Shropshire Hills National Landscape

Baseline Report for Habitats Regulations Assessment
[under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc (Amendment) (England & Wales) Regulations 2006] of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030

June 2025

1. Introduction

The EU Natura 2000 network provides ecological infrastructure for the protection of sites which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Community. These sites which are also referred to as European sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Offshore Marine Site (OMS). Ramsar sites (Internationally Important Wetlands) are also treated as it they were European sites.

The Habitat Regulations require plans or projects to be assessed before they can be adopted, to ensure that they have no significant environmental effect on sites of European Interest (N2K). Natural England considers that whilst it is not clear that National Landscape (designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, AONBs) Management Plans set the framework for development, they are plans which may well have significant effects (both positive and negative) on sites covered by the Habitats Regulations - Natura 2000 sites. Thus, they need to be assessed before the plans can be adopted to ensure that they have no significant environmental effect (adverse effect) on such sites.

Whilst Habitats Regulations Assessment is considered to be required for National Landscape Management Plans, National Landscape teams and Natural England should be able to ensure that the exercise is "fit for purpose". It is expected that there will be few policies, or proposals, which would pose a significant threat to Sites of European Importance (SAC and SPAs - Natura 2000 sites) which are covered by the Habitats Regulations.

This document is guided by and refers to Natural England (2007) *The Assessment of AONB Management Plans under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations. Natural England's guidance on the requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment*.

Sites to be considered

This baselining exercise has identified the following sites to be considered.

The only European site protected under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) is:
The Stiperstones and the Hollies SAC (Ref UK 0012810, 601.8ha).

Just outside the boundary of the National Landscape, and clearly affected by activities within it, is:
River Clun SAC (Ref (UK0030250, 15.0ha).

Slightly further from the National Landscape, and possibly affected in some way by activities within the National Landscape, is:
Downton Gorge SAC (Ref UK 0012735, 68.9ha).

The following Ramsar sites have been identified near the Shropshire Hills National Landscape:
Midland Meres & Mosses, Phase 1 Ramsar – The nearest part of this site is under 1km from the National Landscape (**Marton Pool, Chirbury SSSI**); **Bomere, Shomere & Betton Pools SSSI** and **Berrington Pool SSSI** are both located c.8km from the National Landscape

Midland Meres & Mosses, Phase 2 Ramsar – **Hencott Pool SSSI** is c.11km from the National Landscape; **Aqualate Mere SSSI** is c.15km from the National Landscape

Evidence gathering for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan draft (currently in the public consultation phases May – July 2025), State of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape report and Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, each contain a large volume of environmental data and are part of the evidence gathering process.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Draft Guidance on HRA (August 2006) states (on page 8) that it would be best practice to collect information for HRA, especially in relation to:

1. European sites within and outside the plan area potentially affected;
2. The characteristics of these European sites;
3. Their conservation objectives; and
4. Other relevant plans or projects.

In accordance with this guidance the following information is presented in this report for scrutiny by Natural England as the statutory consultee. It is also presented to the following:
Shropshire Council
Herefordshire Council
Natural Resources Wales

Confirmation from Natural England is sought on the sites identified, and information requested on any relevant updates to their conservation objectives.

HRA reports: Methodology

It is considered unlikely that a full "Appropriate Assessment" will be required for National Landscape Management Plans. The "competent authority" as prescribed by the Habitats Regulations is the National Landscape Team on behalf of, or as sanctioned by, the local planning authorities.

This baseline report presents data and evidence related to European sites. Subsequent HRA reports if necessary will test plan options and assess the same draft plan as the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process. SA and HRA are two separate but complementary processes.

These reports would assess options in terms of the HRA Tasks suggested in DCLG Guidance:

Task 1: Likely significant effects
Basically, this is a screening process and this will determine whether the subsequent steps of AA (Tasks 2 & 3) are required. This test will be chiefly carried out by the National Landscape Team in consultation with Natural England as necessary. All of the National Landscape Management Plan policies and any detailed plan proposals or actions will be screened.

Task 2: Appropriate assessment and ascertaining the effect on site integrity
To be completed for plan policies if there are found to be likely significant effects.

Task 3: Mitigation measures and alternative solutions
To be completed where a plan policy has been found to have likely significant effects on the integrity of a European site.

It is expected that the bulk of the assessment, of the policies and proposals in the National Landscape Management Plan, will be a matter of screening for possible negative significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. It is not expected that full appropriate assessment would be required in most instances as it is hoped that any potential adverse effects can be "screened out".

"In combination" assessment

Paragraph 5.9 of DCLG Draft Guidance on HRA (August 2006) Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment – Guidance For Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents August 2006 states: "The assessment of significant effects of a given option needs to take account of the option's impact in combination with other plans and projects. Only other key plans and projects which the RPB or LPA consider most relevant should be collected for the "in combination" test. An exhaustive list could render the assessment exercise unworkable. Consult Natural England on the list identified."

Bearing this in mind the basic list of relevant plans is proposed as follows:

- Core Strategy and Development Plan Documents for Shropshire (2006-2026)
- Draft Local Plan for Shropshire
- Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (2011 – 2031)
- Herefordshire Core Strategy (2011 – 2031)

