

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

April 2026

Land at Pigott Close, Netheravon



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Executive Summary

BlueJay Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Ian Sullivan Architecture Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) on land at Pigott Close, Netheravon, Salisbury, SP4 9QF. The proposed development comprises the construction of two class C-3 semi-detached three-bedroom houses and associated access and landscaping.

The PEA assesses the potential for protected habitats and species on site, identifies important ecological features, and determines the need for further survey work. The findings will inform the development design and ensure compliance with relevant ecological legislation and planning policy.

The Site comprises unmanaged land dominated by mixed scrub, with a narrow strip of roadside modified grassland, scattered trees, ornamental shrubs and two dilapidated sheds. The Site lies close to the River Avon SAC/SSSI and Salisbury Plain SAC/SPA/SSSI. It has potential to support nesting birds, bats, reptiles, hedgehog [REDACTED]

Subject to standard pollution prevention measures during construction, appropriate drainage design, and any requirements arising from Wiltshire Council's Habitats Regulations Assessment process, no likely significant effects on designated sites are anticipated.

Recommended measures include timing-sensitive vegetation clearance and pre-clearance checks for nesting birds, a precautionary reptile working method statement, [REDACTED] precautionary checks for hedgehogs, and retention of hedgehog access through boundary treatments. No further bat surveys are considered necessary. If any trees are proposed for felling or substantial pruning, they should first be checked from ground level for potential roost features.

1. Introduction

Brief

- 1.1 BlueJay Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Ian Sullivan Architecture Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of Land at Pigott Close, Netheravon, Salisbury (referred to as the 'Site').

Scope

- 1.2 The purpose of this PEA is to:
- I. Identify likely ecological features and constraints within the Zone of Influence (Zoi);
 - II. Feed into the design of the development to ensure the impacts on features of biodiversity importance can be avoided or minimised; and
 - III. Inform the scope of any necessary further ecological surveys that are likely to be required as part of the planning application process.
- 1.3 Advice on further actions to address constraints and maximise opportunities to enable the proposals to proceed in accordance with nature conservation legislation and policy is also provided.

The Site

- 1.4 The Site is located at Pigott Close, Netheravon, Salisbury, within the county of Wiltshire (OS Grid Reference SU 14365 49219).
- 1.5 The Site measures approximately 0.1 ha and is accessed from the corner of Salisbury Road and Pigott Close. It comprises an area of unmanaged land supporting edge grassland, scrub, scattered trees and ornamental shrubs. The Site is bounded to the west by arable fields, and to the north, south and east by residential properties and their associated gardens.
- 1.6 The Site lies on the northern edge of Netheravon, approximately 7.5 km north of Amesbury town centre. To the west lies arable farmland and the extensive calcareous grassland associated with Salisbury Plain Military Training Area. To the north, east and south there are small settlements, scattered woodland parcels, and the floodplain of the River Avon, including a network of waterbodies and channels. The wider landscape comprises a mosaic of arable

farmland, rural settlements, riparian habitats and calcareous grassland, including extensive areas to the west and further to the east.

Proposals

- 1.7 The proposed development comprises the construction of two class C-3 semi-detached three-bedroom houses and associated access and landscaping (see **Appendix 1**).

Zone of Influence (Zol)

- 1.8 To define the spatial scope of the ecological appraisal it was necessary to predict the likely Zone of Influence (Zol) of any development of the Site.
- 1.9 The Zol of a proposed development is defined in CIEEM's ecological impact assessment (EclA) guidelines as '*...the areas/(ecological) resources that may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by activities associated with a project*'.
- 1.10 The Zol will be further refined as the project progresses but initially has been based on a desk study and a survey, undertaken to identify the areas and ecological resources that are likely to be affected by a scheme, with consideration of the type of activities that may occur.
- 1.11 It is considered that in most cases the Zol of the development proposals are unlikely to extend beyond the Site boundary and immediately adjacent habitats.

Applicable Planning Policy and Nature Conservation Related Legislation

- 1.12 Throughout this report, relevant legislation, policy directives, and both local and national Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) are cited as needed. The report clarifies their relevance and application in the corresponding sections.
- 1.13 The articles of Planning Policy relevant to this assessment are:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2024, as amended 2025).
 - ODPM Circular 06/2005 (retained as Technical Guidance on NPPF 2021).
- 1.14 Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities should apply the following principles when determining planning applications:

- If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, mitigated, or compensated for, planning permission should be refused.
- Development affecting a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) should not be permitted unless the benefits clearly outweigh the adverse impacts on the SSSI and its broader network.
- Development leading to the loss of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland or veteran trees, should be refused unless there are exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy.
- Development aimed at conserving or enhancing biodiversity should be supported, with opportunities for measurable net gains and improved public access to nature integrated into the design.

1.15 The articles of legislation relevant to this assessment are:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

1.16 The articles of legislation considered, but not deemed relevant to this assessment are:

- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996.

1.17 The articles of local planning policies considered relevant are Core Policies 50, 51, 52, 57 and 69 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted 2015). In addition, the Salisbury Plain SPA Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Mitigation Strategy and Wiltshire Council's River Avon SAC mitigation guidance are relevant to the determination of a residential proposal at this Site. Details of each policy are provided in **Appendix 2**.

Competence

1.18 This report has been prepared by Thomas Lock, an Assistant Ecologist at BlueJay Ecology Ltd who is in his second year working in ecology and has experience in a range of surveys and reports, including Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, bat

activity surveys, reptile surveys, and Ecological Clerk of Works (ECOW) roles. Tom is an associate member of CIEEM and holds a survey licence from Natural England for Beaver *Castor fiber*.

2. Methodology

Assessment Methodology

- 2.1 A PEA comprises two main elements: 1) A desktop review of the ecological and policy context; and 2) a field survey of the Site and, where possible, any other areas likely to be affected.
- 2.2 The assessment methodology and general approach adopted in this report is in line with guidance in The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Assessment (CIEEM, 2017).

Desk Study

- 2.3 A desk study was carried out prior to visiting the Site to assess potential habitats on Site and in the surrounding area, and to identify nearby designated sites of nature conservation importance. This was achieved by examining maps, online aerial photography and through the interrogation of freely available online sources, including the Government's Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website, Natural England's Provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory, and the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway. A series of modern and historic maps were also examined to assist in understanding the derivation of the habitats present.
- 2.4 A 1:25,000 OS map was used to locate nearby features such as ponds or green corridors that could provide habitat or connectivity to other areas, as well as Google Earth, to study the evolution of the Site.
- 2.5 The Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) were also commissioned to carry out a search of protected species, designated and non-statutory sites of nature conservation and habitats within 2 km of the Site.

UKHab Survey

- 2.6 A site walkover was undertaken on 27th March 2026, by Thomas Lock of BlueJay Ecology Ltd. During the site visit, a UKHab habitat survey was undertaken in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification Definitions methodology (UKHab Ltd, 2023).
- 2.7 The different habitats and ecological features present within the survey area were mapped and classified, and the dominant plant species identified. In addition, any evidence of, or potential for, protected species on the Site was noted. Where relevant, habitat immediately adjacent to the Site was also

assessed, as this can have a bearing on the possible presence of protected species on the Site.

- 2.8 A protected species scoping survey was carried out in conjunction with the UKHab Survey. The Site was assessed for its suitability to support protected species.

