

## 1. Introduction

### **Requirement for Habitat Regulations Assessment**

~~Under the provisions of European Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive)<sup>1</sup>, transposed into British law by Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017<sup>2</sup>, a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required to assess the potential effects of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of any European sites designated for their importance to nature conservation under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)<sup>3</sup>. These sites form a system of internationally important sites throughout Europe and are known collectively as the 'Natura 2000 network'. Article 2 of the Directive requires the maintenance or restoration of habitats and species of interest to the EU in a favourable condition.~~

European sites provide valuable ecological infrastructure for the protection of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species of exceptional importance within the EU. These sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPA), designated under European Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Birds Directive)<sup>4</sup>. Additionally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraph 181~~176~~<sup>5</sup> requires that sites designated under the Ramsar Convention (The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat) are treated as if they are fully designated European sites for the purpose of considering development proposals that may affect them.

~~Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states that local authorities have a duty to ensure that all the activities they regulate have no adverse effect on the integrity of any of the Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, a~~ An HRA must assess the possible effects of proposed plans on any Natura 2000 sites. This includes screening for potential impacts on European sites. If there is a probability or a risk that there will be significant effects on site integrity, alone, or in-combination with other relevant plans or projects, (having regard to the site's conservation objectives) then the plan or project must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment of its implications on the site.

Depending on the outcome of the HRA, the local authority may need to amend the plan to eliminate or reduce potentially damaging effects on the European site. If adverse effects on the integrity of sites cannot be ruled out, the plan can only be adopted where there are no alternative solutions that would have a lesser effect and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest sufficient to justify adopting the plan despite its effects on the European sites.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:31992L0043>

<sup>2</sup> Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/490/regulation/41/made>

<sup>3</sup> Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/contents>

<sup>4</sup> European Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Birds Directive): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009L0147>

<sup>5</sup> National Planning Policy Framework: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

Update March 2022: The HRA has been updated in the light of advice from Natural England regarding protected sites in unfavourable condition due to nutrient pollution, including the River Lambourn Special Area of Conservation (SAC) in West Berkshire. Other amendments include removing references to European Legislation since the UK left the European Union on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 and other factual updates. Changes are shown using the format of underline for additions and ~~strikethrough~~ for deletions.

There are four stages to the Habitats Regulations Assessment as outlined in Table 1.1 below:

Table 1.1: HRA stages

<b>Habitat Regulation Assessment - stage</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Screening exercise	The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 or Ramsar site(s), either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant
Appropriate Assessment	The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the site(s), either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts should be provided
Assessment of alternative solutions	The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 and Ramsar site(s)
Compensatory measures	An assessment of the compensatory measures where, in light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest, it is deemed that the plan should proceed. This is not a standard part of the process and will only be carried out in exceptional circumstances.

This document constitutes stage 1 of the assessment and screens the potential of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan for its likely effects, either alone or in combination.

***What is the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan***

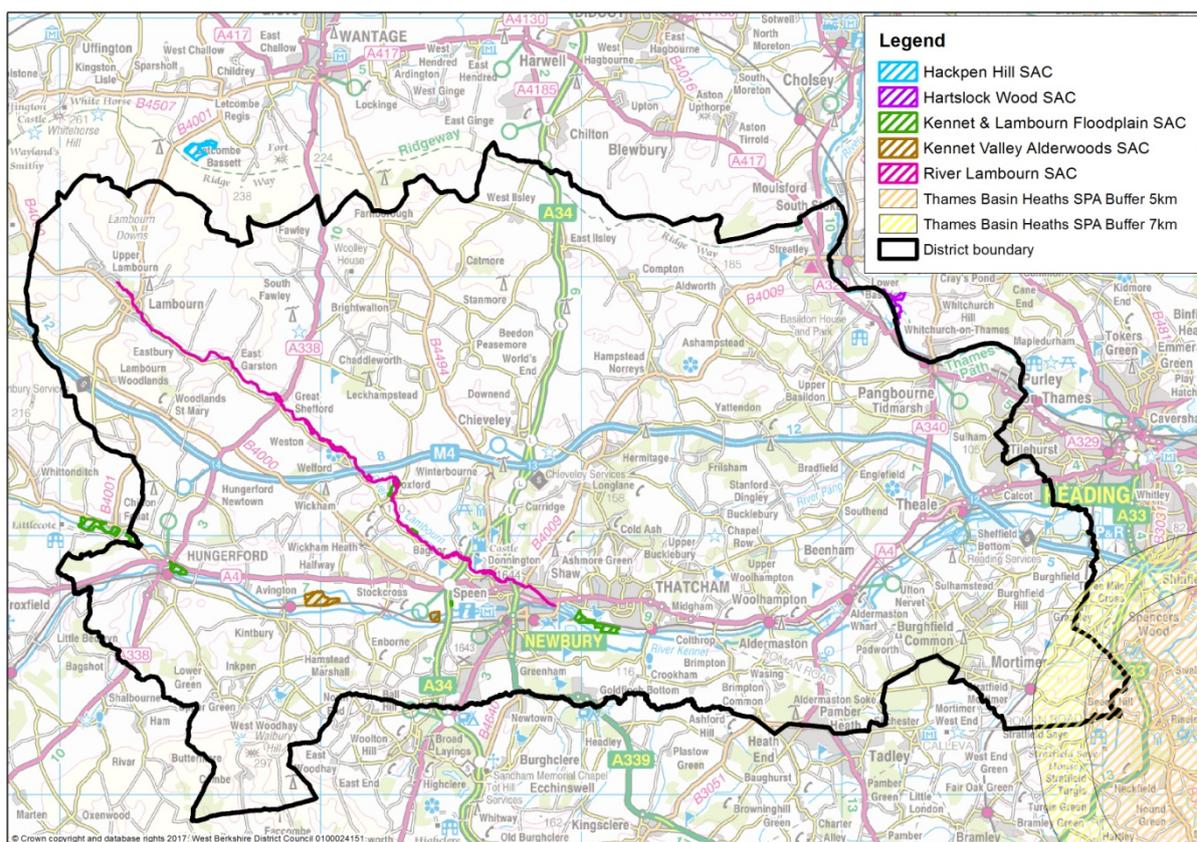
The West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will replace the existing saved minerals and waste planning policies as set out in the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (incorporating alterations) (2001) and the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (1998).

The Minerals and Waste Local Plan will cover the period to 2037, setting out new policies to manage mineral and waste development in West Berkshire.

***Natura 2000 sites within West Berkshire***

Within the boundaries of West Berkshire there are three designated SACs, and within 5km of the boundaries of West Berkshire, there are two SACs. While there is no SPA within West Berkshire, the south-eastern area of the District falls within the 5km boundary of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. The 5km boundary has been determined by Natural England as a buffer area to regulate development near the SPA.

The map below shows the location of the SACs and the SPA buffers.



The **Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC** is a composite site of approximately 114 hectares located within West Berkshire and Wiltshire. The cluster of sites selected in the Kennet and Lambourn valleys support one of the most extensive known populations of Desmoulin’s whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*) in the UK. The conservation objective related to the sites’ designation is to maintain in favourable condition, the habitat for the population of Desmoulin’s whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*).