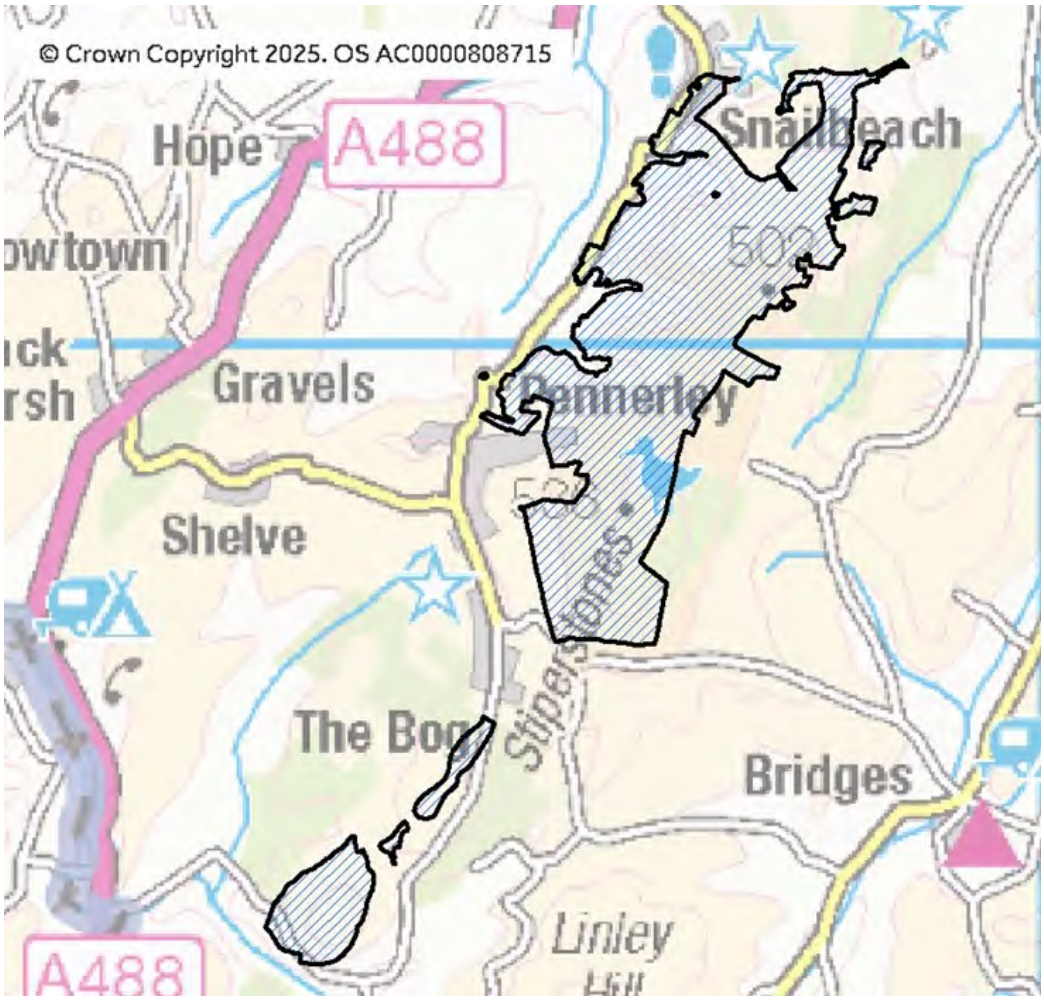
In combination effects and cumulative effects are required to be tested but may involve some complexity of approach. It is Natural England's view that if the Management plan does not have a significant environmental effect then it is not necessary to carry out an in combination assessment.

The Stiperstones and The Hollies

Site details

Location of The Stiperstones and The Hollies SAC/SCI/cSAC

Country	England
Unitary Authority	Shropshire
Centroid	SJ375006
Latitude	52 35 57 N
Longitude	02 55 24 W
SAC EU code	UK0012810
Status	Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
Area (ha)	602.18



General site character

Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (1%)
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (75%)
Dry grassland. Steppes (10%)
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (10%)
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice (4%)

Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site

4030 European dry heaths
This site in central Britain is an example of European dry heaths that contains features transitional between lowland heathland and upland heather moorland. The most extensive vegetation type

present is H12 Calluna vulgaris – Vaccinium myrtillus dry heath, which is characteristic of the uplands. South-facing slopes support stands of H8 Calluna vulgaris – Ulex gallii heath, a predominantly lowland vegetation community of south-west Britain. The heathland of the Stiperstones is in excellent condition because it is managed by a programme of rotational, controlled winter burning and cutting.

Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site
91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles

Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site
Not applicable.

Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection
Not applicable.

Other site characteristics:

Soil & geology:
Acidic, Nutrient-poor, Quartzite, Sedimentary

Geomorphology & landscape:
Crags/ledges, Upland

Quality and importance
European dry heaths
• for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles
• for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Vulnerability
The heathland is dependent on the continuation of traditional heather moorland management with rotational burning or cutting supplemented by light grazing. In the recent past, lack of management on parts of the site has resulted in scrub encroachment, and on other parts high stocking levels had led to overgrazing and a deterioration of the heathland interest. These issues are being addressed on an ongoing basis by an effective management programme on that part of the site which is managed as a National Nature Reserve (by Natural England). On land in private ownership, effective management is shaped by management agreements and in the past ESA payments, which have now been replaced by new Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes. The sessile oak woods have been traditionally managed either as high forest or as oak coppice. Neglect and grazing of coppiced woods in the past has led to a deterioration in woodland interest. Traditional management of these woods has been reinstated by effective management of the National Nature Reserve and by agreement of a site management statement with woodlands in private ownership.

The site is also vulnerable to other threats (as outlined in the Site Improvement Plan) including wildfire/ arson; deer browsing pressure and disease effecting bilberry (Phytophthora ramorum) as part of the dry heath habitat. Fragmented habitat is a key threat also and any opportunities to strengthen habitat connectivity and support nature recovery are very important. See notes under 'Conservation Objectives' for information on how some of these threats are being managed and links to the Shropshire Hills National Landscape management plan.

Site Improvement Plan: The Stiperstones and The Hollies - SIP243

Conservation Objectives
(Published 27th Nov 2018)

European Site Conservation Objectives for The Stiperstones & The Hollies SAC - UK0012810

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
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely

