

APPENDIX 11.2 DESIGNATED SITES

1.1 Background Data Search

- 1.1.1 A background data search was received from Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre. The search area included records of designated sites and protected and notable species within 2km of the proposed development site.
- 1.1.2 An additional search for granted European Protected Species (EPS) licences within 2km of the site boundary was undertaken using publicly available information (DEFRA Magic map). Furthermore, a search for sites of internationally recognised designations Special Areas of Conservations (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites) was conducted up to 10km from site using publicly available information (DEFRA Magic map).

1.2 Designated Sites

Statutory designated sites

- 1.2.1 One statutory designated site was identified within 2km of the site (table 1, figure 1).
- 1.2.2 The site is located within the Salisbury Plains Special Protection Area (SPA) 6.4km buffer zone, the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) greater horseshoe bat 4,000 m buffer and lesser horseshoe bat 2,000 m buffer zone. The site is also located in the Kennet Valley Barbastelle Bats SAC, barbastelle 6,000 m buffer zone and the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) area known as the Red Zone (high risk) and yellow zone (medium risk) areas.

Table 1 Statutory designated sites within 2km of site

Site title and designation	Reason for designation	Distance from site
Picket and Clanger Wood SSSI	The area is characterised by ancient woodland supporting specialist wildlife species, with broadleaf trees offering habitat to a wide range of fauna. Part of the site is managed and owned by the Woodland Trust.	750m northeast, on the far side of the A350

- 1.2.3 The Salisbury Plain SPA does not extend into the immediate vicinity of the application site; however, a 6.4 km buffer zone associated with the SPA extends across the application site, as shown on Figure 1. The site therefore falls within this consultation zone and given the commercial and residential nature of the proposed development at Hawk Ridge Business Park, recreational pressure on the SPA is likely to be a significant pathway of impact; however, this should be confirmed through HRA screening with the competent authority.

