

C00520 Amesbury below ground stormwater storage tank Salisbury Road, Amesbury

Ecological Impact Assessment

8 October 2025



Wessex Water
YTL GROUP



King’s Gate, Amesbury

Proposed new tanker layby and temporary compound access

Ecological Impact Assessment

8 October 2025

On behalf of:
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Executive summary

Wessex Water has undertaken an ecological impact assessment (EcIA) to support a planning application for the proposed new tanker layby and temporary compound access at King's Gate, Salisbury Road, Amesbury, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 15895 40934).

The aim of the EcIA is to provide an assessment of protected and/or notable habitats and species which occur on or near the proposed project which may be impacted by the proposed activities and to set out mitigation measures to avoid, minimise and reduce effects upon them. Where necessary compensation measures are given as well as enhancements to demonstrate a measurable net gain for biodiversity.

A desk study was undertaken of designated sites for nature conservation, habitats of conservation importance and protected and notable species which occur within 1km of the proposed project. This was followed by a preliminary ecological appraisal on 13 February 2024 and habitat mapping survey on 20 August 2024 by a Wessex Water ecologist. Targeted surveys for reptiles were undertaken in April 2025. The site was revisited on 1 May 2025 to ensure current habitat conditions are reflected in this report.

The River Avon Site of Special Scientific interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located 160m southwest of the site and is designated for its aquatic habitats. These statutory designations are unlikely to be impacted by the proposed project. The site is also within the 6.4km buffer zone for the Salisbury Plain SPA, which is designated for stone curlew. No impact on the SPA is expected.

The proposed project is located on the outskirts of Amesbury, bordered to the north, east, and west by residential housing and scrub and grassland to the south. Dominant habitats within the area of the proposed project includes bramble scrub; mixed scrub; other neutral grassland; and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface. The site is likely to provide nesting habitat for common bird species and support small numbers of foraging and commuting bats due to the presence of suitable habitats and biological records. Targeted reptile surveys found one common lizard, indicating a small population is present on site. No other protected species are considered likely to occur which have the potential to be adversely affected.

To mitigate for impacts on protected species nesting bird checks will be carried out by an ecologist for all vegetation removed during nesting bird season. Two stage habitat degradation will be carried out as a precautionary measure to displace any reptiles should they be present within the project area and a hand search for nesting or hibernating hedgehogs will be undertaken.

The proposed project will result in the permanent loss of 82m² of other neutral grassland and 34m² of bramble scrub. 35m² of mixed scrub will be temporarily removed for the compound access and will be allowed to grow back following reinstatement.

It is not possible to compensate for the loss of habitat on site due to the small-scale nature of the works and the surrounding land being outside of Wessex water's ownership. Therefore, off-site habitat units will be bought through a third-party provider to compensate for the loss of 0.05 habitat units and ensure a 10% biodiversity net gain based on *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool*.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Wessex Water has undertaken an ecological impact assessment (EcIA) to support a planning application for the proposed vehicle layby and a temporary access off Sailsbury Road during construction (hereafter the 'proposed project') at Sailsbury Road, Amesbury, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 15895 40934). The location of the proposed project is shown on drawing C00520/ENV/400/A in Appendix A.1.

1.1.1 Project description

The new layby and temporary construction access will be constructed in at King's Gate, Amesbury, located adjacent to the A345 Sailsbury Road. Works are programmed to commence on site in March 2026 and will continue for a duration of approximately six months.

The proposed project will be delivered in combination with additional works which will be carried out under Wessex Water's permitted development rights. Activities for which consent is required relate entirely to the proposed layby and temporary construction access and are located within the red line boundary shown on drawing C00520/ENV/400/A. Activities which will be carried out under permitted development relate to the proposed compound, below ground storage tank, and roadside kiosk and are not included within this assessment.

The following elements of the project are installed under Wessex Water's permitted development rights as a statutory undertaker and are not included within the red line boundary:

- New roadside kiosk (approx. 2m length by 0.5m width by 2m height, volume of approx. 2m³);
- New storage tank (approx. volume of 300m³, below ground level);
- New manhole covers and 'grasscrete' surrounds,
- Temporary adjoining compound areas for laydown, welfare and parking

Planning permission is required for:

- New vehicle layby from Salisbury Road adjacent to the storage tank, located within the red line boundary to the north on drawing C00520/ENV/400/A in Appendix A.
- New temporary access during construction from Salisbury Road (a classified road), located within the red line boundary to the south on drawing C00520/ENV/400/A.
- New bollards to stop access by unauthorised vehicles adjacent to the aforementioned layby.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The aim of this report is to provide an EclA of the protected and/or notable habitats and species which occur on or near the proposed project which may be impacted by the proposed activities. The objectives are to:

- Identify all protected and/or notable habitats and species which have the potential to be impacted by the proposed project.
- Determine and describe the significance of the effects on those ecological features.
- Set out mitigation measures required to ensure compliance with nature conservation legislation and to address potentially significant effects.
- Provide an assessment of the significance of any residual effects.
- Identify appropriate compensation and enhancement measures, including a minimum of the 10% biodiversity net gain where applicable.
- Set out any requirements for any post construction monitoring, including significant enhancements of on-site habitats.

