



Defence Infrastructure Organisation

**SERVICE FAMILIES
ACCOMMODATION MODEL HOMES
DEVELOPMENT SLING ROAD,
BULFORD**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal





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MODEL HOMES DEVELOPMENT SLING
ROAD, BULFORD**

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Executive summary

WSP has been commissioned by Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in advance of Proposed Development at Bulford Camp, in Bulford, near Salisbury, Wiltshire. The scheme comprises the construction of eight homes with associated garages and supporting infrastructure. The Site covers approximately 1.13 ha and is centred on National Grid Reference/NGR 418895, 144419.

This PEA is based on the findings of a desk study to review existing ecological baseline information available in the public domain and information held by relevant third parties, and a site survey conducted in November 2025 to assess and map the habitats present and search for evidence of the presence of protected or notable species, or features suitable to support them.

The PEA has identified the following designated sites and ecological features that are considered relevant to the Proposed Development:

- Salisbury Plain Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
- Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA);
- Salisbury Plain Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- River Avon SAC;
- Habitats of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities NERC Act (2006) including deciduous woodland and lowland calcareous grassland;
- Bats;
- Badger *Meles Meles*;
- Hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*;
- Other notable mammals;
- Breeding birds, including stone curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus*;
- Widespread reptile species;
- Amphibians, including great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN);
- Notable terrestrial invertebrates; and
- Notable plant species.

Recommendations for further survey and assessment are provided. These include further habitat surveys, a Habitat Regulations Screening Assessment, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, Ecological Impact Assessment, a pre-construction badger survey, stone curlew surveys, reptile surveys and a GCN environmental DNA (eDNA) survey.



Recommendations for general avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures are also provided.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1. WSP has been commissioned by Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) (hereafter referred to as the 'Client') to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in advance of a proposed development at Sling Road, Bulford near Salisbury, Wiltshire (National Grid Reference/NGR 418895, 144419, **Figure 1**). The proposals entail the construction of eight houses as well as associated garages, hard landscaping, soft landscaping and SuDS. The land is currently 1.13 ha of green space, hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.
- 1.1.2. The Site is in a semi-rural location 0.5 km north of Bulford Camp and barracks. Salisbury Plain Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) all lie 100 m to the north and east of the Site. In the wider landscape, the town of Salisbury is located 15 km to the south and Andover 17.5 km to the east of the Site.
- 1.1.3. Full planning permission will be sought for the Proposed Development from Wiltshire Council.

1.2 Scope of report

- 1.2.1. The Client commissioned WSP to complete a PEA in November 2025.
- 1.2.2. This report presents the findings of the PEA and has been prepared with reference to current good practice guidelines published by the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) in relation to PEAs, report writing and Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) (CIEEM, 2017a, 2017b and 2024) and guidance contained in the British Standard for biodiversity (British Standards Institute (BSI), 2013).
- 1.2.3. WSP was commissioned to:
 - Provide baseline ecological information about the Site and a surrounding study area with particular reference to ecological features that could be affected by the Proposed Development and therefore form key considerations in the design of the proposals. Ecological features include designated sites¹, and protected or priority species and habitats²;

¹ As defined in Box 14 in CIEEM (2024) Ecological Impact Assessment guidelines.

² The terms 'priority habitats' and 'priority species' are used for habitats and species considered as priorities for conservation, as defined in Box 1 in CIEEM (2017a) guidelines for PEAs. It includes, for example, those listed as local priority on local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs), those listed as national priority such as Species of Principal Importance (SPI) and Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) and those on red lists, including Birds of Conservation

- Conduct a Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW) survey, comprising an inspection of habitats and trees on Site to classify the suitability of these to support roosting bats;
- Produce a report combining the methods and results of the desk study, habitat survey and DBW, including recommendations to enable compliance with relevant nature conservation legislation and planning policy;
- If necessary, provide recommendations for further surveys and/or design changes to enable compliance with relevant nature conservation legislation and planning policy; and
- Identify the likely need for avoidance, mitigation, or compensation measures, and to highlight opportunities for enhancement.

1.2.4. The PEA is for use by the Client to inform the design of the Proposed Development, to highlight any ecological constraints, requirement for further surveys and to aid project planning. It is based on the Site plans and Proposed Development information described in Section 1.1. Any future variations in the Proposed Development may result in the need to update the appraisal.

1.2.5. It is not usually appropriate to submit a PEA in support of a planning application (CIEEM, 2017a). As the Proposed Development progresses to planning application stage, the PEA should be superseded by, or appended to, an EclA report for submission with a planning application. This should include an evaluation of the importance of ecological features and assessment of the significance of effects.

1.3 Relevant Legislation and Policy

- 1.3.1. This PEA has been prepared in the context of the current national policy and legislative framework for nature conservation as summarised in **Appendix A**. Section 4 discusses the implications of the legislation and policy relevant to the Proposed Development. This does not constitute legal advice, and the original legislation should be consulted for details.
- 1.3.2. This PEA has been compiled with reference to the following national and local planning policy documents. Key Wiltshire Council planning policies driving recommendations made in this report are summarised below, where they differ to national policy.

National

- The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2011-2020) (JNCC, 2012);
- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (DEFRA, 2011);

Concern (BoCC) (Stanbury et al., 2021). It should not be confused with priority habitats and species as listed in the EU Habitats Directive, or as previously used to denote those afforded the highest level of priority for conservation under the UKBAP.

- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)³;
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2025 (Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government, 2018- 2021); and
- Environmental Improvement Plan 2023: first revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (DEFRA, 2023).

Local

- Wiltshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Wiltshire Council, New Forest National Park, Swindon Borough Council, 2025)
- Wiltshire Core Strategy (Wiltshire Council, 2015);
- Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to protect and enhance biodiversity, including non-statutory sites such as local wildlife sites (Wiltshire Council, 2015).
- Wiltshire Local Plan Review – Draft Policies (Wiltshire Council, 2023);
- Wiltshire Biodiversity Net Gain Topic Paper (Wiltshire Council, 2024);
- Wiltshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan (Wiltshire Council, 2008); and
- Bat Special Areas of Conservation Planning Guidance (Wiltshire Council & Natural England, 2015).

³ The UK BAP has now been replaced by a new UK Biodiversity Framework published in 2024, however, it contains useful information on how to characterise importance species assemblages and habitats which is still relevant.

2 Methods

2.1 Overview

2.1.1. This PEA is based on the following data sources:

- An ecological desk study;
- A habitat survey; and
- A protected/priority species assessment including:
 - A DBW, comprising a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA); and
 - Badger *meles meles* walkover

2.2 Desk Study

- 2.2.1. The desk study was undertaken in January 2026 to review existing ecological baseline (**Table 2-1**) information available in the public domain and to obtain information held by relevant third parties. For the purposes of the desk study exercise, records were collated within various radii around the Site. This approach is consistent with current good practice guidance published by CIEEM (2017a and 2017b) to provide the baseline data for the ecological desk study.
- 2.2.2. The findings of the desk study are presented in Section 2 and are shown in **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**. A list of the desk study records is located in **Appendix B**.
- 2.2.3. The ecological desk study was carried out by a graduate ecologist with a Qualifying CIEEM membership and a Basic level of competence in ecological assessment (CIEEM, 2021a), assisted by an Associate member of CIEEM who is 'Capable' in carrying out ecological assessments and desk studies of this type.
- 2.2.4. The standard 2 km ecological data search was conducted using records from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre.

Table 2-1 – Desk Study Data Sources

Source	Record Type	Search Area
Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre	Protected and priority species	2 km
Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre	Bat species	2 km

Source	Record Type	Search Area
Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre	Non-statutory site ⁴	1 km
Natural England	Statutory sites designated under national legislation, i.e. Local Nature Reserves (LNR), National Nature Reserves (NNR), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	2 km
Natural England	Statutory sites designated at the international level (also including sites classified under international conventions): National Site Network sites: Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), potential SPA (pSPA) and candidate SAC (c.SAC); and Ramsar and potential Ramsar sites.	10 km
Natural England	International statutory sites (SAC) designated for bats	30 km
Natural England Priority Habitat Inventory ⁵	Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) ⁶	1 km
Natural England Woodpasture & Park and BAP Priority Habitat dataset (provisional)	Wood Pasture & Parkland HPI	1 km
Natural England Open Mosaic Habitat (OMH) dataset (draft)	OMH HPI	1 km

⁴ An area without protection by the law, designated at a local level and protected by local and national policy (as defined in BSI (2013) Biodiversity Code of Practice BS42020).

⁵ Inventories of UKBAP habitats which mostly align with Habitats of Principal Importance.

⁶ Habitats listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

Source	Record Type	Search Area
Natural England (Ancient Woodland Inventory) ⁷	Semi-natural ancient woodland and ancient replanted woodland	1 km
Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory ⁸	Ancient, veteran and notable trees	250 m
MAGIC ⁹ – 1:10,000, accessed December 2024	Waterbodies and watercourses and their direction of flow	500 m
MAGIC	Protected Species Licencing	2 km

2.3 Habitat survey

- 2.3.1. A UK Habitat classification (UKHab) survey was undertaken of the Site and a 30 m buffer area (the ‘Survey Area’), as shown on the habitat plan (**Figure 6**). The survey was carried out on 24 November 2025. The weather during the survey was cool and dry.
- 2.3.2. The habitat survey was carried out by an Associate member of CIEEM who is ‘Capable’ in surveys of sites containing similar habitat types (CIEEM, 2021a).
- 2.3.3. Habitats were described and mapped following the standard UK Habitat classification methodology (UKHab Ltd, 2023). Where appropriate, consideration was given to whether habitats qualify or could qualify as a ‘Habitat of Principal Importance’ (HPI) following habitat descriptions published by BRIG (JNCC, 2011) and The UK Habitat Classification Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd, 2023), and whether they could classify as irreplaceable habitats, following the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government, 2024) definition . At the same time, habitat classification and habitat condition assessment was carried out following the methodology in Defra’s Biodiversity Metric. The overall condition is presented in the Results section of this report.
- 2.3.4. A list of plant species was compiled by habitat type or by habitat parcel where different areas of the same habitat had significantly different species compositions, showing all species recorded in order to describe and classify the habitat type and show dominant and notable species. Relative plant species abundances were estimated using the DAFOR

⁷ The ancient woodland inventory in England lists areas over two hectares in size which have been continuously wooded since at least 1600.

⁸ Map of ancient, veteran, and notable trees; accessed: <https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

⁹ Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA, 2024) – Mutli-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) database.

scale¹⁰. The scientific names for plant species follow those in the New Flora of the British Isles (Stace, 2019).

2.4 Protected And Priority Species Assessment

- 2.4.1. The potential for presence of legally protected and priority species (as defined in Section 1.2) in the Survey Area was assessed using the desk study results, habitat survey results, and incidental field observations from the habitat survey. The assessment of habitat suitability for protected and priority species was based on professional experience and judgement. This was supplemented by standard sources of guidance on habitat suitability assessment for key faunal groups (CIEEM, 2021b).

2.5 Badger Walkover

- 2.5.1. A badger walkover survey of the Survey Area was completed in accordance with best practice guidance (Harris et al. 1989 and Roper, 2010). This involved a thorough search for badger setts and signs of badger activity within areas of suitable habitat including woodland, dense scrub and hedgerows. For each area of potentially suitable habitat within the Survey Area, the following signs were recorded where present:
- sett entrances, spoil heaps and bedding (such as dried grass);
 - footprints;
 - mammal paths;
 - droppings in dung pits and/or established latrines;
 - distinctive badger guard hairs on nearby features or in sett entrances;
 - scratching posts; and
 - 'snuffle holes' indicating foraging.

2.6 Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW)

- 2.6.1. A DBW was undertaken in adherence to best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023) in conjunction with the habitat survey. The aim was to determine the suitability of the Survey Area to support commuting and foraging bats (see **Table 2-2**), and for trees found in the Survey Area to support roosting bats (BSI, 2015). The DBW is intended to identify the need for further surveys to be undertaken to inform the Proposed Development.

¹⁰ The DAFOR scale has been used to estimate the frequency and cover of the different plant species as follows: Dominant (D) - >75% cover, Abundant (A) – 51-75% cover, Frequent (F) – 26-50% cover, Occasional (O) – 11-25% cover, Rare (R) – 1-10% cover., The term 'Locally' (L) is also used where the frequency and distribution of a species are patchy and 'Edge' (E) is also used where a species only occurs on the edge of a habitat type.

