

Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Pre-Submission Version of the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan

August 2015



Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan

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Photo: Pitstone Windmill

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Acronyms

AA	Appropriate assessment
AVDC	Aylesbury Vale District Council
CSDPD	Core Strategy Development Plan Document
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs
ha	Hectares
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LDF	Local Development Framework
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LSE	Likely Significant Effect
NE	Natural England
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PNP	Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Executive Summary

- E1** This HRA report has carefully considered the effects that might be associated with development as part of the Pre-Submission Version of the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan.
- E2** One site of European importance lies within the PNP Neighbourhood Area. No other European sites are present within 20 kilometres of the Neighbourhood Area.
- E3** The following site was assessed as part of this HRA report:
- Chiltern Beechwoods SAC
- E4** The following vulnerabilities were considered during the assessment: low market value of timber, grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) presence, lack of funding, habitat management for Juniper (*Juniperus* sp.).
- E5** Eight policies are proposed in the PNP, three of which are site specific. All development is to be contained within a distinct settlement boundary, which is located 2.5 kilometres from the boundary of Chiltern Beechwoods SAC, as proposed in Policy 1.
- E6** None of the policies proposed in the PNP are anticipated to have a significant effect on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC.
- E7** The Pre-Submission version of the PNP is not likely to lead to adverse effects on any European sites. An appropriate assessment is not required for this plan.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Lepus Consulting has prepared this Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) report of the Pre-Submission Version of the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan (PNP) on behalf of Pitstone Parish Council. This is a requirement of Regulation 102 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010¹ (the Habitats Regulations).

1.1.2 The following European site was identified using a 20km area of search around the PNP Neighbourhood Area as well as including sites which are potentially connected (e.g. hydrologically) beyond this distance:

- Chiltern Beechwoods SAC

1.1.3 Potential significant effects were identified and were explored for the site. Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is spread over a number of counties and in separate parcels. In order to provide a realistic assessment of the effects of the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan (PNP) on the SAC, focus lies on the area of Chiltern Beechwoods SAC that overlaps and is adjacent to the PNP Neighbourhood Area.

1.2 Approach to report preparation

1.2.1 The outputs of this report include information in relation to:

- The HRA process;
- Methodology for HRA;
- Evidence gathering in relation to European sites;
- Understanding vulnerabilities of sites;
- Assessing potential effects of the plan; and
- Conclusions and recommendations.

1.2.2 This report is a screening assessment under the Habitats Regulations to assess any likely significant effects of development proposals in the PNP.

1.3 The HRA process

1.3.1 The application of HRA to land-use plans is a requirement of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the UK's transposition of European Directive 92/43/EEC *on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora* (the Habitats Directive).

1.3.2 The HRA process assesses the potential effects of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of any European sites designated for their importance to nature conservation. These sites form a system of internationally important sites throughout Europe and are known collectively as the 'Natura 2000 network'.

¹ UK Government, (2010), The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

- 1.3.3 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). Additionally, Government policy 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.
- 1.3.4 Under Regulation 102 of the Habitats Regulations, the assessment must determine whether or not a plan will adversely affect the integrity of the European sites concerned. The process is characterised by the precautionary principle. The European Commission describes the principle as follows:
- 1.3.5 “If a preliminary scientific evaluation shows that there are reasonable grounds for concern that a particular activity might lead to damaging effects on the environment, or on human, animal or plant health, which would be inconsistent with protection normally afforded to these within the European Community, the **Precautionary Principle** is triggered.”
- 1.3.6 Decision-makers then have to determine what action/s to take. They should take account of the potential consequences of no action, the uncertainties inherent in scientific evaluation, and should consult interested parties on the possible ways of managing the risk. Measures should be proportionate to the level of risk, and to the desired level of protection. They should be provisional in nature pending the availability of more reliable scientific data.
- 1.3.7 Action is then undertaken to obtain further information, enabling a more objective assessment of the risk. The measures taken to manage the risk should be maintained so long as scientific information remains inconclusive and the risk is unacceptable.
- 1.3.8 The hierarchy of intervention is important: where significant effects are likely or uncertain, plan makers must firstly seek to avoid the effect through for example, a change of policy. If this is not possible, mitigation measures should be explored to remove or reduce the significant effect. If neither avoidance, nor subsequently, mitigation is possible, alternatives to the plan should be considered. Such alternatives should explore ways of achieving the plan’s objectives that do not adversely affect European sites.
- 1.3.9 If no suitable alternatives exist, plan-makers must demonstrate under the conditions of Regulation 103 of the Habitats Regulations, that there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) to continue with the proposal.