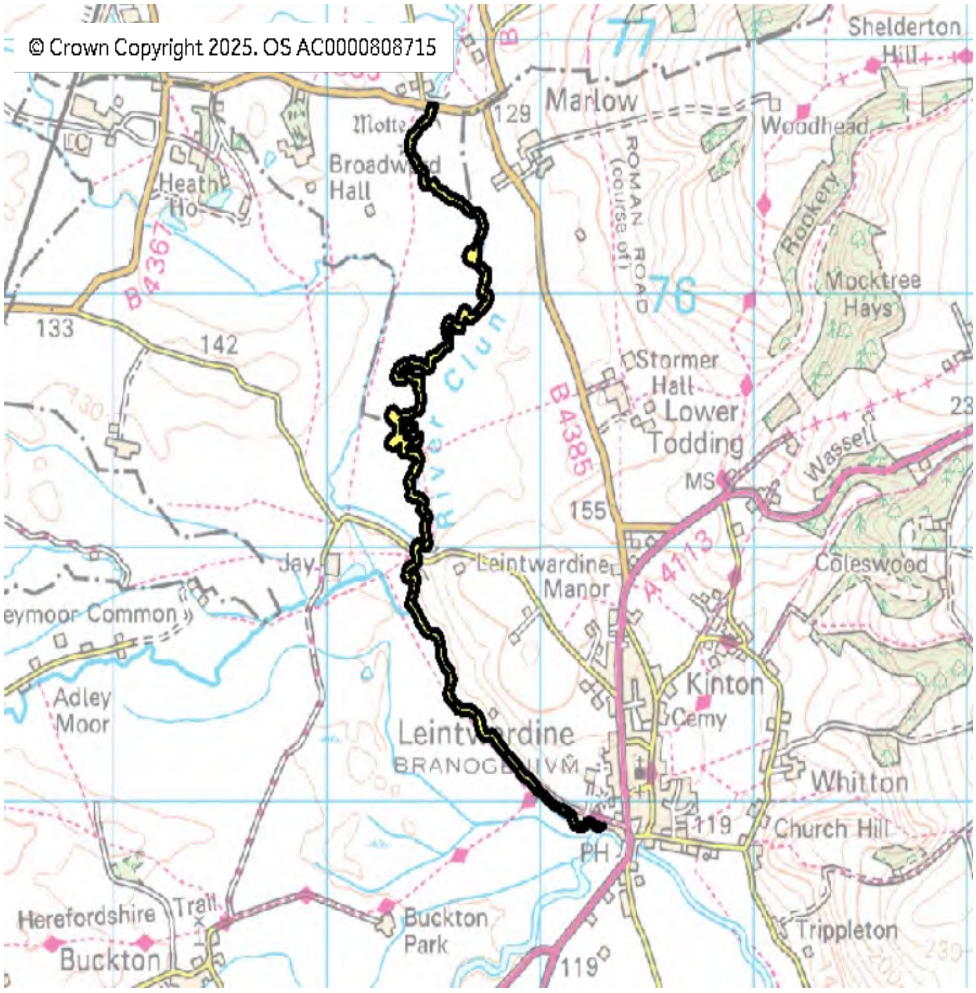
A significant proportion of the SAC (C.440 ha) is managed as The Stiperstones National Nature Reserve (NNR). During 2024, proposals were developed by Natural England for the creation of a larger NNR around the existing Stiperstones NNR (referred to as a 'super' or 'landscape' NNR). This was an opportunity for neighbouring landowners (organisations and private) to work together to increase the amount of land managed for wildlife. Following ongoing discussion and consultation with partners, landowners and the public, the proposal was approved by the Natural England Board in February 2025. Next steps are for the landscape NNR to be declared, as a partnership initiative that includes land owned by Forestry England, Shropshire Council, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, the Middle Marches Community Land Trust, Linley Estate and Natural England. It creates an exciting opportunity for the partners to work more collaboratively together to benefit wildlife and people and will seek to work with local organisations, communities and landowners to deliver its objectives. At the time of this assessment (May & June 2025), further Natural England processes were underway to confirm the landscape NNR declaration, with a launch event planned in August 2025. Under this landscape NNR, partners will be able to agree joint approaches to common problems and opportunities, share expertise and resources. The aim is to collaborate to work efficiently, for example to manage non-native species and pests; share ideas and expertise on the use of grazing animals to manage habitats; share equipment, machinery and tools; plan together to improve natural flood management, carbon storage and fire risk; manage recreational pressures and improve visitor experiences. More broadly, such a collaborative approach to conservation, with the Lawton principle in mind to enhance nature recovery is called for in the management plan.

River Clun

Site details

Location of River Clun SAC/SCI/cSAC

Country	England
Unitary Authority	Herefordshire; Shropshire
Centroid	SO393754
Latitude	52 22 22 N
Longitude	02 53 30 W
SAC EU code	UK0030250
Status	Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
Area (ha)	14.93



General site character

Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (33%)
Improved grassland (55%)
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (12%)

<u>Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site</u>
Not applicable

<u>Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site</u>
Not applicable.

Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site
Not applicable.
Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection
1029 Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*

Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:
Basic, Clay, Neutral, Sandstone, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:
Floodplain, Lowland

Quality and importance
Margaritifera margaritifera
• for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Vulnerability
Margaritifera margaritifera is dependent on low sediment and nitrate levels, fast flows of cool water and clean gravels. It is also relies on the presence of trout for part of its breeding cycle. Intensification of agriculture across the catchment is a significant threat to the long-term survival of the isolated population at this site i.e. enhanced sedimentation through poor agricultural practice leading to smothering of adult and juvenile mussels; eutrophication of waters through fertiliser run-off from adjacent land. In addition, upstream domestic sewage treatment works are believed to add to the nutrients to the river also. Increases in the occurrence of alder disease also pose a risk through loss of shading bankside tree cover. Phosphate levels are also important for the freshwater pearl mussel and another vulnerability.

Under previous management plan cycles, sustainable agricultural management has been promoted via the production of Whole Farm Plans, Environmentally Sensitive Area Agreements and Countryside Stewardship Agreements for landowners within the catchment. Catchment Sensitive Farming Advice, through a dedicated Catchment Officer continues to be a very important and well-trusted source of advice for farmers. This advice targets practical interventions that can improve soil health, water and air quality in the catchment. Current uncertainty around new agri-environment payments (under the Environmental Land Management Scheme), such as the halt to Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) make it challenging to incentivise environmental improvements in land management. The Clun catchment also has a Protected Site Strategy (PSS) Pilot project running at present, with a focus on the River Clun, the rural economy and river ecology. It is taking a holistic and catchment scale approach. The pilot is being run by Natural England, working with a number of partner organisations and stakeholders to run projects focusing on environmental, social and economic aspects.