The **River Lambourn SAC** is a site of approximately 27 hectares located wholly within West Berkshire and consists of the River Lambourn water body. The Lambourn supports Bullhead (*Cottus gobio*) populations inhabiting chalk streams in central southern England. Good water quality, coarse sediments and extensive beds of submerged plants provide an excellent habitat for the species. The presence of Brook lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*) is also a qualifying feature of the site. In March 2022, Natural England released a list of habitats sites in unfavourable condition due to nutrients, where new development may have an adverse effect by contributing

additional nutrients and therefore where nutrient neutrality is a potential solution to enable development to proceed. The River Lambourn SAC was included in this list as being in unfavourable condition due to high concentrations of the nutrient Phosphorus and a Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area (NNCA) was defined.

The **Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC** consists of two sites of approximately 56 hectares in total located within West Berkshire in the Kennet floodplain. Its general site characteristic is of broad leaved deciduous woodland. The woodlands are the largest remaining fragments of damp, ash-alder woodland in the Kennet floodplain area. The conservation of the site is dependent upon maintaining a constantly high groundwater level.

**Hartslock Wood SAC** is located just outside the West Berkshire boundary in South Oxfordshire. **Hackpen Hill** is a 35.8 hectare SAC site located in the Vale of White Horse approximately 2km north of West Berkshire's border.

The **Thames Basin Heaths SPA** is a composite site covering an area of some 8,274 hectares, consisting of 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) scattered from Hampshire in the west, to Berkshire in the north, through to Surrey in the south east. The site supports important breeding populations of a number of birds of lowland heath, especially Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*), Woodlark (*Lullula arborea*) and Dartford warbler (*Sylvia undata*). None of the SPA is located within the borders of West Berkshire; however the 5km buffer outlined by Natural England covers a small portion of West Berkshire's eastern area. The only settlement in West Berkshire that is within the 5km buffer is the village of Beech Hill (which is outside the District's settlement hierarchy where development will be focused). There are no additional settlements within the 5-7km buffer.

## **2. Description of the plan or project and description and characteristics of other plans or projects that in combination have the potential to have significant effects on the Natura 2000 site/s.**

The West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will set out the overall planning framework and vision for minerals and waste development in West Berkshire to 2037.

Plans and projects from neighbouring authorities also need to be considered. The following is a list of relevant documents which may impact upon the SACs identified:

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Plan, Policy or Proposal</b>
Oxfordshire County Council	Minerals and Waste Local Plan provides a basis for policy and strategy for minerals and waste on a countywide basis. <u>Site allocations underway. MWLP review underway.</u>
Hampshire CC	Minerals and Waste Local Plan ( <u>adopted 2013</u> ) provides a basis for policy and strategy for minerals and waste on a countywide basis. <u>The plan was reviewed in 2018 and no updates were required.</u>
Wiltshire Council	Core Strategy; and

	Minerals and Waste Local Plan provides a basis for policy and strategy for minerals and waste on a countywide basis.
Vale of the White Horse	Core Strategy/Site Allocations
South Oxfordshire	Core Strategy/Site Allocations
Basingstoke & Deane BC	Core Strategy
Reading BC	Core Strategy

For the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, the following plans and projects, in addition to those detailed above also need to be considered:

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Plan, Policy or Proposal</b>
<i>Bracknell Forest BC</i>	<i>Core Strategy</i>
<i>Wokingham</i>	<i>Core Strategy</i>
<i>Hart District Council</i>	<i>Core Strategy</i>
<i>Central Berkshire (Bracknell Forest, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Wokingham and Reading)</i>	<i>Emerging Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan (at examination)</i>

### 3. Identifying potential effects

This HRA screening report will determine whether the matters proposed for the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will raise any issues either alone or in combination with other plans and projects within West Berkshire or neighbouring areas. If the screening of the plan identifies potential effects, or there is uncertainty regarding potential effects, then further more detailed appropriate assessment is required.

The table below is a list of potential effects that the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, in combination with other plans, may have on the SAC sites and SPA sites.

<b>Effect</b>		<b>Comment</b>
Fragmentation of Habitat		Due to many years of urban and agricultural activities, the SACs and SPA are already fragments of habitat that have not been developed upon. Further development may have the effect of causing further fragmentation of habitats and/or severance or blocking of movement corridors.
Predation	Vermin	Waste sites have the potential to attract vermin which could impact on fauna species by preying on bird eggs and out-competing other species.
	Invasive species	This could affect the habitat structure of sites.
Hydrology – alteration / pollution / enrichment	Leachate	Contaminants can reach a habitat by leaching through soil and groundwater. Chemicals released in this manner could have a range of impacts depending on their source.
	Traffic	Vehicle movements to/from a site could lead to pollution on the road surface which could run-off and contaminate the habitats surrounding the road.

	Water use	Extraction of minerals and processing of minerals and/or waste can require large amounts of water which could result in the reduction of the natural water table or affect river levels which could impact on drying out of sites and changing of habitats.
	Water Pollution	Water pollution can result in a number of impacts on sensitive habitats including reducing the number of in-stream species, eutrophication and siltation.
	Groundwater	Infilling of worked minerals sites could impact on groundwater flow which could result in less water reaching certain sites.
Disturbance	Noise	This can disturb birds and other animal species, potentially disrupting breeding/feeding/roosting or causing migration. Noise can arise from processing on a site or from traffic movements to/from a site.
	Lighting	Provision of lighting at night time, or security lighting, can cause disturbance to birds, invertebrates and mammals using nearby habitats.
	Traffic	Vehicle movements to/from a site could increase level of disturbance through increased noise and vibration.
	Impact of building	Construction of buildings for minerals/waste processing could impact on birds by affecting take off/landing routes and increasing cover for predatory birds.
Air Pollution	Dust	Commonly created from minerals and waste sites. It can affect the growth of plants and pollute water courses.
	Traffic	Vehicle movements to/from a site can result in emissions which can impact on air pollution.
	Aerial Pollution	Waste management development can result in aerial pollution which can impact on flora and fauna.