1.4 About the Pre-Submission Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.4.1 The aim of the PNP is to guide development throughout the parish until 2033. The PNP sets out proposals for how and where future development will be located in the PNP Neighbourhood Area as well as policies determining standards for development.

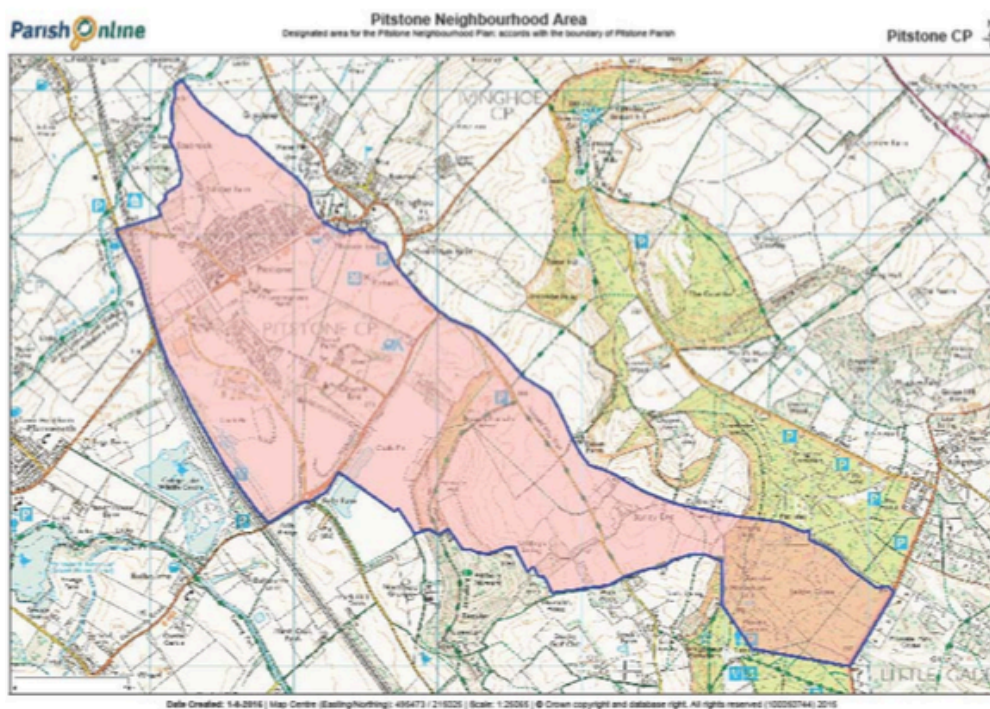


Figure 1.1: PNP Neighbourhood Area (Pitstone Parish Council, 2015)

- 1.4.2 An implementation chapter is included in the PNP to provide a clear indication of how the plan will be implemented and monitored. This has specific sections on development and traffic management.

1.5 HRA process to date

- 1.5.1 The HRA process is iterative and assesses different stages of the plan making process. The HRA process of this report draws on the methodology prepared by David Tyldesley Associates for Scottish Natural Heritage (2012), as explained in **section 2.1**. This methodology sets out 13 stages of the HRA process, shown in **Table 2.1**.
- 1.5.2 This HRA report is an addition to, and draws on, the Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) Habitats Regulations Assessment/Appropriate assessment Stage 1 Screening undertaken to inform the Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

2 Methodology

2.1 Guidance and best practice

- 2.1.1 Guidance on HRA has been published in draft form by the Government (DCLG, 2006) and by Natural England in conjunction with David Tyldesley Associates (Local Development Plan Documents under the Provisions of the Habitats Regulations, 2009); both draw, in part, on European Union guidance (European Commission, 2001) regarding the methodology for undertaking appropriate assessment (AA) of plans.
- 2.1.2 All guidance recognises that there is no statutory method for undertaking HRA and that the adopted method must be appropriate to its purpose under the Habitats Directive and Regulations; this concept is one of the reasons why HRA is often referred to as appropriate assessment.
- 2.1.3 Due to a moratorium on the publication of new guidance as issued by the Government, the draft guidance may not be published. As an alternative, Natural England has suggested that the guidance on HRA published by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH, 2012) can be used to assess land use plans.
- 2.1.4 For the purposes of this report Habitats Regulations Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment are synonymous.
- 2.1.5 Paragraph 1.3 of the SNH guidance states that “the procedure referred to in this guidance is that of ‘Habitats Regulations Appraisal’ (HRA) which encompasses the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive...The procedure is sometimes referred to as an ‘appropriate assessment’, but this can be confusing because an appropriate assessment is only one particular stage in the process of Habitats Regulations Appraisal. Not all plans undergoing Habitats Regulations Appraisal will reach the stage of appropriate assessment, because some plans would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site”.
- 2.1.6 The term ‘Habitats Regulations Appraisal’ is used here to encompass the decision on whether the plan should be subject to appraisal, the ‘screening’ process for determining whether an ‘appropriate assessment’ is required, as well as any ‘appropriate assessment’ that may be required. It is important to remember that an appropriate assessment is only required where the plan-making body determines that the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site in Great Britain, or a European Offshore Marine Site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and the plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site.

