

Habitat Regulations Assessment of the Blaenau Gwent Replacement Local Development Plan

Preferred Strategy

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

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Executive Summary for the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy

Introduction

AECOM was appointed by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment of its Preferred Strategy of its Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP), which sets out the housing and employment needs for the period between 2018 and 2033. The objective of this assessment was to identify any aspects of the Plan that might cause an adverse effect on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites, otherwise known as European sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites), either in isolation or in combination with other plans and projects, and to advise on appropriate policy mechanisms for delivering mitigation where such effects were identified.

Legislative Context

The need for an assessment of impacts on European sites is set out within Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and transposed into English and Welsh law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The purpose of the Habitats Directive is to *“maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest*

components within these sites is not available. It is recommended to model a minimum of one road transect in each of these SACs to inform the Deposit Plan HRA.