Survey Limitations and Constraints

- 2.9 The weather conditions were cloudy and dry.
- 2.10 The PEA was conducted in March, so some grasses and certain species of annual plants may not have been identified due to their growing season, and consequently, will not have been included in the assessment. However, this is not considered to be a significant constraint in this instance as the broad habitat types were identifiable and an overall assessment of the Site could be carried out.
- 2.11 The protected species scoping is a preliminary view, based on observations made whilst completing the survey, predicting the likelihood of these species being present based on the suitability of habitats and known ranges. It should be noted that this is neither a full survey nor a definitive survey.
- 2.12 The data within the desk study is third party controlled, purchased solely for use within the report. BlueJay Ecology Ltd cannot be held liable for errors resulting from the use of this data set.
- 2.13 See **Appendix 3** for general legal and technical limitations which apply to this document.

3. Results

Desk Study

Designated Sites

- 3.1 Statutory designated sites are key ecological receptors and include Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), and RAMSAR sites, all of international significance, as well as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs), which hold national importance.
- 3.2 Non-statutory designated sites include, Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA), Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Roadside Verge Nature Reserves (RVNR), and do not receive special protection, they are safeguarded by legislation and planning policies.
- 3.3 The data search revealed that there are five statutory designated sites within 5 km of the Site boundary. Details of these are given in **Table 3.1**, below and illustrated in **Appendix 4**.

Table 3.1 – Statutory Designated Sites

Site Name	Designation	Distance from Site	Reason for designation
Statutory designated Sites			
River Avon System	SSSI	145 m northeast	Chalk/lowland river system with Ranunculus vegetation and associated wetland habitats supporting notable aquatic flora and fauna (Natural England, n.d.a)
River Avon	SAC	145 m northeast	Designated for watercourses with Ranunculus vegetation and qualifying species including Desmoulin's whorl snail, sea lamprey, brook lamprey, Atlantic salmon and bullhead (JNCC, n.d.a)
Salisbury Plain	SSSI	1.35 km west	Notified for extensive chalk grassland, the Nine Mile River, juniper habitat, rare plants, invertebrates and birds including stone-curlew and wintering hen harrier (Natural England, n.d.b)
Salisbury Plain	SAC	1.35 km west	Designated for juniper scrub, extensive semi-natural dry calcareous grassland and marsh fritillary butterfly (JNCC, n.d.b)
Salisbury Plain	SPA	1.35 km west	Classified for internationally important breeding stone-curlew and wintering hen harrier (JNCC, 2015)

- 3.4 There are five non-statutory designated sites within 2 km of the application boundary, details of these are given in **Table 3.2**, below.

Table 3.2 – Non-Statutory Designated Sites

Non-statutory designated Sites		
Site Name	Designation	Distance from Site
Haxton Meadows	LWS	0.24 km east
Netheravon Meadows	LWS	0.71 km south-east
Choulston Meadows	LWS	1.12 km south-east
Figheidean Meadows	LWS	1.87 km south-east
Fifield Swamp	LWS	1.32 km north

Species

- 3.5 A number of species of conservation concern or otherwise notable were recorded within 2 km of the Site boundary. These included amphibians (Common Frog *Rana temporaria*, Common Toad *Bufo bufo*, and Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*), mammals (Otter *Lutra lutra*, [REDACTED], Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, Brown Hare *Lepus europaeus*, Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, Harvest Mouse *Micromys minutus* and Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius*) and reptiles (Grass Snake *Natrix helvetica*).
- 3.6 A number of Birds of Conservation Concern (BOCC) Red-Listed species and Section 41 species have been recorded within the 2 km desk study area. These include Curlew *Numenius Arquata*, Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*, House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*, Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*, Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, Skylark *Alauda arvensis*, Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*, Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*, Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus* and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*.
- 3.7 Some predatory birds were also recorded within the desk study area including Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*, Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*, Barn Owl *Tyto alba*, Red Kite *Milvus milvus* and Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*.
- 3.8 The data search returned 105 bat records within 2 km of the application boundary, 96 of which are from the year 2006 onwards. The following bat taxa were recorded: Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, Brown Long-eared Bat *Plecotus auritus*, Natterer's Bat *Myotis nattereri*, Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii*, Whiskered/Brandt's Bat *Myotis mystacinus/brandtii*, Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* and Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*.

Priority Habitats

- 3.9 Priority Habitats include those listed in local Biodiversity Action Plans and Habitats of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC).
- 3.10 A search of the WSBRC and MAGIC database revealed the following priority and other habitats within the desk study area: Lowland Calcareous Grassland, Deciduous woodland, Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, Chalk Rivers, Lowland meadows and Wood-pasture and Parkland (see **Appendix 5**).

History of the Site

- 3.11 Historical Ordnance Survey maps from 1876 to 1973 indicate that Pigott Close was constructed by 1938, and likely after 1925, although the exact construction date is unclear. The Site itself appears to have remained almost completely undeveloped, with no built development shown within the plot until around 1972, when one of the sheds appears to have been constructed. The land seems to have remained as open ground, likely associated with garden or other edge-of-settlement use. The surrounding area has historically been rural in character, although later development to the south of Pigott Close has introduced a more residential setting.

Soils

- 3.12 Shallow lime-rich soils over chalk or limestone (LANDIS, 2024)

UKHab Survey

- 3.13 The next section provides the results of the UKHab Survey with descriptions of the habitat types and boundary features detailed below.
- 3.14 The habitat descriptions are defined by broad habitat types (UK Hab, 2023) and are illustrated in **Figure 1**. Photographs of the Site can be found in **Appendix 6**.

H3h 518 847 (Mixed scrub, neglected, introduced shrub)

- 3.15 The southern boundary of the Site comprises a large area of unmanaged scrub, which appears to have originally been planted as an ornamental hedgerow but has since become neglected and expanded to colonise a significant part of the Site. Recorded species comprise a mixture of non-native Cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* and Kerria *Kerria japonica*, with native Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, Dog-rose *Rosa canina*, Bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, and common privet *Ligustrum vulgare*.

H3h 32 81 510 518 (Mixed scrub, scattered trees, ruderal or ephemeral, bare ground, neglected)

- 3.16 Large areas of the Site comprise mixed scrub with abundant common privet. The ground layer is dominated by ivy *Hedera helix* together with numerous chopped branches and dead herbaceous material.
- 3.17 Frequently occurring ruderal species include common nettle *Urtica dioica*. Other herbs recorded include lords-and-ladies *Arum maculatum*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, grape hyacinth *Muscari* sp., bindweed *Calystegia sepium* and catchweed bedstraw *Galium aparine*. Scattered Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior*, and Cherry, *Prunus* sp., trees are also present within this area.

H3h 518 (Mixed scrub, neglected)

- 3.18 Scrub dominated by common privet, with very few herbaceous species visible in the ground layer.

H3h 510 518 (Mixed scrub, bare ground, neglected)

- 3.19 Mixed scrub with frequent common privet and dogrose. The ground layer comprises ivy and many chopped branches, with very few other herbaceous species present.

G4 81 (modified grassland, ruderal or ephemeral)

- 3.20 The western edge of the Site consists of a strip of road-side modified grassland that is encroaching into the Site in places, with ruderal species established along its length. The dominant grass is perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, with occasional cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*.
- 3.21 Common ruderal and edge species included cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, common nettle, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and bird's-foot speedwell *Veronica persica* all occurring frequently.

U1b5 (Buildings B1 and B2)

- 3.22 There are two dilapidated sheds on site, constructed of corrugated iron and timber, both of which are in very poor condition.

U1b5 (Developed land - sealed surface)

- 3.23 An area of pavement with no vegetation present.