2.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment methodology

- 2.2.1 The HRA process follows the methodology prepared by David Tyldesley Associates for Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH, 2012). A step-by-step methodology is outlined in the guidance (see **Appendix B**) and has been summarised in **Table 2.1**.
- 2.2.2 A synoptic version of the flow chart is presented in **Table 2.1**. Stages 1 to 7 are relevant to this report.

2.3 Dealing with uncertainty

- 2.3.1 The assessment of effects can be affected by uncertainty in a number of ways; some of these are addressed below.
- 2.3.2 **Regulatory Uncertainty:** Some plans will include references to proposals that are planned and implemented through other planning and regulatory regimes, for example, trunk road or motorway improvements. These will be included because they have important implications for spatial planning, but they are not proposals of the LPA, nor are they proposals brought forward by the plan itself. Their potential effects will be assessed through other procedures. The LPA may not be able to assess the effects of these proposals. Indeed, it may be inappropriate for them to do so, and would also result in unnecessary duplication.
- 2.3.3 There is a need to focus the Habitats Regulations Assessment on the proposals directly promoted by the plan, and not all and every proposal for development and change, especially where these are planned and regulated through other statutory procedures, which will be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- 2.3.4 **Planning Hierarchy Uncertainty:** The higher the level of a plan in the hierarchy the more general and strategic its provisions will be and therefore the more uncertain its effects will be. The protective regime of the Directive is intended to operate at differing levels. In some circumstances assessment 'down the line' will be more effective in assessing the potential effects of a proposal on a particular site and protecting its integrity. However, three tests should be applied.
- 2.3.5 It will be appropriate to consider relying on the Habitats Regulations Assessments of lower tier plans, in order for an LPA to ascertain a higher tier plan would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site, only where:
- A] The higher tier plan assessment cannot reasonably assess the effects on a European site in a meaningful way; whereas

B] The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the lower tier plan, which will identify more precisely the nature, scale or location of development, and thus its potential effects, will be able to change the proposal if an adverse effect on site integrity cannot be ruled out, because the lower tier plan is free to change the nature and/or scale and/or location of the proposal in order to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (e.g. it is not constrained by location specific policies in a higher tier plan); and

C] The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the plan or project at the lower tier is required as a matter of law or Government policy.

2.3.6 It may be helpful for the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the higher tier plan to indicate what further assessment may be necessary in the lower tier plan.

2.3.7 **Implementation Uncertainty:** In order to clarify the approach where there is uncertainty because effects depend on how the plan is implemented, and to ensure compliance with the Regulations, it may be appropriate to impose a caveat in relevant policies, or introduce a free-standing policy, which says that any development project that could have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site will not be in accordance with the plan.

2.3.8 This would help to enable the assessors to reasonably conclude, on the basis of objective information, that even where there are different ways of implementing a plan, and even applying the precautionary principle, no element of the plan can argue that it draws support from the plan, if it could adversely affect the integrity of a European site.

2.4 Likely significant effect

2.4.1 The plan and its component policies are assessed to determine and identify any potential for **'likely significant effect'** (LSE) upon European sites. The guidance (SNH, 2012) provides the following interpretation.

2.4.2 "A likely effect is one that cannot be ruled out on the basis of objective information. The test is a 'likelihood' of effects rather than a 'certainty' of effects. Although some dictionary definitions define 'likely' as 'probable' or 'well might happen', in the Waddenzee case the European Court of Justice ruled that a project should be subject to appropriate assessment "if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on the site, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects". Therefore, 'likely', in this context, should not simply be interpreted as 'probable' or 'more likely than not', but rather whether a significant effect can objectively be ruled out".