1.3 Planning policy and legislation

The construction and operational activities for the proposed project must comply with conservation legislation, and with national and local biodiversity policies. The main pieces of legislation in the UK are the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The biodiversity policies which are most relevant are the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023), and *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services* (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2011).

In addition, under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, all public bodies are required to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their function. Under this act a list of habitats and species that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England are published under Section 41.

Further information on legislation and planning policies is given Tables C.1 and C.2 in Appendix C.

1.4 Quality assurance

This EclA was conducted following Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* (CIEEM, 2017) and *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine version 1.2* (CIEEM, 2024), as well as recognised industry best practice standards. All surveys and assessments have been undertaken with reference to the recommendations given in *BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity: Code of practice for planning and development*.

2. Methodology

2.1 Scope of the assessment

The scope of the assessment only includes activities of the proposed project for which planning permission is sought. Any reference to ecological features beyond the red line boundary within areas covered by Wessex Water's permitted development rights is given for context only and does not form part of the material considerations within the planning process. An assessment of all activities related to the proposed project has been undertaken by Wessex Water to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and internal policy for biodiversity.

2.1.1 Ecological features

All ecological features which may be affected by the project were considered as part of this EclA. This includes the following:

- Statutory and non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.
- Statutory protected habitats and species.
- Habitats and species of principal importance for nature conservation.
- Hedgerows of importance as determined by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.
- Trees protected by tree preservation orders (TPO) and veteran trees.
- Non-native invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

2.1.2 Zone of influence

The current guidance on ecological assessments (CIEEM, 2024) recommends that all ecological features that occur within the zone of influence for a proposed development are investigated. This includes:

- Areas directly within the land take for the proposed development and access.
- Areas which will be temporarily affected during construction.
- Areas likely to be impacted by hydrological disruption.
- Areas where there is a risk of pollution and/or noise disturbance during construction and/or operation.

The zone of influence (hereafter the 'survey area') is variable depending on the ecological features affected. With respect to the proposed project it is considered to be all land denoted by the red line boundary as shown on drawing C00520/ENV/400/A, with exception to the following:

- **Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*:** all water bodies within the red line boundary and up to 250m.
- **Badger *Meles meles*:** All suitable habitat including woodland and field boundaries within the red line boundary and up to 50m.

- **Bats:** All trees, field boundaries and buildings within the red line boundary and up to 50m.
- **Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*:** all hedgerows and lines of trees within and immediately adjacent to the red line boundary.

2.2 Desk study

A desk study was undertaken of the designated sites for nature conservation, sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) impact risk zones, habitats of conservation importance and protected and notable species. Due to the small-scale low impact nature of the works this was limited to within 1km of the proposed project. Species record data were obtained from the county biological records centre which are held by Wessex Water in a geographic information system (GIS) database.

2.3 Field surveys

2.3.1 *Habitat mapping and preliminary ecological appraisal*

A habitat mapping survey was undertaken by a Wessex Water ecologist on 20 August 2024. All habitats within the red line boundary were identified and mapped in compliance with the UK Habitat Classification methodology (UKHab Ltd, 2023). This was based on a fine scale minimum mapping unit (MMU) of 25m² for area habitats and 5m for linear habitats. Any habitats present below these thresholds, were denoted as secondary codes.

Dominant plant species were also noted, as were any protected, uncommon and non-native invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). A habitat condition assessment was also completed based on criteria within *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology* (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2023a).

A preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA), including a daytime bat walkover (DBW) based on Collins (2023), was concurrently undertaken of the likely presence or absence of protected and notable animal species within the zone of influence of the proposed project. This was based on the known distribution of species, habitat suitability and/or direct evidence such as field signs or observations. The methodologies and assessment criteria used were based on current published guidance where available.

Where protected species were identified or considered likely to occur, further targeted field surveys were undertaken, as outlined in section 2.3.2. Survey information in respect to an adjacent development by Magna Housing (Green Ecology, 2018) was also reviewed to inform the impact assessment for the presence and distribution of dormouse, in conjunction with an appraisal of current habitat conditions for the species within the area of the proposed project.

2.3.2 *Reptiles*

Reptile surveys were completed in April 2025 with an array of 38 artificial refugia (tins, felts and/or carpet tiles) deployed on 21 March 2025. The refugia were deployed evenly over an area of 0.3ha, extending beyond the red line boundary to cover the triangle of grass and

scrub habitat between the footpath to the northeast and Salsbury Road to the west, extending as far south as the smaller red line boundary area. The refugia remained undisturbed for a minimum of two weeks to allow reptiles to find and start using them. Following this initial bedding-in period, refugia were checked at appropriate times of the day on seven occasions during suitable weather conditions, as set out below in Table 2.0.

Survey Date	Weather Conditions			
	Temperature (c)	Wind (BF)	Cloud Cover (%)	Precipitation
04/04/2025	16	2	50	None
07/04/2025	11	1	10	None
10/04/2025	10	2	20	None
14/04/2025	12	2	90	None
17/04/2025	9	1	0	None
22/04/2025	13	1	90	None
25/04/2025	12	1	30	None

2.3.3 Badgers

A search of all suitable habitat including woodland and field boundaries within the red line boundary and up to 50m, where access was available, was undertaken on 13 February 2024.

2.4 Assessment of conservation importance and likely impacts

The conservation importance for each of the main ecological features (designated sites, habitats, and species) that occur within the survey area was assessed and categorised using a geographical scale (international, national, regional, county, district and local) following CIEEM, 2024; as well as in accordance with the relevant legislative and policy framework.