Table 2-2 - Suitability of Habitat to Support Bats (based on Collins (2023) Table 4.1)

Suitability rating	Description
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats)
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small number of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolate habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as alone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-path such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous, high quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-path such as river valleys, stream, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge- High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

2.7 Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)

2.7.1. All trees within the Survey Area, where accessible, were inspected to search for features suitable to support roosting bats using binoculars from ground level. Where possible, each feature was visually inspected for evidence of use by roosting bats, including:

- Bat droppings in, around or below the potential roost feature;
- Urine staining below the potential roost feature;
- Scratch marks;
- Characteristic staining (from fur oils);
- Squeaking noises; and,
- Live or dead specimens.

2.7.2. Owing to the difficulty of identifying Potential Roost Features (PRFs) in trees, best practice guidelines (Collins (2023) Table 4.2 and Table 6.2) recommend an alternative method for the classification of trees during ground-level inspections as part of a GLTA, as set out in **Table 2-3** below:

Table 2-3 - Suitability of Trees to Support Roosting Bats

Suitability rating	Description
None	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any.
Further Assessment Required (FAR)	Further assessment required as it was not possible to confidently say there were no PRFs due to size, structure or obstructions from the initial survey.
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present.

2.7.3. Where possible, trees containing PRFs were then categorised further as shown in Table 2-4 below.

Table 2-4 - Further Classification of Trees Containing PRFs

Suitability rating	Sub-Category	Description
PRF	PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
	PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

2.8 Notes and Limitations

- 2.8.1. Every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the Survey Area, however, the following specific limitations apply to this assessment:
- Ecological survey data is typically valid for 18 months unless otherwise specified, for example if conditions are likely to change more quickly due to ecological processes, mobile species or anticipated changes in management (CIEEM, 2019).
 - Records held by local biological record centres and local recording groups are generally collected on a voluntary basis. Therefore, the absence of records does not demonstrate the absence of species; it may simply indicate a gap in recording coverage.
 - The habitat survey was carried out over the period of a single day. As such, only a selection of all species that occur within the Survey Area will have been recorded. However, through use of desk study information to supplement site survey data, it is considered that an accurate assessment of the potential for the Site to support protected or priority species or habitats was possible.
 - The habitat map (**Figure 6**) has been reproduced from field notes and plans. Whilst this provides a sufficient level of detail to fulfil the requirements of a PEA, the maps are not intended to provide exact locations of key habitats.
 - Assessment of suitability for protected and priority species does not confirm that a species is present or absent, unless otherwise stated. Neither does it exclude the possibility of other protected or priority species being subsequently encountered. Recommendations are made where further surveys are needed to determine the baseline or mitigation requirements.
 - Some dense scrub was present, restricting access to certain areas of the Survey Area. However, the broad habitats of the Survey Area were fully accessed.
 - Residential houses are present on the northern edge of the Survey Area which were not surveyed as part of the DBW as access was not available at the time of the survey. As the design of the Proposed Development progresses, if disturbance impacts to the buildings are likely, further surveys will be required.
 - The survey was not completed during the optimal survey season for habitat survey, generally accepted to be from April-September (inclusive). Botanical surveys are seasonally limited and throughout the spring and summer period certain species will be

more or less evident at different times (i.e. depending on the flowering season). Due to the historical management of the grassland within the Survey Area and the close proximity of grassland HPis, it is considered that insufficient information was gathered during this survey to enable an accurate assessment of the habitat types present, in line with standard habitat categories. Therefore, further survey work is recommended in Section 5 to mitigate this limitation.

3 Results

3.1 Site context

- 3.1.1. The Site is situated within a semi-rural landscape, bounded by the town of Bulford Camp to the south and Salisbury Plain and open agricultural land to the north and east. It forms part of a transitional zone between built development and the wider countryside.

The Site supports habitat features typical of lowland southern England, including:

- Improved and semi-improved grasslands;
- Hardstanding with scattered ruderal vegetation and scrub;
- Grassland; and
- Blocks of broadleaved woodland and shelterbelt planting.

- 3.1.2. The Survey Area appears to support habitats and land uses broadly consistent with those present in the surrounding landscape. While it includes some modified features (e.g. hardstanding), the overall habitat assemblage is typical of the local area and does not represent an ecological outlier.

3.2 Desk Study

Statutory Designated Sites

- 3.2.1. The desk study identified the Salisbury Plain SAC, SPA and SSSI located approximately 100 m north and east of the Site at its closest point. The desk study also identified River Avon SAC located approximately 2.24 km north west and Porton Down SPA located approximately 6.7 km to the south east of the Site. The locations of these designated sites are shown on **Figures 2** and **3** and further information is provided in **Tables 3-1** and **3-2** below.
- 3.2.2. The Site lies within the ecological impact risk zone for the Salisbury Plain SSSI (located approximately 100 m east).
- 3.2.3. One non-statutory local designated sites was present in the desk study area.

Table 3-1 - European or International Designated Sites within 10 km of the Site

Site Name / Designation	Size (ha)	Location*	Site / Feature Summary
Salisbury Plain SAC	21,460	100 m E	Salisbury Plain represents juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations near the southern edge of the habitat's range on chalk in southern England, where it is particularly rare. This site is the best remaining example in the UK of lowland juniper

Site Name / Designation	Size (ha)	Location*	Site / Feature Summary
			scrub on chalk. The site hosts the priority habitat type "orchid rich sites". Salisbury Plain is believed to be the largest surviving semi-natural dry grassland within the EU and is therefore the most important site for this habitat in the UK. Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site: 5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>). Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site: 1065 Marsh fritillary <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>.
Salisbury Plain SPA	19,714	100 m E	Supports nationally important breeding populations of two regularly occurring migratory species, quail <i>Coturnix coturnix</i> and hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i> and nationally important populations of stone curlew <i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i> and hen harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>. It also contains the largest expanse of unimproved chalk downland in northwest Europe with 41% of Britain's chalk downland.
River Avon SAC	417	2.24 km NW	The River Avon SAC is a large, lowland river system that includes sections running through chalk and clay, with transitions between the two. Five aquatic <i>Ranunculus</i> species occur in the river system, but stream water-crowfoot <i>Ranunculus penicillatus</i> ssp. <i>Pseudofluitans</i> and river water-crowfoot <i>R. fluitans</i> are the main dominants. Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site: 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site:

Site Name / Designation	Size (ha)	Location*	Site / Feature Summary
			1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> 1095 Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> 1096 Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i> 1106 Atlantic salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> 1163 Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i>
Porton Down SPA	1,562	6.7 km SE	Located on the Hampshire/Wiltshire border in the Test Valley and Salisbury Districts of southern England. It consists of an extensive area of chalk grassland with scrub and woodland and is one of the largest uninterrupted tracts of semi-natural chalk grassland in the UK. It is important for downland breeding birds and supports important numbers of stone curlew.

*Approximate location relative to Site boundary

Table 3-2 - National Designated Sites Within 2 km of the Site

Site Name / Designation	Size (ha)	Location*	Site / Feature Summary
Salisbury Plain SSSI	19,714	100 m E	Designated for its calcareous grassland, nationally rare and scarce plants, species of rare and scarce invertebrates and its nationally and internationally important bird populations. In addition to chalk downland, this site supports scrub habitats, temporary and permanent pools and the Nine Mile River winterbourne. Species of note include great crested newt and all four species of widespread reptile.

*Approximate location relative to Site boundary

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

3.2.4. One non-statutory designated site is present within 1 km of the Site (**Table 3-3**).

Table 3-3 - Non-statutory Local Designated Sites Within 1 km of the Site

Site Name / Designation	Size (ha)	Location*	Site / Feature Summary
Sheep Bridge Pond LWS	0.08	330m NW	Pond about 40 m in diameter and part of the streambed of the Nine Mile River, a tributary of the River Avon. Surrounded by cover of dense ruderal weeds.

*Approximate location relative to Site Boundary

Protected and priority Habitat Records

- 3.2.5. Table 3-4 shows any irreplaceable habitats¹¹ and HPI records from inventories within 1 km of the Site, and the distance of these from the Site (**Figure 4**).

Table 3-4 - Protected and Priority Habitat Records Within 2 km of the Site

Habitat	No. Parcels	Closest Parcel	Irreplaceable habitats and Habitats of Principal Importance
Lowland calcareous grassland	56	100 m E	HPI
Deciduous woodland	32	10 m S	HPI
No main habitat but additional habitats present ¹²	11	400 m NE	The map contains evidence of one or more priority habitats, but no single habitat dominates. The parcels in proximity to the Site contain deciduous woodland and lowland calcareous woodland.

- 3.2.6. No semi-natural ancient woodland nor ancient replanted woodland records were returned by the desk study within 1 km of the Site. Neither were any ancient or veteran trees identified within 250 m.

¹¹ Irreplaceable habitats are defined in the NPPF (Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government, 2024) as those which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

¹² This category comprises parcels where unspecified HPI has been recorded as present but not at sufficient densities to qualify as the main habitat within that parcel.

- 3.2.7. Aerial photography and OS mapping were checked for ponds and watercourses within 500 m of the Site and showed the Nine Mile River approximately 250 m north-west of the Site. The Nine Mile River is a small chalk stream that is connected to the River Avon SSSI approximately 2.5 km west of the Site, See **Figure 5**. The Local Wildlife Site, Sheep Bridge Pond, is also located 330m northeast of the Site.

3.3 Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

- 3.3.1. The desk study identified that the Site is located within two habitat opportunity areas termed Area that Could Become (ACB) within the LNRS¹³. The two areas are nominated in the LNRS for their potential to:
- Create more calcareous grassland; and
 - Maintain and enhance existing woodland

3.4 Habitat Survey

- 3.4.1. The habitat types that were identified in the Survey Area are shown on **Figure 6** and are listed and described in **Table 3-5**. A description of the dominant and notable species, and the composition and management of each habitat is provided below. Photographs are provided in **Appendix C**. Alpha-numeric codes used in this section cross-refer to the habitat classification. The order of the habitat descriptions below reflects their ordering in the habitat manual and does not reflect habitat importance.

¹³ Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council (n.d) Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Wiltshire and Swindon. Available online; [Revised Copy of Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Wiltshire and Swindon \(landscape\)](#)

Table 3-5 - Habitat Areas

Habitat	Area (ha)/ Length (m)*	Condition	Summary Description	HPI?	Irreplaceable?
g - Grassland	1.49	Poor	The Site was dominated by grassland which is regularly managed through mowing (Photographs 1, 2 and 4, Appendix C). Due to the species recorded and current management, this has been categorised as grassland. However, given the context of the wider landscape and the time of year in which the survey was undertaken (see Limitations section), recommendations for further survey during the appropriate season have been provided. Species recorded included cocks foot <i>Dactylis glomerata</i>, germander speedwell <i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>, yarrow <i>Achillea millefolium</i>, doves foot cranesbill <i>Geranium molle</i>, creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i>, annual meadow grass <i>Poa annua</i>, cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i>, dandelion <i>Taraxacum officinale</i>, sheep's fescue <i>Festuca ovina</i> and Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i>. Twenty-five scattered trees were present on Site (Photographs 3 and 7, Appendix C). Species recorded included beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>, horse chestnut <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>, field maple <i>Acer</i>	No	No

Habitat	Area (ha)/ Length (m)*	Condition	Summary Description	HPI?	Irreplaceable?
			<i>campestre</i> , elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i> , ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> and deodar cedar <i>Cedrus deodara</i> .		
h3 - Dense scrub	0.57	Moderate	Mixed scrub dominated the southern section of the Site (Photograph 5, Appendix C). No invasive species were recorded. The scrub was dominated by elder and blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> scrub with occasional sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>, dog wood <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> and scots pine <i>Pinus sylvestris</i>. The ground layer comprised nettles <i>Urtica dioica</i>, <i>clematis sp.</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>.	No	No
w1g – other woodland, broadleaved	0.33	Poor	Two parcels of broadleaved woodland were present on the north and western edges of the Site, within the Survey Area (Photograph 8, Appendix C). The woodlands were dominated by sycamore, and the understory was generally sparse at the time of the survey. Most trees were semi mature and of similar age. The ground layer was composed of occasional bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> and deadwood. No evidence of recent or ongoing management was observed.	Yes	No

Habitat	Area (ha)/ Length (m)*	Condition	Summary Description	HPI?	Irreplaceable?
u1b6 – other developed land	0.35	N/A	Tarmac and concrete surfaces used for access and occasional vehicle movement although at the time of survey there was no evidence of recent vehicle use.	No	No
u1d – suburban mosaic of developed/natural surfaces	0.35	N/A	Several houses and gardens were present on the northern edge of the Survey Area.	No	No
TOTAL AREA (ha)	3.09				

*Habitat length (m) is provided for linear habitats (i.e. hedgerows, lines of trees and watercourses), rather than area (ha).