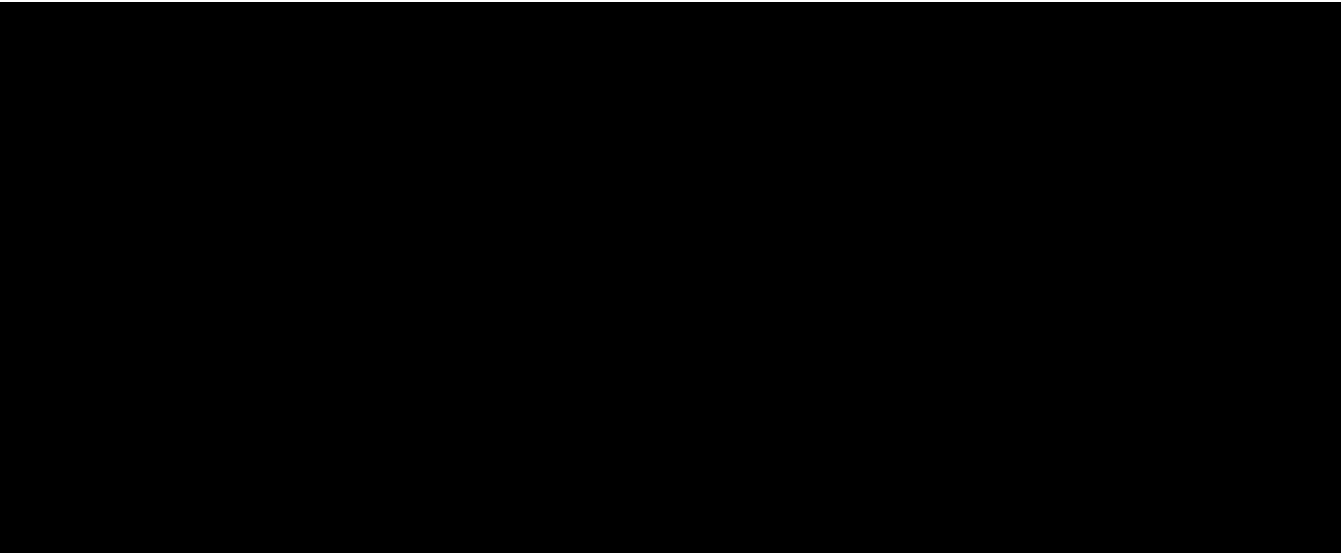
Ecological Scoping Survey

Birds

- 3.24 The data search returned several records of different bird species located within 2 km of the Site. Their conservation status varies from red (most at risk), amber (moderately at risk), to green (least at risk). The wider area is also of increased interest because of its proximity to Salisbury Plain, which supports important populations of notable bird species including Stone-curlew, wintering Hen Harrier, and breeding Quail *Coturnix coturnix* and Hobby *Falco subbuteo*.
- 3.25 No active bird nests were recorded during the survey. However, on-site scrub, together with boundary trees, provide suitable nesting habitat for common scrub and tree-nesting bird species such as Dunnock *Prunella modularis* and Linnet *Linaria cannabina*.
- 3.26 Given the variety and structure of habitats on Site, the bird assemblage is likely to be dominated by common and widespread species, although species of conservation concern may also occur.

Bats

- 3.27 The data search returned 105 bat records within 2 km of the Site, most frequently Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*. The closest record was a Common Pipistrelle approximately 200 m south of the Site.
- 3.28 A Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) was not undertaken as part of this survey. A cursory inspection during the PEA walkover did not identify any trees within the Site with obvious bat roost features, other than localised ivy cover. Several mature trees and dense overgrown hedgerows adjacent to the northwest Site boundary may nonetheless offer roosting potential. These off-site features are understood to be retained but could be indirectly affected by increased artificial lighting.
- 3.29 Buildings B1 and B2 are both in very poor condition, being largely constructed of corrugated iron and open to the elements. As such, they offer poor thermodynamic conditions and negligible suitability for roosting bats. No further bat-specific survey effort is therefore considered necessary in relation to these structures.
- 3.30 The Site supports limited habitat of potential value for foraging bats, primarily within the mixed scrub and along the roadside modified grassland, where ivy-covered vegetation, ruderal herbs, scattered trees and scrub edges provide some sheltered habitat likely to support invertebrate prey.

- 3.31 The overall value of the Site for foraging bats is likely to be reduced by artificial lighting from surrounding residential properties, light spill from Salisbury Road and disturbance associated with passing vehicles. Overall, the Site is considered to provide low suitability for foraging bats.
- 3.32 Areas of mixed scrub and scattered trees within the Site, together with adjoining garden vegetation, provide some features that could be used by commuting bats. However, these habitats are relatively narrow and fragmented, and their value is likely to be reduced by surrounding residential lighting, light spill from Salisbury Road and disturbance associated with vehicle movements along the main road. Overall, the Site is considered to provide low suitability for commuting bats.
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Hazel Dormice

- 3.36 The data search returned no records of Hazel Dormouse within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.37 There is little suitable habitat on Site, and it lacks aerial connectivity to nearby woodlands and hedgerows and therefore is considered to have negligible potential for Hazel Dormice, and they are not discussed further in this report.

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

- 3.38 The data search returned five records of GCN within 2 km of site (two of which are from the last 20 years), the nearest being 685m to the south in 2011.
- 3.39 The Site lies within Wiltshire, which is covered by Natural England's Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme. A review of the risk zone mapping indicates that the Site falls within a green zone, where great crested newts (GCN) are sparsely distributed and where important habitat connectivity pathways for this species are less likely to occur (Natural England, 2025).

- 3.40 No ponds are present within the Site boundary. However, four off-site lakes to the north, three ponds to the east, a network of drains and sluices to the northeast, and the River Avon to the east are present within the surrounding landscape (**Figure 2**). Most of these features are separated from the Site by the fast-flowing River Avon, which is likely to act as a barrier to GCN. The lakes to the north may provide some degree of connectivity; however, they are considered unsuitable for GCN due to likely high fish abundance.
- 3.41 The Site is considered to have low suitability for GCN due to the absence of on-site ponds, limited terrestrial habitat quality, separation from most off-site waterbodies, and the Site's location within a green DLL risk zone. While the likelihood of presence is limited, GCN cannot be ruled out.

Reptiles

- 3.42 The data search returned three records of reptiles within 2 km (two of which are from the last 20 years).
- 3.43 The Site is considered to provide low to moderate suitability for reptiles due to the presence of edge grassland, ruderal vegetation, deadwood and scrub offering shelter and refuge opportunities, although basking opportunities are limited. No evidence of reptiles was recorded during the survey. Connectivity to the wider landscape is somewhat constrained by surrounding roads and residential development.

Otter and Water Vole

- 3.44 The data search returned 13 otter records and 85 water vole records within 2 km of the Site. 12 otter records, and 70 water vole records, are from the last 20 years. The nearest otter record lies approximately 420 m to the north, while the nearest water vole record lies approximately 120 m to the west.
- 3.45 There are no habitats on or directly adjacent to Site that could support either species. Therefore, they are not discussed any further in this report.

Hedgehogs

- 3.46 The data search returned 48 records of Hedgehog within 2 km of the Site (44 of which are from the last 20 years), with the closest record located approximately 20 m to the east.
- 3.47 The Site offers a good range of shelter, foraging and hibernation opportunities for the species. Overall, the Site is assessed as having good suitability for hedgehogs.

4. Evaluations & Recommendations

Designated Sites

- 4.1 A desk-based assessment of designated sites has been completed in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), Natural England's guidance on assessing likely significant effects, and Defra's Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook (2021).
- 4.2 Three internationally designated sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), or Ramsar sites) are present within 5 km of the application boundary. However, the assessment process has been applied to all statutory and non-statutory designated sites to ensure that any potential direct, indirect, or cumulative effects are fully considered.

Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.3 The data search identified five statutory designated sites within 5 km of the Site boundary:
- River Avon System SSSI 145 m northeast
 - River Avon SAC 145 m northeast
 - Salisbury Plain SSSI 1.35 km west
 - Salisbury Plain SAC 1.35 km west
 - Salisbury Plain SPA 1.35 km west
- 4.4 No direct land-take from any statutory designated site will occur. However, given the proximity of the River Avon SAC / River Avon System SSSI and Salisbury Plain SAC / SPA / SSSI, potential indirect impact pathways require consideration
- 4.5 The relevant pathways are likely to relate principally to nutrient and water quality effects associated with the River Avon SAC, and recreational pressure associated with Salisbury Plain SPA / SAC. Wiltshire Council, as competent authority, will determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant effect on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 4.6 The planning application should therefore be supported by any information required by Wiltshire Council in relation to River Avon SAC nutrient impacts and Salisbury Plain SPA / SAC recreational impacts, including any relevant nutrient

calculations, strategic mitigation contributions or other HRA information. The conclusions of this PEA do not supersede the Council's HRA determination.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.7 Five non-statutory designated sites (Local Wildlife Sites) occur within 2 km of the Site boundary:
- Haxton Meadows LWS 0.24 km east
 - Netheravon Meadows LWS 0.71 km south-east
 - Choulston MeadowsLWS 1.12 km south-east
 - Figheldean Meadows LWS 1.87 km south-east
 - Fifield Swamp LWS 1.32 km north
 - No non-statutory designated sites are located within or immediately adjacent to the Site boundary. The proposals will therefore not result in any direct land-take, habitat loss or physical damage to a Local Wildlife Site.
- 4.8 The Site lies within the wider River Avon valley landscape, where several Local Wildlife Sites are associated with meadow, wetland and riparian habitats. However, the Site itself comprises unmanaged scrub, a narrow strip of roadside modified grassland, scattered trees and ornamental shrubs. It does not form part of a continuous semi-natural habitat block linking the nearby Local Wildlife Sites.
- 4.9 Potential indirect effects on non-statutory designated sites are limited to standard construction-phase risks, including dust, sediment-laden runoff, accidental pollution and unnecessary lighting spill. Given the small scale of the proposals, the separation from the nearest Local Wildlife Site and the absence of direct works within designated habitats, these risks are considered low.
- 4.10 Standard construction safeguards should be implemented, including appropriate storage of fuels, oils and chemicals, use of spill kits, prevention of polluted runoff entering drains or watercourses, damping down of dust where required, and appropriate management of soil or material stockpiles.
- 4.11 Subject to standard pollution prevention and construction good practice measures, significant effects on non-statutory designated sites are not anticipated. No additional mitigation is considered necessary specifically in relation to Local Wildlife Sites.

Habitats

- 4.12 All the habitats on Site are common and widespread, with no notable flora species recorded. The habitats on Site are considered to be of low ecological value in terms of potentially supporting protected species.
- 4.13 No Schedule 9 invasive plant species were observed during the on-site survey.

Species

Breeding Birds

- 4.14 All breeding birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation, it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take the birds or their eggs, or to intentionally destroy or disturb a nest, when it is in use or being built.
- 4.15 The development is likely to result in some loss of nesting and foraging habitat within the Site, particularly where areas of scrub, rough grassland and boundary vegetation are removed or cut back. However, given the retention of some existing trees, together with proposed landscaping and hedgerow planting, impacts on the local bird assemblage are expected to be limited and largely restricted to common and widespread species using the Site.
- 4.16 With this in mind, any vegetation clearance, including the removal of trees and scrub within the Site, should be undertaken outside the breeding bird season, which typically extends from March to September inclusive.
- 4.17 If this is unavoidable, it is recommended that, prior to removal, the vegetation and trees are inspected for nesting birds by an experienced ecologist. If any active nests are found, they must be left undisturbed until the young have fledged, which may take up to six weeks.

Bats

- 4.18 All species of bat present in the UK receive full protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 4.19 With reference to the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines (Collins *et al.*, 2023), the Site is considered to provide low suitability for foraging bats. The Site supports mainly scrub with a narrow strip of roadside grassland, both of which are likely to provide only limited foraging opportunities for bats. The highest foraging value is likely to be associated with the scrub margins and adjoining off-site vegetation.

- 4.20 Overall, the Site is considered to have low suitability for commuting bats. Although areas of scrub and scattered trees may provide some limited cover, these features are relatively narrow and fragmented and do not form a strong commuting corridor. The Site's value for commuting bats is further reduced by its proximity to the A345, associated vehicle movements and likely light spill from the road and surrounding residential properties.
- 4.21 Given the low suitability of the Site for foraging and commuting bats, and the negligible roost potential of the on-site sheds, no further bat surveys or specific mitigation measures are considered necessary. However, as a matter of good practice, external lighting should be designed to minimise light spill onto retained vegetation and site boundaries.

GCN

- 4.22 The Site is considered to have low suitability for GCN. While the likelihood of presence is limited, GCN cannot be ruled out. In line with Natural England's District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme operating in Wiltshire, potential impacts to GCN can be addressed through a precautionary approach and, if required, use of the DLL scheme secured via planning condition. On this basis, no further GCN survey work is considered necessary at this stage.

Reptiles

- 4.23 The Site is considered to provide suitable habitat for reptiles, with edge grassland, ruderal vegetation, deadwood and scrub offering shelter, foraging opportunities and localised basking habitat. Widespread reptile species such as slow worm, grass snake and common lizard cannot therefore be ruled out. However, in view of the limited size of the Site and the scale of the proposals, reptile surveys are considered disproportionate in this case.
- 4.24 A reptile precautionary working method statement should be implemented during site clearance. This should include a two-stage vegetation clearance approach undertaken under ecological supervision, comprising an initial cut of suitable vegetation to approximately 150 mm, followed by a second cut to ground level no sooner than 24 hours later, to encourage any reptiles present to disperse into retained suitable habitat.

Hedgehogs

- 4.25 In the UK, hedgehogs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Schedule 6), which makes it illegal to kill or capture them using certain methods, and the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996, which prohibits cruelty and mistreatment.

- 4.26 Areas of suitable habitat should therefore be inspected by an ecologist immediately prior to vegetation clearance, with particular attention paid to dense vegetation, log piles, scrubby margins, the sheds and other sheltered features where hedgehogs may be resting or hibernating. These checks can be undertaken alongside pre-clearance nesting bird inspections. If any hedgehogs are found, works in that area should stop until the animal has moved away naturally or has been carefully relocated by the ecologist to suitable retained habitat.

Recommended Enhancements

Habitats

- 4.27 Habitat enhancements are proposed as part of the development and are shown on the Site plan in **Appendix 1**. These include new planting and enhancement measures for birds, bats, bees and hedgehogs.
- 4.28 The new tree, shrub and hedgerow planting being undertaken as part of the proposals should include a variety of native species to promote diversity, with selected species suitable for the local climatic conditions and geology. Native trees, shrubs and hedgerows grown from seed of local provenance will have a pattern of flowering and fruiting more in tune with the life cycles of native birds and other wildlife and will therefore be of greater benefit.
- 4.29 Native tree species such as Silver Birch, Common Hawthorn, Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Holly *Ilex aquafolium* and Field Maple *Acer campestre* are recommended. Landscaping within the footprint of the development may also include non-native species of known value to wildlife, such as Lilac *Syringa vulgaris* or Hydrangea. Native hedgerow species such as Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* as well as native shrubs such as Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, Jasmine *Jasminum Sp.* and Juniper *Juniperus communis* are also recommended.
- 4.30 Once established, the new planting will offer shelter and foraging opportunities for various local wildlife, including bats, birds, and invertebrates.

Breeding Birds

- 4.31 The proposed scheme should integrate a variety of built-in bird boxes within the new structures, along with a mixture of externally mounted boxes on retained trees, to provide additional nesting opportunities within the Site. These boxes should be varied and designed to attract a range of common garden bird species known to occur locally, including blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, great tit *Parus major*, house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, and robin *Erithacus rubecula*.