2.5 Biodiversity net gain

Where residual impacts on habitats were identified following mitigation (avoidance and minimisation), compensation has been provided to achieve no net loss and a measurable biodiversity net gain (BNG) of a minimum of 10% as required under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

This has been based on The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Auditing and Accounting for Biodiversity Calculation Tool v.1.0.4 (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2025b), hereafter referred to as the 'biodiversity metric tool' and following The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2025e). This is also in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024) and local planning 8 Version

3.2.1 requirements, including measures, where possible, to benefit the local nature recovery strategy (LNRS).

2.6 Consultations

Pre application planning advice was sought from Wiltshire County Council.

2.7 Assessment limitations and constraints

The preliminary ecological appraisal was undertaken in February when vegetation growth was reduced, as such identification of plant species was limited, and certain species could have been missed. However, a subsequent visit for a habitat mapping survey was undertaken in August 2024, which captured the habitats and species present in the optimum period. Therefore, the timing of the initial visit is not considered likely to impact the final assessment.

3. Baseline ecological conditions

The following sections outline the ecological baseline conditions within the survey area.

3.1 Designated sites for nature conservation

3.1.1 Statutory designated sites for nature conservation

There are two statutory sites for nature conservation within 1km of the site (see Table 3.1 and drawing C00520/ENV/401/A). Both sites are 160m southwest of the site and are designations related to the River Avon and its aquatic habitats. These designations are geographically well separated from the site, and unlikely to be impacted by the work and therefore are not considered further in this report.

The site is also within the 6.4km buffer zone for the Salsbury Plain SPA, with the closest point of the SPA 2.8km northeast of the site. This buffer is predominantly to protect nesting stone curlew from increased recreational pressure due to development. The habitat on site is not favourable for nesting stone curlew and therefore would not be functionally linked to the SPA. Neither will the proposals result in increased recreational pressure. As such, No Likely Significant Effects are expected to result from the proposals on the SPA and no further assessment of the SPA is included in this report.

Table 3.1: Summary of statutory sites for nature conservation

Site name ¹	Description	Distance	Conservation importance
River Avon SSSI	The River Avon is a varied chalk stream, with diverse wildlife communities of national importance.	160m	National
River Avon SAC	Lowland river system designated for aquatic <i>Ranunculus</i> species, Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> , and various fish species.	160m	International

¹SPA: Special Protection Area; SSSI: Special Area of Conservation; Site of Special Scientific Interest.

3.1.2 Non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation

There are no non-statutory designated sites within 1km of the site. No non-statutory designated sites are likely to be impacted by the work and are not considered further in this report.

3.2 Habitats

The site is within a small triangle of predominantly scrub and grassland habitat, situated on the urban fringe of Amesbury. The site is bordered by housing to the north and east and is adjacent to the A345 to the west, beyond which is further housing. Rough grassland on an embankment associated with a scheduled monument is to the south of the site.

The other neutral grassland, bramble and mixed scrub are not considered to be habitats of principal importance as listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, nor are they listed in the LBAP.

All habitats are shown on drawing C00520/ENV/402/A in Appendix A.3 with associated target notes (TN) and photographs in Appendix B. Further details are given in sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.5 below; UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) codes are given in brackets.

3.2.1 Other neutral grassland (g3c)

Approximately half of the area inside the red line boundary is classified as other neutral grassland. The grassland is tussocky and unmanaged in areas, with other areas damaged by cars parking on the verge. The grassland is dominated by species such as perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, nettles *Urtica dioica*, cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, and field bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis*, and has frequent occurrence of white clover *Trifolium repens*, fat hen *Chenopodium album*, and yellow oat grass *Trisetum flavescens*.

3.2.2 Bramble scrub (h3d)

A quarter of the area inside the red line boundary is dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus* scrub. The bramble scrub has been periodically cut back over the years to maintain access to the adjacent field for the landowner, and to maintain the informal parking areas.

3.2.3 Mixed scrub (h3h)

Where the temporary compound access is proposed off the Salisbury Road, there is an area of mixed scrub. This mixed scrub is predominantly hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), and bramble. The mixed scrub runs sporadically along the field edge next to the public highway, however, this is not classed as a hedgerow due to the scrub never having formed a continuous line, as verified by viewing the past aerial imagery available on google earth.

3.2.4 Artificial, unsealed, unvegetated surfaces (u1c)

A small area is covered with crushed stone, which serves as an informal parking area. There are small patches of vegetation, predominantly pineapple weed *Matricaria discoidea* and common knotgrass *Polygonum aviculare*.

3.3 Invasive non-native plant species

No invasive non-native plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded in the survey area. No impacts are considered likely; therefore, they are not considered further in this report.

It is an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild invasive non-native plants listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

3.4 Protected and notable animal species

The following protected and/or notable species were assessed which will potentially be affected by the proposed project.

3.4.1 Bats

The desk study returned various records for bat species within 1 km of the proposed project area. There were records for lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*, serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*, whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, and unidentified bat species.

Lesser horseshoe and barbastelle bats are of national conservation importance. Whiskered bats and Natterer's bats are of county-level conservation importance. Other species such as soprano and common pipistrelle, noctule, serotine, and Daubenton's bat are considered to be of local conservation importance.