3.5 Protected and Priority Species

Desk study

- 3.5.1. Records of protected or priority species relevant to the locality of the Site from the last 10 years, returned by the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre, are summarised in **Table 3-6** and **Appendix B**.

Table 3-6 - Records of Protected and Priority Species within 2 km of the Site

Species/Species Group	No. Records	Most Recent	Closest Record (m)
Bats	93	2024	503
Badger	8	2020	1398
Other priority mammals including hedgehog, harvest mouse and brown hare	44	2025	321
Birds (Schedule 1 on Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended))	27	2025	306
Birds (SPIs, LBAPs, and BoCC amber and red listed)	318	2025	266
Reptiles	3	2024	221
Amphibians	38	2025	457
Invertebrates	205	2025	306
Plants	225	2024	306

- 3.5.2. There are four granted European Protected Species licenses (EPSL) within 2 km of the Site. These are for the destruction of a resting or breeding site for common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, and brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*, serotine *Cnephaeus serotinus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*.
- 3.5.3. No other granted EPSLs were found within a 2 km radius of the Site.



Badger walkover

- 3.5.4. No evidence of badger (sett, latrines, snuffle holes, prints or hairs) were identified during the survey within the Survey Area.

GLTA

- 3.5.5. There were 25 trees within the Survey Area surveyed for potential roosting features. All trees were classified as having NONE suitability for roosting bats.
- 3.5.6. The woodland present within the Survey Area was surveyed for potential roosting features. All trees were classified as having NONE suitability for roosting bats.

4 Suitability Assessment

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1. The potential for the Survey Area to support legally protected and/or priority species is discussed for each species/species group below.
- 4.1.2. Suitability assessments for the following species/species groups are not included below because these species are not considered likely to be present within the Survey Area, due to the lack of records and no suitable habitat within or adjacent to the Survey Area to support them;
 - otter *Lutra lutra*;
 - water vole *Arvicola amphibius*; and
 - white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*;

4.2 Bats

- 4.2.1. A total of 93 records of bats within 2 km of the Site were returned by the desk study comprising 11 records of brown long-eared bat, 35 records of common pipistrelle, one record of Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii*, one record of leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri*, one record of Nathusius' pipistrelle, one record of natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*, 18 records of noctule *Nyctalus noctule*, 14 records of serotine, and 11 records of soprano pipistrelle.
- 4.2.2. The closest roost was a brown long-eared bat roost recorded 225 m southwest of the Site.
- 4.2.3. Furthermore, pre-application advice provided by Wiltshire Council (letter dated 15 January 2026) indicated that there is a known bat roost 300 m east of the Site. No further detail on the type of roost or species supported was provided.
- 4.2.4. The desk study identified that the Site is located within a bat assemblage opportunity area, as set out in the LNRS, nominated for the area's potential to increase the population of bat species, and expand their ranges, particularly in areas close to existing populations.

Roosting bats

- 4.2.5. No buildings or other structures were present within the Site. However, there are buildings present within the Survey Area that were not surveyed (see limitation in Section 2.8).
- 4.2.6. The trees within the Survey Area were surveyed for their potential to support roosting bats. No trees containing features to support roosting bats were found to be present within the Survey Area.

Foraging and commuting bats

- 4.2.7. The Survey Area consists of low diversity grassland, hardstanding and pockets of scrub, which offer some foraging opportunities. The Site itself is surrounded mostly by woodland but has some housing to the north of the Site which could create some higher light levels to

spill onto the Site. The offsite woodland to the west and south of the Site creates a dark feature for bats to commute along, and could commute through the Site.

- 4.2.8. Considering the relatively small size of the Survey Area, extent and type of habitats present, as well as the presence of numerous records and granted EPSLs within 2 km, the Survey Area is assessed as having moderate suitability to support foraging and commuting bats.

4.3 Badger

- 4.3.1. A total of eight records of badger within 2 km of the Site were returned by the desk study, with the most recent record from 2020 and the closest record 1.4 km from the Site.
- 4.3.2. No evidence of badgers was recorded within the Survey Area. The woodland habitat adjacent to the Survey Area consists of suitable habitat for sett creation. The Site itself is considered suitable for foraging badgers, however, not suitable for sett creation given the open and flat nature of the landscape.
- 4.3.3. In the wider landscape, there is further suitable habitat for badger including grassland, arable fields and woodlands. These habitats are not separated from the Site by any barriers, and further suitable habitat is only separated by relatively quiet roads (Sheepbridge Road and Sling Road). It is therefore possible that badgers could be present in the wider area and could utilise the Site for foraging and commuting.

4.4 Hazel dormouse

- 4.4.1. No records of hazel dormouse were recorded within 2 km of the Site.
- 4.4.2. Suitable habitat for dormice is present within the Survey Area in the form of woodland and scrub, which provide foraging, nesting and dispersal opportunities. In the wider landscape, there is suitable habitat for dormice including woodland and scrub which is connected to the Site.

4.5 Other mammals

- 4.5.1. A total of 44 records of other mammals within 2 km of the Site were returned by the desk study, including one record of brown hare *Lepus europaeus* from 2016, 1.46 km east of the Site, one record of harvest mouse *Micromys minutus* from 2023, 479 m north of the Site and 42 records of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* with the most recent record from 2024 and the nearest record 321 m east of the Site.
- 4.5.2. The mixed scrub present in the southern extent of the Site provides suitable commuting and foraging habitat for hedgehog.
- 4.5.3. The grassland and scrub on Site provide suitable habitat for brown hare to use for commuting and foraging.

- 4.5.4. The condition of the habitat present at the time of the survey provides low suitability for harvest mouse due to the low sward height of the grassland and lack of connectivity due to the absence of hedges and field margins within the Site.

4.6 Birds

- 4.6.1. A total of 347 records of 54 species of bird of within 2 km of the Site were returned by the desk study. Nine of those species are listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) comprising one record of hen harrier, ten records of red kite, five records of stone curlew, two records of kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*, one record of hobby, one record of quail, three records of redwing *Turdus iliacus*, three records of fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*, and one record of barn owl *Tyto alba*.
- 4.6.2. The desk study identified that the Site is located within a local priority species area, as set out in the LNRS, for stone curlew. The area has been nominated for its potential to create a mosaic of high-quality chalk and limestone grassland habitats. A total of five records of this species were identified within 2 km of the Site with the most recent record from 2021 and the nearest record 1.59 km east of the Site. The Site is also located 100 m from the Salisbury Plain SPA which is designated, inter alia, for breeding stone curlew.
- 4.6.3. The Site supports habitats suitable for nesting birds, including scrub, grassland margins and scattered trees. These habitats provide opportunities for common and widespread species. The habitat present at the time of survey provides low suitability for nesting stone curlew due to the absence of well-draining, sparsely vegetated calcareous soil. However, given the connectivity to the Salisbury Plain SPA, it is possible they could be present on Site.

4.7 Reptiles

- 4.7.1. Three records of reptile species within 2 km of the Site were returned by the desk study comprising two records of slow worm *Anguis fragilis* with the most recent record from 2024 and the nearest record 221 m south of the Site; and one record of common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* from 2016, 1.4 km south of the Site.
- 4.7.2. The habitats present on the Site provide moderate suitability for widespread species of reptile including slow worm, common lizard and grass snake *Natrix helvetica*. The scrub habitat and grassland provide opportunities for shelter, basking and foraging.

4.8 Amphibians

- 4.8.1. A total of 38 records of amphibians within 2 km of the Site were returned by the desk study including 27 records of common toad *Bufo bufo*, with the most recent record from 2025 and the nearest record 457 m from the Site and three records of GCN with the most recent record from 2020 and the nearest record 1.1 km north east of the Site.
- 4.8.2. Amphibians are not considered to be breeding on the Site due to the absence of suitable waterbodies (ARG, 2010). However, the grassland and scrub provide suitable terrestrial habitat for commuting and foraging amphibians including great crested newt. The desk

study identified two waterbodies – the Nine Mile River – within 500 m of the Site, and Sheep Bridge Pond located 330 m north of the Site. GCN are known to be present in pools along the Nine Mile River (Salisbury Plain SSSI Citation). Should the Sheep Bridge Pond support breeding great crested newt then it is possible that they could use the Site in their terrestrial phase.

4.9 Invertebrates

- 4.9.1. A total of 205 records of invertebrates were recorded within 2 km of the Site, such as Marsh fritillary *Eurphyodryas aaurinia*, including a number of moths, bees, wasp, try flies and dragonflies.
- 4.9.2. The desk study identified that the Site is located within a local priority species area, per the LNRS, for Duke of Burgundy butterfly *Hamearis lucina* nominated for the areas potential to increase the population, and expand its range, particularly in areas close to existing populations. A total of 20 records of this species within 2 km of the Site were returned by the desk study with the most recent record from 2018 and the nearest record 1 km south east of the Site.
- 4.9.3. The Duke of Burgundy is mostly found in scrubby downland habitat, mostly feeding on cowslips. They are also found within areas of limestone and chalk grassland scrub, or more open section of ancient woodland. Given that the none of these habitats are present within the Survey Area, it is considered unlikely that this butterfly would be present on Site.
- 4.9.4. At the time of the survey, the area of grassland habitat provided low suitability for moths and butterflies due to intense management maintaining a low, unvaried sward height. However, further survey to classify the grassland may determine potential for invertebrate species.

4.10 Plants

- 4.10.1. A total of 58 records of 28 species of flowering plants within 2 km of the Site were returned by the desk study. Notable species included three records of bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* and seven UKBAP species comprising white helleborine *Cephalanthera damasonium*, burnt orchid *Neotinea ustulate*, broad-fruited cornsalad *Valerianella rimosa*, purple milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus*, basil thyme *Clinopodium acinos*, red hemp-nettle *Galeopsis angustifolia*, and pheasant's-eye *Adonis annua*.
- 4.10.2. None of these species were identified during the survey, and only common and widespread species were recorded. However, it should be noted that the survey was carried out at a sub-optimal time of year.

5 Key Ecological Considerations, Opportunities and Recommendations

- 5.1.1. This section first presents the key ecological considerations relevant to the Proposed Development, as drawn from the results section, and the implications they may have for the Proposed Development. The recommendations sub-section then sets out measures to avoid any identified features where possible. Where avoidance is not possible and/or further surveys or detailed assessment of potential effects are required to determine the biodiversity value of the Site and/or appropriate mitigation measures, these are identified next. The following two sections outline preliminary mitigation and compensation measures that may be needed, where known. The final sub-section identifies requirements and opportunities for enhancement beyond the mitigation and compensation measures required to address ecological effects.

5.2 Key Ecological Considerations

- 5.2.1. The sections below discuss each ecological feature recorded as part of the desk study or field survey in relation to the Proposed Development.

Designated sites

- 5.2.2. The overlapping Salisbury Plain SAC, SPA and SSSI lie 100 m north and east of the Site. This extensive designated area supports internationally important habitats and species and is considered relevant to the Proposed Development. Habitats on the Site have potential to support plant and animal species for which the SAC, SPA and SSSI are designated, and therefore could be considered to be functionally linked. Potential indirect impacts during construction and operation such as disturbance and air quality changes will also need to be considered due to the proximity of the designated sites.
- 5.2.3. Given the impacts listed above, the construction and operation of the Proposed Development will therefore need to be designed and implemented to avoid adverse effects to these sites and their important features, including functionally linked land. As the Competent Authority, Wiltshire Council will be required to assess whether the Proposed Development could have significant effects on the designated sites through a process known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The HRA will involve a screening assessment for Likely Significant Effects as a minimum, but further stages may be required. Sufficient information to inform that assessment should be submitted to the local authority to permit them to complete this assessment.
- 5.2.4. SSSIs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (**Appendix A**). Salisbury Plain SSSI is designated for its calcareous grassland, nationally rare and scarce plants, species of rare and scarce invertebrates and its nationally and internationally important bird populations. As the Salisbury Plain SSSI underpins the SAC and SPA, the

same potential impacts apply to this designated site also. Activities which have the potential to damage SSSIs such as residential development require consent from Natural England.