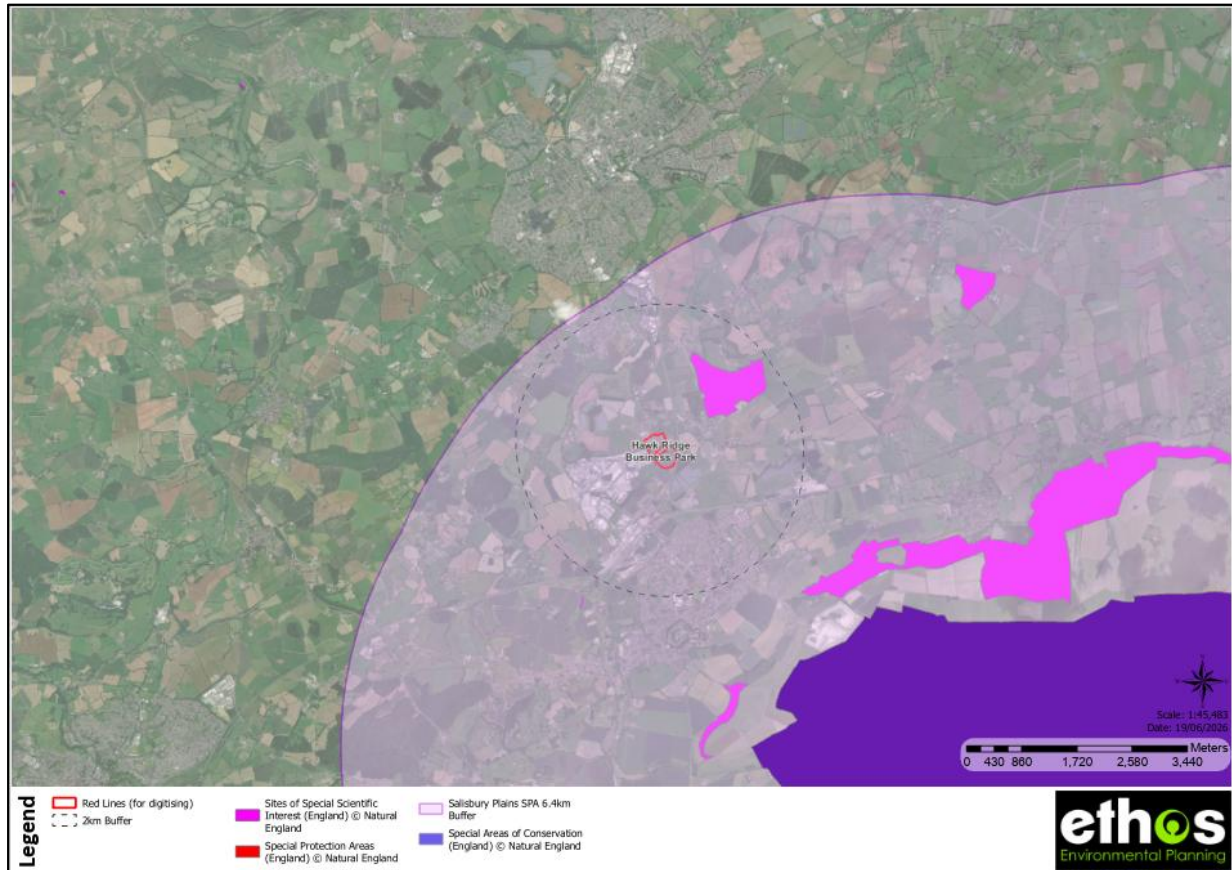


Figure 1 Statutory designated sites within 2km

- 1.2.4 **Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC** is designated for its populations of **greater horseshoe bat** (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) and **lesser horseshoe bat** (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*). The application site falls within the **greater horseshoe bat 4,000 m buffer** (shown in green) and the **lesser horseshoe bat 2,000 m buffer** (shown in olive/darker green). The 4,000 m buffer reflects the species' extensive foraging range from roost sites, and the site's position within both buffers indicates a meaningful potential for functionally important foraging and commuting habitat to be present on or near the application site.
- 1.2.5 **Kennet Valley Barbastelle Bats SAC** (or equivalent barbastelle designation) is reflected by the **barbastelle 6,000 m buffer** (shown in pink) which also overlaps the application site. The barbastelle bat (*Barbastella barbastellus*) is a Annex II species of considerable conservation concern, associated with ancient woodland and riparian habitats for foraging. The presence of woodland Local Wildlife Sites and watercourses in the wider study area ensures that this site will be carried through for further assessment.
- 1.2.6 The application site falls within the **Trowbridge Bat Mitigation SPD** area, adopted by Wiltshire Council to manage cumulative impacts of development on bat populations associated with the Bath and BoA Bat SAC. The site lies within both the **Red Zone (High Risk)** and **Yellow Zone (Medium Risk)** as defined by the SPD, with the red zone centred to the north and northeast of the site.