**4. Screening Tables**

<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain</b>	
Site Designation	SAC	
Location of International Site	SU313704	
Description of International Site	<p>Supports extensive population of Desmoulin’s Whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>)</p> <p>The site is predominately Reed Sweet-grass (<i>Glyceria maxima</i>) swamp of tall sedges at the river margins, in ditches and in depressions in wet meadows.</p>	
Conservation Objectives of International Site	<p>Subject to natural change, to maintain, in favourable condition, the habitat for the population of European importance of Desmoulin’s whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>)</p> <p>Currently the majority of the site is in a favourable condition. Maintaining this condition is dependent on minimising scrub incursion to wetland, fen and grassland habitats. Risks to the declining condition stem from spread of invasive weeds, poor woodland and land management and run-off effecting water quality.</p>	
Aspects of the plan that could impact on International Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land bank / Need</li> <li>• Self-Sufficiency in Waste Management</li> <li>• Restoration and after-use</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Cumulative Impact</li> <li>• Minerals Safeguarding</li> <li>• Waste Safeguarding</li> <li>• Location of Development (construction aggregates, waste management facilities, landfill)</li> <li>• Borrow Pits</li> <li>• Specialist Waste Management</li> <li>• Chalk and Clay</li> <li>• Energy Minerals</li> <li>• Reworking of old landfill sites</li> <li>• Temporary infrastructure (waste, construction aggregate)</li> <li>• Permanent construction aggregate infrastructure</li> </ul>	
Potential causes of significant effects	Likely Significant Effect	Details

Fragmentation		N	No land take from protected sites will be required to deliver the objectives set out in the MWLP
Predation	Vermin	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because the Desmoulin's whorl snail is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development. In addition, no waste facilities are specifically proposed as part of the MWLP.
	Invasive species	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
Hydrology	Leachate	N	<p>It is generally considered that clean water is a habitat requirement of the Desmoulin's whorl snail, although research undertaken in relation to this is limited. There is a risk that leachate from waste facilities may enter the water course and pollute the water making the habitat unsuitable for this species.</p> <p>However, it is understood that sites likely to come forward as part of the plan are located downstream of the SAC. In addition, no waste facilities are specifically proposed as part of the MWLP. Therefore, it is considered that there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</p>
	Water use	N	<p>The Desmoulin's whorl snail requires permanently wet, usually calcareous, swamps, fens and marshes, boarding river, lakes and ponds, or in river floodplains. It is highly dependent on maintenance of existing hydrological conditions. If water hungry developments are located close to the SAC there is a risk that the requirement for large amount of water could lead to drying of the floodplain.</p> <p>However, it is understood that sites likely to come forward as part of the plan are located downstream of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</p>
	Water pollution	N	It is generally considered that clean water is a habitat requirement of the Desmoulin's whorl snail, although research undertaken in relation to this is limited. There is a risk that leachate from waste facilities, or an influx of nutrients may

			<p>enter the watercourse and pollute the water, making the habitat unsuitable for this species.</p> <p>However, it is understood that sites likely to come forward as part of the plan are located downstream of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</p>
	Groundwater	N	<p>Dewatering is a key process of the extraction of sand and gravel. This can have impacts on groundwater flows up to 2km from the extraction site. The Desmoulin's whorl snail requires permanently wet, usually calcareous, swamps, fens and marshes, boarding river, lakes and ponds, or in river floodplains. It is highly dependent on maintenance of existing hydrological conditions.</p> <p>However, it is understood that sites likely to come forward as part of the plan are located downstream of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</p>
Disturbance	Noise	N	<p>This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because the Desmoulin's whorl snail is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.</p>
	Lighting	N	<p>This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because the Desmoulin's whorl snail is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.</p>
	Traffic	N	<p>The local area is already serviced by the A4. It is not anticipated that development would result in significant increases in traffic sufficient to cause likely significant effects on the SAC.</p>
	Impact of building	N	<p>This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because the Desmoulin's whorl snail is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.</p>
	Vibration	N	<p>This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because the Desmoulin's whorl snail is not</p>

			considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
Air Pollution	Dust	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because the Desmoulin's whorl snail is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Traffic (inc. emissions)	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because the Desmoulin's whorl snail is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.  This risk is considered low as developments would be complying with Environment Agency guidelines, meaning that the chances of leachates escaping any facility are low.
Other Plans and projects	<p><b>West Berkshire Council</b>  <i>Core Strategy / Housing Site Allocations DPD</i> – deliver 10,500 new homes to 2026. Focus for housing is within the settlement hierarchy (Urban Areas – Newbury, Thatcham, Eastern Urban Area, Rural Service Centres – Burghfield Common, Mortimer, Theale, Pangbourne, Lambourn, Hungerford, Service Villages – Kintbury, Great Shefford, Compton, Chieveley, Hermitage, Cold Ash, Woolhampton, Bradfield Southend, Aldermaston). The River Lambourn SAC has areas in close proximity to Newbury and Thatcham. These documents were subject to their own HRA.</p> <p><u>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the early draft published for consultation in December 2020 shows the majority of development in the district taking place in the Newbury and Thatcham Spatial Area, with a significant strategic site proposed in Thatcham. This area is downstream of the SAC and therefore, it is considered unlikely to impact on the SAC. The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</u></p> <p><del>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the potential impacts on protected sites are unknown. The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</del></p> <p><b>Hampshire County Council</b>  <i>Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (adopted 2013)</i></p>		

	<p>Sand and gravel deposits clustered in Hampshire are largely in the south east corner (New Forest Area) along the northern boundary and patchy throughout the rest of the County. Of particular relevance to the West Berkshire MWLP are the deposits along the north Hampshire border around the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and within 5km of the Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC. These mineral deposits are protected from other development. 'Mineral Resources Areas' have been identified in the north east corner around the Thames Basin Heaths SPA area (6 mineral extraction sites within 500m, 3 mineral extraction sites between 500m and 2.5km). These same sites also form 'Landfill Potential Sites' showing they would have a more long-term use.</p> <p>It is expected that development projects in north east Hampshire will accommodate waste management facilities.</p> <p><b>Wiltshire Council</b>  <i>Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy (adopted 2009)</i>                  Mineral resources throughout Wiltshire are determined by geology, with the same geology creating important landscape and natural habitats. Therefore, mineral resources often occur within important environmental designations, such as the AONB. Past, current and proposed mineral workings are located towards the north, west and south of the country, avoiding the area adjacent to West Berkshire.</p> <p><i>Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Core Strategy (adopted 2009)</i>                  Current waste facilities are largely located in more urban areas of the district. Landfill facilities are in areas geologically suited to mineral extraction. As with mineral sites this generally avoids the areas adjacent to West Berkshire, although there are current waste facilities within 5km of West Berkshire and it is proposed that new waste facilities are located within 16km of strategically significant cities (inc. Swindon). This zone covers land adjacent to West Berkshire. Therefore, the plan for waste in Wiltshire could have an effect on the Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC in terms of site locations or travel routes.</p>	
Are the potential impacts of the Plan likely to be significant?		
Alone?	N	No likely significant effects have been identified at the MWLP level as the focus of any waste and mineral development in the area would be located downstream from the SAC.
In combination with other plans/projects?	N	Additional development is proposed for Thatcham through the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations (HSA) DPD, however, this is not likely to impact on the SAC as it is located downstream of the SAC and the HSA DPD has been subject to separate HRA screening.

