

**From:** SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <[consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk)>

**Sent:** 20 May 2020 11:09

**To:** Webster, Gemma <[Gemma.Webster3@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Gemma.Webster3@herefordshire.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** HRA & Appropriate Assessment - Residential development of 5 dwellings - Land at Brookside, Whitchurch, Ross-On-Wye HR9 6DJ (Hereford) 200845

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Ms Webster

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

### **Internationally and nationally designated sites**

The application site is within the catchment of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is a European designated site (also commonly referred to as Natura 2000 sites), and therefore has the potential to affect its interest features. The SAC is notified at a national level as the River Wye Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is also within 3km of Wigpool Ironstone Mine SSSI which is part of the Forest of Dean & Wye Valley Bats SAC. European sites are afforded protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended (the 'Habitats Regulations').

In considering the European site interest, Natural England advises that you, as a competent authority under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, should have regard for any potential impacts that a plan or project may have<sup>[1]</sup>. The [Conservation objectives](#) for each European site explain how the site should be restored and/or maintained and may be helpful in assessing what, if any, potential impacts a plan or project may have.

### **European site - River Wye SAC & Forest of Dean & Wye Valley Bats SAC**

Natural England notes that your authority, as competent authority, has undertaken an appropriate assessment of the proposal, in accordance with Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended). Natural England is a statutory consultee on the appropriate assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process, and a competent authority should have regard to Natural England's advice.

---

<sup>[1]</sup> Requirements are set out within Regulations 63 and 64 of the Habitats Regulations, where a series of steps and tests are followed for plans or projects that could potentially affect a European site. The steps and tests set out within Regulations 63 and 64 are commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' process. The Government has produced core guidance for competent authorities and developers to assist with the Habitats Regulations Assessment process. This can be found on the Defra website. <http://www.defra.gov.uk/habitats-review/implementation/process-guidance/guidance/sites/>

Your appropriate assessment concludes that the proposal **will not result in adverse effects on the integrity** of the sites in question. Natural England **agrees** with the assessment conclusions.

The relevant AONB partnership should be consulted for any potential impacts on protected landscapes. Further general advice on the protected species and other natural environment issues is provided at Annex A.

Should the proposal change, please consult us again.

Please send further correspondence, marked for my attention, to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

**Rob Sargent**

**Team Leader – West Mids**  
Natural England

[www.gov.uk/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/natural-england)

<<mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>