A ground level assessment for roosting bats was carried out during the walkover survey of the trees adjacent to the red line boundary. No suitable features were identified. The bramble scrub, grassland and mixed scrub is suitable foraging habitat for bats, the loss of which may impact on local bat species.

All bat species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017. In summary it is an offence to intentionally or deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture any bats or damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure used for breeding or resting by them. Seven are also species of principal importance and 15 are listed in the LBAP.

3.4.2 Dormouse

The bramble and mixed scrub have the potential to be utilised by Dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius*. The scrub is relatively low lying and does not provide optimum habitat for nesting or hibernating dormice but could provide foraging opportunities. The connecting habitat outside of the red line boundary provides better opportunities for nesting and hibernating, with more varied vegetation structure and the presence of mature trees.

However, it is considered unlikely dormice are present in this area. There are no records of a local population of dormice, with the closest record for dormice originating from a site 5km northwest of the proposed project area. This is a record of dormouse footprints from 2020. The nearby housing development 350m south of the proposed project area submitted results of dormice surveys in 2018, which found no evidence of dormice. Furthermore, the habitat on site is not well connected to the surrounding habitat. The proposed project area is on the urban fringe of Amesbury, predominantly surrounded by roads and residential gardens. There are no established hedgerows connecting the proposed project area to the woodland and scrub habitat to the south and west which follows the River Avon. Therefore, dormice are unlikely to be impacted by the minor scrub vegetation removal and not considered further in this report.

Dormice are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017. In summary it is an offence to intentionally or deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture dormice or damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure used for breeding or resting. Dormice are also species of principal importance and are listed in the LBAP.

3.4.3 Badger

There are local records of badgers from within 1km of the proposed project area. However, no evidence of badgers *Meles meles* or badger setts were recorded within or adjacent to the proposed project area. The bramble scrub and grassland within the proposed project area may provide limited foraging opportunities but this is likely to be a very small proportion of a badger's foraging territory. Badgers are considered unlikely to be significantly affected by the proposed project and are therefore not considered further within this assessment.

Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. In summary it is an offence to wilfully kill or injure a badger; damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett; or disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett.

3.4.4 Widespread reptiles

Widespread reptiles include: common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, adder *Vipera berus* and slow worms *Anguis fragilis*. There are records of slow worm, grass snake and common lizards from within 1km of the proposed project. The closest record is for common lizard, 120m east of the red line boundary in 2021. Reptile surveys undertaken in April 2025 found a total of 1 common lizard on a single occasion, indicating a low population of common lizards are present in the area which may be impacted by the proposed works. Widespread reptile species are of local conservation importance.

Common lizards, grass snakes, adders and slow worms are afforded partial protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In summary it is offence to intentionally kill or injure any of these species. All widespread reptiles are also listed as species of principle importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. Slow worm, grass snakes and adders are included in the LBAP.

3.5.5 Great crested newt

No ponds are present within 250m of the proposed project site. A network of drains and ditches is located approximately 140m west of the red line boundary. However, these water features have been assessed and found to contain flowing water, indicating they are unsuitable as breeding habitat for great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*, who tend to favour static water free from predators associated with running water (such as fish).

One historical record of great crested newt (GCN) exists within 1km of the site, located approximately 570m to the southwest and dated to 1979. Due to the age of this record, it cannot be considered reliable evidence of the species' current presence in the local area.

Due to the lack of nearby suitable waterbodies the area is considered suboptimal terrestrial habitat. Great crested newts are therefore considered unlikely to occur and therefore will not be affected by the proposed project. GCN are not considered further within this assessment.

Great crested newts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017. In summary it is illegal to intentionally or deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture a great crested newt or damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure used for breeding or resting. Great crested newts are also listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and the LBAP.

3.4.5 Other amphibians

Records of common frogs *Rana temporaria*, have been documented within 1km of the proposed project area. However, due to the absence of suitable waterbodies near the proposed site, it is unlikely that amphibians are present within the project area and are not considered further in this report.

Common toads are listed on S41 of the NERC Act 2006 and the common toad and palmate newt (*Triturus helveticus*) are included in the LBAP.

3.4.6 Breeding birds

There are many records of bird species from within 1km of the proposed project. The scrub within the proposed project area provides suitable habitat for breeding birds, as do the mature trees adjacent to the red line boundary. There is potential for breeding birds to be impacted when the scrub habitat is removed.

It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird, or take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Some species also receive further protection from disturbance whilst nesting.

3.4.7 Hedgehog

There are many records of hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) from within 1km of the proposed project. The scrub within the proposed project area provides suitable habitat for nesting and hibernating hedgehogs. There is potential for hedgehogs to be impacted when the scrub habitat is removed.

Hedgehogs are afforded partial protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In summary it is offence to intentionally kill or capture hedgehogs. Hedgehogs are also listed as species of principle importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

4. Assessment of effects and mitigation measures

The following sections outline the potential impacts on the ecological features identified in Section 3 and the mitigation measures that will be undertaken to avoid, minimise and restore them. The significance of any residual effects is also assessed to inform the need for compensation where necessary to achieve no net loss as well as any enhancements to achieve an overall biodiversity net gain. The proposed mitigation and compensation measures are proportionate to the conservation importance of the ecological features affected and the magnitude of the impacts upon them.