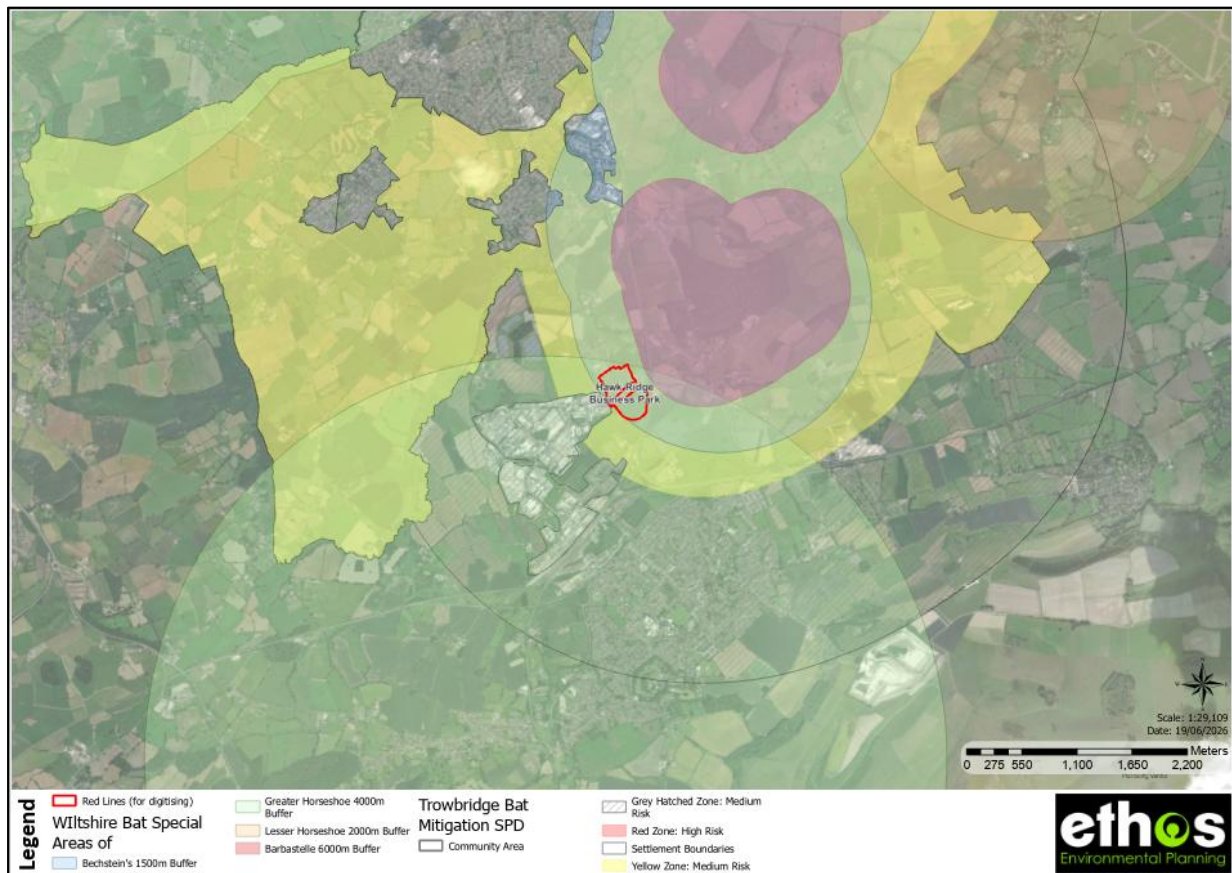


Figure 2 Bath & Bradford-on-Avon Bat SAC within 2km of the site boundary buffer

Non-statutory designated sites

- 1.2.7 Four Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and one Local Geological Site (LGS) was identified within the search area, as shown in Figure 2. were identified within the 2,000 m search radius, as summarised in Table 2 below.