- 5.2.5. The River Avon SAC is hydrologically linked to the Nine Mile River which flows approximately 300 m north of the Site. Therefore, there is potential for runoff into the Nine Mile River which could impact the River Avon SAC. Potential impacts to the River Avon SAC should also be considered within a HRA for the Proposed Development which will identify suitable mitigation measures should they be required.
- 5.2.6. Sheep Bridge Pond Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is located approximately 0.3 km north west of the Site. The design of the Proposed Development will need to avoid adverse impacts to this LWS. This can be achieved through implementing pollution prevention measures as discussed further in Section 5.7. In addition, this LWS is ecologically connected to the Site through suitable GCN habitat and therefore a GCN environmental DNA (eDNA) survey is required to determine the presence or likely absence of GCN.
- 5.2.7. Porton Down SPA is designated for supporting downland breeding birds and it supports important numbers of stone curlew. Given the distance from the Proposed Development and lack of hydrological links, no further impacts are considered for this SPA.

Habitats

- 5.2.8. The Site supports mixed scrub, grassland, scattered trees and hardstanding. Hardstanding is of no ecological importance, however, the mixed scrub and scattered trees are considered of local ecological importance given their common occurrence in the wider area. Given the timing of the survey outside of the optimal season, further habitat surveys are recommended to confirm the classification of the grassland on Site and presence or likely absence of protected and notable plant species. This will also inform its relative importance for protected or notable species and its ability or otherwise to act as functionally linked land for the Salisbury Plain qualifying features.
- 5.2.9. Land take and vegetation clearance required as part of the Proposed Development will result in loss of some habitat on Site. Retained habitats within and immediately adjacent to the Site could be vulnerable to impacts during construction / operation which, depending on the design of the Proposed Development, could result in permanent loss or damage.
- 5.2.10. Deciduous woodland present within the Survey Area is a key consideration for the Proposed Development as a HPI.
- 5.2.11. HPis are listed under the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) as being of principal importance for the purpose of conserving or enhancing biodiversity, and therefore part of a public bodies' duty to further the general biodiversity objective (**Appendix A**).
- 5.2.12. Measures to minimise loss of habitat, including HPI, and protect retained habitats are provided in this report.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 5.2.13. Under the legislative framework implemented by the Environment Act 2021 (**Appendix A**), most developments granted planning permission will be subject to the biodiversity gain condition, requiring them to achieve 10% BNG for replaceable habitats, as measured using the Defra Biodiversity Metric. However, Wiltshire Council's policy for BNG is being considered by the Local Plan Review with a view to increasing the minimum net gain to 20%. The Proposed Development is likely to be subject to the mandatory BNG requirement on account of requiring planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and because it does not fall under one of the exemptions set out in **Appendix A**. However, even if exempt from mandatory BNG requirements, national planning policy requires that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply principles including that opportunities to improve biodiversity should be integrated as part of the design, particularly where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- 5.2.14. The BNG legislative framework requires the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy to be followed. This hierarchy sets out a list of priority actions in relation to replaceable habitats of medium, high and very high distinctiveness, requiring that adverse effects are first avoided; and if they cannot be avoided then mitigated; and then any remaining adverse effects should be compensated for by prioritising in order, where possible, the enhancement of existing onsite habitats, creation of new onsite habitats, allocation of registered offsite gains and finally the purchase of biodiversity credits. Therefore, all habitats of medium distinctiveness or above are key considerations in the design of the Proposed Development. Currently, this relates to the broadleaved woodland and mixed scrub on Site.
- 5.2.15. The baseline value of habitats within the red line boundary are used to determine the 10% gain requirement, and the requirement applies separately to area habitats, watercourses, and hedgerows/lines of trees. As there are no linear habitats or watercourses within or adjacent to the Site, the 10% BNG requirement will only apply to the area habitats recorded within the Site boundary.
- 5.2.16. The Site is located within two habitat opportunity areas termed Area that Could Become (ACB) under the Wiltshire and Swindon LNRS (**Appendix A**). Much of the Site is located within an opportunity area for calcareous grassland, with the aim to create more open mixed habitats on calcareous soil through the undertaking of early design and advice, surveying for diverse habitat features and undertaking enhancements such as blocking drainage, adding butterfly banks or enriching soil. Areas to the north and west are within a woodland opportunity area, with the aim to maintain and enhance woodland through the implementation of management regimes, avoidance of nutrient inputs, retaining standing and fallen deadwood and management of deer and grey squirrel populations.
- 5.2.17. Incorporating enhancement measures aligned with the ACBs could provide opportunities for the client to secure measurable net gains for biodiversity. LNRS-aligned projects receive a 15% uplift in biodiversity units, incentivising habitat creation in priority areas.

5.3 Protected and Priority Species

- 5.3.1. The results of the desk study, habitat survey and protected species assessment highlighted the potential presence of several protected or priority species within the Survey Area. These species form key considerations for the Proposed Development. The legal protection afforded to these species is described in **Appendix A**.

Bats

- 5.3.2. Bats are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the Habitats Regulations) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (the WCA). Certain species of bats, including noctule, brown long eared and soprano pipistrelle bats are also listed as SPI under the NERC Act 2006.
- 5.3.3. No trees within the Site have the potential to support roosting bats. However, woodland within the Survey Area has the potential to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.
- 5.3.4. The Proposed Development could affect foraging and commuting bats by fragmenting the array of habitat types that are currently available, either through direct loss, or indirect impacts such as lighting. It is understood that under the current design, there will be no loss of trees or woodland. However, if this should change then further assessment may be required. It is recommended that lighting and noise levels should be kept to a minimum necessary for construction to avoid disturbance to foraging and commuting bats.

Badger

- 5.3.5. Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (**Appendix A**).
- 5.3.6. No evidence of badger activity was recorded during the survey. However, the habitats within the Survey Area have the potential to support commuting and foraging badger. In addition, the woodland on the western edge of the Survey Area has the potential for sett creation.
- 5.3.7. Depending on the design of the Proposed Development, impacts from construction and/or operation could result in adverse effects on this protected species. It is recommended that ecological input is sought to avoid and minimise the potential impacts through design development. Badgers are highly mobile and there is a potential for sett creation to occur within the Survey Area before the works commence. Therefore, a pre-construction survey is required. If further evidence of badger is found during the survey, additional mitigation measures may be required which could include a licence from Natural England should any setts be encountered that would require closure.

Hazel dormouse

- 5.3.8. Hazel dormice are protected under the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the WCA 1981 (as amended). They are also listed as SPI (**Appendix A**).

- 5.3.9. Although no direct evidence was found during the survey, the combination of suitable habitat within the Survey Area and that dormice are present within Wiltshire indicates that the Survey Area has potential to support hazel dormouse populations.
- 5.3.10. The design of the Proposed Development does not currently remove or fragment suitable dormouse habitat, however, there is potential for disturbance to occur as a result of construction. Precautionary Method of Works have been recommended in Section 5 to mitigate for potential hazel dormouse presence and should design change such that suitable habitat will be lost, further recommendations may be required.

Other mammals

- 5.3.11. The Site and its surroundings provide suitable habitat for a range of other terrestrial mammals. Local records confirm the presence of species such as hedgehog, hare and harvest mouse all of which could utilise the scrub and grassland within the Survey Area and the woodland directly adjacent.
- 5.3.12. Several terrestrial mammal species with potential to occur on or around the Site are subject to legal or policy protection. European hedgehog, brown hare and harvest mouse are listed as SPI under the NERC Act 2006. Furthermore, the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 protects against cruel treatment (**Appendix A**). Hedgehog is also protected under Schedule 6 of the WCA 1981 (as amended), which prohibits certain methods of killing or taking. Other widespread mammals such as rabbit and deer are not afforded specific legal protection beyond the general provisions of the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996, but their welfare must still be considered during works.
- 5.3.13. Given the presence of suitable habitat for hedgehog and brown hare, Precautionary Methods of Work have been recommended in Section 5 to mitigate for potential hedgehog and brown hare presence.

Birds

- 5.3.14. The Site supports a range of habitats suitable for nesting birds, including scrub, grassland margins and scattered trees. These habitats provide nesting and foraging opportunities for both common and widespread species. The Site also has the potential to support stone curlew. It is recommended that targeted stone curlew surveys are carried out.
- 5.3.15. All wild birds are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended), and additional protection is extended to species listed under Schedule 1 such as barn owl and kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*, both of which are recorded in the wider Bulford/Salisbury Plain area. Species such as skylark and song thrush *Turdus philomelos* are listed as SPI. Skylark and house sparrow *Passer domesticus* are red-listed species on the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) list as being of high conservation concern, while species such as kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* and dunnock *Prunella modularis* are amber-listed as being of moderate conservation concern (Stanbury et al., 2021). The BoCC list does not confer additional protection under legislation

or planning policy, however, it provides a basis for informing evaluation of a Site and for targeting conservation effort and is a widely used resource for interpreting bird populations.

- 5.3.16. Clearance of vegetation such as scrub and grassland during the breeding bird season (taken to be between March and August but can extend into September) could result in harm to nesting birds. Therefore, nesting birds are a key consideration for the Proposed Development and recommendations are made in Section 5 with respect to these species.

Reptiles

- 5.3.17. Suitable habitat for reptiles is present within the Site in the form of woodland edges, scrub and grassland, which provide opportunities for basking, foraging, shelter and hibernation. Although no reptiles were recorded during the walkover survey, the habitats present are considered suitable for widespread species such as grass snake, slow worm, common lizard, and adder.
- 5.3.18. Native, widespread reptile species are partially protected from killing or injury under the WCA 1981 (as amended). All native reptiles are also listed as SPI in accordance with Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. Therefore, reptiles are a key consideration for the Proposed Development and it is recommended that targeted reptile surveys are carried out to establish presence or likely absence of these species and characterise patterns of occupation and population size for any species found to be present. The results of the survey would inform the need and design of avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures.

Amphibians

- 5.3.19. Records of GCN were returned within 2 km, the closest being 1.1 km from the Site. Sheep bridge pond LWS has the potential to support GCN and has suitable connectivity to the Site. Furthermore, the site contains suitable habitat to support GCN in their terrestrial phase.
- 5.3.20. GCN are protected under the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the WCA 1981 (as amended). Common toads are also listed as SPI in accordance with Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 (**Appendix A**).
- 5.3.21. Impacts from the Proposed Development could result in adverse effects to these species via the loss of suitable terrestrial habitat. Therefore, amphibians are a key consideration for the Proposed Development and recommendations are made for further survey, avoidance and mitigation.

Invertebrates

- 5.3.22. The Site include habitats suitable to support invertebrates, including scrub and grassland, which provide opportunities for foraging, breeding, shelter and dispersal. These habitats are suitable for a range of widespread species groups such as butterflies, moths, bees, wasps and beetles.

- 5.3.23. Invertebrates are not generally protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) unless specifically listed, but many species are recognised as SPI (**Appendix A**).
- 5.3.24. A further habitat survey has been recommended which will record the plant species present on Site during the flowering season. If plant species are identified that are known food plants for notable invertebrate species and there is a potential for them to be present on the Site, then targeted surveys for terrestrial invertebrates would be recommended.
- 5.3.25. Depending on the results of further surveys and the design of the Proposed Development, impacts from construction and/or operation could result in adverse effects on notable terrestrial invertebrate species. It is recommended that ecological input is sought to avoid and minimise the potential impacts through design development. If impacts are likely, then appropriate mitigation and compensation measures may be required.

5.4 Recommendations

- 5.4.1. Should the Proposed Development boundary change, or once further details pertaining to the extents and construction methods are refined, it is possible that these recommendations could change, and a suitably experienced ecologist should be consulted to provide updated information with regards to the ecological considerations.
- 5.4.2. Recommendations are provided where relevant under the following three sub-sections, and are summarised in **Table 4-1**:
- Additional surveys, assessment and consultation;
 - Avoidance; and
 - Mitigation and compensation.