4.1 Habitats

4.1.1 Potential impacts

The proposed project will result in permanent and loss of bramble scrub and other neutral grassland habitat during construction. An area of crushed stone (artificial, unvegetated, unsealed surface) will be retained. An area of mixed scrub will be temporarily lost during construction. However, as this scrub is in poor condition it will be reinstated and reach its previous condition within two years of initial impact, and is therefore counted as retained. Exact areas of habitat lost and retained are outlined in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Summary of permanent and temporary habitat loss during construction

Habitat	Area/length habitat loss (approx.)		Retained
	Permanent	Temporary	
Other neutral grassland	81.94m ²	0m ²	0m ²
Bramble scrub	33.98m ²	0m ²	0m ²
Mixed scrub	0m ²	0m ²	35.28m ²
Artificial, unsealed, unvegetated surfaces	0m ²	0m ²	11.44m ²

Existing habitat and post development habitat plans are shown on drawing C00520/ENV/403/A in Appendix A.4 and C00520/ENV/404/A in Appendix A.5

4.1.2 Mitigation measures

The proposed project has been designed to occupy the minimum area required for the construction and safe usage of the tanker layby and temporary compound access. Construction will take place only within low and medium distinctiveness habitats.

4.1.3 Significance of residual effects

Without further compensation there will be a residual permanent habitat loss of 115.92m². This is considered to have a significant residual effect at the local level in respect to these habitats. This residual impact will be offset using off site BNG units, purchased through a third-party provider as outlined in section 4.5.1.

4.2 Bats

4.2.1 Potential impacts

There will be no loss of suitable roosting opportunities for bats as a result of the proposed project. No lighting is proposed for the new tanker layby. The removal of bramble and other neutral grassland will result in a loss of low-quality foraging habitat. Due to the relatively small area of foraging habitat to be removed, no impacts on connectivity are considered likely.

4.2.2 Mitigation measures

No targeted mitigation measures for bats will be undertaken during construction or operation.

4.2.3 Significance of residual effects

There will be no long-term significant residual effect on foraging and commuting bats as result of the proposed project.

4.3 Breeding birds

4.3.1 Potential impacts

The proposed project has the potential to kill, injure, or damage active birds' nests during the breeding season, as a result of clearance of vegetation to facilitate construction.

The proposed project will also result in the permanent loss of a small area of bramble which is considered to be suitable nesting and foraging habitat for breeding birds.

4.3.2 Mitigation measures

Habitat clearance of suitable nesting habitat will be scheduled for outside of nesting bird season. Should the proposed clearance of habitats occur inside the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive), an ecologist will be required to carry out nesting bird checks prior and during clearance to ensure that no nests are present. Additionally, a toolbox talk will be given to operatives conducting the clearance to ensure that the method of checking and incremental clearance and its potential impacts are understood.

If an active nest is identified, clearance works will cease, and an ecologist will advise a suitable exclusion zone to be erected around the nest until it is no longer considered active.

4.3.3 Significance of residual effects

The amount of permanent loss of foraging and nesting habitat due to the proposed scrub clearance is a small proportion of the surrounding grass and bramble scrub on site. Overall, there will be a residual loss of 33.98m² of nesting habitat, which is significant at the local level.

4.4 Reptiles

4.4.1 *Potential impacts*

The proposed project will result in the permanent loss of suitable reptile habitat, including scrub and unmanaged neutral grassland. This habitat was found to be used by a low population of common lizards during the reptile surveys. This habitat loss accounts for a small area on the outskirts of the wider available habitat provided by the grassland and scrub beyond the red line boundary to the south.

4.4.2 *Mitigation measures*

The works are scheduled to start in March 2026; therefore, habitat clearance can occur during the start of the active season for reptiles. Grass and scrub will be strimmed in a phased approach to no less than 15cm initially and then to ground level, to allow any reptiles to disperse naturally without injury. Following this, an ecologist will carry out a fingertip/destructive search of the area, to ensure that there are no reptiles are present.

4.4.3 *Significance of residual effects*

Following the proposed mitigation to avoid killing and injuring reptiles, there will still be a small permanent residual loss of habitat which will be significant at a local level.

4.5 Hedgehogs

4.5.1 *Potential impacts*

The proposed project will result in the permanent loss of suitable hedgehog nesting and hibernating habitat.

4.5.2 *Mitigation measures*

Mitigation for hedgehogs will be undertaken concurrently with reptile mitigation. After the first phased cut of scrub, a hand search for hedgehog nests will be undertaken to ensure that there are no hedgehogs present.

4.5.3 *Significance of residual effects*

Following the proposed mitigation to avoid killing hedgehogs, there will still be a small permanent residual loss of habitat which will be significant at a local level.

4.6 Compensation and enhancements

In order to ensure there will be no significant residual adverse effects, further ecological compensation measures will be implemented as given in sections 4.5.1 to 4.5.2 below.

4.6.1 *Habitat compensation and biodiversity net gain*

The following habitat compensation and enhancement measures for area habitats will be implemented to achieve a measurable BNG of a minimum of 10%. Further details on how these have been determined are given in the draft biodiversity metric tool and habitat

condition assessment documents which have been submitted separately to this EclA, as well as the baseline habitat condition and distinctiveness plan in Appendix A.4 and post development habitat plan in Appendix A.5.

