

By email only
planningpolicy@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Our Ref: CAS-316506-X7L0

Dyddiad/Date: 13/08/2026

Annwyl Syr/Madam/Dear Sir/Madam,

**Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) 2018-2033
Habitats Regulations Assessment Addendum on Nutrient Sensitive Special Areas of
Conservation.**

Thank you for consulting us on the updated Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
Addendum (July 2026).

We are supportive of the HRA and RLDP's primary pathway to managing nutrient
increases arising from plan-led development. This relies on the headroom secured through
WwTW upgrades and the associated review of environmental permits.

The "NRW Review of Consents and screening against WwTW upgrades" pathway is not a
mitigation-based approach. Rather, it allows development to be screened out as not
having a likely significant effect, in accordance with our [Advice to planning authorities for
planning applications affecting nutrient sensitive Special Areas of Conservation](#).

The Nutrient Management/Mitigation Action Plan (NMAP) (Appendix C, HRA Addendum,
July 2026) states *"DCWW provided data and through further discussion it was determined
that all relevant WwTWs for the RLDP have had their final effluent phosphorus limits
reviewed against the nutrient reduction targets set out in the conservation objectives for
the respective SAC catchments. Nearly all will have reduced permit limits in place by 2030,
with most already operating under tightened limits. The exception is Goytre WwTW, which
will not be upgraded until 2030. However, only allocated site HA12 which proposed 42
dwellings would be served by Goytre. Devauden WwTW is not due to be upgraded until
January 2027 but will be by the time of plan adoption. **Thus, on this basis, there would
appear to be potential to conclude that for all proposed development other than
HA12 there will be no likely significant effect on SAC site integrity with regard to
phosphorus, subject to reaching such agreement with NRW.**"*

Development served by Goytre WwTW, together with any other development that cannot
be screened out at the likely significant effect stage, would therefore need to proceed

through the mitigation-based pathways established in Welsh Government policy (Figure 1 of the Clarification Note: Applying the Tests of Soundness to Local Development Plans (LDPs) where additional nutrients may impact on Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), March 2026).

The latest evidence submitted by the Council also provides additional information on catchment restoration measures which underpin the Review of Permits and WwTW upgrades pathway. This evidence also informs the measures identified under the Integrated Approach.

The HRA Addendum also includes a policy caveat which ensures that development will not be permitted unless a project-level HRA can conclude no likely significant effect or, through an appropriate assessment, that there will be no adverse effect on site integrity.

On this basis, we are satisfied with the conclusions of the plan-level HRA. The assessment demonstrates that the substantial majority of plan-led growth can be screened out with a conclusion of no likely significant effect. For development that cannot be screened out, mitigation-based pathways remain available, namely the Integrated Approach and, where necessary, the Nutrient Neutrality approach.

We note the draft policy caveat set out on pages 25-26 of the HRA Addendum (July 2026). While we support the overall intent of the policy, we recommend several amendments to improve clarity, simplify drafting and better align the wording with the HRA process. We intend to send our suggested amendments under separate cover for consideration in advance of the hearing sessions.

If you have any queries about the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yn gywir / Yours faithfully,

James Davies

Cynghorydd Arbenigol Arweiniol: Cynllunio / Lead Specialist Advisor Planning

Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru/Natural Resources Wales