



WELLINGTON ROAD JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS

Wellington Road PEAR

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1. Non- Technical Summary

- 1.1.1. This preliminary ecological appraisal report (PEAR) has been prepared by Sweco for Aberdeen City Council and relates to a proposed road improvement and active travel scheme along Wellington Road between Craigshaw Drive and Charleston Road North.
- 1.1.2. The purpose of this report is to identify potential ecological constraints to development, inform recommendations for design change, highlight opportunities for ecological enhancement and determine the need for further survey work and/or assessment to confirm baseline ecological conditions.
- 1.1.3. An extended Phase 1 habitat survey was carried out on 31 May 2023, to map the habitats present on site and assess their potential to support notable/protected species.
- 1.1.4. The extended Phase 1 habitat survey found that the non-urban areas of site primarily consist of broadleaved and mixed woodland, amenity grassland and scattered trees. The site has the potential to support nesting birds, bats and badger. Some areas of ornamental planting within the site also contain invasive non-native species (INNS) of plants.
- 1.1.5. It is considered **best practice** that appropriate precautions be taken, documented and implemented through a Pollution Prevention Plan. These measures include but are not limited to appropriate storage of fuels/oils, treatment of arisings and silt/pollution protection.
- 1.1.6. It is **recommended** that vegetation clearance and tree felling across the site is kept to a minimum. If design proposals include felling of woodland, then consultation with the local planning department within Aberdeen City Council is recommended to establish whether the proposed extent of removal would be permitted.
- 1.1.7. It is a **mandatory requirement** that nesting birds (or their nests or eggs), including ground and bank nesting birds and waterfowl, are not killed or injured or their active nests destroyed as a result of activities on site.
- 1.1.8. It is **recommended** that clearance of vegetation that is suitable for nesting birds is undertaken outside the core nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) and if the works programme cannot be amended to facilitate this, that a pre-works check for nesting birds be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist one week and then no more than 48





hours prior to works. If active nests were found, there would be no other option but to delay works in the immediate area until chicks have fledged.

- 1.1.9. It is **recommended** that the woodland to the east of the site remain unlit during construction and post construction. If the lighting on site is to be considerably altered, it is further **recommended** that a sensitive lighting plan is produced which will cover the construction and operation of the development to minimise disturbance to bats and badger and would be reviewed by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 1.1.10. It is **recommended** that a detailed badger survey is undertaken during the winter months to identify any setts in the woodland to the east of the site, up to 100m from the site boundary.
- 1.1.11. As the project progresses through DMRB stages it is **recommended** that impacts on any protected species would be reassessed by an ecologist.
- 1.1.12. It is **recommended** that if any INNS of plants recorded are to be removed, it is done so in a responsible manner and any waste is stored so as not to facilitate the spread of these species. The details of any INNS removal and storage should be detailed in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
- 1.1.13. It is **recommended** that the following ecological enhancements appropriate for the scheme should be considered for inclusion:
 - Use of native plant species in landscaping plans
 - Inclusion of wildflowers and other 'plants for pollinators'
 - Bird and bat boxes erected onto retained trees
 - Inclusion of log piles for invertebrates
 - Enhancement of any proposed sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to benefit wildlife





2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose

- 2.1.1. This preliminary ecological appraisal report (PEAR) has been prepared by Sweco for Aberdeen City Council and relates to a proposed road improvement and active travel scheme along Wellington Road between Craigshaw Drive and Charleston Road North (central grid reference NJ 94718 03013) known hereafter as 'the site'.
- 2.1.2. The purpose of this report is to identify and classify the habitats present, assess ecological constraints to the project and provide recommendations for any further surveys required to inform baseline conditions, and any mitigation or licencing requirements. This includes an assessment of whether the scheme and associated activities would have the potential to adversely affect any designated nature conservation sites, protected or notable habitats or species.

2.2. Proposed Development

2.2.1. The scheme includes improvements to Wellington Road between Craigshaw Drive and Charleston Road North, encompassing two major junctions and their influencing approaches. The improvements are for both motor vehicle and active travel users and is linked to the adjacent Aberdeen South Harbour Link Road (ASHLR) project, to the east at Hareness Road.