Table 2.1: Synoptic version of the flow chart in **Appendix B** identifying screening and appropriate assessment stages within the HRA process

Group		HRA Stage
Determination of Need and Compilation of Evidence Base	Stage 1	Determination of need
	Stage 2	Identification of European sites that should be considered in the appraisal
	Stage 3	Gathering information on European sites
	Stage 4	Discretionary discussions on the method and scope of the appraisal
Screen all aspects of plan (Screening)	Stage 5	Screening the plan
	Stage 6	Applying mitigation measures at screening stage to avoid likely significant effects
	Stage 7	Rescreen the plan and decide on the need for appropriate assessment
Appropriate assessment	Stage 8	The appropriate assessment – site integrity, conservation objectives and the precautionary principle
	Stage 9	Amending the plan until there would be no adverse effects on site integrity
Consultation of Draft	Stage 10	Preparing a draft of HRA
	Stage 11	Consultation
	Stage 12	Proposed modifications
	Stage 13	Modifying and completing HRA

2.5 Previous HRA work

- 2.5.1 Previous HRA work was undertaken for the AVDC Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CSDPD) (2009)².
- 2.5.2 Two sites were screened in for the AVDC CSDPD; Chiltern Beechwoods SAC and Aston Rowant SAC. The appropriate assessment (AA) work examined potential likely significant effects of the CSDPD on the European sites.
- 2.5.3 The appropriate assessment considered Core Strategy policies and allocations against SACs within the Local Planning Area and those outside of the district boundary but were considered to be close to development hence potentially impacted.
- 2.5.4 The results of the AA concluded that the AVDC CSDPD would not adversely affect the integrity of any European sites.
- 2.5.5 This HRA report has considered baseline evidence from the report undertaken to inform the AVDC CSDPD.

² Aylesbury Vale District Council Habitats Regulations Assessment/Appropriate assessment: Stage 1 Screening

- 2.5.6 Aston Rowant SAC is located further than than 20 km from the PNP boundary and is not anticipated to be otherwise linked to the PNP Neighbourhood Area, therefore it has not been assessed as part of this report.

3 European Sites

3.1 About European sites

- 3.1.1 Each site of European importance has its own intrinsic qualities, besides the habitats or species for which it has been designated, that enables the site to support the ecosystems that it does. An important aspect of this is that the ecological integrity of each site can be vulnerable to change from natural and human induced activities in the surrounding environment. For example, sites can be affected by land use plans in a number of different ways, including the direct land take of new development, the type of use the land will be put to (for example, an extractive or noise emitting use), the pollution a development generates and the resources used (during construction and operation for instance).
- 3.1.2 An intrinsic quality of any European site is its functionality at the landscape ecology scale. This refers to how the site interacts with the zone of influence of its immediate surroundings, as well as the wider area. This is particularly the case where there is potential for developments resulting from the plan to generate water or air-borne pollutants, use water resources or otherwise affect water levels. Adverse effects may also occur via impacts to mobile species occurring outside of a designated site but which are qualifying features of the site. For example, there may be effects on protected birds that use land outside the designated site for foraging, feeding, roosting or loafing.
- 3.1.3 During the screening process, as a starting point to explore and to identify which European sites might be affected by the PNP, a 20km area of search was applied. The guidance (SNH, 2012) specifies no specific size of search area. The inclusion of a specific search area was to facilitate the use of the following list of criteria for identification of European sites. Other sites beyond this zone were also reviewed on the basis that they are connected physiographically.

3.2 Ecological information

- 3.2.1 **Table 3.1** presents information about the criteria used for the identification of European sites in the HRA process. **Appendix A** provides conservation objectives for Chiltern Beechwoods SAC. This information is drawn from the Joint Nature Conservancy Council (JNCC) and Natural England (NE).

Table 3.1: Criteria for identification of European sites (SNH, 2012)