		Any waste and minerals development coming forward in the area would be located downstream from the SAC.
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<b>Site Name</b>	<b>River Lambourn</b>
Site Designation	SAC
Location of International Site	SU398739
Description of International Site	<p>Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation. The Lambourn is an example of sub-type 1 in central southern England, a chalk stream discharging into the middle reaches of the Thames system.</p> <p>The Lambourn supports Bullhead (<i>Cottus gobio</i>) populations that inhabit chalk streams in central southern England. Good water quality, coarse sediments and extensive beds of submerged plants provide excellent habitat for the species.</p> <p>The Brook lamprey is a qualifying species but is not the primary reason for designation. The Brook lamprey requires clean gravel beds for spawning and soft marginal silt or sand for the larvae. It spawns mostly in part of the river where the current is not too strong.</p>
Conservation Objectives of International Site	<p>To maintain in a favourable condition the: Floating formations of Water Crowfoot (<i>Ranunculus</i>) of plain and sub-mountainous rivers;</p> <p>To maintain, in a favourable condition, the habitats for the population of Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) and Bullhead (<i>Cottus gobio</i>).</p> <p>The River Lambourn component SSSI units are all in unfavourable condition, due to siltation, inappropriate weirs, dams and other structures, inland flood defence works, invasive freshwater species, and water pollution from agricultural run off. <u>In March 2022, Natural England released a list of habitats sites in unfavourable condition due to nutrients, where new development may have an adverse effect by contributing additional nutrients and therefore where nutrient neutrality is a potential solution to enable development to proceed. The River Lambourn SAC was included in this list as being in unfavourable condition due to high concentrations of the nutrient Phosphorus and a Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area (NNCA) was defined.</u></p>
Aspects of the plan that could impact on International Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land bank / Need</li> <li>• Borrow Pits</li> <li>• Specialist Waste Management</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Sufficiency in Waste Management</li> <li>• Landscape and Protected Landscapes</li> <li>• Restoration and after-use</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Cumulative Impact</li> <li>• Minerals Safeguarding</li> <li>• Waste Safeguarding</li> <li>• Location of Development (construction aggregates, waste management facilities, landfill)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chalk and Clay</li> <li>• Energy Minerals</li> <li>• Reworking of old landfill sites</li> <li>• Temporary infrastructure (waste, construction aggregate)</li> <li>• Permanent construction aggregate infrastructure</li> </ul>
Potential causes of significant effects		Likely Significant Effect	Details
Fragmentation		N	No land take from European and Ramsar sites will be required to deliver the objectives set out in the MWLP.
Predation	Vermin	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause likely significant effect on the SAC because fish species and Crowfoot are not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Invasive species	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
Hydrology	Leachate	N	All the interest features of the SAC designation rely on clean water to survive. The three species for which the River Lambourn is designated are at risk of nitrification of the watercourses. An influx of nutrients could lead to growth of other plants which might out-compete the Water Crowfoot resulting in a decline in its population. The Brook lamprey relies on a clear migration pathway and the

			<p>Bullhead requires clear, shallow waters, both of which would be implicated if increased vegetation occurred as a result of leachate entering the water.</p> <p><u>No waste sites are allocated within the MWLP. Two minerals sites are allocated, the closest of which is 3.8km north of the SAC, located within the Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area (NNCA). Given that there are no expected sources of phosphorous from mineral extraction, nor from restoration using uncontaminated inert fill, it is considered unlikely development of the site would impact on the SAC.</u></p> <p><u>The policies in the plan seek to manage development across the district, and direct development to the most suitable locations. Policy 20 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) requires that development likely to result in a significant effect on internationally designated sites will need to satisfy the requirements of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations. The presence of the AONB further limits the scope for minerals and waste developments to take place in this area.</u></p> <p><u>Therefore, it is considered that there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</u></p> <p><u>However, it is understood that sites likely to come forward as part of the plan are located downstream of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that there is no likely significant effect from the plan. In addition, the risk is considered low as development would be required to comply with the Environment Agency guidelines, meaning that the chance of leachates escaping are low.</u></p>
	Water use	N	<p>If facilities require large amounts of water this could lead to use of groundwater supplies which could lead to drying of the floodplain habitat.</p> <p><u>No waste sites are allocated within the MWLP. Two minerals sites are allocated, the closest of which is 3.8km north of the SAC, located within the Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area (NNCA). Given that there are no expected sources of phosphorous from mineral extraction, nor from restoration using uncontaminated</u></p>

			<p><u>inert fill, it is considered unlikely development of the site would impact on the SAC.</u></p> <p><u>The policies in the plan seek to manage development across the district, and direct development to the most suitable locations. Policy 20 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) requires that development likely to result in a significant effect on internationally designated sites will need to satisfy the requirements of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations. The presence of the AONB further limits the scope for minerals and waste developments to take place in this area.</u></p> <p><del>However, it is understood that sites likely to come forward as part of the plan are located downstream of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</del></p>
	Water pollution	N	<p><u>All the interest features of the SAC rely on clean water. Pollutants/sediment entering the water course may result in mortalities of fish species or changes in the habitat. The water quality of the river has been determined to exceed the acceptable levels for phosphorus at all units and a Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area (NNCA) defined (March 2022).</u></p> <p><u>No waste sites are allocated within the MWLP. Two minerals sites are allocated, the closest of which is 3.8km north of the SAC, located within the Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area (NNCA). Given that there are no expected sources of phosphorous from mineral extraction, nor from restoration using uncontaminated inert fill, it is considered unlikely development of the site would impact on the SAC.</u></p> <p><u>The policies in the plan seek to manage development across the district, and direct development to the most suitable locations. Policy 20 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) requires that development likely to result in a significant effect on internationally designated sites will need to satisfy the requirements of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations. The presence of the AONB</u></p>

			<p><u>further limits the scope for minerals and waste developments to take place in this area.</u></p> <p><del>However, it is understood that any development would be located downstream from the SAC. It is therefore, considered there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</del> In addition, the risk is considered low as development would be complying with Environment Agency guidelines, meaning the chance of pollutants escaping any facility, or resulting sedimentation are low.</p> <p>All three species for which the SAC is designated rely on clean water. There is a risk that increased transportation to and from facilities may increase the chances of polluted run-off from roads entering the water courses, therefore, negatively impacting on water quality.</p> <p>The M4, A4 and A34 all dissect the watercourse meaning the river is already exposed to road runoff. It is not anticipated that the potential predicted low increase in traffic to/from the sites would significantly change the risk posed to water quality.</p> <p><u>It is therefore, considered there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</u></p>
	Groundwater	N	<p>If facilities require large amounts of water this could lead to use of groundwater supplies which could lead to drying of the floodplain habitat.</p> <p><u>No waste sites are allocated within the MWLP. Two minerals sites are allocated, the closest of which is 3.8km north of the SAC, located within the Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area (NNCA). Given that there are no expected sources of phosphorous from mineral extraction, nor from restoration using uncontaminated inert fill, it is considered unlikely development of the site would impact on the SAC.</u></p>

			<p><u>The policies in the plan seek to manage development across the district, and direct development to the most suitable locations. Policy 20 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) requires that development likely to result in a significant effect on internationally designated sites will need to satisfy the requirements of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations. The presence of the AONB further limits the scope for minerals and waste developments to take place in this area.</u></p> <p><del>However, it is understood that sites likely to come forward as part of the plan are located downstream of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that there is no likely significant effect from the plan.</del></p>
Disturbance	Noise	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because fish species and Crowfoot are not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Lighting	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because fish species and Crowfoot are not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Traffic	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
	Impact of building	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because fish species and Crowfoot are not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Vibration	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because fish species and Crowfoot are not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
Air Pollution	Dust	N	This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because fish species and Crowfoot are not