- 4.32 Species such as Swifts *Apus apus* and House Martins *Delichon urbicum*, both of which rely heavily on built structures for nesting, should be specifically considered within the design. Integrated swift boxes should be incorporated into the new buildings, while external house martin nest cups can be installed on suitable sheltered elevations to provide additional nesting opportunities.

Bats

- 4.33 To enhance roosting opportunities for bats on Site, a variety of bat boxes should be integrated into the new buildings. Different models should be chosen to accommodate various bat species considering their specific requirements. The selection of precise box models and locations should be agreed in consultation with the ecologist and added to architect plans to ensure inclusion during the construction phase.
- 4.34 The inclusion of native species in the landscaping of the Site will benefit the local invertebrate assemblage, offering increased foraging opportunities to bats. Night-flowering species like native Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* or Jasmine *Jasminum Sp.* should be incorporated into the landscaping plans to provide a foraging resource for night-flying invertebrates, such as moths.
- 4.35 Any external lighting associated with the development must comply with Guidance Note GN08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (Institute of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust, 2023). Lighting should be designed to avoid direct illumination of bat habitats, such as hedgerows, tree lines and watercourses, as well as enhancement measures such as bat boxes.
- 4.36 Lighting specifications should avoid ultraviolet and short-wavelength emissions, which attract insects away from dark foraging habitats and alter bat behaviour. Warm-white LED fittings with a colour temperature of 2700 Kelvin or less are recommended. Fittings should also avoid peak wavelengths below 550 nm, which are known to be particularly disturbing to bats.
- 4.37 All lighting units should be directional and fitted with hoods, back shields and side shields to restrict spill, glare and backlight. This approach ensures dark corridors are preserved and minimises disturbance risk.
- 4.38 Lighting design should be developed in consultation with the project ecologist. As a guide, light levels should not exceed 1 lux along key commuting features or around bat enhancements, in line with GN08/23 and relevant planning policy.

Hedgehogs

- 4.39 Hedgehog boxes should be installed post development in locations to be advised by the ecologist on well-connected linear features and in a secluded area where they are unlikely to be disturbed.
- 4.40 In addition, connectivity between the Site and the adjacent land should be maintained via gaps in fences, which can be specifically incorporated into the gravel boards or the use of green boundaries (i.e. hedgerows).

5. Summary

- 5.1 Nesting birds, bats, reptiles, and hedgehog were identified as ecological features requiring further consideration. A precautionary working method statement is recommended for reptiles, while precautionary measures should also be used for nesting birds and hedgehogs. No further bat surveys are considered necessary, although any trees proposed for felling or substantial pruning should first be checked from ground level for potential roost features, and external lighting should be designed to minimise light spill onto retained vegetation and site boundaries. **Table 5.1** provides a summary of the further work recommended in Section 4.

Table 5.1 - Recommended further work

Feature	Survey	Action	Timing
Birds	Pre-clearance check	Any vegetation clearance, including scrub removal, ivy removal and works to trees undertaken during the bird nesting season should be preceded by a check by a suitably qualified ecologist.	March to September inclusive
Bats	Lighting mitigation	A sensitive lighting strategy should be implemented to protect retained boundary vegetation and commuting routes.	During construction
Reptiles	Precautionary working method statement	Implement a reptile precautionary working method statement during site clearance. This should include a two-stage vegetation clearance approach under ecological supervision, comprising an initial cut to approximately 150 mm, followed by a second cut to ground level no sooner than 24 hours later.	Pre-commencement / during site clearance

Hedgehogs	Precautionary pre-clearance check / PWS	Inspect suitable habitat immediately prior to vegetation clearance, particularly dense vegetation, brash piles, scrub margins and other sheltered features. Maintain hedgehog access through fence gaps and protect excavations overnight.	Pre-commencement / during site clearance
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- 5.2 In line with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021, the proposed development will deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), principally through the creation and management of habitats within the Site, as well as the addition of new features on Site.
- 5.3 BlueJay Ecology Ltd has been commissioned to complete a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment for the Site, using the Defra Biodiversity Metric 4.0. The findings will be set out in a separate report titled *Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, March 2026*, which will define the baseline habitat value and identify measures to deliver a minimum 10% uplift in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.
- 5.4 It is expected that part of the required uplift will be achieved through on-site habitat creation and enhancement. The final assessment may recommend the use of off-site biodiversity units to meet the 10% target. If so, units will be sourced from an approved provider and secured through appropriate legal agreements to ensure long-term delivery and monitoring.

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FIGURES & APPENDICES

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Figure 1 – UKHab Habitat Map