5.5 Additional surveys, assessment and consultation

- 5.5.1. **Table 5-1** below summarises the surveys and assessments recommended to inform a planning application for the Proposed Development based on the findings of this PEA.

Table 5-1 - Recommended Further Survey and Assessment

Target habitat or species group	Description	Seasonal considerations
HRA (screening)	Screening by competent authority to determine whether significant effects on relevant Habitats Sites are likely and if further stages of HRA if required. This is dependent on information supplied by the Client which will inform the competent authority's HRA.	N/A

Target habitat or species group	Description	Seasonal considerations
SSSI assessment and consultation with Natural England	Given that the site is within the Impact Risk Zone for Salisbury Plain SSSI, consultation with Natural England is recommended.	N/A
Further habitat survey	A habitat survey at the appropriate time of year to determine the grassland classification.	At least one visit between late April to June.
BNG assessment	The Proposed Development is subject to mandatory BNG/subject to NPPF requirements around BNG. Designs should consider how to achieve the minimum 10% net gain, guided by assessments using the Biodiversity Metric.	Iterative assessments using the Biodiversity Metric and the BNG Good Practice Principles (CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2016) and BS8683:2021 should be undertaken throughout the design of the Proposed Development to ensure it can achieve BNG. Submission of a Biodiversity Metric showing habitats on Site is a validation requirement for planning.
Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)	An EcIA must be carried out and reported using the results of the above recommended surveys and assessments and the baseline data obtained, to assess likely impacts of the Proposed Development.	N/A
Pre-construction badger survey	As badger are highly mobile, a pre-construction survey is recommended before the works commence to assess the Site for signs of badger.	Required prior to works commencing.
Stone curlew survey	A stone curlew survey is required due to the proximity of the Site to Salisbury Plain and the potential for habitats within the Survey Ara to support this species.	Fortnightly visits from early April to mid/late June, with around 6 visits total.

Target habitat or species group	Description	Seasonal considerations
Reptile surveys	Reptile surveys are recommended to determine the presence/likely absence of reptiles on Site.	April – September Seven initial visits to establish presence or likely absence. If presence is found then at least 13 additional visits required to assess the population(s).
GCN eDNA survey	A GCN eDNA survey is required at Sheep bridge pond LWS to determine the presence or likely absence of GCN. A GCN District Level Licence could also be applied for. This would mean further surveys would not be required on Site. However, a pre-determined financial contribution to a scheme which funds off-site compensation habitat for GCN would need to be made to mitigate for the Proposed Development.	Between 15th April – 30th June The District Level Licence can be obtained at any time of the year. Stage 1 must be completed to submit with the planning application. Stage 2 must be completed post planning application prior to the commencement of works.

5.6 Avoidance

- 5.6.1. Although no irreplaceable habitats are present on Site, the woodland HPI and the other habitats, in particular the scrub, woodland and woodland edges should be retained and buffered wherever possible. Retention of these features will help maintain ecological connectivity, reduce the need for additional measures to mitigate and compensate for the species they support and provide opportunities for enhancement. Where retention is not possible, any adverse effects should be addressed in line with the BNG Hierarchy, with compensation provided as a last resort. Habitats that are slower to recreate, such as mature trees, should be prioritised for retention given their ecological value and the difficulty of replacing them.
- 5.6.2. The Proposed Development should be designed to maintain scrub and woodland around the Site boundaries that provide important habitat linkages for commuting and foraging bats, dormice and other wildlife. Where possible, areas of dense scrub and woodland edge should also be retained to provide ecotone habitat, buffer adjacent habitats from development effects and support nesting birds, amphibians and invertebrates.

5.6.3. Indirect impacts from the Proposed Development should be considered during design. For example, the operational lighting design should avoid illuminating retained habitats to maintain dark corridors for nocturnal wildlife (BCT, 2014). Measures to control potential degradation of retained habitats from increased human access, or the introduction of cats, dogs and nonnative invasive plant species from private gardens should also be considered for bats as well as birds, reptile, amphibians and small mammals (BCT, 2012).

5.7 Mitigation and compensation

5.7.1. General environmental protection measures should be implemented during the construction phase of the Proposed Development. Such measures include those that are outlined on the guidance pages on the government website¹⁴, and those in the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) environmental good practice on site guide (Kwan et al., 2023). The following general measures are recommended to prevent ecological impacts:

- A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be prepared prior to the start of construction, and followed throughout the duration of construction works to ensure the required mitigation measures are implemented;
- Measures must be taken to prevent dust, wind-blown debris and other emissions from construction affecting land beyond the Site (DEFRA, 2024; Environment Agency, 2014);
- Chemicals and fuels must be stored in secure containers and located away from drains. Spill kits must be available;
- Excavations must be covered or securely fenced (with no potential access points beneath fencing) when the Site is closed (e.g. overnight), or ramps included, to prevent entrapment of animals;
- Retained trees must be protected in accordance with BS5837;
- Habitats to be retained should be protected by fencing with clear signage throughout works;
- Biosecurity measures should be in place;
- Noise and vibration must be controlled and kept to the minimum necessary; and
- Lighting used for construction must be switched-off when not in use and positioned so as not to spill on to adjacent land or retained vegetation within the Site, particularly hedgerows and woodland edges used by bats and dormice.

5.7.2. Vegetation clearance of grassland, scrub or woodland habitats should be conducted under a Precautionary Method of Works (PMoW) for dormice, badger, birds and other priority

¹⁴ For example, Pollution Prevention for Businesses [accessed <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pollution-prevention-for-businesses>]

mammals, however, further measures may be required following the results of the further recommended surveys. This is likely to include, but is not limited to:

- A pre-construction badger survey to assess the Site for badger signs prior to the works commencing;
- Specific seasonal timings of works to avoid bird nesting season (March to August but can extend into September). If this is not possible, habitat with the potential to support breeding birds will need to be checked by an ecologist before removal. If nests are present, these will need a buffer zone implemented, and the vegetation cannot be removed until the young have fledged;
- Works close to suitable dormouse habitat should be conducted either in spring or autumn to avoid hibernation season and the sensitive breeding period.
- Pre-works inspections and ecological watching briefs by a suitably qualified ecologist to check for protected species, or evidence of their presence. This will include fingertip searches of the vegetation before removal for protected species prior to works commencing;
- Careful dismantling of refugia including fingertip searches and ecological supervision. This should not take place during winter to avoid hibernation season; and
- Compensatory and enhancement habitat creation. This could include the formation of log piles/hibernacula created with the removed vegetation.

5.7.3. Under the mandatory BNG requirements, the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy will need to be followed, as described in Section 4.1. Any habitats adversely affected by the Proposed Development will need to be compensated for in accordance with the biodiversity metric trading rules to ensure no net loss, before a measurable net gain can be achieved (BSI, 2021). For example, habitats of higher distinctiveness on Site, such as woodland edge, will need to be compensated for by enhancement or creation of the same habitat type. Where habitat loss is unavoidable, a larger area of equivalent habitat type and condition will need to be created or enhanced to offset the loss, as determined by the biodiversity metric. It is recommended that iterative BNG assessments are carried out throughout the design process to ensure the Proposed Development can deliver the required net gain. A long-term management plan (minimum 30 years) will be required to secure the success of habitat creation and enhancement. The BNG design should be undertaken in accordance with the BNG good practice principles (CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2016) and the British Standard for BNG (BS8683:2021).

5.8 Opportunities for enhancement

5.8.1. Enhancement measures should be tailored to local nature conservation objectives. The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Wiltshire & Swindon LNRS identify priorities for the area including the restoration of species-rich grassland, enhancement of hedgerows and woodland connectivity, creation of wetland and pond habitats, and provision of

resources for farmland birds and pollinators. The Wiltshire Local Plan also requires development to protect and enhance biodiversity, maintain ecological networks and contribute to long-term nature recovery. The Proposed Development could contribute to these objectives by creating new species-rich grassland areas and incorporating bird and bat boxes to provide additional nesting and roosting opportunities. Long-term management of these features will ensure they deliver measurable biodiversity benefits in line with local and national policy.

5.8.2. Recommended enhancement opportunities which could be taken to increase the biodiversity value of the Proposed Development include the following:

- Enhancement of the condition of retained scrub and woodland through sympathetic management (e.g. rotational cutting, gapping-up with native species, and buffering from development).
- Creation of new calcareous species-rich grassland areas using native wildflower seed mixes of local provenance, contributing to local targets for pollinator habitat.
- Incorporation of wildlife-friendly planting schemes within landscaping, using native trees, shrubs and nectar-rich species to provide year-round resources for birds, bats and pollinators.
- Provision of bird and bat boxes on retained trees and new structures, targeting species such as house sparrow, starling, swift and pipistrelle bats.
- Creation of invertebrate features such as log piles, habitat piles and insect hotels in sunny, sheltered locations.
- Integration of sustainable drainage features (SuDS) designed with biodiversity in mind, such as swales, wetland scrapes and native planting, to provide both water management and habitat benefits.
- Adoption of pesticide- and herbicide-free management, with good horticultural practice including the use of peat-free composts, mulches and soil conditioners.
- Preparation and implementation of a long-term Ecological Management Plan to ensure that retained and created habitats are maintained and enhanced for biodiversity over at least 30 years.
- Delivery of wider ecosystem service benefits, including stormwater attenuation through SuDS, carbon sequestration via new woodland and hedgerow planting, and climate resilience through shade provision and reduced urban heat island effect.

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7 Figures

Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

Figure 2 - International Designated Statutory Sites within 10km

Figure 3 - Nationally Designated Statutory Sites within 2km

Figure 4 - Habitats of Principal Importance within 1km

Figure 5 - Waterbodies within 500m

Figure 6 - UKHab Map



Legend

 Site boundary

0 50 100
Metres

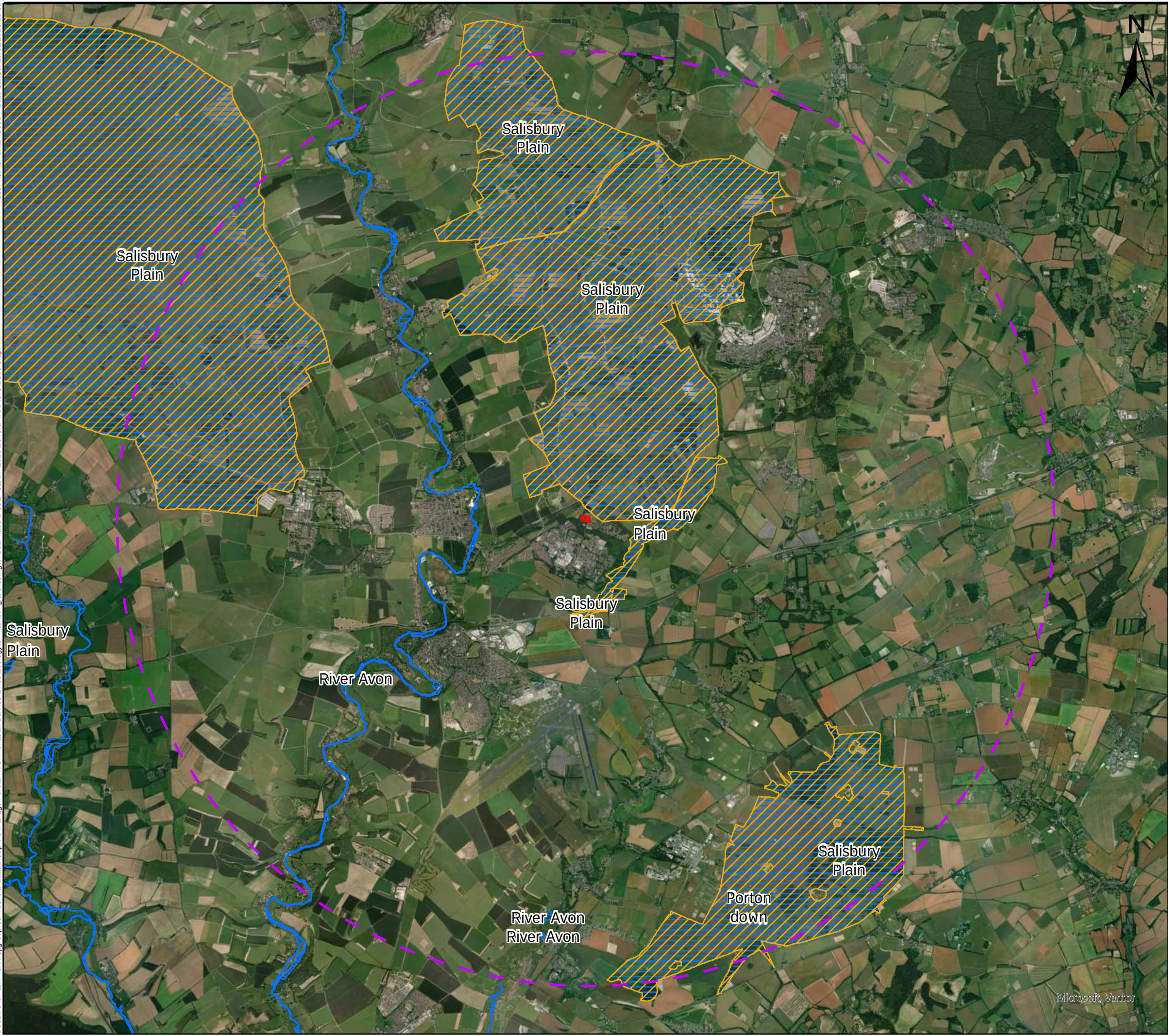


Client:
Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)