	Traffic (inc. emissions)	N	<p>considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.</p> <p>This hazard is considered to have a negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC because fish species and Crowfoot are not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.</p>
Other Plans and projects	<p><b>West Berkshire Council</b>  <i>Core Strategy / Housing Site Allocations DPD</i> – deliver 10,500 new homes to 2026. Focus for housing is within the settlement hierarchy (Urban Areas – Newbury, Thatcham, Eastern Urban Area, Rural Service Centres – Burghfield Common, Mortimer, Theale, Pangbourne, Lambourn, Hungerford, Service Villages – Kintbury, Great Shefford, Compton, Chieveley, Hermitage, Cold Ash, Woolhampton, Bradfield Southend, Aldermaston). The River Lambourn SAC has areas in close proximity to Newbury and Thatcham. These documents were subject to their own HRA.</p> <p>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage <u>the early draft published for consultation in December 2020 shows the majority of development in the district taking place in the Newbury and Thatcham Spatial Area, with a significant strategic site proposed in Thatcham. This area is downstream of the SAC and therefore, it is considered unlikely to impact on the SAC.</u> The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</p> <p><b>Wiltshire Council</b>  <i>Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy (adopted 2009)</i>                      Mineral resources throughout Wiltshire are determined by geology, with the same geology creating important landscape and natural habitats. Therefore, mineral resources often occur within important environmental designations, such as the AONB. Past, current and proposed mineral workings are located towards the north, west and south of the county, avoiding the area adjacent to West Berkshire.</p> <p><i>Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Core Strategy (adopted 2009)</i>                      Current waste facilities are largely located in more urban areas of the district. Landfill facilities are in areas geologically suited to mineral extraction. As with mineral sites this generally avoids the areas adjacent to West Berkshire, although there are current waste facilities within 5km of West Berkshire and it is proposed that new waste facilities are located within 16km of strategically significant cities (inc. Swindon). This zone covers land adjacent to</p>		

	West Berkshire. Therefore, the plan for waste in Wiltshire could have an effect on the Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC in terms of site locations or travel routes.	
Are the potential impacts of the Plan likely to be significant?		
Alone?	N	<p>No likely significant effects have been identified at the MWLP level. <u>Mineral development is considered unlikely to result in leachate/pollutants which would find their way into the water course. Given the allocations within the plan and the distance from the SAC this further reduces the potential for any impact on the SAC. There are a small number of existing waste sites that fall along the River Lambourn SAC or within the Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area. These sites are ‘safeguarded’, however, no new/additional development is expected on these sites which would impact on the SAC.</u></p> <p><del>The SAC is considered less vulnerable as the focus of any waste or mineral developments, should they occur, will be downstream of the SAC itself. Furthermore, Risks are considered low as development would <u>have to be</u> complying with Environment Agency guidelines meaning the chance of leachates/pollutants escaping is low.</del></p>
In combination with other plans/projects?	N	Additional development is proposed for Thatcham and Newbury, however, this is not likely to significantly impact on the SAC as they are located downstream.

<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Kennet Valley Alderwoods</b>	
Site Designation	SAC	
Location of International Site	SU398675	
Description of International Site	<p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>).</p> <p>These, the largest fragments of alder-ash woodland on the Kennet floodplain, lie on alluvium overlain by a shallow layer of moderately calcareous peat.</p>	
Conservation Objectives of International Site	<p>The Conservation Objectives for this site are, subject to natural change, to maintain the following habitats and geological features in favourable condition, with particular reference to any dependent component special interest features for which the land is designated – Broadleaved mixed and yew woodland.</p> <p>This site is in a favourable condition.</p>	
Aspects of the plan that could impact on International Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land bank / Need</li> <li>• Self-Sufficiency in Waste Management</li> <li>• Landscape and Protected Landscapes</li> <li>• Restoration and after-use</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Cumulative Impact</li> <li>• Minerals Safeguarding</li> <li>• Waste Safeguarding</li> <li>• Location of Development (construction aggregates, waste management facilities, landfill)</li> <li>• Borrow Pits</li> <li>• Specialist Waste Management</li> <li>• Chalk and Clay</li> <li>• Energy Minerals</li> <li>• Reworking of old landfill sites</li> <li>• Temporary infrastructure (waste, construction aggregate)</li> <li>• Permanent construction aggregate infrastructure</li> </ul>	
Potential causes of significant effects	Likely Significant Effect	Details

Fragmentation		N	No land take from European and Ramsar sites will be required to deliver the objectives set out in the plan.
Predation	Vermin	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the woodland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Invasive species	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
Hydrology	Leachate	N	The focus of development would be located some distance (at least 14km downstream) from the SAC, therefore, there is no likely significant impact from the plan. Even if development was to take place closer to the site the risk is considered low as development would be required to comply with the Environment Agency guidelines, meaning that the chance of leachate escaping is low. In addition, no waste facilities are specifically proposed as part of the MWLP.
	Water use	N	<p>The SAC is wet woodland, therefore, relies on specific groundwater levels in order to maintain an appropriate level of soil moisture for the woodland to support the species for which it is designated.</p> <p>There is a risk that large amount of development may lead to use of groundwater supplies which could lead to the lowering of groundwater levels in the floodplain habitat. The River Kennet passes through the SAC and the floodplain provides a lot of the soil moisture.</p> <p>However, the focus of development would be located some distance (at least 14km downstream) from the SAC, therefore, there is no likely significant impact from the plan.</p>
	Water pollution	N	There is potential, if sites are located close to the SAC boundary, that water pollutants may reach the habitats for which the site is designated. However, the risk is considered low as waste developments would be complying with Environment Agency guidelines, meaning that the chance of water pollutants escaping any facility is low.

	Groundwater	N	<p>The SAC is wet woodland, therefore, relies on specific groundwater levels in order to maintain an appropriate level of soil moisture for the woodland to support the species for which it is designated.</p> <p>There is a risk that a large amount of development may lead to use of groundwater supplies which could lead to the lowering of groundwater levels in the floodplain habitat.</p> <p>However, The focus of development would be located some distance (at least 14km downstream) from the SAC, therefore, there is no likely significant impact from the plan.</p>
Disturbance	Noise	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the woodland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Lighting	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the woodland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Traffic	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
	Impact of building	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the woodland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
	Vibration	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the woodland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output type at anticipated levels from regulated development.
Air Pollution	Dust	N	<p>Air quality is of importance in maintaining the health of the trees. High levels of aerial pollution, such as dust, could result in reduced vigour and possible increased tree mortality, if present at high enough levels.</p> <p>However, the focus of any development would be located some distance (at least 14km) from the SAC, therefore, there is no likely significant impact from the plan.</p>