Figure 2 – Waterbodies within 500 m of Site Boundary

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Proposed Scheme

Appendix 2 – Key Legislative Provisions and Policies of Relevance

Appendix 3 – Legal and Technical Limitations

Appendix 4 – Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites

Appendix 5 – Priority Habitats

Appendix 6 – Survey Photography

Figure 1 – UKHab Habitat Map

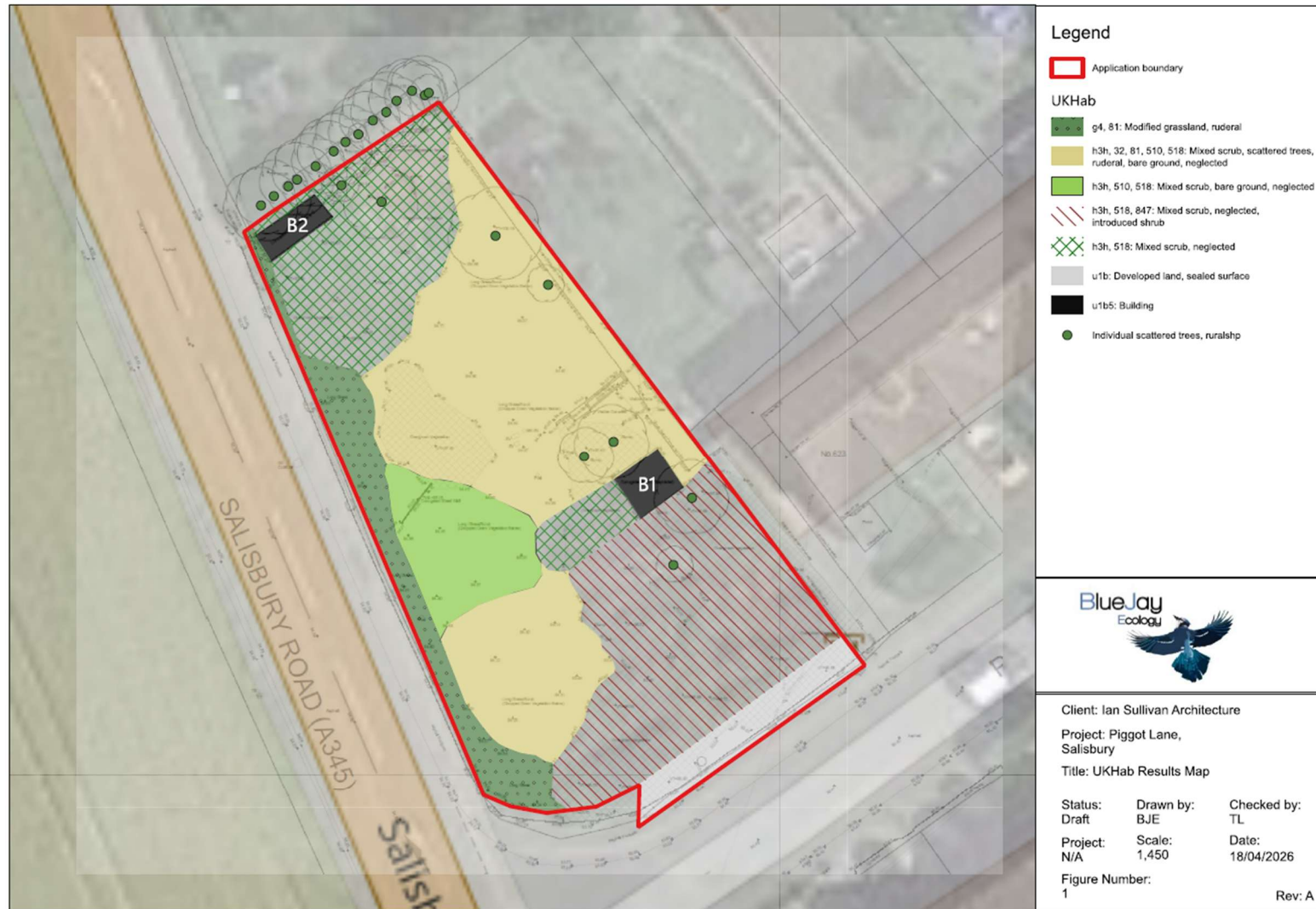
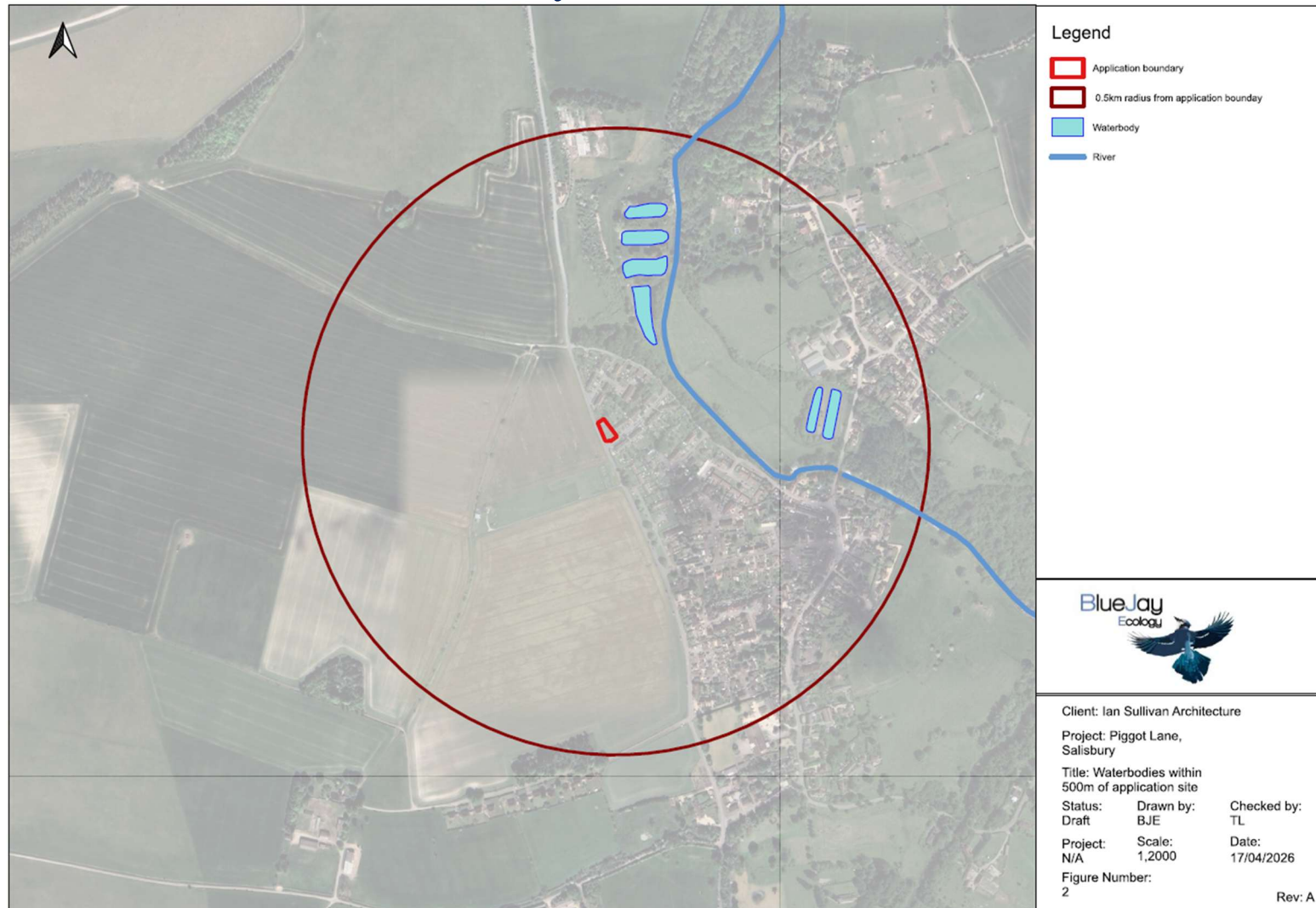


Figure 2 – Waterbodies within 500 m of Site Boundary



APPENDIX 1 – Proposed Scheme



APPENDIX 2 – Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted 2015)

Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Development proposals are expected to demonstrate how features of nature conservation and geological value have been protected as part of the design process. Existing ecological features should, where possible, be retained, buffered and appropriately managed in the long term so that ecological value, connectivity and functionality are maintained. Where avoidance is not possible, impacts should be mitigated as far as practicable, with measures secured to avoid net loss and to support local ecological networks. The policy also requires development to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and to seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

Core Policy 51: Landscape

Development should protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance landscape character, and should not result in harmful landscape effects. Any adverse effects should be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. Proposals should be informed by the relevant landscape character assessments and other applicable studies, and should demonstrate that important landscape attributes have been conserved and, where possible, enhanced.

Core Policy 52: Green Infrastructure

Development should make provision for the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire's green infrastructure network and ensure that suitable links to that network are provided and maintained. In the context of this Site, the policy is relevant to the retention and enhancement of existing vegetation, trees, scrub, grassland and other green infrastructure features, together with the maintenance of ecological connectivity through the Site and into the surrounding landscape.

Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping

Where relevant to the proposal, this policy supports the retention and enhancement of existing landscaping and natural features, including trees, hedgerows and watercourses, and the creation of wildlife and recreational corridors as part of good design and place shaping.

Core Policy 69: Protection of the River Avon SAC

In order to avoid and reduce potential environmental effects on the River Avon SAC, development within the catchment may need to incorporate appropriate avoidance, mitigation or other measures, depending on the type, scale and location of the proposal and the pathway for effect. This policy is potentially relevant to proposals at Netheravon because of the site's location within the River Avon catchment.

Salisbury Plain SPA Habitats Regulations Assessment and Mitigation Strategy

This document is relevant to new residential development in the area because it addresses the potential effects of additional housing on the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA), particularly in relation to recreational pressure and the need for appropriate mitigation.

River Avon SAC mitigation guidance

Wiltshire Council's River Avon SAC mitigation guidance is relevant to residential development within the catchment where there is potential for effects on the SAC, including those associated with foul drainage and nutrient loading.