Selection of European sites	
Criteria	European sites to check
All plans	Sites within the plan area, including those for the criteria listed below
For plans that could affect the aquatic environment	Sites upstream or downstream of the plan area in the case of a river or estuary
	Peatland and other wetland sites with relevant hydrological links to land within the plan area, irrespective of distance from the plan area
For plans that could affect mobile species	Sites which have significant ecological links with land in the plan area, for example, land in the plan area may be used by migratory birds, which also use a SPA, outside the plan area, at different times of year
For plans that could increase recreational pressure on European sites potentially vulnerable to such pressure	European sites in the plan area
	European sites within a reasonable travel distance of the plan area boundaries that may be affected by local recreational or other visitor pressure within the plan area (the appropriate distance in each case will need to be considered on its merits, in light of any available evidence)
	European sites within a longer travel distance of the plan area, which are major (regional or national) visitor attractions such as European sites which are National Nature Reserves where public visiting is promoted, sites in National or Regional Parks, coastal sites and sites in other major tourist or visitor destinations (the appropriate distance in each case will need to be considered on its merits, in light of any available evidence)
For plans that would increase the amount of development	Sites that are used for, or could be affected by, water abstraction in or close to the plan area
	Sites used for, or which could be affected by, discharge or effluent from waste water treatment works or other waste management streams serving land in the plan area, irrespective of distance from the plan area
	Sites could be affected by transport or other infrastructure (e.g. by noise or visual disturbance)
	Sites that could be affected by increased deposition of air pollutants arising from the proposals, including emissions from significant increases in traffic
For plans that could affect the coast	Sites in the same coastal 'cell', or part of the same coastal ecosystem, or where there are interrelationships with or between different physical coastal processes

4 Potential Effects

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Baseline research identified one potential European sites for assessment:

- Chiltern Beechwoods SAC

4.1.2 The location of Chiltern Beechwoods in relation to PNP Neighbourhood Area is illustrated in **Figure 4.1**.

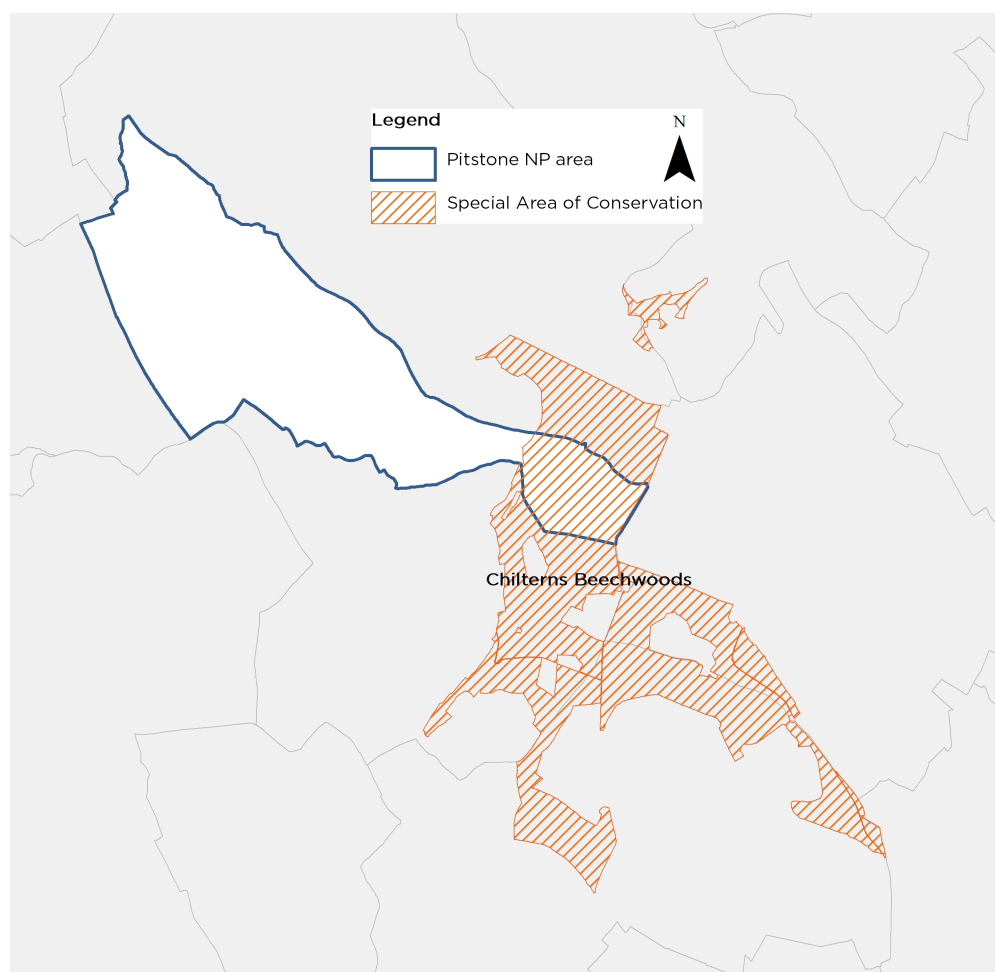


Figure 4.1: Map illustrating location of Chiltern Beechwoods SAC

4.1.3 The area of Chiltern Beechwoods SAC that coincides with the PNP Neighbourhood Area is also designated as Ashridge Common and Woods SSSI. The location of the SSSI is shown in **Figure 4.2**. The area of the SSSI that lies in the PNP Neighbourhood Area is identified as currently being in favourable condition.