			Even if development was to take place closer to the site, the risk is considered low as development would be required to comply with the Environment Agency guidelines, meaning that the chance of high levels of dust is low.
	Traffic (inc. emissions)	N	<p>Air quality is of importance in maintaining the health of the trees. High level of aerial pollution such as nitrous oxide may result in reduced vigour and increased tree mortality if it is present in high enough concentrations.</p> <p>Significant changes in traffic levels are considered to be minimal in this area due to the main link road near to this SAC being the A4, an already busy road. It is not anticipated that significant increase in traffic along this road would result from development of sites in this area.</p>
	Aerial pollutants	N	<p>Air quality is of importance in maintaining the health of the trees. High level of aerial pollution such as nitrous oxide may result in reduced vigour and increased tree mortality if it is present in high enough concentrations.</p> <p>There is potential that if facilities are located in close proximity to the SAC aerial pollutants may reach the habitats for which the site is designated. However, the focus of development would be located some distance (at least 14km downstream) from the SAC, therefore, there is no likely significant impact from the plan. In addition, the risk is considered low, as developments would be complying with the Environment Agency guidelines, meaning that the chances of aerial pollutants being released at significant levels from any site area low.</p>
Other Plans and projects	<p><b>West Berkshire Council</b>  <i>Core Strategy / Housing Site Allocations DPD</i> – deliver 10,500 new homes to 2026. Focus for housing is within the settlement hierarchy (Urban Areas – Newbury, Thatcham, Eastern Urban Area, Rural Service Centres – Burghfield Common, Mortimer, Theale, Pangbourne, Lambourn, Hungerford, Service Villages – Kintbury, Great Shefford, Compton, Chieveley, Hermitage, Cold Ash, Woolhampton, Bradfield Southend, Aldermaston). The River Lambourn SAC has areas in close proximity to Newbury and Thatcham. These documents were subject to their own HRA.</p>		

	<p><u>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the early draft published for consultation in December 2020 shows the majority of development in the district taking place in the Newbury and Thatcham Spatial Area, with a significant strategic site proposed in Thatcham. This area is downstream of the SAC and therefore, it is considered unlikely to impact on the SAC. The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</u></p> <p><del>Work has started on the new Local Plan for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the potential impacts on protected sites are unknown. The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</del></p> <p><b>Hampshire Country Council</b>  <i>Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (adopted 2013)</i>                  Sand and gravel deposits are clustered in Hampshire are largely in the south east corner (New Forest Area) along the northern boundary and patchy throughout the rest of the County. Of particular relevance to the West Berkshire MWLP are the deposits along the north Hampshire border around the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and with 5km of the Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC. These mineral deposits are protected from other development. 'Mineral Resources Areas' have been identified in the north east corner around the Thames Basin Health SPA area (6 mineral extraction sites within 500m, 3 mineral extraction sites between 500m and 2.5km). These same sites also form 'Landfill Potential Sites' showing they would have a more long-term use.</p> <p>It is expected that development projects in north east Hampshire will accommodate waste management facilities.</p>	
Are the potential impacts of the Plan likely to be significant?		
Alone?	N	<p>It is recognised that there is potential for harm to the SAC from aerial pollution from both waste and mineral sites, both chemical aerial pollution and water use.</p> <p>However, no likely significant effects have been identified. The development will be focused downstream of the SAC, reducing the potential for harm.</p>
In combination with other plans/projects?	N	<p>While additional development is proposed for Newbury and Thatcham, this is not likely to impact on the SAC as it is located downstream from the SAC.</p>

<b>Site Name</b>		<b>Thames Basin Heaths</b>	
Site Designation		SPA	
Location of International Site		SU878566 (approx. centre point)	
Description of International Site		<p>The mosaic of habitats which form the internally important lowland heathland are dependent on active heathland management.</p> <p>Large UK breeding populations of Nightjar (7.8%), Woodlark (9.9%) and Dartford warbler (27.8%)</p>	
Conservation Objectives of International Site		<p>A common conservation objective has been set for the whole of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA – Subject to natural change, to maintain in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of Annex 1 bird species of European importance, with particular reference to lowland heathland and rotationally managed plantation.</p> <p>The majority of the site is in unfavourable, but recovering condition. The main threat to the condition of the SPA is recreational pressure from nearby residential development.</p>	
Aspects of the plan that could impact on International Site		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land bank / Need</li> <li>• Self-Sufficiency in Waste Management</li> <li>• Landscape and Protected Landscapes</li> <li>• Restoration and after-use</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Cumulative Impact</li> <li>• Minerals Safeguarding</li> <li>• Waste Safeguarding</li> <li>• Location of Development (construction aggregates, waste management facilities, landfill)</li> <li>• Borrow Pits</li> <li>• Specialist Waste Management</li> <li>• Chalk and Clay</li> <li>• Energy Minerals</li> <li>• Reworking of old landfill sites</li> <li>• Temporary infrastructure (waste, construction aggregate)</li> <li>• Permanent construction aggregate infrastructure</li> </ul>	
Potential causes of significant effects		Likely Significant Effect	Details
Fragmentation		N	No land take from European and Ramsar sites will be required to deliver the objectives set out in the MWLP.

Predation	Vermin	N	The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for there to be significant impacts on the habitat. The risk is also considered to be low as development would be complying with Environment Agency guidelines, meaning the chance of any leachate escaping any facility is low.
	Invasive species	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
Hydrology	Leachate	N	There is potential where facilities are located within close proximity to the SPA boundary for leachate to reach the habitats for which the site is designated, thus changing the habitat structure that the birds rely upon.  The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for these to be significant impacts on the habitat. The risk is also considered to be low as development would be complying with Environment Agency guidelines, meaning the chance of any leachate escaping any facility is low.
	Water use	N	The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for there to be significant impacts on the habitat.
	Water pollution	N	The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for there to be significant impacts on the habitat.
	Groundwater	N	The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for there to be significant impacts on the habitat.
Disturbance	Noise	N	The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for there to be significant impacts on the habitat. The risk is also considered to be low as development would be complying with Environment Agency guidelines, meaning noise emanating from sites should be low.
	Lighting	N	The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for significant impacts on the habitat.
	Traffic	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.