APPENDIX 3 – Legal and Technical Limitations

- This report has been prepared by BlueJay Ecology Ltd with all reasonable skill, care, and diligence as required by the terms of the contract agreed with the Client. It is based upon the information provided to us by the Client and other relevant sources made available at the time of its preparation. BlueJay Ecology Ltd makes no further warranty, expressed or implied, regarding the completeness or accuracy of the professional advice provided within this report, or any other associated services we may have delivered.
- This report and its contents are provided solely for the use of the Client and are confidential. Except where submission to the Local Planning Authority is required in connection with a planning application, and solely for the purpose of the Authority publishing the report on the planning portal, this report must not be disclosed, reproduced, or distributed to any third party without the prior written consent of BlueJay Ecology Ltd.
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- This report shall not be relied upon by any party other than the Client without the express written agreement of BlueJay Ecology Ltd.
- The assessments and conclusions set out in this report are based upon the understanding that the sites and facilities evaluated will continue to be used for their current, stated purpose without significant alteration. Should any material change to the use or development of the site occur, BlueJay Ecology Ltd reserves the right to review and potentially revise the findings of this report considering such changes.
- It should be noted that while BlueJay Ecology Ltd strives to provide accurate and reliable advice, this report does not constitute legal advice, and as such, the Client is advised to seek independent legal counsel where matters of law are concerned. Professional legal advice may be necessary to fully understand the legal implications of the ecological findings and recommendations set out herein.
- The ecological assessments within this report are founded on field surveys and data that were accurate at the time of collection. These findings, however, should not be considered reliable beyond a maximum period of two years from the date of the original surveys. The dynamic nature of ecological systems means that changes can occur rapidly, including the colonization of the site by species that were absent during the initial survey period.
- The findings and recommendations in this report have been derived using factual information from third-party maps, databases, and documents. BlueJay Ecology Ltd disclaims any liability for inaccuracies or errors contained in these external sources of information and assumes no responsibility for the consequences of relying on this data.
- While considerable effort has been made to represent the location of ecological features with precision, BlueJay Ecology Ltd advises that the exact position of mapped features

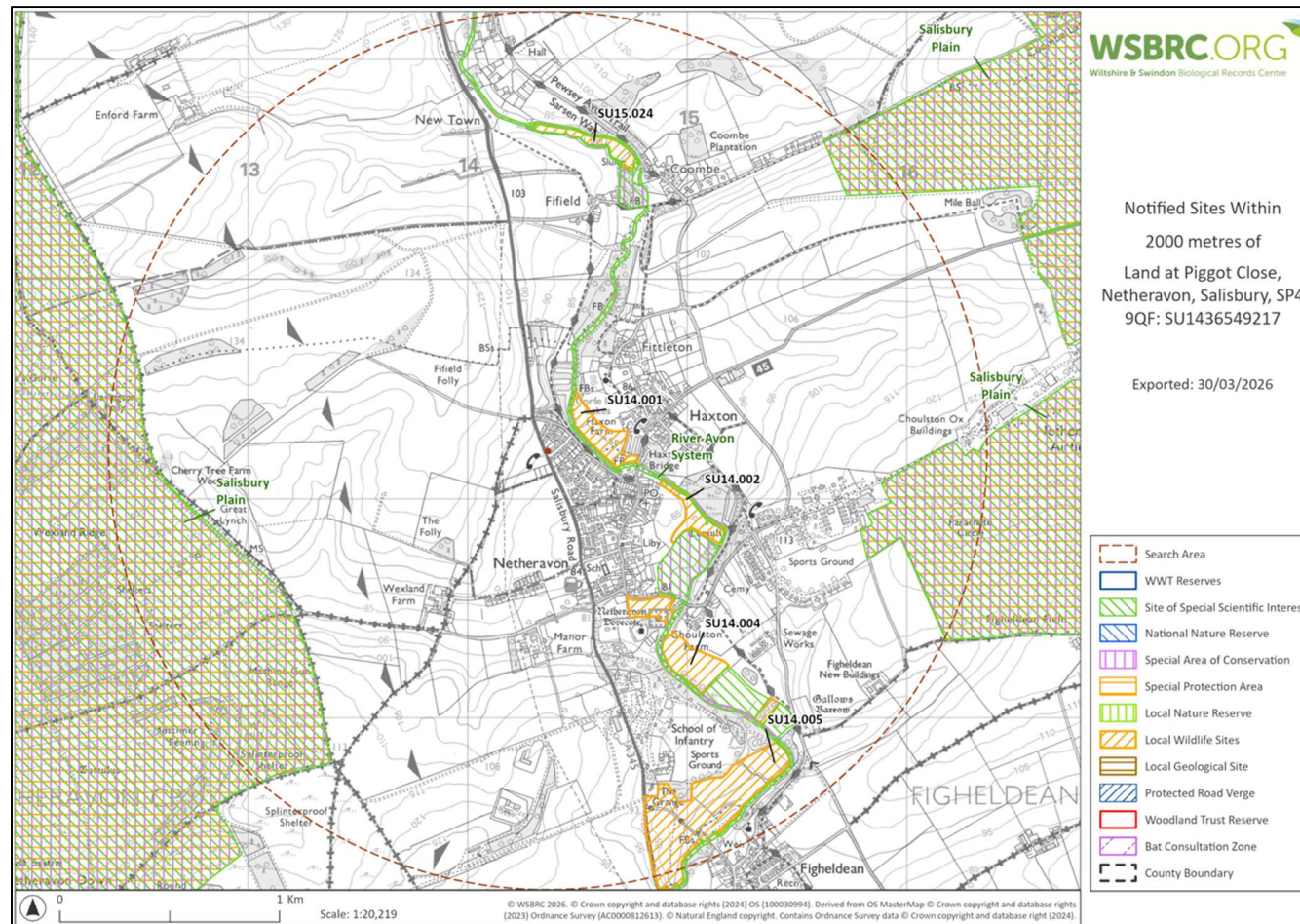
should not be solely relied upon for design or decision-making purposes without ground verification.

- It is important to recognize that the distribution and presence of flora and fauna are inherently variable. A single survey visit provides only a snapshot in time and may not capture all species present on the site. Survey results can be influenced by numerous factors, including the time of year, prevailing weather conditions, and specific survey methodologies. Although thorough efforts were undertaken to document indicators of protected, rare, and notable species within and around the site, there remains the possibility that some species went undetected.
- Any activities or interventions recommended within this report should be undertaken in compliance with applicable health and safety regulations. BlueJay Ecology Ltd recommends that a comprehensive risk assessment is carried out prior to the initiation of any works to ensure that they meet all required safety standards and procedures.
- All conclusions, recommendations, and opinions expressed in this report are based on BlueJay Ecology Ltd.'s current professional knowledge, as well as our interpretation of existing UK ecological standards, codes of practice, and legislation at the time of writing. We emphasize that changes in relevant legislation, policy, or best practice guidelines could potentially impact the validity of the findings herein. BlueJay Ecology Ltd assumes no responsibility to update or revise the content of this report in response to such changes unless specifically instructed to do so by the Client.