2.3. Site Description

- 2.3.1. The site is located in Aberdeen, south of the city centre, and occupies a total area of approximately 14ha. The majority of the site consists of open space and will not be impacted by the scheme. The site boundary and survey areas are shown on Figure 1 (Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map).
- 2.3.2. The primary habitats on site include hardstanding, broadleaved and mixed woodland, amenity grassland and scattered trees. A full list of habitats is detailed below and shown on Figure 1.
- 2.3.3. The habitats directly adjacent to the site are almost exclusively residential and commercial infrastructure. Areas of woodland are located to the east and west of the site, primarily forming the Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) Tullos Hill and Kincorth Hill respectively. Other nearby protected sites are detailed below and shown on Figure 2 (Designated Sites and Protected Woodland).





3. Legislative and Policy Context

- 3.1.1. The main pieces of legislation relating to ecology in Scotland are:
 - The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations (1994) as amended in Scotland
 - Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act (2004)
 - Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011
 - Protection of Badgers Act 1992
 - National Planning Framework 4 (2023)
- 3.1.2. All recommendations made in this PEAR are in line with the above the legislation. The reader is referred to the original legislation for definitive interpretation.





4. Methods

4.1. Technical Approach

- 4.1.1. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken following CIEEM's guidelines [1] and British Standard 42020:2013 [2]. This approach has been employed to provide an indication of the ecological importance of the site and the potential for the site to be used by protected species.
- 4.1.2. Common names and binomial scientific names of plant species identified are as they appear in Stace [2].
- 4.1.3. The conclusions and recommendations for further works are in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

4.2. Personnel

4.2.1. This report was produced by Ecologist Libby Ward MSc, QCIEEM who has over 3 years' experience in ecological consultancy including surveys and mitigation for a range of protected species and in producing preliminary ecological appraisals and impact assessments. The field survey was carried out by Ecologist Alex Clough MSc who has over 5 years' experience in ecological consultancy, and Graduate Ecologist Georgia Barnett-Sadler. This report was reviewed by Alex Clough (reviewer) and by Technical Manager Lorna McDonald MSc MCIEEM CEnv who has over 11 years' experience in ecological consultancy and production of preliminary ecological appraisals and impact assessments.

4.3. Scope of the Assessment and Zone of Influence

- 4.3.1. The Zone of Influence (ZOI) is the area over which ecological features may be subject to change as a result of the scheme and associated activities [3]. The ZOI varies depending on the ecological feature concerned and can extend beyond the site boundary. Where possible, ZOIs would be determined using the results of professionally accredited or published scientific studies. Where such studies are not available, the ZOI would be determined using the professional judgement of a suitably experienced and qualified ecologist. This is in line with professional guidelines [3].
- 4.3.2. The ZOI for the surveys was determined from the site boundary for each ecological feature in line with best practice survey guidance; taking into account the context of suitable habitat in relation to the site, their sensitivity and mobility, and is described below:





- Statutory designated sites: due to the nature of the scheme on site the ZOI was considered as 5km for statutory designated sites and 2km for ancient woodland.
- Non-statutory designated sites: The ZOI was considered as 2km for nonstatutory designated sites and Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) sites.
- Protected and notable species records search: due to the nature of the scheme on site a search of 2km was carried out.
- Bats: 30m ZOI based on professional guidelines [4].
- Badger (Meles meles): 100m ZOI based on professional guidelines [5].
- Red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*) and pine marten (*Martes martes*): considered at the scale of the site and connected habitat within 2km.
- Reptiles: the site boundary was considered a sufficient ZOI [6].
- Invasive non-native species (INNS): the site boundary was considered a sufficient ZOI.
- 4.3.3. There are no rivers or streams crossing the site or within the ZOI for otters and water vole, therefore, they have been scoped out of the survey. Data returned from the 2km data search has still been provided.