Project: SERVICE FAMILIES ACCOMMODATION MODEL
HOMES DEVELOPMENT
SLING ROAD, BULFORD

Title
Site Location Plan

Drawing No:	Figure 1	Drawn:	ES
Date:	January 2026	Checked:	LB
Scale:	2,500 @ A3	Approved:	KT



Legend

- Site boundary
- 10km Search Area
- Special Area of Conservation
- Special Protection Area

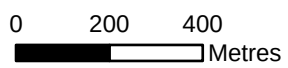
0 1,000 2,000 Metres

Client:	Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)		
Project:	SERVICE FAMILIES ACCOMMODATION MODEL HOMES DEVELOPMENT SLING ROAD, BULFORD		
Title	International designated sites within 10km		
Drawing No:	Figure 2	Drawn:	ES
Date:	January 2026	Checked:	LB
Scale:	1: 75,000 @A3	Approved:	KT



Legend

-  Site boundary
-  2km Search Area
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest



Client:	Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)		
Project:	SERVICE FAMILIES ACCOMMODATION MODEL HOMES DEVELOPMENT SLING ROAD, BULFORD		
Title	Nationally designated statutory sites within 2km		
Drawing No:	Figure 3	Drawn:	ES
Date:	January 2026	Checked:	LB
Scale:	1: 18,000 @A3	Approved:	KT



Legend



Site boundary



1km Search Area

Habitats of Principal Importance



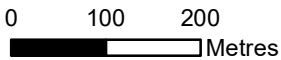
Deciduous woodland



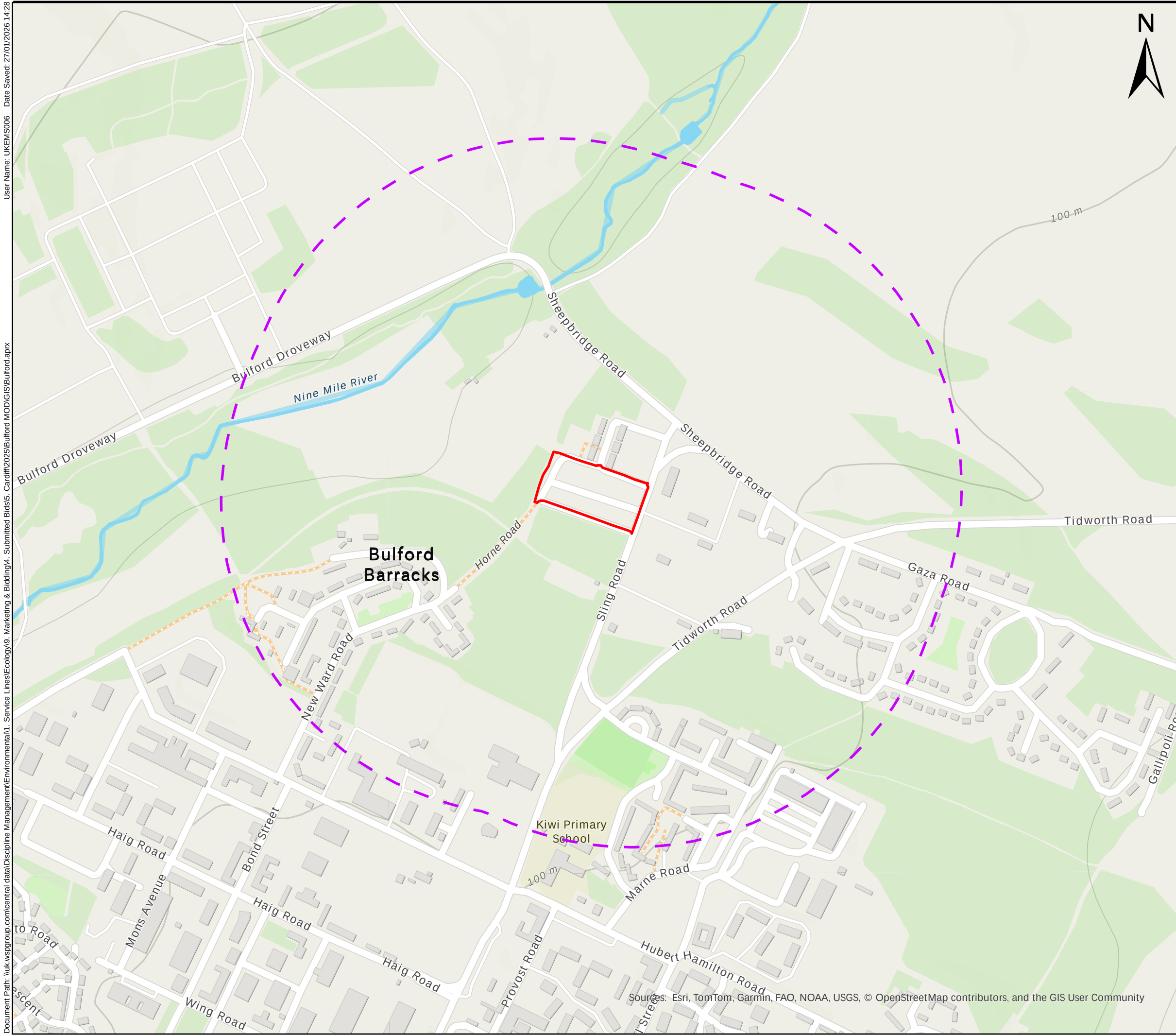
Lowland calcareous grassland



No main habitat but additional habitats present



Client:	Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)		
Project:	SERVICE FAMILIES ACCOMMODATION MODEL HOMES DEVELOPMENT SLING ROAD, BULFORD		
Title	Habitats of Principal Importance within 1km		
Drawing No:	Figure 4	Drawn:	ES
Date:	January 2026	Checked:	LB
Scale:	8,000 @ A3	Approved:	KT



Legend

- Site boundary
- 500m Search Area
- Waterbodies

0 50 100
Metres

Client:

Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)

Project:

SERVICE FAMILIES ACCOMMODATION MODEL
HOMES DEVELOPMENT
SLING ROAD, BULFORD

Title

Waterbodies within 500m

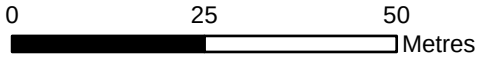
Drawing No:	Figure 5	Drawn:	ES
Date:	January 2026	Checked:	LB
Scale:	1: 5,000 @A3	Approved:	KT

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Legend

- Site boundary
- 30m Survey Area
- Habitats
 - g4 - modified grassland
 - h3 - dense scrub
 - u1b6 - other developed land
 - u1d - suburban mosaic of developed/natural surfaces
 - w1g - other woodland, broadleaved
 - Individual trees



Client: Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)

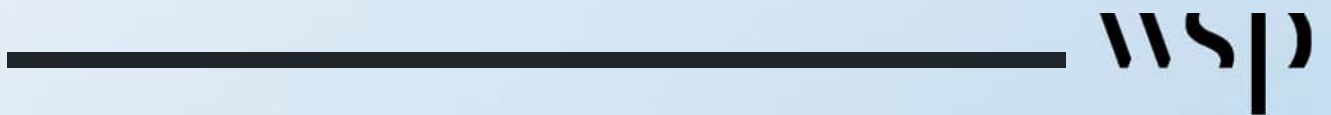
Project: SERVICE FAMILIES ACCOMMODATION MODEL HOMES DEVELOPMENT SLING ROAD, BULFORD

Title: UKHab map

Drawing No:	Figure 6	Drawn:	ES
Date:	January 2026	Checked:	LB
Scale:	1: 1,000 @A3	Approved:	KT

Appendix A

Legislation and Policy



Legislation and National Policy Context

This appendix provides an overview and context of the below legislation and national policy and guidance, as applies in England.

Legislation:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (the “WCA”);
- The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019;
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the “CRoW Act”);
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the “Habitats Regulations”);
- Environment Act 2021;
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (as amended);
- The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949;
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997;
- The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England And Wales) Regulations 2017;
- The Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975;
- The Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009;
- The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996;
- The Conservation of Seals Act 1970.

National policy and guidance:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024;
- National planning policy guidance;
- Environmental Improvement Plan 2023;
- UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2011-2020); and
- UK Biodiversity Action Plans.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, (as amended) (WCA)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended; hereafter referred to as the ‘WCA’) is the principal mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. This legislation is the means by which the Bern Convention and (partially) the European Union Directives on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) and Habitats Directive are implemented in the UK. The WCA includes provisions, amongst others, for the identification and designation of protected species; for the safeguarding and designation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (hereafter referred to as SSSI); and for the designation of invasive non-native species and measures to control the spread of these.

Protected birds, animals and plants are listed under Schedules 1, 5, 8 respectively of the WCA. Schedule 9 lists non-native invasive species. A description of these Schedules and their meaning is provided below. Activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under this legislation may be licensed under certain circumstances by Defra or Natural England.

Birds

Under the WCA all birds, their nests and eggs (with exception of species listed under Schedule 2) are protected. It is an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- Take or destroy an egg of any wild bird;
- Damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird (whilst being built, or in use).

Birds listed under Schedule 1 of the WCA¹⁵ are afforded additional protection with regard to intentional or reckless disturbance whilst nest-building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Protected animals

Species listed in Schedule 5 can either be fully protected or partially protected under Section 9, which makes it unlawful to intentionally or recklessly:

- Part 1: kill, injure or take;
- Part 2: possess or control (live or dead animal, part or derivative);
- Part 4 (a): damage or destruct any structure used for shelter or protection;
- Part 4 (b): disturb them in a place of shelter or protection;
- Part 4 (c): obstruct access to place of shelter or protection;
- Part 5 (a): sell, offer for sale, possess or transport for the purpose of sale (live or dead animal, part or derivative);
- Part 5 (b): advertise for buying or selling.

The Environment Act 2021 enables licences to be granted under section 16 of the WCA for reasons of over-riding public interest where there is no other satisfactory solution, and the grant of the licence is not detrimental to the survival of any population of the plant or animal species to which the licence relates. In addition, the Environment Act 2021 has amended section 10 of the WCA such that where a European Protected Species (ESP) licence is obtained under the Habitats Regulations and fully complied with, the above offences under the WCA no longer apply for that species.

¹⁵ To view the current list of Schedule 1 listed birds, visit: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1>

Protected plants

The Act makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to pick, uproot, trade in, or possess (for the purposes of trade) any wild plant listed in Schedule 8, and prohibits the unauthorised intentional uprooting of such plants.

Invasive species

Invasive animal species listed under Schedule 9 are prohibited from release into the wild under Section 14 of the WCA, and the Act prohibits planting or “causing to grow” in the wild of any plant species listed in Schedule 9. It should be noted that certain bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA are also listed on Schedule 9 to prevent release of non-native and captive individuals, this includes barn owl, red kite, goshawk and corncrake.