Conservation Objectives
(published 27th November 2018)
European Site Conservation Objectives for River Clun SAC - UK0030250

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 the habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site

Downton Gorge

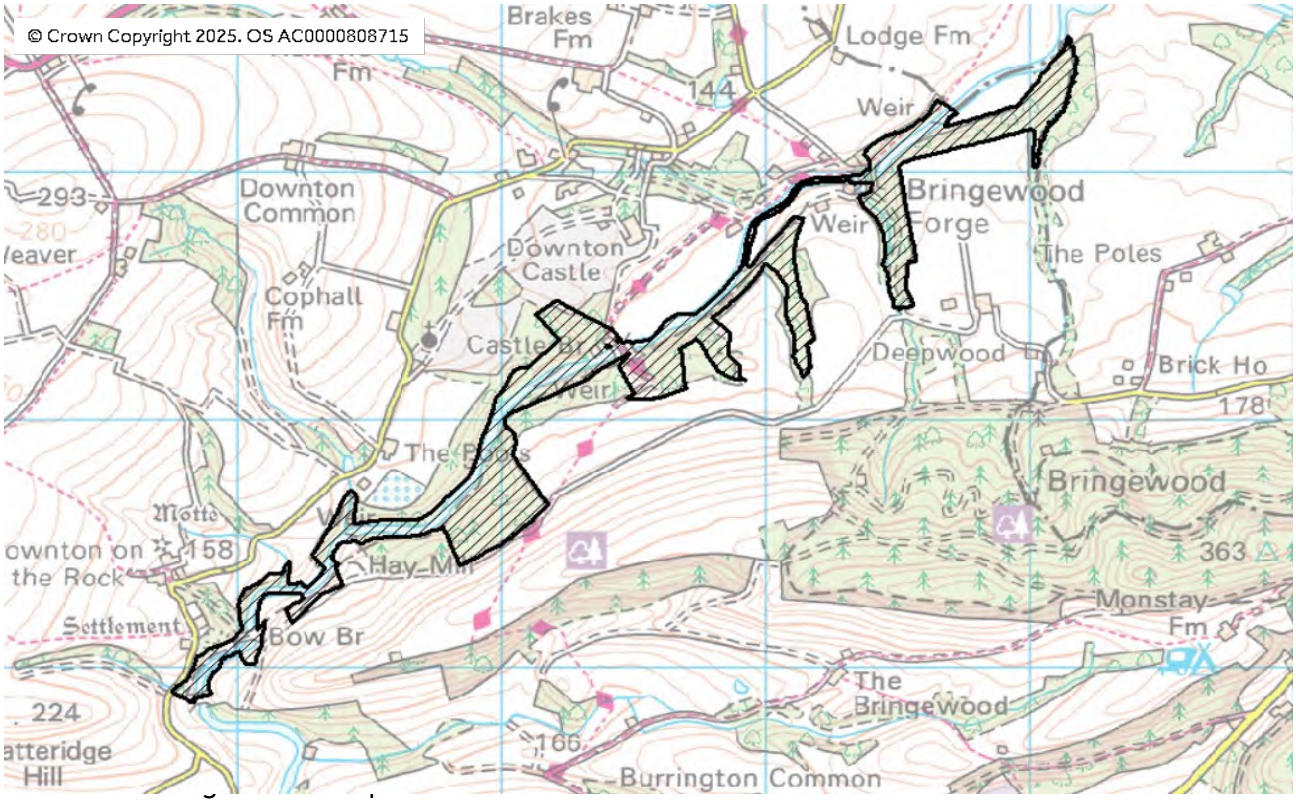
Site details

Location of Downton Gorge SAC/SCI/cSAC

Country	England
Unitary Authority	Herefordshire
Centroid	SO443743
Latitude	52 21 48 N
Longitude	02 49 07 W
SAC EU code	UK0012735
Status	Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
Area (ha)	69.3

General site character

Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (14%)
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (85%)
Coniferous woodland (1%)



microclimate and a variety of slopes and aspects. Both small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata* and large-leaved lime *T. platyphyllos* occur, together with ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and elm *Ulmus* spp. The ground flora includes wood fescue *Festuca altissima* and violet helleborine *Epipactis purpurata*. The gorge cliffs are rich in ferns, reflecting the humidity of the site, with a wide range of species recorded.

<u>Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site</u>
Not applicable.

<u>Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site</u>
Not applicable.

Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection
Not applicable.

Other site characteristics
Soil & geology:
Acidic, Alluvium, Basic, Limestone

Geomorphology & landscape:
Crags/ledges, Lowland, Valley

Qualifying features and importance
Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines
• for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

Mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes

- Considered to be a priority natural habitat at a European scale

Vulnerability
The site is potentially vulnerable to the effects of air- and water-borne pollution, particularly in respect of its significant lichenological interest. However these effects are not related to the management of the site.