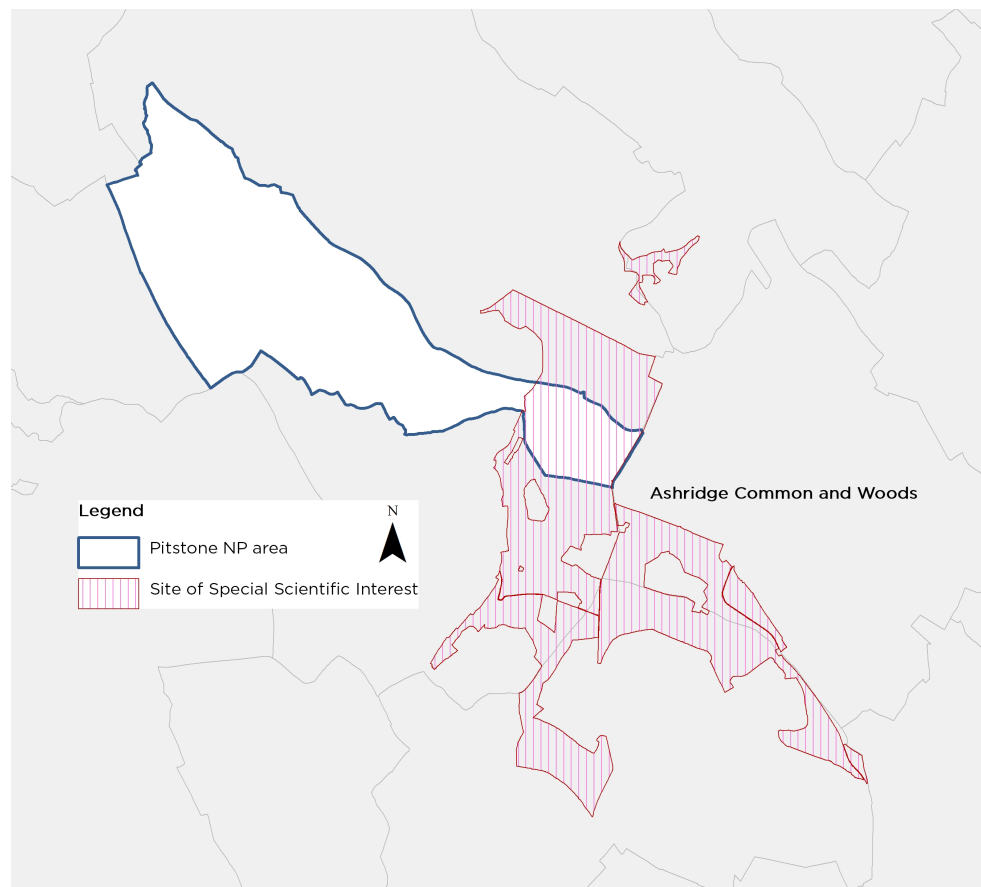


Figure 4.2: Map illustrating location of Ashridge Common and Woods SSSI

4.2

Site vulnerabilities

4.2.1

Site vulnerabilities have been derived from various datasets held by the JNCC. SAC and SPA information is held on Natura 2000 Data Forms. Known vulnerabilities are summarised in **Table 4.1** and discussed in the following sections.

Table 4.1: Key vulnerabilities of Chiltern Beechwoods SAC

Site	Chiltern Beechwoods SAC May 2003
Low market value for timber	Due to the current low market value of timber, Beech woodlands in the Chilterns are at risk of being removed. Chiltern Beechwoods SAC is designated for the presence of Beech woodland and removal of such will affect the integrity of the site.
Grey squirrel presence	Grey Squirrel damages young trees in Chiltern Beechwoods. This damage can cause low levels growth and regeneration of new trees. Low regeneration of new trees will affect the integrity of the site
Lack of funding	Financial support is important to help retain a larger proportion of mature trees in order to increase the level of deadwood habitat. A lack of funding will reduce the amount of dead-wood and therefore habitat for Stag Beetle, a qualifying feature of the SAC

Habitat management for Juniper	Juniper has a low regeneration rate and does not compete well with other scrub species. Habitat management is important in order to ensure that Juniper, a qualifying feature, can flourish at the SAC
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4.2.2 No vulnerabilities are published for Ashridge Common and Woods SSSI.