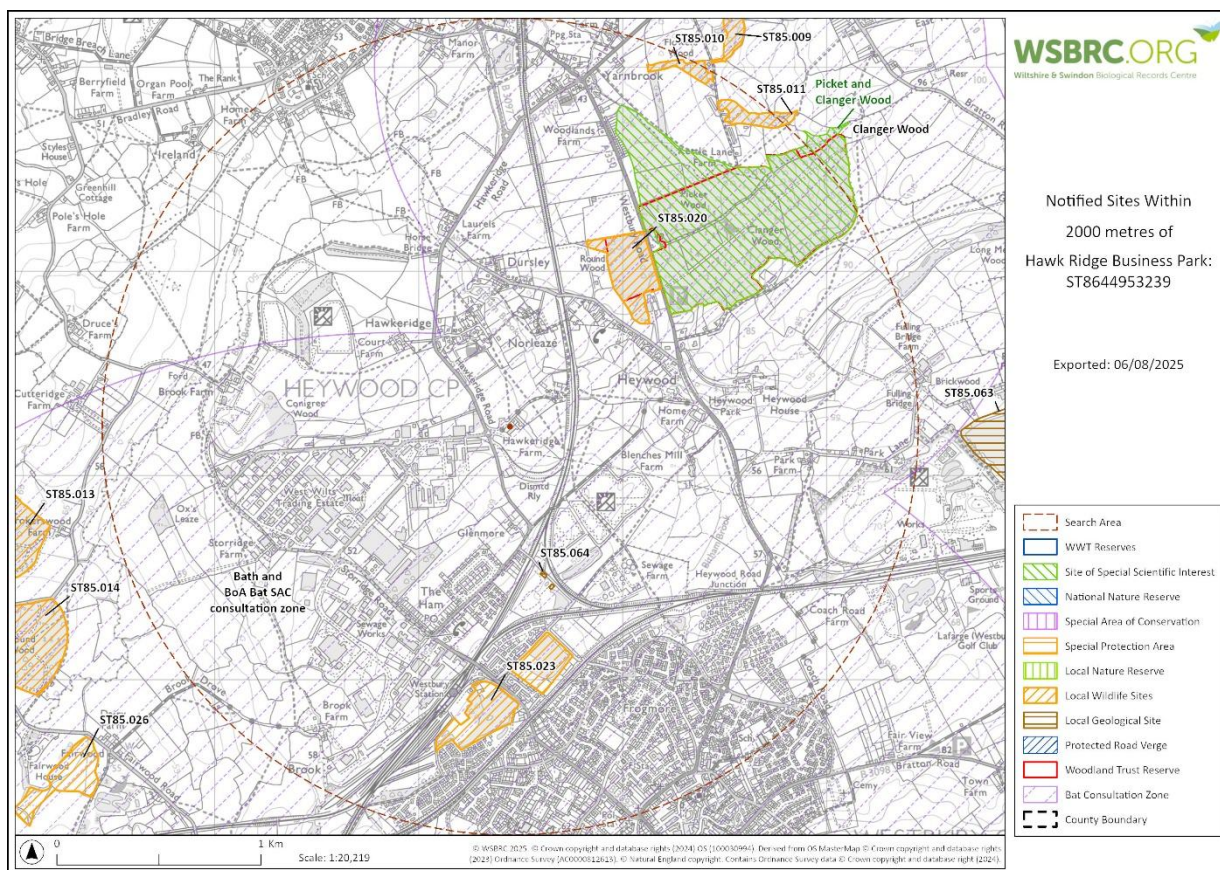


Figure 3 Non-statutory designated sites within 2km (WSBRC)

Table 2 Non-statutory designated sites

LWS Ref	Grid Ref	Site Name	Area (ha)	Principal habitat and designation.	Approx. distance from Site
ST85.010	ST872552	Flowers Wood LWS	1.55	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland. Comprising coppiced oak, hawthorn and hazel, grading into adjacent gardens.	c. 1.7km NNE
ST85.011	ST876547	Kettle Lane Wood LWS	2.54	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland. Supports coppiced oak and ash with features of archaeological interest, including a possible Iron Age bank and ditch. A winterbourne bed crosses the site.	C 1.4km NE
ST85.020	ST870540	Round Wood, Heywood LWS	7.93	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland. It comprises ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland on flat clay land. The majority of the site is managed as a Woodland Trust reserve.	c. 1.0km NE
ST85.023	ST864518	Westbury Lakes LWS	11.1	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland. Comprises two large areas of open freshwater close to the railway intersections at Westbury, covering	C 0.7km SSW

				approximately 11.1 ha in total. The site supports eutrophic standing waters, wet woodland and neutral grassland.	
ST85.064	ST866525	Hawkrige Lane, Westbury LGS	0.091	This site represents the only remaining exposure of the Westbury Ironstone following the infilling of the Bremeridge Farm Pit.	c. 0.5km S

1.2.8 All four LWS support habitats qualifying as Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, and are therefore material considerations in the assessment.

1.2.9 Given the intervening distances and the existing land use context, significant direct impacts on these Local Wildlife and Geological Sites are not anticipated. However, the potential for indirect hydrological or air quality effects, particularly on Westbury Lakes, will be considered further in the impact assessment.

Priority habitats

1.2.10 Priority habitats within 2km of the proposed development site are shown in Figure 3 below. There are several parcels of priority habitat in the surrounding local area, including deciduous woodland along the railway line, eastern boundary of the Site and on the other side of the B3097 on the western site boundary. The parcels consist of deciduous woodland, traditional orchard and 'no main habitat but additional parcels present'.