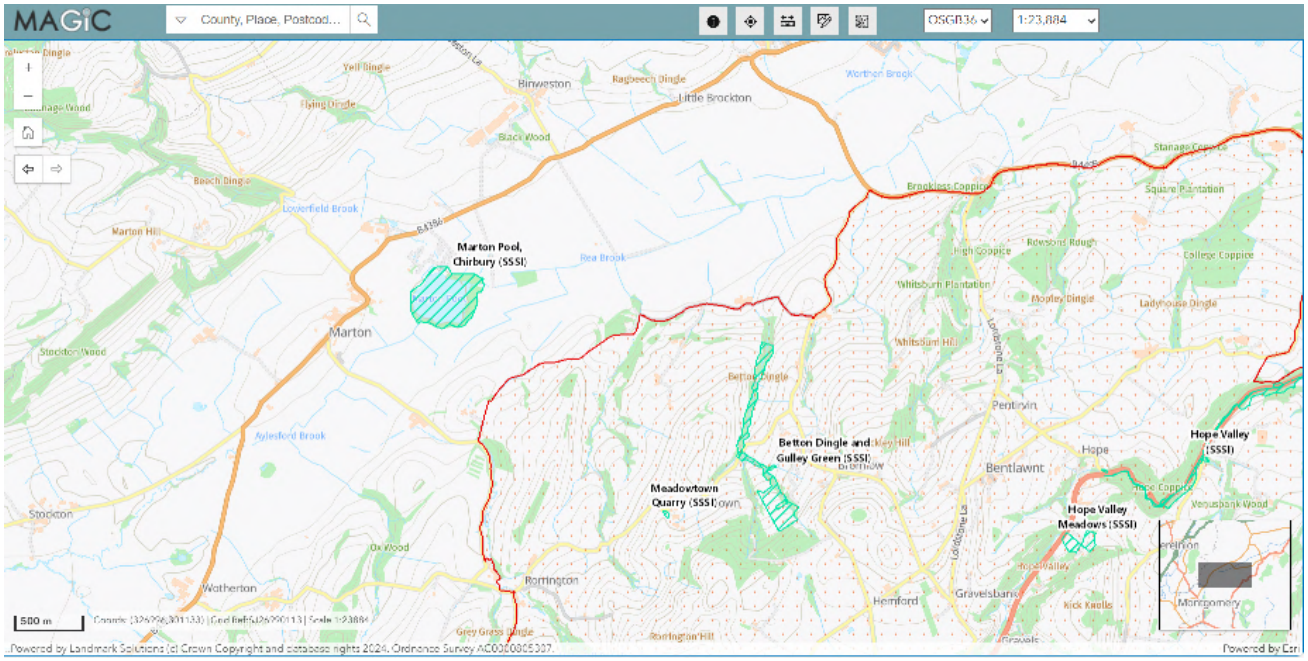
Conservation Objectives
(published 27th November 2018)
European Site Conservation Objectives for Downton Gorge SAC - UK0012735

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;

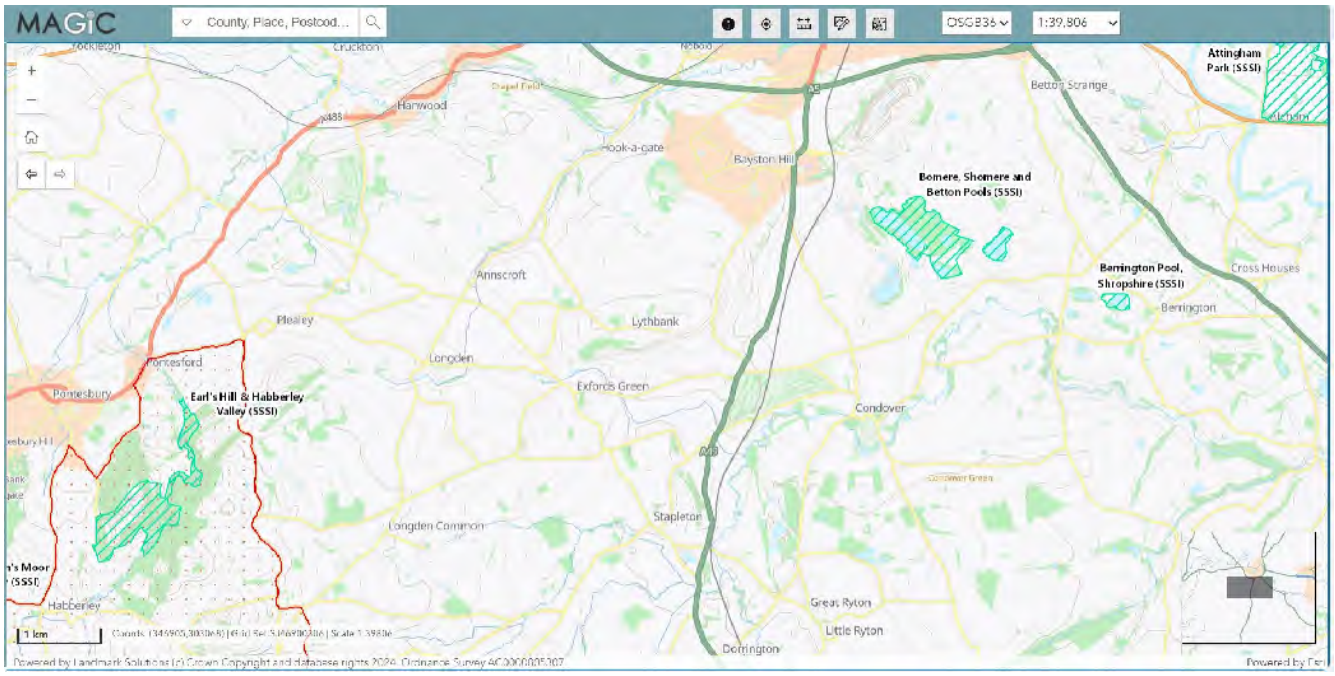
- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural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

Midland Meres & Mosses, Phase 1 Ramsar –

Designated: 9 May 1994
Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude): 52 54 11 N 02 50 25 W
The nearest part of this site is under 1km from the National Landscape (Marton Pool, Chirbury SSSI).
Bomere, Shomere & Betton Pools SSSI and Berrington Pool SSSI are both located c.8km from the National Landscape



(National Landscape boundary in red)



The Meres & Mosses form a geographically discrete series of lowland open water and peatland sites in the north-west Midlands of England. These have developed in natural depressions in the glacial drift left by receding ice sheets which formerly covered the Cheshire/Shropshire Plain. The 16 component sites include open water bodies (meres), the majority of which are nutrient-rich with associated fringing habitats; reed swamps, fen, carr & damp pasture. Peat accumulation has resulted in nutrient poor peat bogs (mosses) forming in some sites in the fringes of meres or completely infilling basins. In a few cases the result is a floating quaking bog or schwingmoor. The wide range of resulting habitats support nationally important flora & fauna.

Ramsar criterion 1
The site comprises a diverse range of habitats from open water to raised bog.

Ramsar criterion 2
The sites support a number of rare species of plants associated with wetlands including five nationally scarce species together with an assemblage of rare wetland invertebrates (three endangered insects and five other British Red Data Book species of invertebrates).

The site's primary interest is its wide range of lowland wetland types and successional stages within a distinct biogeographical area. Waters are generally circumneutral or acidic depending on the component site's soil type, catchment size and usage. Substantial areas of open water remain in some sites, and in many cases, this is fringed by extensive and varied swamp, fen and carr communities. Some basins have become peat-filled, leading in some circumstances to the development of ombotrophic conditions; of particular importance are the quaking bogs or schwingmoors.