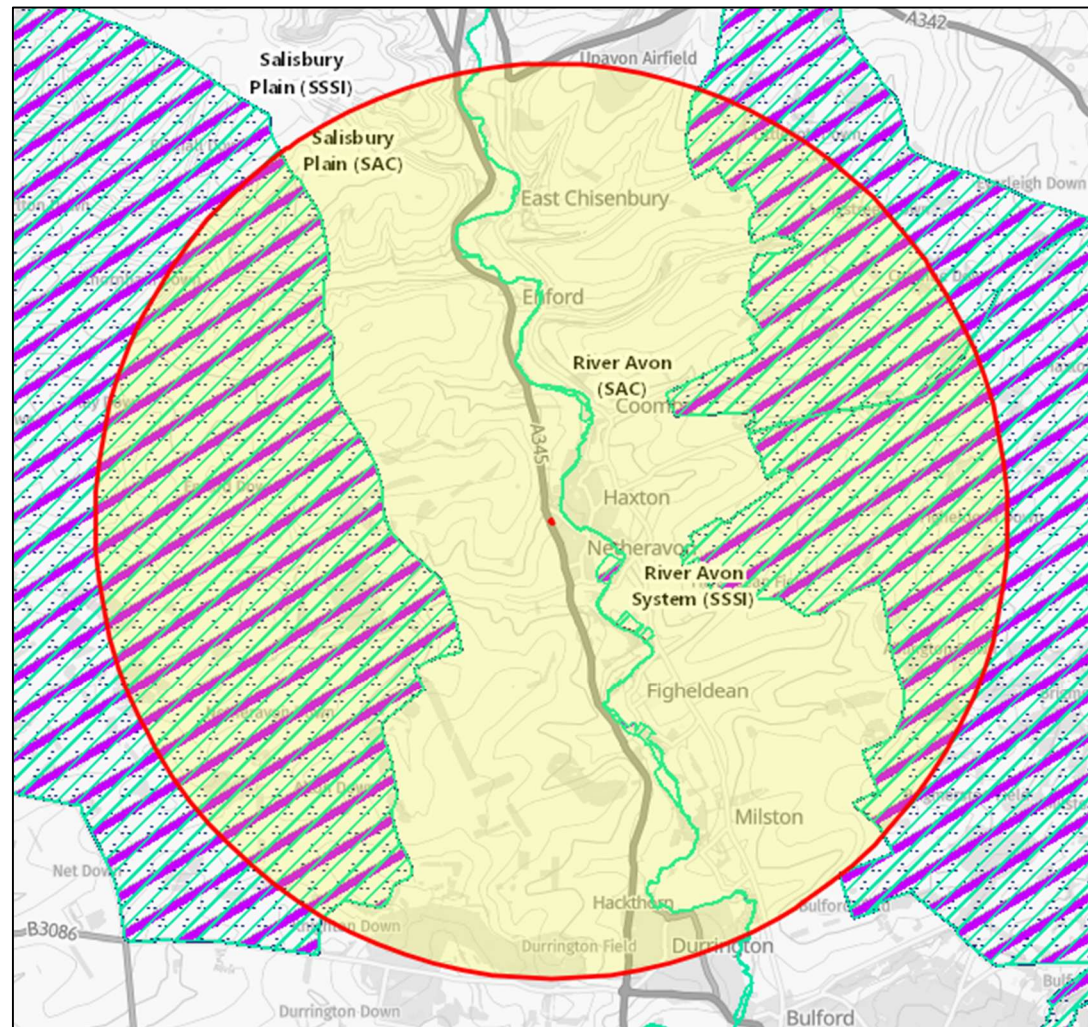
APPENDIX 4 – Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites

Map reproduced with permission from WSBRC, 2026.

Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites within 2 km

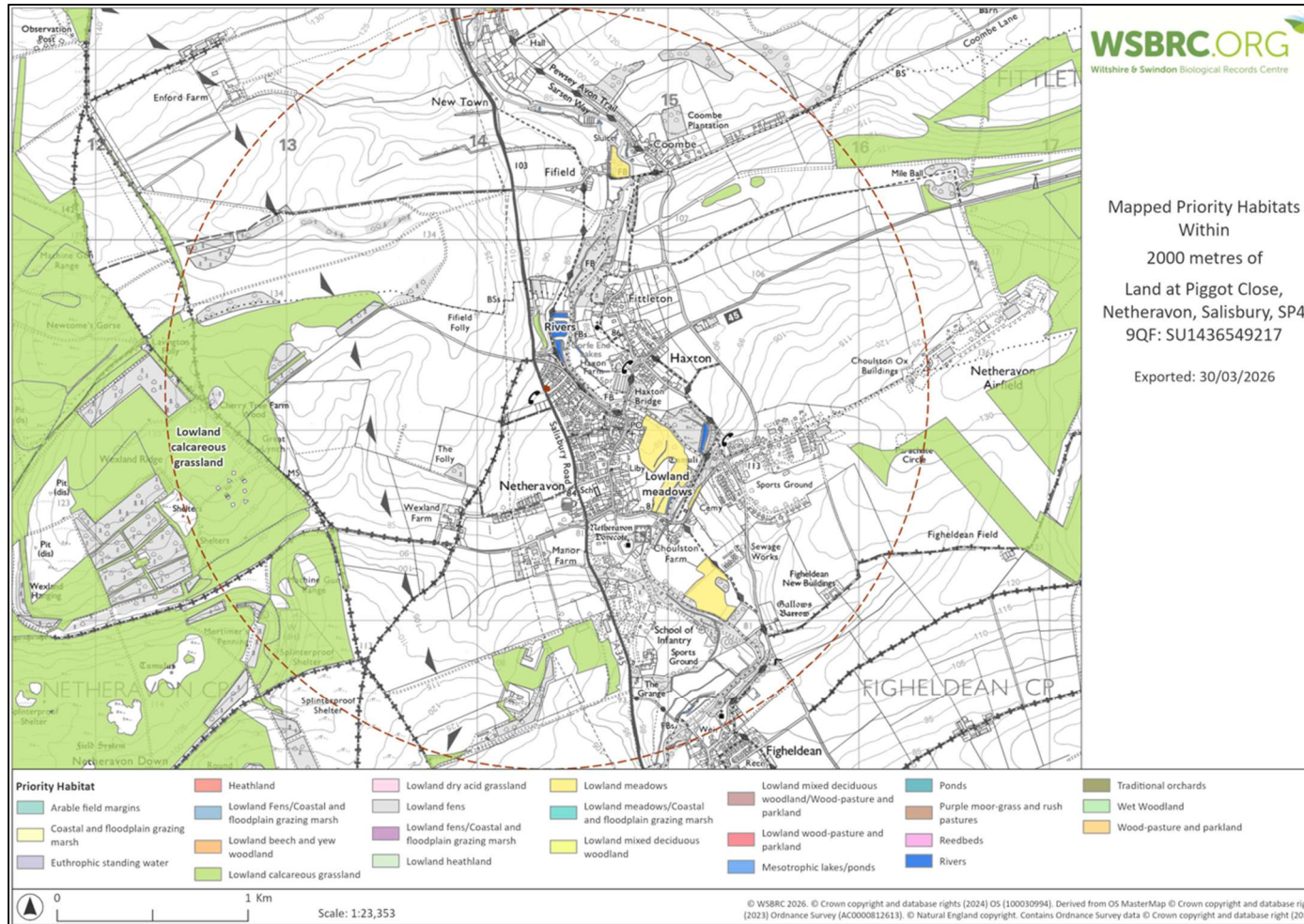


Statutory Sites within 5 km (Map reproduced with permission from MAGIC, 2026)



APPENDIX 5 – Priority Habitats

Map reproduced with permission from WSBRC, 2026.



APPENDIX 6 – Survey Photography

H3h 518 847 (Mixed scrub, neglected, introduced shrub)



H3h 518 847 (Mixed scrub, neglected, introduced shrub)



H3h 518 847 (Mixed scrub, neglected, introduced shrub)



H3h 32 81 510 518 (Mixed scrub, scattered trees, ruderal or ephemeral, bare ground, neglected)



H3h 32 81 510 518 (Mixed scrub, scattered trees, ruderal or ephemeral, bare ground, neglected)



H3h 32 81 510 518 (Mixed scrub, scattered trees, ruderal or ephemeral, bare ground, neglected)



H3h 518 (Mixed scrub, neglected)



H3h 518 (Mixed scrub, neglected)



H3h 510 518 (Mixed scrub, bare ground, neglected)



H3h 510 518 (Mixed scrub, bare ground, neglected)



G4 81 (modified grassland, ruderal or ephemeral)



G4 81 (modified grassland, ruderal or ephemeral)



U1b5 (Buildings B1 and B2)



U1b5 (Buildings B1 and B2)