SSSIs

SSSIs are subject to strict protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Certain operations within SSSIs or affecting SSSIs require approval (known as assent); these are specific to each SSSI.

The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019

This removes the Invasive Alien Species (IAS) of European Union concern from the scope of Sections 14 and 14ZA of the WCA, and brings all offences relating to species of European Union concern into one place under The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019. For animal species under this order, it is an offence to release or allow them to escape into the wild, and for plant species it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause them to grow in the wild.

Schedule 9A of the WCA is amended to ensure that species control agreements can be used for all species of European Union concern, including widely-spread invasive species.

Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act)

The CRoW Act has amended the WCA in England and Wales, strengthening the protection afforded to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the legal protection for threatened species, and provides better management arrangements for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). It adds the word ‘reckless’ to the wording of the offences listed under Section 9(4) of the WCA. This alteration makes it an offence to recklessly commit an offence, where previously an offence had to be intentional to result in a breach of legislation.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitat Regulations)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) consolidate the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 with subsequent amendments. The Regulations transpose Council Directive 92/43/EEC, on the conservation of natural habitats

and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats Directive), into national law. They also transpose elements of the EU Wild Birds Directive in England and Wales.

European Protected Species (EPS)

All species listed under Annex IV of the Habitats Directive require strict protection and are known as European Protected Species (EPS). Under Regulation 43 of the Habitats Regulations it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of an EPS;
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species*;
*In particular any disturbance which is likely to a) impair their ability to survive, breed, reproduce, rear or nurture their young, hibernate or migrate, or b) affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
- Deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal; and
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

It is also an offence to be in possession of or to control, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead animal or part of an animal of an EPS which has been taken from the wild, or anything derived from such an animal or any part of such an animal.

If the ecologist determines that impacts to an EPS are unavoidable then the works may need to be carried out under a site specific mitigation licence from Natural England (NE). Activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under this legislation may be licensed by Natural England for certain purposes. Low Impact Class licences are also available for bats and great crested newts, enabling Registered Low Impact Consultants to undertake certain low impact activities reducing the EPS application paperwork and process length. District licencing is also available for great crested newts.

National Site Network

Certain EPS are also listed under Annex II of the Habitats Directive and are designated and afforded protection under the Habitats Regulations by the establishment of core areas of habitat known as Special Areas of Conservation. This means these species are a relevant consideration in a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The Birds Directive seeks to maintain populations of all wild bird species across their natural range (Article 2). All bird species listed under Annex I¹⁶ of the Birds Directive are rare or vulnerable and afforded protection by the classification of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), these are also designated under all regularly occurring migratory species, with regard to the protection of

¹⁶ To view birds listed under Annex I visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/threatened/index_en.htm

wetlands of international importance (Article 4). This means these bird species and communities are a relevant consideration in HRA.

The Habitats Regulations require projects or plans to be screened by the competent authority (usually the Local Planning Authority) for likely significant effects upon SPA, SAC and candidate SACs (cSACs). Guidance and policy also requires potential SPAs (pSPAs) and Ramsar sites be subject to the same assessment. If the competent authority is unable to conclude that significant effects are not likely, the Proposed Development must be subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the Habitats Regulations.

Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act legislates enhancing the environment through measures and targets for improving air quality and waste management, increase recycling, restoring habitats and preventing species decline. This includes a new legally binding target on increasing abundance of British species by 2030, makes a requirement for Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and updates the NERC Act 2006 (see below). The Act also sets out the requirement for the Secretary of State to prepare an Environmental Improvement Plan, and sets out a framework for mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain in England.

Section 98 of the Environment Act specifies that measures outlined in Schedule 14 of the Environment Act, to make provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England, are to apply. Schedule 14 specifies that biodiversity gains are to be assessed using the metric published by the SoS and that a 10% gain will be mandatory. The Act requires that gains must be secured for a minimum of 30 years post completion of development. This is implemented through the insertion of Schedule 7A into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which provides the statutory framework. The Act includes this requirement for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), being secured under Section 99 and Schedule 15 of the Planning Act 2008. It is expected that the mandatory requirement for a 10% gain for NSIPs will come into force in November 2025.

As a result, under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the pre-commencement condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ('the biodiversity gain condition'). The biodiversity gain objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. Secondary legislation includes a number of biodiversity net gain regulations which provide the detail around implementing mandatory BNG, including provisions around irreplaceable habitats, and amendments which set out the requirements of the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy. It also sets out exemptions for categories of development to which biodiversity net gain does not apply, as follows:

- Householder development. Development which is subject of a householder application as defined within Article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

- Development granted planning permission by a development order under section 59. This includes permitted development rights.
- Development subject to the de minimis exemption. Development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat, and 5 metres of linear habitats such as hedgerows.
- Self-build and custom build development. Development which: consists of no more than 9 dwellings, and is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares, and consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015.
- Urgent Crown development granted permission under section 293A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- Development of a biodiversity gain site. Development which is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the biodiversity gain condition which applies in relation to another development.
- Development related to the high speed railway transport network. Development forming part of, or ancillary to, the high speed railway transport network comprising connections between all or any of the places or parts of the transport network specified in section 1(2) of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (as amended)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act) provides that any public body or statutory undertaker in England must have regard to the purpose of conservation of biological diversity in the exercise of their functions. The intention is to help ensure that biodiversity becomes an integral consideration in the development of policies and plans.

The Environment Act 2021 makes changes to the NERC Act which updates the general duty to conserve biodiversity by adding a duty to not only conserve but also enhance biodiversity. Public authorities are also expected to produce reports on the action they have taken under this duty when designated by the Secretary of State. Under Section 40 of this legislation, every public body (including planning authorities) must further the general biodiversity objective, which is described as ‘the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in England through the exercise of functions in relation to England’.

Section 41 of the NERC Act requires the Secretary of State (SoS) to “publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat which in the Secretary of State's opinion are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity”. These are referred to as Habitats/Species of Principal Importance. The habitats and species listed in accordance with Section 41 largely replicate those listed on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) which occur in England (however there are exceptions).

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

The Act provides the framework for the creation of National Parks, National Nature Reserves and Local Nature Reserves. The Act confers powers on the Nature Conservancy (a now defunct government body whose functions Natural England now perform) and local authorities: for the establishment and maintenance of nature reserves; to make further provision for the recording, creation, maintenance and improvement of public paths; for securing access to open country; and to amend the law relating to PRoW.

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992

It is an offence to wilfully take, kill, injure, possess or ill-treat a badger. Under the Act their setts are protected against intentional or reckless interference. Sett interference includes damaging or destroying a sett, obstructing access to any part of the sett, or disturbance of a badger whilst it is occupying a sett. The Act defines a badger sett as 'any structure or place, which displays signs indicating the current use by a badger' and Natural England (NE) takes this definition to include seasonally used setts that are not occupied but that show sign of recent use by badgers (Natural England, 2009¹⁷).

If impacts to badgers or their setts are unavoidable then authorised sett disturbance requires a licence. Activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under this legislation may be licensed by Natural England for certain purposes.

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997

The Hedgerows Regulations (1997) make provision for the protection of important hedgerows in England and Wales. The regulations affect hedgerows which are 20 m or more in length or connected at both ends to another hedgerow of any length. They relate to hedgerows which are on, or adjoining land used for agriculture and / or conservation purposes. They do not include hedges that are attached to or marking the boundaries of a private dwelling.

The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017

The purpose of the Water Framework Regulations is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters (rivers and lakes), transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater. All water bodies (unless artificial or heavily modified) are required to achieve 'good' ecological status unless alternate objectives are set or there are grounds

¹⁷ Natural England, June 2009, Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended), Guidance on 'Current Use' in the definition of a Badger Sett WMLG17, Natural England, Peterborough.

for deterioration. Ecological status demonstrates the quality of the structure and function of surface water ecosystems indicated through 'quality elements'. These include hydromorphological, chemical and biological indicators (including benthic invertebrates, macroalgae, fish, phytoplankton and angiosperms).

When considering the effect of a development or activity on a water body, it is a regulatory requirement under the Water Framework Regulations to assess if it will cause or contribute to a deterioration in status or jeopardise the water body achieving good status in the future. Water Framework Regulations lists Lower and Higher Sensitivity Habitats that it considers important features that require protection.

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

This Act makes it an offence to use a variety of methods to intentionally cause suffering to a wild mammal. It is an offence to mutilate, kick, beat, nail (or otherwise impale), stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering. It also has exemptions, related to euthanasia.

National Planning Policy Framework 2025

The National Planning Policy Framework 2025 (the 'NPPF') sets out the Government's planning policies for England and it contains relevant policies specific to biodiversity and nature conservation (most notably in section 15). It sets out provisions for biodiversity, including protected sites and species, for which local planning authorities (LPAs) must have regard.

The NPPF requires local authorities in England to take measures to:

- Protect and enhance sites of biodiversity;
- Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services;
- Maintain the character of the undeveloped coast;
- Minimise impacts and provide net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- Prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and
- Remediate and mitigate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply principles including:

- If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a 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;

- Typically refusing development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest that is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments). The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Typically refusing development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) unless there are wholly exceptional reasons (for example, infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act and hybrid bills), where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat), and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Irreplaceable habitats are defined in the glossary as: *“habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen”*; and
- Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been published alongside the NPPF, and is regularly updated, to provide guidance on the implementation of the planning policies. It is also a matter of government policy under the NPPF that Ramsar Sites are given the same protection as European Sites (habitats sites), and therefore should be considered in the HRA process.

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Explains the processes and tools that can be used through the planning system in England. In relation to terrestrial biodiversity, guidance on Appropriate Assessment (i.e. the assessment of effects on sites designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017), BNG, and Environmental Impact Assessment are relevant, alongside the “Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Ecosystems” section of the Natural Environment guidance section. It states that a key purpose of a public authorities’ duty under the NERC Act 2006 is to embed consideration of biodiversity as an integral part of policy and decision making throughout the public sector, which should be seeking to make a significant

contribution to the achievement of the commitments made by government in its 25 Year Environment Plan.

The guidance advises how to identify suitable mitigation and adaptation measures in the planning process. This would require the implementation of appropriate measures by the local planning authorities. The guidance particularly recommends development of brownfield sites over greenfield sites, implementation of green infrastructure networks in development, avoidance of effects on important ecological sites and species and use of appropriate mitigation where necessary.

The BNG PPG sets out the statutory framework for mandatory BNG.

Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (Defra, 2023)

This is the government's first revision of its 25 Year Environment Plan. It sets out a new plan for delivering ten goals to improve the environment, with interim targets to measure progress. Part of the plan includes new National Nature Reserves, Nature Recovery Networks, implementing the Environment Act 2021 including Local Nature Recovery Strategies and Biodiversity Net Gain. The apex goal is to improve nature, with other goals to help achieve it including:

- Goal 1 - Thriving plants and wildlife
- Goal 2 - Clean air
- Goal 3 - Clean and plentiful water
- Goal 4 - Managing exposure to chemicals and pesticides
- Goal 5 - Maximise our resources, minimise our waste
- Goal 6 - Using resources from nature sustainability
- Goal 7 - Mitigating and adapting to climate change
- Goal 8 - Reduced risk of harm from environment waste
- Goal 9 – Enhancing biosecurity
- Goal 10 – Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2011-2020) (JNCC and DEFRA, 2012)

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework covers the period from 2011 to 2020 and was developed in response to two main drivers: the Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and its five strategic goals; and 20 'Aichi Targets'. The Framework lists the UK's most threatened species and habitats and sets out targets and objectives for their management and recovery. The targets set in this framework are still valid, even though the period has now elapsed. The Biodiversity Framework shows how the work of the four UK countries joins up with work at a UK level to achieve the 'Aichi Targets'

and the aims of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. It identifies the activities required to complement each country's biodiversity strategy, and where work in the country strategy contributes to international obligations.

UK Biodiversity Action Plans

The United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) has been replaced by the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework, however, it contains useful information on how to characterise important species assemblages and habitats which is still relevant. The UKBAP, first published in 1994 and updated in 2007, is a government initiative designed to implement the requirements of the Convention of Biological Diversity to conserve and enhance species and habitats. The UKBAP contains a list of priority habitats and species of conservation concern in the UK, and outlines biodiversity initiatives designed to enhance their conservation status. The priority species generally correlate with those listed in accordance with Section 41 of the NERC Act (with some exceptions).