	Impact of building	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SPA, because the site’s features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.
	Vibration	N	The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for there to be significant impacts on the habitat.
Air Pollution	Dust	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause likely significant effect on the SPA, due to the fact that facilities will be complying with Environment Agency regulations. It is unlikely that they will release sufficient levels of dust to cause harm to the bird species for which the SPA is designated.
	Traffic (inc. emissions)	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SPA, as it is not anticipated that there will be significant increases in traffic resulting from the development of sites in the area
	Aerial pollutants	N	The focus of development is outside the buffer zones, therefore it is considered that there is negligible potential for there to be significant impacts on the habitat. The risk is also considered to be low as development would be complying with Environment Agency guidelines, meaning the chance of any aerial pollutants escaping any facility is low.
Other Plans and projects	<p><b>West Berkshire Council</b>  <i>Core Strategy / Housing Site Allocations DPD</i> – deliver 10,500 new homes to 2026. Focus for housing is within the settlement hierarchy (Urban Areas – Newbury, Thatcham, Eastern Urban Area, Rural Service Centres – Burghfield Common, Mortimer, Theale, Pangbourne, Lambourn, Hungerford, Service Villages – Kintbury, Great Shefford, Compton, Chieveley, Hermitage, Cold Ash, Woolhampton, Bradfield Southend, Aldermaston). None of these areas are within the SPA buffer zones. These documents were subject to their own HRA.</p> <p><u>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the early draft published for consultation in December 2020 shows the majority of development in the district taking place in the Newbury and Thatcham Spatial Area, with a significant strategic site proposed in Thatcham. This area is outside of the 7km buffer from the SAC and therefore, it is considered unlikely to impact on the SAC. The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</u></p>		

	<p>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the potential impacts on protected sites are unknown. The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</p>	
<p>Are the potential impacts of the Plan likely to be significant?</p>		
<p>Alone?</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>A small area of West Berkshire, to the south east, is located within the 5km and 7km buffer zone to the SPA. There are no mineral deposits within West Berkshire close to the SPA, and limited potential for waste development and therefore, it is concluded that there is negligible potential for mineral or waste development sufficiently close to the SPA to result in significant impact on the habitats.</p> <p>However, no likely significant effects have been identified. The development will be focused outside the SPA buffer zones, reducing the potential for harm.</p>
<p>In combination with other plans/projects?</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Despite the fact that there are large amounts of development currently around the SPA, it is not expected that the proposed MWLP will contribute to these impacts as there are no major mineral deposits in close proximity to the SPA, and waste development is likely to be focused elsewhere in the district.</p>

<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Hartslock Wood</b>
Site Designation	SAC
Location of International Site	SU619789
Description of International Site	<p>The chalk grassland mostly consists of a mosaic of shorter-turf NVC type CG2 Festuca ovina-Avenula pratensis grassland and taller CG3 Bromus erectus grassland. The site supports one of only three UK populations of Monkey Orchid (<i>Orchis simian</i>), a nationally rare Red Data Bood Species.</p> <p>Open patches show a rich flora including local species such as Southern Wood-rush (<i>Luzula foresteri</i>), Wood Barley (<i>Hordelymus europaeus</i>) and Narrow-lipped Helleborine (<i>Epipactis leptochila</i>).</p>
Conservation Objectives of International Site	<p>The conservation objective is subject to natural change, to maintain the following habitats and geological features in favourable condition, with particular reference to any dependent component special interest features for which the land is designated – Broadleaved mixed and yew woodland and Calcareous grassland.</p> <p>The site is currently in a favourable condition.</p>
Aspects of the plan that could impact on International Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land bank / Need</li> <li>• Self-Sufficiency in Waste Management</li> <li>• Landscape and Protected Landscapes</li> <li>• Restoration and after-use</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Cumulative Impact</li> <li>• Minerals Safeguarding</li> <li>• Waste Safeguarding</li> <li>• Location of Development (construction aggregates, waste management facilities, landfill)</li> <li>• Borrow Pits</li> <li>• Specialist Waste Management</li> <li>• Chalk and Clay</li> <li>• Energy Minerals</li> <li>• Reworking of old landfill sites</li> <li>• Temporary infrastructure (waste, construction aggregate)</li> <li>• Permanent construction aggregate infrastructure</li> </ul>

Potential causes of significant effects		Likely Significant Effect	Details
Fragmentation		N	No land take from European and Ramsar sites will be required to deliver the objectives set out in the MWLP.
Predation	Vermin	N	The hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site's features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.
	Invasive species	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
Hydrology	Leachate	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is a long distance from any potential sites and therefore, any potential hazards from the development of sites will not reach the SAC.
	Water use	N	The hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site's features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.
	Water pollution	N	The hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site's features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.
	Groundwater	N	The hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site's features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.
Disturbance	Noise	N	The hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site's features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.
	Lighting	N	The hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site's features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.

	Traffic	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
	Impact of building	N	The hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site's features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.
	Vibration	N	The hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site's features of interest are considered unlikely to be vulnerable to this hazard.
Air Pollution	Dust	N	<p>Air quality is of importance in maintaining the health of trees. High levels of aerial pollution such as dust might lead to reduced vigour of trees and increased tree mortality if it is present in high enough concentrations.</p> <p>The SAC is not located within close proximity to safeguarded areas or allocated sites and such facilities are regulated by the Environment Agency, therefore, the risks of impacts from dust are considered low.</p>
	Traffic (inc. emissions)	N	<p>Air quality is of importance in maintaining the health of trees. High levels of aerial pollution such as dust might lead to reduced vigour of trees and increased tree mortality if it is present in high enough concentrations.</p> <p>The SAC is not located within close proximity to safeguarded areas or allocated sites and such facilities are regulated by the Environment Agency, therefore, the risks of impacts from increased traffic movements are considered low. The nearest road is the A329, and it is not considered that sites would significantly increase traffic along this road to lead to sufficient increase to cause a likely significant effect on the trees for which the SAC is designated.</p>
Other Plans and projects	<p><b>West Berkshire Council</b>  <i>Core Strategy / Housing Site Allocations DPD</i> – deliver 10,500 new homes to 2026. Focus for housing is within the settlement hierarchy (Urban Areas – Newbury, Thatcham, Eastern Urban Area, Rural Service Centres – Burghfield Common, Mortimer, Theale, Pangbourne, Lambourn, Hungerford, Service Villages – Kintbury, Great Shefford, Compton, Chieveley, Hermitage, Cold Ash, Woolhampton, Bradfield Southend, Aldermaston). The River</p>		

	<p>Lambourn SAC has areas in close proximity to Newbury and Thatcham. These documents were subject to their own HRA.</p> <p><u>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the early draft published for consultation in December 2020 shows the majority of development in the district taking place in the Newbury and Thatcham Spatial Area, with a significant strategic site proposed in Thatcham. This area is approximately 14km from the SAC and therefore, it is considered unlikely to impact on the SAC. The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</u></p> <p><del>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the potential impacts on protected sites are unknown. The new Local Plan will be subject to its own HRA.</del></p> <p><del>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the potential impacts on protected sites are unknown. The new Local Plan will be subject to its own HRA.</del></p> <p><b>Oxfordshire County Council</b> Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy</p> <p>Past and existing permitted mineral working areas in Oxfordshire are clustered to the west of Oxford with another cluster between Oxford and Didcot. There are a few in the north towards Banbury. There are also small workings in the south east and south west. Proposed extraction sites are roughly 5km from Hartslock Wood SAC.</p> <p>Proposed waste sites are clustered around towns of Banbury, Oxford, Bicester and around Abingdon/Didcot/Wantage. None are within 5km of Hartslock Wood SAC.</p>	
Are the potential impacts of the Plan likely to be significant?		
Alone?	N	<p>It is recognised that there is potential for harm on the SAC from aerial pollution from both waste and mineral sites, relating both to chemical aerial pollution and dust.</p> <p>However, impacts resulting from waste sites are considered unlikely due to the distance between sites and the SAC. Any potential emissions would be regulated.</p>
In combination with other plans/projects?	N	<p>There are no other areas of significant development within close proximity to the SAC.</p>