Nationally important species occurring on the site.
Higher Plants.
Elatine hexandra, Eleocharis acicularis, Cicuta virosa, Thelypteris palustris, Carex elongata

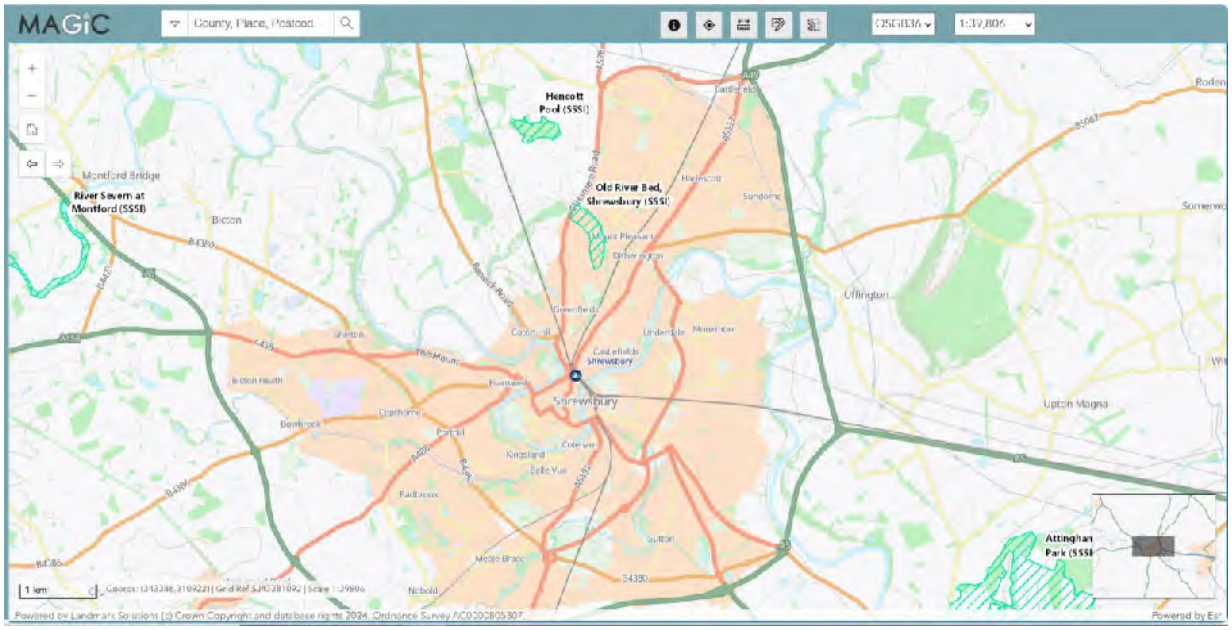
Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects

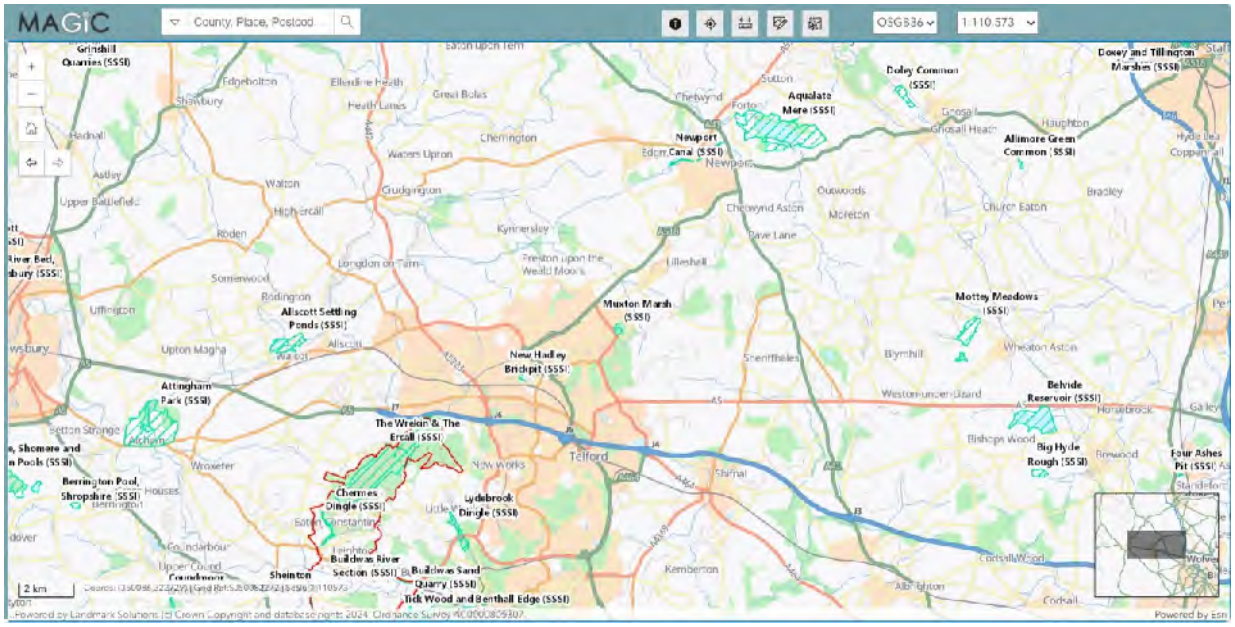
- Eutrophication
- Introduction/invasion of non-native plant species

Midland Meres & Mosses, Phase 2 Ramsar

Designated: 02 February 1997

Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude): 52 55 20 N 02 45 43 W
Hencott Pool SSSI is c.11km from the National Landscape
Aqualate Mere SSSI is c.15km from the National Landscape





National Landscape boundary in red.