BAPs in the UK have no statutory status but provide a framework for implementing conservation requirements. Species listed as Priority species in the UK BAP which are also listed as Species of Principal Importance are afforded a degree of protection under the NERC Act (2006) (see above).

The national BAP is supplemented by local BAPs which identify habitats and species of particular value or concern at the local level.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

Core Policy 50 - Biodiversity and geodiversity

Protection

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource, and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.

All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

Any development potentially affecting a Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in paragraphs 6.75-6.77 above where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000

network. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy. Biodiversity enhancement

All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/ Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character.

Local sites

Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:

- i. cannot reasonably be avoided
- ii. are reduced as far as possible
- iii. are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest
- iv. where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements.

Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long-term

Wiltshire Local Plan Review – Draft Policies

Policy 88: Biodiversity and geodiversity

New policy incorporating elements of Core Policies 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity and 69 Protection of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation.

Policy 89: Biodiversity net gain

New policy requiring development to achieve 20% net gain or higher also outlining how this should be delivered.

Policy 90: Woodland, hedgerows and trees

New policy requiring major development to make provision for the retention and enhancement of woodlands, hedgerows and trees.

Wiltshire Biodiversity Net Gain Topic Paper

This topic paper has three main purposes:

- 1. to set out the planning and statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, including changes to planning guidance and legislation that have occurred since the Regulation 19 consultation of the Wiltshire Local Plan Review;*
- 2. to provide background to Policy 89 (Biodiversity Net Gain) of the Wiltshire Local Plan Review and how the policy will be implemented; and*
- 3. to summarise relevant supporting evidence and strategies that provide justification for 20% biodiversity net gain that accords with National Planning Practice Guidance.*

Wiltshire and Swindon Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

The Local Nature Recovery Strategies have been formally adopted and published with the aim to provide a mechanism to deliver nature recovery at a local and regional scale. The Wiltshire and Swindon LNRS provides a clear framework to reverse biodiversity decline and build resilience across the county's landscapes. The LNRS identifies priorities for nature recovery, maps the most valuable areas for nature and specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.

The Wiltshire and Swindon LNRS will be knitted together with the LNRS's created by the 48 Responsible Authorities across England to form a National Nature Recovery Network, contributing to the UK's commitment to protect 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030.

The LNRS sets out 24 priorities for recovery:

- nine strategically mapped habitat priorities
- nine species priorities
- six countryside priorities that apply across all landscapes

The Wiltshire and Swindon LNRS Legal and Policy Framework BNG states that:

- *"LNRS-aligned projects receive a 15% uplift in biodiversity units, incentivising habitat creation in priority areas.*
- *Public Authority Duty: Under the Environment Act 2021, all public authorities must conserve and enhance biodiversity, with the LNRS providing spatial guidance.*
- *Planning Integration: The LNRS informs Local Plans and planning decisions, supporting sustainable development and safeguarding key ecological areas.*

Appendix B

Desk Study Records

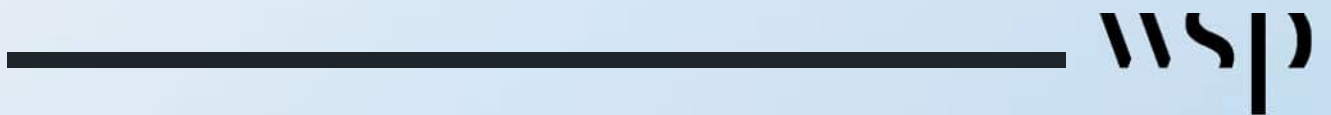


Table B-1 – Desk Study Records

Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
Amphibian	Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>	HSD5	8
	Common Toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	27
	Great Crested Newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	HabRegs2, HSD2p, HSD4, Sect.41, UKBAP, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	3
Bird	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	WCA1i	1
	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	BAmb	3
	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT)	3
	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT)	1
	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	BRed, RLGB.Lr(NT)	5
	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	BRed, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	15
	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	BAmb	17
	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	BRed, RLGB.CR(PE), WCA1i	3
	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	BD1	1
	Goshawk	<i>Astur gentilis</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT), WCA1i	1
	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	BRed, Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	BRed, RLGB.EN	6

Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT)	4
	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	BAmb, RLGB.Lr(NT)	1
	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	BD1, BRed, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, WCA1i	1
	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	WCA1i	1
	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	BRed, RLGB.VU	3
	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	BRed, Sect.41, UKBAP	3
	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	BAmb, RLGB.VU	10
	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	BD1, WCA1i	2
	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	BRed, RLGB.EN, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	7
	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	BRed, RLGB.Lr(NT)	13
	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	BD1	5
	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	BAmb, RLGB.Lr(NT)	11
	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	BAmb	3
	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	BRed, RLGB.VU	3
	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	BAmb, RLGB.VU	2
	Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	BAmb, WCA1i	1
	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	BD1, RLGLB.NT, WCA1i	10



Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	BAmb	1
	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	BAmb, RLGB.CR, WCA1i	3
	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	BAmb, Sect.41, UKBAP	2
	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	BRed, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	BAmb, RLGB.Lr(NT)	9
	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	BAmb	1
	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	BRed, Sect.41	28
	Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	BAmb, RLGB.Lr(NT)	1
	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	BAmb	6
	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	BAmb	5
	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>	BAmb, BD1, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP, WCA1i	5
	Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	BRed, RLGB.EN	10
	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	BAmb, RLGB.Lr(NT)	4
	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	BRed, Sect.41, UKBAP	5
	Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	BAmb	4
	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	BRed, RLGB.Lr(NT)	1
	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	BD1	19



Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
	Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	BAmb	13
	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	BAmb	13
	Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	BRed, RLGB.VU	2
	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	BAmb	44
	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	BAmb	16
	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	BRed, Sect.41, UKBAP	17
Conifer	Common Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis subsp. communis</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	2
	Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Scots Pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	NS-excludes	5
Flowering plant	Basil Thyme	<i>Clinopodium acinos</i>	RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Bastard-toadflax	<i>Thesium humifusum</i>	NS-excludes	2
	Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	WCA8	3
	Bristly Poppy	<i>Roemeria hispida</i>	County	1
	Broad-fruited Cornsalad	<i>Valerianella rimosa</i>	NS-excludes, RLGB.EN, Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Burnt Orchid	<i>Neotinea ustulata</i>	NS-excludes, RLGB.EN, Sect.41, UKBAP	2
	Common Eyebright	<i>Euphrasia nemorosa</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT)	2



Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
	Corn Gromwell	<i>Buglossoides arvensis</i>	RLGB.EN	2
	Dense-flowered Fumitory	<i>Fumaria densiflora</i>	County	2
	Flattened Meadow-grass	<i>Poa compressa</i>	County	1
	flowering plant	<i>Tephroseris integrifolia</i> subsp. <i>integrifolia</i>	NS-excludes, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Green-flowered Helleborine	<i>Epipactis phyllanthes</i>	NS-excludes	3
	Hound's-tongue	<i>Cynoglossum officinale</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT)	1
	Meadow Brome	<i>Bromus racemosus</i> subsp. <i>commutatus</i>	County	1
	Narrow-fruited Cornsalad	<i>Valerianella dentata</i>	RLGB.EN	1
	Narrow-leaved Meadow-grass	<i>Poa angustifolia</i>	County	2
	Pale Poppy	<i>Roemeria argemone</i>	RLGB.VU	1
	Pheasant's-eye	<i>Adonis annua</i>	NS-excludes, RLGB.EN, Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Pond Water-crowfoot	<i>Ranunculus peltatus</i>	County	1
	Purple Milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus danicus</i>	RLGB.EN, Sect.41, UKBAP	3



Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
	Red Hemp-nettle	<i>Galeopsis angustifolia</i>	NS-excludes, RLGB.CR, Sect.41, UKBAP	2
	Sainfoin	<i>Onobrychis viciifolia</i>	RLGB.VU	15
	Spotted Medick	<i>Medicago arabica</i>	County	3
	Spreading Meadow-grass	<i>Poa humilis</i>	County	1
	Stinking Hellebore	<i>Helleborus foetidus</i>	NS-excludes	1
	Thread-leaved Water-crowfoot	<i>Ranunculus trichophyllus</i>	County	1
	White Helleborine	<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	2
	Wild Clary	<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	County	1
Insect - butterfly	Adonis Blue	<i>Polyommatus bellargus</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT)	3
	Brown Hairstreak	<i>Thecla betulae</i>	RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	27
	Chalk Hill Blue	<i>Polyommatus coridon</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT)	6
	Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>	RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	14
		<i>Erynnis tages tages</i>	RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	2
	Duke of Burgundy	<i>Hamearis lucina</i>	RLGB.EN, Sect.41, UKBAP	20
	Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>	RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	20

Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
	Marsh Fritillary	<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>	HSD2p, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP, WCA5/9.1k/l, WCA5/9.1t, WCA5/9.2, WCA5/9.4.a, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	11
	Small Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT), Sect.41, UKBAP	4
	Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT), Sect.41, UKBAP	17
		<i>Coenonympha pamphilus pamphilus</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT), Sect.41, UKBAP	9
	Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT), Sect.41, UKBAP	3
Insect - dragonfly (Odonata)	Common Darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	RLGB.DD	1
Insect - hymenopteran	Blunthorn Nomad Bee	<i>Nomada flavopicta</i>	Nb	1
	Brown-Banded Carder Bee	<i>Bombus humilis</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	22
	Hill Cuckoo Bee	<i>Bombus rupestris</i>	Nb	13
	Large Garden Bumblebee	<i>Bombus ruderatus</i>	Nb, Sect.41, UKBAP	5
	Orange-footed Furrow Bee	<i>Lasioglossum xanthopus</i>	Nb	3
	Red Bartsia Blunthorn Bee	<i>Melitta tricincta</i>	Nb	3



Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
	Red-shanked Carder Bee	<i>Bombus ruderarius</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	3
	Small Tiphia	<i>Tiphia minuta</i>	Nb	1
	Swollen-thighed Blood Bee	<i>Sphecodes crassus</i>	Nb	1
Insect - moth	Blood-vein	<i>Timandra comae</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Brindled Beauty	<i>Lycia hirtaria</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Cinnabar	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	8
	Forester	<i>Adscita statices</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Knapweed Pear	<i>Paratalanta hyalinalis</i>	Nb	1
	Scarce Grass-moth	<i>Crambus pratella</i>	Nb	1
	Spindle Knot-horn	<i>Nephopterix angustella</i>	Nb	1
Insect - true fly (Diptera)	Hornet Robberfly	<i>Asilus crabroniformis</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	insect - true fly (Diptera)	<i>Pherbellia dorsata</i>	N	1
Moss	Many-fruited Beardless-moss	<i>Weissia wilsonii</i>	NR-excludes, RLGLB.CR, Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Pointed Beard-moss	<i>Didymodon icmadophilus</i>	NR-excludes	6
	Sterile Beardless-moss	<i>Weissia sterilis</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	2



Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
Reptile	Common Lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP, WCA5/9.1k/l	1
	Slow-worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP, WCA5/9.1k/l	2
Terrestrial mammal	Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	PBA	8
	Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Brown Long-eared Bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, Sect.41, UKBAP, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	11
	Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	35
	Daubenton's Bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	1
	Harvest Mouse	<i>Micromys minutus</i>	RLGB.Lr(NT), Sect.41, UKBAP	1
	Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP	42
	Leisler's Bat	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, RLGB.Lr(NT), WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	1
	Nathusius's Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, RLGB.Lr(NT), WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	1
	Natterer's Bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	1
	Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, Sect.41, UKBAP, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	18



Taxon group	Species common name	Species Latin name	Legal/ conservation Status	No. of records
	Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	RLEU.Lr(NT), RLGLB.NT	4
	Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, RLGB.VU, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	14
	Soprano Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	County, HabRegs2, HSD4, Sect.41, UKBAP, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c	11

Appendix C

Photographs





Photograph 1- Grassland



Photograph 2- Grassland



Photograph 3- Small cluster of coppice horse chestnut and elder and ash



Photograph 4 - Grassland



Photograph 5- Dense bramble scrub and dead wood



Photograph 6- Refugia pile of cut logs



Photograph 7- Scattered trees along northern site boundary



Photograph 8 - Woodland edge habitat on northwest corner of the Site



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