

Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Statement for Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan (ENP)

**Telford & Wrekin Council
January 2017**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This document is the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Statement for the Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan (ENP).
- 1.2 This HRA Screening Statement concludes that there is no likely significant effect on any European Site as a result of the policies contained within the Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan and as such the ENP is 'screened out' of the HRA process and no further HRA assessments (including Appropriate Assessments) are deemed necessary.

2.0 Neighbourhood Planning

- 2.1 Neighbourhood planning is a new community right introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and guidance on its implementation is provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.2 Neighbourhood Plans form part of the Statutory Land Use Plan and as such must be subject to HRA under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) [the Habitats Regulations].

3.0 Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 Edgmond Neighbourhood Area was designated by Telford & Wrekin Council in September 2016. The Parish Council have subsequently prepared a draft Neighbourhood Plan and are proposing to run a public consultation on the draft plan during spring 2017 with a view to 'making' the Neighbourhood Plan later in 2017.
- 3.2 The Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan centres around eight key themes and includes 13 policies within those themes.

4.0 Habitat Regulation Assessment

- 4.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) set out the process by which HRA of plans and projects must be undertaken. Further guidance has been provided by government and Natural England on the process.
- 4.2 Telford & Wrekin Council has undertaken several stages of HRA during the preparation of the new Local Plan and has, most recently, carried out a Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Report (Submission Version)¹. This HRA

¹ Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Report (Submission Version) by Enfusion (July 2016).

Screening Statement follows the process used in the latest HRA report and relies on the evidence gathered during that process.

4.3 Telford & Wrekin Council is the 'Competent Authority' in terms of HRA for the 'making' of the Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan and has, therefore, produced this HRA Screening Statement to accompany the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

4.4 Natural England will be given an opportunity to formally comment on this HRA Screening Statement and Telford & Wrekin Council will have regard to the representations of Natural England prior to 'making' the Neighbourhood Plan as required under Regulation 61 (3).

4.5 The HRA process assesses the potential effects arising from a plan against the conservation objectives of any site designated for its nature conservation importance. The European Sites situated in close proximity to the borough of Telford & Wrekin are set out in the HRA Screening Report (Submission Version)² along with their conservation objectives and an assessment of potential effect pathways.

4.6 There are no European Sites within the Neighbourhood Area or, indeed, within the borough. Aqualate Mere, part of the Midland Meres & Mosses Ramsar Phase 2 site, is close to the borough border but located in Staffordshire. Aqualate Mere is around 2.2km from the Edgmond Neighbourhood Area.

5.0 HRA Screening

5.1 Each policy within the Neighbourhood Plan has been screened to determine whether it has potential to cause a Likely Significant Effect on any European Site.

5.2 Any policy with no Likely Significant Effect will be screened out of the HRA process. Any policy where potential for a Likely Significant Effect is identified will be subject to further, more detailed, assessment (sometimes called an 'Appropriate Assessment') in line with the Habitats Regulations and relevant guidance documents.

5.3 Table 1 below considers the potential impacts arising from each of the policies within the draft Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan.

² Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Report (Submission Version) by Enfusion (July 2016).