As above, the following information also applies to these sites.
The Meres and Mosses form a geographically diverse series of lowland open water and peatland sites in the north-west Midlands of England and north-east Wales. These have developed in natural depressions in the glacial drift left by receding ice sheets which formerly covered the Cheshire/Shropshire Plain. The 18 component sites include open water bodies (meres), the majority of which are nutrient-rich with associated fringing habitats, reed swamp, fen, carr and damp pasture. Peat accumulation has resulted in the nutrient-poor peat bogs (mosses) forming in some sites on the fringes of the meres or completely infilling basins. In a few cases the result is a floating quaking bog or schwingmoor. The wide range of resulting habitats support nationally important flora and fauna.

Ramsar criterion 1
The site comprises a diverse range of habitats from open water to raised bog.

Ramsar criterion 2
Supports a number of rare species of plants associated with wetlands, including the nationally scarce cowbane *Cicuta virosa* and, elongated sedge *Carex elongata*. Also present are the nationally scarce bryophytes *Dicranum affine* and *Sphagnum pulchrum*.
These sites also support assemblages of invertebrates including several rare species. There are 16 species of British Red Data Book insect listed for this site including the following endangered species: the moth *Glyphipteryx lathamella*, the caddisfly *Hagenella clathrata* and the sawfly *Trichiosoma vitellinae*.

Nationally important species occurring on the site.
Higher Plants - *Calamagrostis stricta, Carex elongata, Cicuta virosa, Thelypteris palustris*

Lower Plants - *Sphagnum pulchrum, Dicranum undulatum*

Birds
Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:
Northern shoveler, *Anas clypeata*
Great cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*,
Great bittern, *Botaurus stellaris stellaris*
Water rail, *Rallus aquaticus*

Invertebrates.
Limnophila heterogyna, Atylotus plebeius, Hagenella clathrata, Limnophila fasciata, Carorita limnaea, Glyphipteryx lathamella, Trichiosoma vitellinae, Eilema serica, Brachythops wusteneii, Pachinematus xanthocarpos, Sittcus floricola, Lampronia fuscatella, Hybomitra lurida.

Adverse Factors:
- Eutrophication
- Introduction/invasion of non-native plant species
- Pollution –pesticides/agricultural runoff

Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc (Amendment) (England & Wales) Regulations 2006
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitat Regulations Assessment 2017)
Appropriate Assessment of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030
Screening Matrix

Site	Qualifying Features	Key environmental conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Plan	Is there a risk of a significant effect?	Possible impacts from other plans, trends, etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
The Stiperstones and The Hollies	4030 European dry heaths H8 – *Calluna vulgaris – ulex galli* heath, H10 – *Calluna vulgaris – Erica cinerea* heath, H12 – *Calluna vulgaris – vaccinium myrtillus* heath, H18 – *Vaccinium myrtillus – Deschampsia flexuosa* heath,	No direct loss of habitat. Management by appropriate grazing to limit succession and maintain habitat diversity. Control of bracken.	The plan supports the new landscape NNR declaration, to enable greater collaboration between all partners on topics such as recreational pressure, conservation grazing, habitat management. The Plan contains policies and recommendations supporting enjoyment of the Shropshire Hills landscape. These are put forward alongside a strong focus on a sensitive approach by visitors, raising awareness of potential damaging impacts. This approach to promote sustainable tourism alongside strengthening people's connection to nature, aims to help reduce pressures on the heathland from recreation rather than exacerbate them. It should be noted that The Stiperstones	No	The Shropshire Great Outdoors Strategy (2018 – 2028) is more specifically focussed on improving and promoting access, compared to the National Landscape Management Plan. In 2018, the National Landscape Partnership gave strong input to the Strategy, stressing the importance to balance conservation needs, with the specific action to review access provision in the Stiperstones area to reduce conservation conflicts. As a result, this was also included in	No

Site	Qualifying Features	Key environmental conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Plan	Is there a risk of a significant effect?	Possible impacts from other plans, trends, etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
			are already well promoted and popular with visitors. The Plan includes a policy on visitor management as follows "Publicity & other management measures should, through promotion of a wide variety of visitor locations, seek to disperse visitors and spread visits across the area, to reduce pressures at heavily used locations and to spread economic benefits". It would be hoped that such actions would help a popular site such as The Stiperstones (and the The Hollies to a lesser extent in terms of it's popularity for visitors). It should be noted that the Hollies is on a key footpath route on to the main Stiperstones SAC and so may also experience some secondary visitor impacts.		the Great Outdoors Strategy. In 2024 and into 2025, the National Landscape Partnership and Team were fully engaged with the landscape NNR process and supportive of its aims to manage land for wildlife and to support nature recovery. The principles behind this link very closely to the policies, recommendations and aspirations of the management plan for nature, climate, people.	

Site	Qualifying Features	Key environmental conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Plan	Is there a risk of a significant effect?	Possible impacts from other plans, trends, etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
The Stiperstones and The Hollies	91A0 Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles W16 – *Quercus* spp – *Betula* spp - *Deschampsia flexuosa* woodland.	No loss of ancient semi-natural stands. At least current area of recent semi-natural stands maintained, although their location may alter. No loss of ancient woodland. For wood pasture/parkland- no loss of semi-natural wood-pasture mosaic area. No reduction in the number of veteran trees.	The Plan contains no policies or actions which could detrimentally affect the woodland. The Plan gives priority to habitat restoration in the Long Mynd – Stiperstones area which may help to buffer or link with habitats within the SAC. Consultation processes would ensure that any woodland creation adjacent to the site was done appropriately, e.g. allowing natural regeneration if possible, avoiding planting of dominant non-native species such as sycamore which could colonise the woodlands within the site. The plan includes specific policies on the protection of ancient woodlands and calls for trees outside woodlands to be cared for and retained also.	No	Linked to the previous management plan period, Shropshire Council carried out woodland sensitivity mapping which also helps to provide guidance on new woodland creation. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin also highlights the importance of woodland habitats and encourages the expansion of native broadleaf woodland, seeking opportunities for woodlands to be expanded and connected through habitat corridors.	No