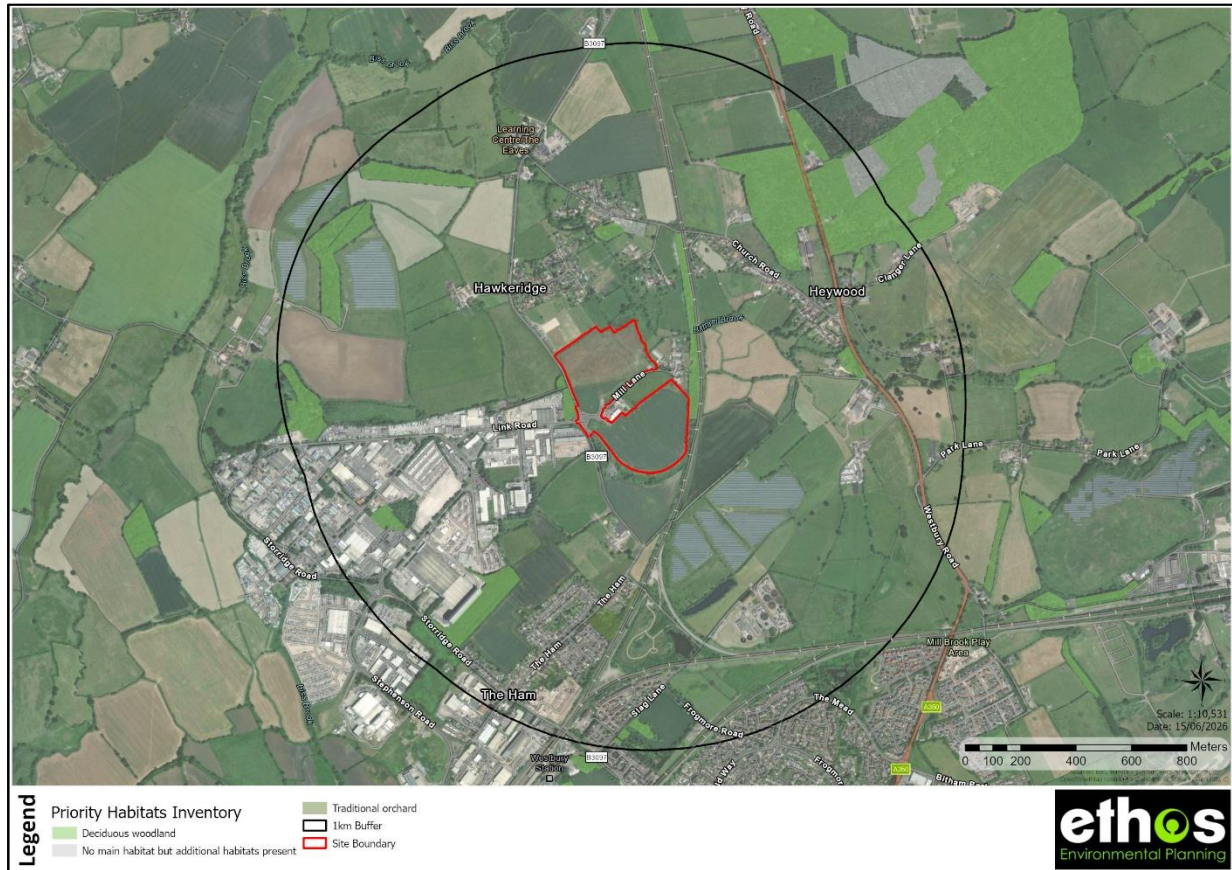


Figure 4 Priority habitats within 2km of the proposed development site

- 1.2.11 The application site and its immediate surroundings are connected to the wider ecological network through a series of hedgerows, field margins, and watercourses, including Biss Brook to the west and Bitham Brook to the northeast. These linear features are likely to function as foraging and commuting corridors for a range of species, including bats, birds, and small mammals.