The proposed project will result in the permanent loss of -0.05 habitat units, equating to a reduction of -76.67% according to the biodiversity metric tool. Due to the small-scale nature of the proposed project and surrounding land being outside of the ownership of Wessex Water, on-site habitat creation and enhancement is not viable. Off-site biodiversity units will therefore be purchased instead to achieve a minimum of 10% BNG. This approach will also generate greater benefit of nature conservation (Principle 1 in CIEEM, CIRIA and EIMA, 2016) and follows The Lawton Principle for '*bigger, better, more joined up habitats*'.

The final version of the biodiversity metric tool, including details of the third-party biodiversity unit purchase, will be submitted following determination of the planning application. A summary of these measures is also included within the biodiversity net gain statement.

4.6.2 Protected species compensation

No targeted protected species compensation measures will be implemented. The surrounding land outside of the red line boundary is outside of Wessex Water's land ownership and the existing landowners plans for the site are not compatible with providing protected species enhancements.

4.6.3 Habitat management and monitoring

As no on-site habitat creation or enhancement is proposed, there will be no requirement for ongoing habitat management and monitoring.

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Appendix A. Drawings

A.1 Location plan

C00520/ENV/400/A

A.2 Designated sites for nature conservation

C00520/ENV/401/A

A.3 Habitat map (UKHab)