Site	Qualifying Features	Key environmental conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Plan	Is there a risk of a significant effect?	Possible impacts from other plans, trends, etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
River Clun	1029 Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*	*M. margaritifera* is dependent on low sediment and nitrate levels, fast flows of cool water and clean gravels. It is also relies on the presence of trout for part of its breeding cycle. Agricultural practices across the catchment are a key threat to favourable conditions e.g. eutrophication of waters through fertiliser run-off. In addition, upstream domestic sewage treatment works are believed to contribute to nutrient loading.	The new plan includes a section focused specifically on water for the first time. Water related policies, recommendations and aspirations address the broad issues of water quality, naturally functioning catchment headwaters, water resources (flooding and drought). These are all issues impacting the river Clun (and other catchments in the National Landscape) and therefore should benefit the qualifying features. There is a dedicated policy on the River Clun SAC – "All feasible steps should be taken to improve the condition of the River Clun SAC and River Teme SSSI". Under the Clun PSS pilot and Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme, members of the National Landscape team continue to work on specific Clun projects (including supporting landowners to restore catchment headwaters, reduce riverbank erosion, create wetland habitats). The plan also promotes ongoing close partnership working with Natural England freshwater specialists and the Catchment Sensitive Farming team.	No negative effects	Ongoing positive interactions with Catchment Sensitive Farming Initiative and agri-environment schemes. Positive impact expected from the Clun Protected Site Strategy (PSS) Pilot, being delivered by Natural England. Ongoing work to develop a Nature Recovery Blueprint for the catchment, support catchment headwater restoration.	No negative effects.

Site	Qualifying Features	Key environmental conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Plan	Is there a risk of a significant effect?	Possible impacts from other plans, trends, etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
Downton Gorge	9180 *Tilio*-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines * Priority feature Semi-natural broadleaved woodland. W8 – *Fraxinus excelsior – acer campestre – mercuralis perennis* woodland. W10 – *Quercus robur – pteridium aquilinium – rubus fruiticosus* woodland W6 – *Alnus glutinosa urtica dioica* woodland: Sambus nigra	No loss of ancient semi-natural stands. At least current area of recent semi-natural stands maintained, although their location may alter. No loss of ancient woodland. For wood pasture/parkland: No loss of semi-natural wood-pasture mosaic area. No reduction in the number of veteran trees.	No impacts. The site lies on the River Teme downstream of the National Landscape, but the woodland features of the site will not be affected in any way by influences of the Management Plan.	No	-	No

Site	Qualifying Features	Key environmental conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Plan	Is there a risk of a significant effect?	Possible impacts from other plans, trends, etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
Marton Pool SSSI/Ramsar	Aquatic plants, invertebrates, breeding birds	Maintain natural characteristics and habitats of sloping margins. Protection of appropriate water quality. Active management of wetland habitats.	No impacts. The site lies several miles outside the National Landscape boundary and is not fed by watercourse originating in the National Landscape.	No	Local Nature Recovery Strategies (statutory government documents) have clear guidance to map SSSIs as part of existing 'areas of particular importance for biodiversity'. This should help to raise the profile of these areas and public awareness of their importance. The LNRS map also identifies a 'nature recovery network' opportunities, to create and expand new habitat areas. The LNRS is due to be adopted in winter 2025.	No

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Bomere, Shomere and Betton Pools SSSI/Ramsar	Fen, marsh and swamp. Semi – natural broadleaved woodland. Bog. Standing open water. Wet woodland.	Water availability and quality. Management, e.g. by grazing to prevent succession.	No impacts. The site lies several miles outside the National Landscape boundary and is not fed by watercourse originating in the National Landscape.	No	Local Nature Recovery Strategies (statutory government documents) have clear guidance to map SSSIs as part of existing 'areas of particular importance for biodiversity'. This should help to raise the profile of these areas and public awareness of their importance. The LNRS map also identifies a 'nature recovery network' opportunities, to create and expand new habitat areas. The LNRS is due to be adopted in winter 2025.	No

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Berrington Pool SSSI/Ramsar	Deep water with low fertility. Rich flora and aquatic fauna	Maintain natural characteristics and habitats of sloping margins. Protection of appropriate water quality. Active management of wetland habitats.	No impacts. The site lies several miles outside the National Landscape boundary and is not fed by watercourse originating in the National Landscape.	No	Local Nature Recovery Strategies (statutory government documents) have clear guidance to map SSSIs as part of existing 'areas of particular importance for biodiversity'. This should help to raise the profile of these areas and public awareness of their importance. The LNRS map also identifies a 'nature recovery network' opportunities, to create and expand new habitat areas. The LNRS is due to be adopted in winter 2025.	No

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Hencott Pool SSSI/Ramsar	Peat-filled basin supporting fen and carr vegetation, representing a stage in the succession from open water to carr woodland and peat bog	Maintain appropriate water quality and levels. Highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticide.	No impacts. The site lies several miles outside the National Landscape boundary and is not fed by watercourse originating in the National Landscape.	No	Local Nature Recovery Strategies (statutory government documents) have clear guidance to map SSSIs as part of existing 'areas of particular importance for biodiversity'. This should help to raise the profile of these areas and public awareness of their importance. The LNRS map also identifies a 'nature recovery network' opportunities, to create and expand new habitat areas. The LNRS is due to be adopted in winter 2025.	No

Site	Qualifying Features	Key environmental conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Plan	Is there a risk of a significant effect?	Possible impacts from other plans, trends, etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
Aqualate Mere SSSI/Ramsar	Complex of open water, fen, grassland and woodland. Esker of national geomorphological importance. Assemblage of beetles, moths and sawflies. Nationally important numbers of breeding herons *Ardea cinerea* and passage shoveler *Anas clypeata* and regionally significant for breeding waders.	Sympathetic management of water levels. Grazing of marshy grassland. Rotational management of ditches to prevent succession. Highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticide.	No impacts. The site lies several miles outside the National Landscape boundary and is not fed by watercourse originating in the National Landscape.	No	Local Nature Recovery Strategies (statutory government documents) have clear guidance to map SSSIs as part of existing 'areas of particular importance for biodiversity'. This should help to raise the profile of these areas and public awareness of their importance. The LNRS map also identifies a 'nature recovery network' opportunities, to create and expand new habitat areas. The LNRS is due to be adopted in winter 2025. A further positive impact in this area, is the ongoing work of the a farmer cluster group running in the area, working to benefit the Aqualate catchment.	No