<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Hackpen Hill</b>	
Site Designation	SAC	
Location of International Site	SU352847	
Description of International Site	Hackpen Hill is an extensive area of unimproved chalk grassland in the Downs. The site has a variety of aspect and gradients, with the grassland dominated by Red Fescue ( <i>Festuca Rubra</i> ) and Upright brome ( <i>Bromus erectus</i> ). The herb flora includes a significant population of early gentian ( <i>Gentianella anglica</i> ), Frog Orchid ( <i>Coeloglossum viride</i> ), Horseshoe Vetch ( <i>Hippocrepis comosa</i> ), Common Rock-rose ( <i>Helianthemum nummularium</i> ) and Dwarf Thistle ( <i>Crisium acaule</i> ).	
Conservation Objectives of International Site	The conservation objectives are subject to natural change, to maintain the following habitats and geological features in favourable condition, with particular reference to any dependent component special interest features for which the land is designated – lowland calcareous grassland.  The site is in favourable condition.	
Aspects of the plan that could impact on International Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land bank / Need</li> <li>• Self-Sufficiency in Waste Management</li> <li>• Landscape and Protected Landscapes</li> <li>• Restoration and after-use</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Cumulative Impact</li> <li>• Minerals Safeguarding</li> <li>• Waste Safeguarding</li> <li>• Location of Development (construction aggregates, waste management facilities, landfill)</li> <li>• Borrow Pits</li> <li>• Specialist Waste Management</li> <li>• Chalk and Clay</li> <li>• Energy Minerals</li> <li>• Reworking of old landfill sites</li> <li>• Temporary infrastructure (waste, construction aggregate)</li> <li>• Permanent construction aggregate infrastructure</li> </ul>	
Potential causes of significant effects	Likely Significant Effect	Details

Fragmentation		N	No land take from European and Ramsar sites will be required to deliver the objectives set out in the MWLP.
Predation	Vermin	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
	Invasive species	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
Hydrology	Leachate	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
	Water use	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
	Water pollution	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
	Groundwater	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because grassland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output at anticipated levels from regulated developments.
Disturbance	Noise	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because grassland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output at anticipated levels from regulated developments.
	Lighting	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because grassland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output at anticipated levels from regulated developments.
	Traffic	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
	Impact of building	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.

	Vibration	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because grassland is not considered to be vulnerable to this hazard output at anticipated levels from regulated developments.
Air Pollution	Dust	N	While there is a theoretical threat from aerial pollution such as dust which could damage the vegetation on site. However the site is 2km from the West Berkshire border and a large distance from any potential sites. Therefore, it is considered that the risk to this site is low.
	Traffic (inc. emissions)	N	This hazard is considered to have negligible potential to cause a likely significant effect on the SAC, because the site is some distance from any potential sites, therefore, any potential hazards are unlikely to reach the SAC.
Other Plans and projects	<p><b>West Berkshire Council</b>  <i>Core Strategy / Housing Site Allocations DPD</i> – deliver 10,500 new homes to 2026. Focus for housing is within the settlement hierarchy (Urban Areas – Newbury, Thatcham, Eastern Urban Area, Rural Service Centres – Burghfield Common, Mortimer, Theale, Pangbourne, Lambourn, Hungerford, Service Villages – Kintbury, Great Shefford, Compton, Chieveley, Hermitage, Cold Ash, Woolhampton, Bradfield Southend, Aldermaston). The River Lambourn SAC has areas in close proximity to Newbury and Thatcham. These documents were subject to their own HRA.</p> <p><u>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the early draft published for consultation in December 2020 shows the majority of development in the district taking place in the Newbury and Thatcham Spatial Area, with a significant strategic site proposed in Thatcham. This area is approximately 24km from the SAC and therefore, it is considered unlikely to impact on the SAC. The Local Plan Review will be subject to its own HRA.</u></p> <p><del>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the potential impacts on protected sites are unknown. The new Local Plan will be subject to its own HRA.</del></p> <p><del>Work has started on the Local Plan Review for West Berkshire, although as this is still at an early stage the potential impacts on protected sites are unknown. The new Local Plan will be subject to its own HRA.</del></p> <p><b>Oxfordshire County Council</b>  Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy</p>		

	<p>Past and existing permitted mineral working areas in Oxfordshire are clustered to the west of Oxford and between Oxford and Didcot. There are a few in the north towards Banbury. There are also small workings in the south east and south west. Proposed extraction sites are roughly 5km from Hartslock Wood SAC.</p> <p>Proposed waste sites are clustered around towns of Banbury, Oxford, Bicester and around Abingdon/Didcot/Wantage. None are within 5km of Hackpen Hill SAC.</p> <p><b>Vale of White Horse</b> Proposed development sites just over 5km from the site</p>	
Are the potential impacts of the Plan likely to be significant?		
Alone?	No	This is an isolated site in terms of its location relative to potential waste and minerals development. It is considered that the interest features for which the site is designated are not vulnerable to any of the potential hazards which may result from minerals and waste development. Where there is potential for harm it is not considered that development will be close enough to the site for hazards to have a significant impact on the SAC.
In combination with other plans/projects?	No	There are no other significant development proposals or plans within close proximity of the SAC.

*Sites*

None of the sites allocated for development in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan are close to or adjacent to a SAC, or fall within the 7km or 5km SPA buffer, although the allocated mineral site at Chieveley Services is just within the Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area for the River Lambourn SAC. Given the nature of mineral extraction and the distance from the SAC it is not anticipated that the development of the site would impact on the SAC. No other allocated sites are within close proximity to any SAC or the SAP and therefore, it is unlikely there would be any ~~Therefore, the development of the allocated sites would not result in a significant impact, on any SAC or the SPA.~~

### **Assessment Outcomes**

The policy approach and allocated sites in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan mean that overall there is unlikely to be a significant impact on any European and Ramsar sites as a result of the plan. The geology of West Berkshire and the environmental designation of the AONB, mean that minerals development is focused along the Kennet Valley between Thatcham and Theale. The plan does not propose to allocate sites for waste development, rather to safeguard existing waste facilities. A small number of these safeguarded waste sites fall along the River Lambourn SAC or within the Nutrient Neutrality Catchment Area. However, no new/additional development is expected on these sites which would impact on the SAC. ~~, none of which are close to any European and Ramsar sites.~~

### **In combination effects**

The screening has identified other relevant plans and projects, and discussed the potential for them to have in combination effects on a European site. The HRA concluded that the integrity of the European sites within the district and those within 5km of the district boundary would not be impacted.

### **Summary**

The findings of the screening demonstrate that the policies and sites for allocation in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan will not have any adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.

The policy approach sets out where development will be considered appropriate and what factors will need to be considered. All applications coming forward on allocated sites must comply with relevant policies; these allocations are judged not to have adverse impacts on European Sites, either alone or in combination.

The policies set out in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan will direct and manage new development and are not considered to have an effect on any European or Ramsar sites.