Ancient woodland

- 1.2.12 There are four distinct parcels of ancient woodland within the 2km search area, which are shown in Figure 4. Two of these, Flowers Wood and Kettle Lane Wood are both parcels of ancient and semi-natural woodland that are associated with the non-statutory designated LWS described above. A parcel further north of these is Woodside Wood/East Flowers Wood, which is an ancient and semi-natural woodland that is located just north of the LWS areas; these parcels will not be considered further as they are assessed to out of the direct zone of impact and will be factored into the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) strategy to be discussed further in relation to potential indirect impacts.
- 1.2.13 Thirteen parcels of ancient and semi-natural woodland and ancient replanted woodland area associated with the Picket/Clanger/Round Wood SSSI and discussed above and considered further in the same capacity.



Figure 5 Ancient woodland inventory within a 2km buffer of the site

1.3 Assessment of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Statutory Designated Sites

Construction Impacts

- 1.3.1 There are no statutory designated sites located within or directly adjacent to the application site. However, a number of statutory designations are present within the wider study area, including Picket and Clanger Wood SSSI approximately 1.4 km to the north-northeast, and the application site falls within the consultation zones of the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC and the Salisbury Plain SPA 6.4 km buffer zone.
- 1.3.2 Potential indirect impact pathways during construction have been considered, including:
- dust generation and air quality effects on Picket and Clanger Wood SSSI;
 - changes in surface water runoff and water quality, including potential effects on Westbury Lakes Local Wildlife Site via watercourse connectivity;

- noise and vibration disturbance;
- artificial lighting during construction in the vicinity of bat SAC foraging and commuting habitat; and
- accidental pollution events.

1.3.3 Given the separation distances involved, the absence of direct hydrological connectivity to SSSI designated features, and the implementation of standard construction best practice to be secured through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), no significant adverse construction effects on statutory designated sites are anticipated.

Operational Impacts

1.3.4 The principal operational impact pathways for statutory designated sites relate to:

- **Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC:** the application site falls within the greater horseshoe bat 4,000 m buffer, the lesser horseshoe bat 2,000 m buffer, and the barbastelle 6,000 m buffer, and within the High Risk Red Zone and Medium Risk Yellow Zone of the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
 - A residential-led mixed use development has the potential to introduce new sources of artificial light at night (ALAN), increased vehicular traffic, and habitat fragmentation that could affect the foraging and commuting function of the site for SAC-qualifying bat species. In accordance with Wiltshire Council's Planning Guidance for the Bath and BoA Bat SAC and the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation SPD, the development will be required to demonstrate that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC.
 - Mitigation measures, including a sensitive lighting scheme, retention and enhancement of commuting and foraging habitat, and financial contributions where required under the SPD, will be incorporated into the design and secured by planning condition or obligation.
- **Salisbury Plain SPA:** the application site lies within the 6.4 km recreational disturbance buffer of the Salisbury Plain SPA, designated for stone curlew.
 - A residential-led development will generate an increase in population, with a potential for increased recreational access to the wider countryside in the vicinity of the SPA. In accordance with Wiltshire Council's requirements and Natural England's standing advice, the development will incorporate provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) at a standard of not less than 8 ha per 1,000 additional population, designed and managed to attract and retain residents within the site and its immediate surroundings, thereby diverting recreational pressure away from the SPA.
 - Financial contributions towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) for the SPA will also be provided in accordance with the requirements of the competent authority.

- 1.3.5 With the implementation of these measures, the development will avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the Salisbury Plain SPA and Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. No significant operational effects on Picket and Clanger Wood SSSI are anticipated given the absence of direct impact pathways and the retention of existing hydrological conditions.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

Construction Impacts

- 1.3.6 Four Local Wildlife Sites are located within the 2,000 m study area, none of which fall within the application site boundary. The closest is Westbury Lakes LWS, approximately 0.7 km to the south-southwest, which supports eutrophic standing waters and wet woodland.
- 1.3.7 Potential indirect construction impacts on Local Wildlife Sites could include:
- dust deposition and air quality effects on sensitive habitats;
 - changes in surface water drainage and water quality, with particular regard to Westbury Lakes;
 - disturbance from construction noise and lighting; and
 - accidental pollution incidents.
- 1.3.8 These impacts will be avoided or minimised through the implementation of appropriate standoff distances, pollution prevention measures, and controls secured through the CEMP. With best practice construction measures in place, no significant adverse construction effects on Local Wildlife Sites are anticipated.