Policy	Assessment of potential impacts	Potential for Likely Significant Effect
RES1: Residential development within Edgmond village	This policy supports housing within Edgmond where it meets national policy and is in line with Telford & Wrekin Local Plan Policies particularly SP3: Rural Areas and HO10: Residential Development in the Rural Area. The Local Plan HRA Screening Report (Submission Version) assesses the potential impact of development in and around Newport on Aqualate Mere in detail and concludes that there is no Likely Significant Effect either alone or in-combination from any of the policies in the Local Plan on a European Designated Site. The evidence from that HRA Screening Report can be carried forward to ENP Policy RES 1 which is in conformity with both SP3 and HO10.	No
RES2: New development outside of Edgmond village	This policy restricts development in the Neighbourhood Area to the village of Edgmond except in set circumstances (affordable housing) and set locations (at Harper Adams University) and as such is in line with SP3: Rural Areas and HO10: Residential Development in the Rural Area. The Local Plan HRA Screening Report (Submission Version) assesses the potential impact of development in and around Newport on Aqualate Mere in detail and concludes that there is no Likely Significant Effect either alone or in-combination from any of the policies in the Local Plan on a European Designated Site. The evidence from that HRA Screening Report can be carried forward to ENP Policy RES 2 which is in conformity with both SP3 and HO10.	No
RES3: Design of new housing	This policy does not drive land use or location of development but relates to qualitative criteria for developments e.g. design. No Likely Significant Effect.	No
RES4: Conservation of Edgmond's historic character	This policy does not drive land use or location of development but relates to qualitative criteria for developments e.g. design. No Likely Significant Effect.	No
RES5: Type and tenure of housing	This policy does not drive land use or location of development but relates to qualitative criteria for developments e.g. design. No Likely Significant Effect.	No
G1: Local Green Spaces	This policy does not result in development and is intended to protect and enhance the natural environment. No Likely Significant Effect.	No

G2: Ecology and landscape	This policy does not result in development and is intended to protect and enhance the natural environment. No Likely Significant Effect.	No
G3: Linkages and connections	This policy may result in works to Public Rights of Way and new footpaths/cycleways/wildlife corridors and planting being created. These measures are likely to be positive for the natural environment and no potential effect pathway has been identified by which such small scale development could result in a Likely Significant Effect on a European Site.	No
E1: Small-scale employment development	This policy may result in conversion of existing buildings or small new buildings/extensions for business use within the built up area of the village. Such schemes will be limited to small scale by the policy and would be contained within the existing built up area of Edgmond. No potential effect pathway has been identified by which such small scale development could result in a Likely Significant Effect on a European Site.	No
E2: Tourism and leisure development	This policy may result in small scale improvements to visitor infrastructure and accommodation where it is in line with Local Plan Policies particularly SP3: Rural Area, EC3L Employment in the rural area and EC12:Leisure, cultural and tourism development. The Local Plan HRA Screening Report (Submission Version) assesses the potential impact of development in and around Newport on Aqualate Mere in detail and concludes that there is no Likely Significant Effect either alone or in-combination from any of the policies in the Local Plan on a European Designated Site. The evidence from that HRA Screening Report can be carried forward to ENP Policy E2 which is in conformity with the Local Plan Policies.	No
E3: Harper Adams University	This policy relates to the ongoing development of Harper Adams University on its established site. No potential effect pathway has been identified by which development associated with the sustainable future of the university could result in a Likely Significant Effect on a European Site.	No
C1: Community Facilities	This policy does not drive land use or location of development but relates to qualitative criteria for developments e.g. design. No Likely Significant Effect.	No
C2: Developer Contributions	This policy does not drive land use or location of development but relates to qualitative criteria for developments e.g. design. No Likely Significant Effect.	No

Conclusion of the HRA Screening Process for Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan

6.1 The policies within the draft Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan have been screened under the Habitat Regulation Assessment process.

6.2 The conclusion of the HRA Screening Process is that none of the proposed policies within the draft Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan have potential to lead to a Likely Significant Effect on a European Site.

6.3 The draft Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan can be 'screened out' of the Habitat Regulation Assessment process and an 'Appropriate Assessment' is not required.

7.0 Next Steps

7.1 Natural England will be given an opportunity to comment on this Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Statement in January 2017 and Telford & Wrekin Council will have regard to the comments of Natural England as the appropriate nature conservation body under the Habitats Regulations prior to the 'making' of Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan.

7.2 If, following the public consultation on the draft Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan, changes are proposed to the policies contained within the Plan then an update to this HRA Screening Statement will be produced reflecting the changes made and, if significant changes are proposed, a further consultation with Natural England will be undertaken.