4.3 Policies in the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan

4.3.1 The PNP sets out eight policies as listed in **Table 4.2**, which, if adopted, will be used to inform future planning decisions in the parish.

Table 4.2: Policies contained in the PNP

Policy	Name
1	Pitstone Settlement Boundary
2	Land at Marsworth Road/Vicarage Road
3	Land north of Marsworth Road
4	Land west of Westfield Road
5	Areas of Special Landscape Value
6	Design Principles
7	Local Green Spaces
8	Community Facilities

Policy 1

4.3.2 This policy states that all development should be lie within a distinct settlement boundary. This boundary lies approximately 2.5 kilometres from the edge of the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC.

4.3.3 The policy is not anticipated to have a significant effect on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC.

Policies 2 to 4

4.3.4 Policies 2 to 4 are related to site specific development. Policy 2 supports mixed use development at Marsworth Road/Vicarage Road including residential use, restaurant or café use and nursery use development. Policy 3 safeguards land for educational use north of Marsworth Road. Land is restricted for business use as part of Policy 4. This land is located west of Westfield Road.

4.3.5 All land encompassed by policies 2 to 4 lies within the distinct settlement boundary as set out in Policy 1. None of the site specific polices are anticipated to have a significant effect on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC.

Policy 5

4.3.6 The area south of Marsworth Road, west and east of Vicarage Road and north of the footpath connecting Chequers Land with Brook End are defined as an Area of Special Landscape Value (ASLV). For this reason, Policy 5 proposes that any development in the ASLV for purposes other than agriculture will be resisted. An area known as Quarry 1 is defined as an ASLV and any proposals for the development of the land will be resisted.

4.3.7 This policy is not anticipated to have a significant effect on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC.

Policy 6

4.3.8 This policy sets out design principles for the PNP Neighbourhood Area. None of the principles set out in the policy are thought to have a significant effect on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC.

Policy 7

4.3.9 Policy 7 designates Local Green Space in nine locations. The designation of greenspace is not anticipated to have a significant effect on the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC.

Policy 8

4.3.10 Policy 8 proposes that designated Assets of Community Value are protected from unnecessary loss and that the improvement and extension of the assets are supported. Policy 8 is not anticipated to have a significant effect on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC.

4.4 Conservation objectives

4.4.1 As vulnerabilities of the SAC are not likely to be exacerbated by an increase in population (e.g. air quality, visitor disturbance, recreation), there are no anticipated likely significant effects of the PNP policies or areas for development on Chiltern Beechwood SAC.

4.4.2 This is because the assessments of vulnerabilities listed in **Table 4.1** do not identify any risk of the PNP affecting:

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
- The populations of the qualifying features; and
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Assessment findings

- 5.1.1 This HRA report has carefully considered the effects that might be associated with development as part of the Pre-Submission Version of the PNP.
- 5.1.2 There is one European site within the PNP Neighbourhood Area, Chiltern Beechwoods SAC. The site is not expected to experience adverse effects from proposals in the PNP.
- 5.1.3 The Pre-Submission version of the PNP is not likely to lead to adverse effects on any European sites alone or in-combination. There is no requirement to prepare an appropriate assessment.

5.2 Limitations

- 5.2.1 This report has been prepared using the best available data. References are cited in the text where appropriate.
- 5.2.2 Other limitations concern habitat and species information for the European sites, which was collected more than ten years ago, and in some cases longer than that. **Table 4.1** states the date that the JNCC Standard Data Form was prepared. This information was taken from the most up-to-date data forms available. Lepus Consulting has collected no primary data in the preparation of this report.

5.3 Next steps

- 5.3.1 As appropriate assessment is not required, stages 8 and 9 in **Table 2.1** may be excluded from this HRA process. If necessary, this report will be reviewed following submission to take into account any changes to the Pre-Submission version of the PNP.

References

David Tyldesley and Associates (2012), Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans: Guidance for Plan-making Bodies in Scotland, Version 2.0

European Commission (2001), Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC

European Commission (1992), Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Fauna and Flora

European Commission (2000) Directive 2000/60/EC on Establishing a Framework for Community Action in the Field of Water Policy

European Commission (2006) Directive 2006/7/EC on the Management of Bathing Water Quality (Repealing Directive 76/160/EEC)

European Commission (2009), Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds

JNCC, (2003), Natura 2000 Standard Data Form: Chiltern Beechwoods, [online] Available at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/n2kforms/UK0012724.pdf>

Natural England, (2014), Ashridge Common and Woods, [online] Available at: http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/citation/citation_photo/1000452.pdf

APPENDIX A

European sites: Conservation Objectives (where available from Natural England).