Operational Impacts

- 1.3.9 The residential-led nature of the development will generate an increase in population and associated recreational activity in the wider area. Westbury Lakes LWS and Round Wood, Heywood LWS, both within approximately 1 km of the site, represent accessible greenspace that could experience increased recreational pressure during operation. Potential impacts include trampling, compaction, disturbance to ground-nesting birds and wintering wildfowl, and cumulative habitat degradation.
- 1.3.10 These impacts will be mitigated through the provision of on-site SANG, open space, and a managed access network within the development, designed to provide sufficient recreational capacity to be largely self-contained in terms of recreational demand. Long-term habitat management will be secured through a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). Significant adverse operational effects on off-site Local Wildlife Sites are not anticipated with these measures in place.

Priority Habitats

Construction Impacts

- 1.3.11 No Priority Habitats are mapped directly within the application site boundary on the Natural England Priority Habitats Inventory. Deciduous woodland and traditional orchard qualifying as Priority Habitats are present within the 1 km study area, principally to the north and northeast of the site.
- 1.3.12 The development has been designed to avoid direct impacts on off-site Priority Habitats. Where hedgerows or other features within the site boundary are confirmed as Priority Habitat through survey, the design will be refined to maximise retention. Where loss is unavoidable, the mitigation hierarchy will apply, including:
- minimisation of habitat loss through design refinement at reserved matters stage;
 - retention of hedgerows wherever possible, with a minimum 5 m buffer from construction activity;
 - dust and pollution control measures;
 - protective fencing and ecological watching briefs during vegetation clearance; and
 - implementation and monitoring through the CEMP.
- 1.3.13 With these measures in place, no significant adverse construction effects on Priority Habitats are anticipated.

Operational Impacts

- 1.3.14 During operation, potential impacts on Priority Habitats within and adjacent to the site include recreational pressure causing trampling, compaction, nutrification from dog walkers, and indirect effects of artificial lighting and noise on woodland edge and hedgerow habitats. The retention and management of hedgerows and boundary vegetation as part of the green infrastructure network will help to maintain habitat connectivity and quality in the long term.

Compensation and Enhancement

- 1.3.15 Where any loss of Priority Habitat is confirmed as unavoidable following survey and design refinement, compensation will be provided through on-site habitat creation and enhancement, including:

- **Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland:** new woodland planting using locally appropriate native broadleaved species (e.g. oak, field maple, hazel, hawthorn) to extend and buffer existing woodland blocks to the north and northeast, and to provide new foraging and commuting habitat for SAC bat species.
 - **Hedgerows (Priority Habitat):** species-rich native hedgerows will be planted throughout the site using a locally appropriate mix of woody species (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, dogwood), in double staggered rows with standard trees at intervals, to enhance connectivity across the site and with the wider landscape.
 - **Species-Rich Grassland:** species-rich grassland will be established within SANG and open space areas through appropriate soil preparation and seeding using locally sourced species-rich mixes, managed by annual hay cutting or low-intensity grazing to maintain botanical diversity.
 - **Bat Foraging and Commuting Habitat:** in accordance with the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation SPD requirements, linear habitat features including hedgerows, woodland belts, and watercourse corridors will be designed and managed to maximise their function as foraging and commuting routes for greater horseshoe, lesser horseshoe, and barbastelle bats.
- 1.3.16 All habitat creation, enhancement, and management commitments will be secured through a LEMP and delivered in accordance with the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements of the Environment Act 2021, with a minimum 10% net gain to be demonstrated using the statutory Biodiversity Metric.