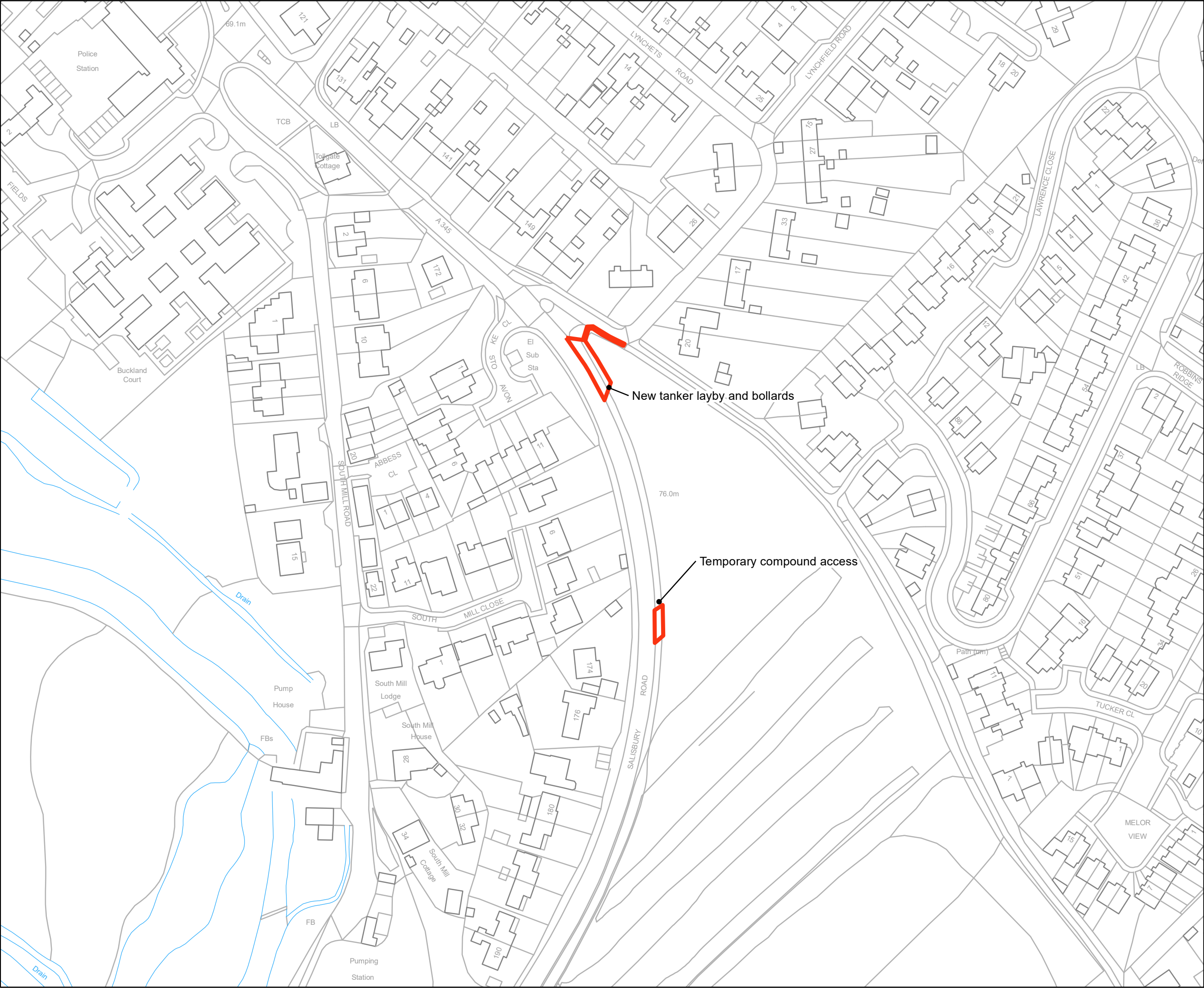
C00520/ENV/402/A

A.4 Habitat condition and distinctiveness plan

C00520/ENV/403/A

A.5 Post development habitat plan

C00520/ENV/404/A



Red Line Boundary

Salisbury Road, Amesbury

Location plan

Grid reference:
SU 15904 40924

Date:
01/10/2025

Drawing number
C00520/ENV/400/A

Scale
1:1,250

N

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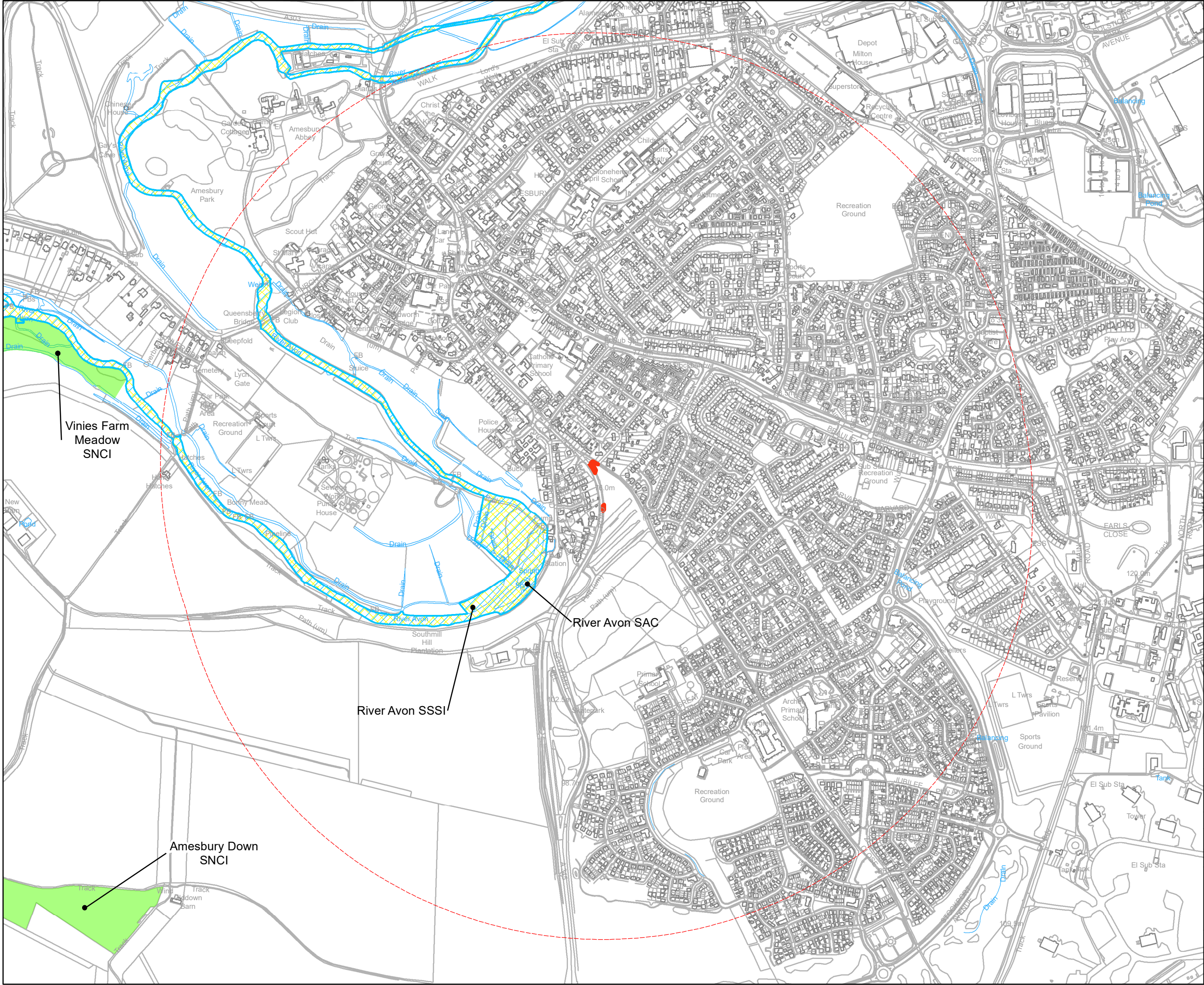
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- Red line boundary
- Red line boundary 1000m buffer
- Special area of conservation (SAC)
- Site of special scientific interest (SSSI)
- Local wildlife site (LWS)

**Salisbury Road, Amesbury
Designated sites within 1km [A3]**

Grid reference: SU 15904 40924	Date: 01/10/2025
Drawing number C00520/ENV/401/A	Scale 1:8,000

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Red Line Boundary

UKHab primary habitats

UKHab Code

g3c - other neutral grassland

h3d - Bramble scrub

h3h - Mixed scrub

u1c - artificial unvegetated unsealed surface

Target note

Secondary codes
16 Tall forbs

Salisbury Road, Amesbury

Habitat map (UKHab) [A3]

Grid reference:

SU 15904 40924

Date:

01/10/2025

Drawing number

C00520/ENV/402/A

Scale

1:450

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- Red Line Boundary
- UKHab primary habitats**
- UKHab Code**
- g3c - other neutral grassland
 - h3d - Bramble scrub
 - h3h - Mixed scrub
 - u1c - artificial unvegetated unsealed surface

Secondary codes

16 Tall forbs

Biodiversity net gain baseline

A1 - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, 11.44m2.
Very low distinctiveness. Condition assessment N/A.