* Denotes a priority natural habitat or species

Chiltern Beechwoods SAC

Conservation objectives:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species;
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats;
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species;
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely;
- The populations of qualifying species; and
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

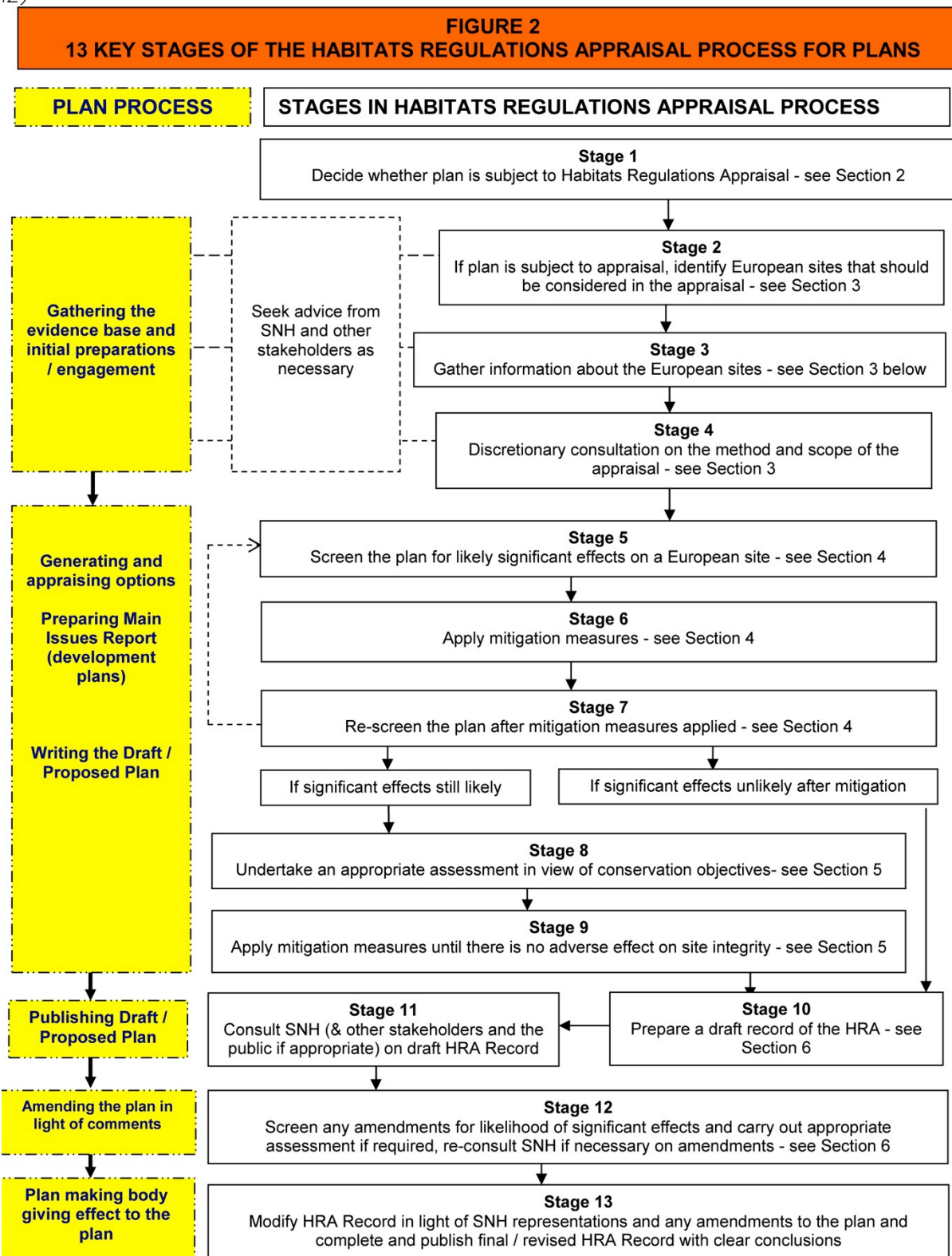
Qualifying Features:

- H6210. Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco- Brometalia*); Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone
- H9130. *Asperulo-Fagetum* beech forests; Beech forests on neutral to rich soils
- S1083. *Lucanus cervus*; Stag beetle

APPENDIX B

Flow chart of HRA process.

The 13 Key Stages of the Habitats Regulations Appraisal Process (reproduced from SNH, 2012)



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