A2 - Other neautral grassland, 81.94m2.
Medium distinctiveness. Poor condition.

A3 - Bramble scrub, 33.98m2.
Medium distinctiveness. Condition assessment N/A.

A4 - Mixed scrub, 35.28m2.
Medium distinctiveness. Poor condition.

Salisbury Road, Amesbury
Habitat condition and distinctiveness

Grid reference: SU 15904 40924	Date: 01/10/2025
Drawing number C00520/ENV/403/A	Scale 1:450
	

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Red Line Boundary

UKHab primary habitats

h3h - Mixed scrub

u1c - artificial unvegetated unsealed surface

Biodiversity net gain onsite post development habitats

A1 - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, 11.44m2 retained.

A4 - Mixed scrub, 35.28m2 retained.

A5 - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, 151.2m2 created.

Salisbury Road, Amesbury

Post development habitat plan

Grid reference:

SU 15904 40924

Date:

01/10/2025

Drawing number

C00520/ENV/404/A

Scale

1:450

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Appendix B. Target notes and photographs

Table B.1: Target notes and photographs

TN	Description	Photo
1	Other neutral grassland and bramble scrub beyond, as viewed from the north looking south	
2	Other neutral grassland and a small area of artificial, unvegetated, unsealed surface in the foreground. Viewed from the south looking north.	
3	Area of mixed scrub, viewed from the east looking west towards Salisbury road.	

Appendix C. Summary of planning policy and legislation

Table C.1: Summary of national planning policy and nature conservation legislation

Planning policy/Legislation	Summary
Planning policy	
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019	The purpose of the NPPF is to help achieve sustainable development. Section 15 of the NPPF (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) sets out the responsibilities of the planning system to minimise impacts on biodiversity and to secure measurable net gains for biodiversity. This requires Local Authorities in England to take measures to protect and enhance biodiversity. If significant harm resulting from the development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.
UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework	This covers the period 2011 - 2020 and replaces the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) 1994 – 2010. Its aim is to address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and improve and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services. However, the UKBAP priority habitats and species background information is still widely used at country level.
Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services	This strategy builds on the Natural Environment White Paper for England and sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade. The strategy describes what is needed to halt overall biodiversity loss by 2020 and includes goals on the following: Better wildlife habitats; More sites that are larger and less fragmented areas for wildlife, with an increase in priority habitats by at least 200,000ha; The restoration of 15% of degraded ecosystems – as a contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation; An overall improvement in the status of wildlife and the prevention of further human-induced extinctions of known threatened species; Increased engagement of people in biodiversity issues, aware of its value and taking positive action.
Legislation	
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	Primary legislation for the protection of wildlife and natural habitats including nesting birds, wild animals and plants; the control of non-native species and designation of protected areas (sites of special scientific interest, SSSI).
Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	Primary legislation transposing European Directives for the designation of protected areas (special area of conservation, SAC and special protection area, SPA) and protection of species.
Protection of Badgers Act 1992	Legislation for the prevention of killing and cruelty to badgers, as well as the protection of their setts.
Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006	Legislation placing a duty on statutory undertakers and public bodies to conserve biodiversity, in particular habitats and species of principal importance as listed in Section 41 of the Act.

Table C.2: Summary of protected species legislation

Species	Summary of Legislation
Bats (all species) Dormouse <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i> Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i> Smooth snake <i>Coronella austriaca</i> Sand lizard <i>Lacerta agilis</i>	All designated species are fully protected under the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In summary it is an offence to: – Deliberately capture, injure or kill a designated species – Damage or destroy a breeding or resting place – Obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places – Possess, sell, control or transport live or dead designated species, or parts of them – Intentionally or recklessly disturb a designated species while it's in a structure or place of shelter or protection

Species	Summary of Legislation
Water voles <i>Arvicola amphibius</i>	Water voles are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In summary it is an offence to: – Intentionally capture, kill or injure water voles – Damage, destroy or block access to their places of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care) – Disturb them in a place of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care) – Possess, sell, control or transport live or dead water voles or part parts of them.
Badger <i>Meles meles</i>	Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. In summary it is an offence to: – Intentionally capture, kill or injure a badger – Damage, destroy or block access to their setts – Disturb badgers in setts
Slow worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i> Grass snake <i>Natrix helvetica</i> Common lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i> Adder <i>Vipera berus</i>	All widespread reptile species are partially protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In summary it is an offence to: – Intentionally kill or injure a widespread reptile
Breeding Birds	All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In summary it is an offence to: – Kill, injure or take any wild bird – Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or in use – Take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird In addition to the above, bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act are afforded further protection. In summary it is an offence to: – Disturb such a bird whilst nest building – Disturb such a bird at a nest containing eggs or young – Disturb the dependent young of such a bird
Example species: Japanese knotweed <i>Fallopia japonica</i> Giant hogweed <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i> Himalayan balsam <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	It is an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant species listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
Example species: Bluebell* <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> Field eryngo <i>Eryngium campestre</i> Cheddar pink <i>Dianthus gratianopolitanus</i>	Plant species listed in Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are afforded special protection. In summary it is an offence to: – Intentionally pick, uproot or destroy such a plant – Sell, possess or transport for the purpose of sale any such plant *Bluebell are protected from sale only.