4.4. Desk Study

- 4.4.1. The Northeast Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC) was contacted for details of any non-statutory designations and records of protected/notable species within 2km of the site's central national grid reference. Only records of protected species from within the last 10 years are considered within this report.
- 4.4.2. Information on Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) and Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) sites within 2km of the site was obtained from Native Woodland Survey of Scotland Data Explorer [7].
- 4.4.3. NatureScot SiteLink [8] was consulted to obtain information on nationally and/or internationally important statutory designations within 2km of the site boundary.

4.5. Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

4.5.1. An extended Phase 1 habitat survey of the site was undertaken on 31 of May 2023. Weather conditions at the time of the survey were dry and sunny, with an ambient temperature of approximately 16°C.





- 4.5.2. The Phase 1 habitat survey involved walking over the site to categorise the habitats present according to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Phase 1 habitat survey guidelines [9].
- 4.5.3. Habitats were classified and assessed in terms of both their conservation importance and potential to support notable and/or protected species (based on habitat suitability and/or field signs).

4.6. Species and Species Groups

- 4.6.1. The following was searched for and recorded if present during the survey:
 - All field signs of protected species or those of conservation interest including burrows, droppings, footprints and hairs
 - Refuges and particular habitat types to be used by certain classes of fauna
 - Any mammal paths if found were noted and followed where possible
 - Entry points for fauna along fence and/or hedgerow boundaries if present
 - Incidental sightings of any non-native species
- 4.6.2. Only accessible buildings and established trees adjacent to the site were inspected and assessed in terms of their suitability (negligible, low, moderate or high) to support roosting bats, in line with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) survey guidelines [4].
- 4.6.3. The survey was carried out from the site boundary and covered all areas within the relevant ZOIs as outlined above in Section 3.3.

4.7. Limitations

4.7.1. No significant limitations were encountered during the survey.





5. Results

5.1. Protected and Designated Sites

5.1.1. There are no statutory and non-statutory designated sites found within the site boundary. Details of all sites found within the relevant ZOI are detailed below.

Statutory Designated Sites

5.1.2. Consultation of the NatureScot SiteLink [8] online interactive mapping tool confirms the presence of two internationally important (Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)) and three nationally important (Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)) statutory designations within 5km of the site boundary, detailed below in Table 1 and shown on Figure 2. Nigg Bay SSSI is designated for geological interest and will not be considered further.

Table 1. Statutory designated sites within 5km of the site

Site Name	Distance and direction from scheme (at closest extent)	Description/Reason for designation	
River Dee SAC	0.8km northwest	The site has been designated as it supports populations of the following Annex II species:	
		 Freshwater pearl mussel (Margaritifera margaritifera) 	
		Atlantic salmon (Salmo salar)	
		Otter (Lutra lutra)	
Cove SSSI	1.4km southeast	The site supports a colony of the rare plant Dickie's bladder-fern (Cystopteris dickieana).	
Nigg Bay SSSI	2km northeast	The site is designated for its geological interest only.	
Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA	2.8km northeast	The site qualifies under Article 4.1 as it supports internationally important populations of Sandwich tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>), common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) and little tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>). The site further qualifies under Article 4.2 as it supports internationally important populations of the migratory species	
		pink-footed goose (<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>) and regularly supports an excess of 20,000 individual waterfowl.	
Findon Moor SSSI	3.6km south	The site comprises a mosaic of habitats from rocky shore to heathland. The coastal heathland is one of the largest areas remaining in South Aberdeenshire.	





Non-Statutory Designated Sites

5.1.3. NESBReC has confirmed the presence of six non-statutory designated sites (Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS)) within the 2km search radius, detailed below in Table 2 and shown on Figure 2.

Table 2. Non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site

Site Name	Distance and direction from site	Description/Reason for designation
Kincorth Hill LNCS	<0.1km west	The site comprises scrub, woodland, neutral grassland and dry heath habitats.
Tullos Hill LNCS	0.2km east	The site comprises a mosaic of broadleaved woodland, neutral grassland, scrub, bracken, acid grassland and dry heath.
Loirston Loch LNCS	0.2km southwest	The site comprises a mosaic of open water, reed beds and marshy grassland which is important for overwintering wildfowl.
River Dee Corridor LNCS	0.6km northwest	The river supports a diverse range of fauna and flora.
Balnagask to Cove LNCS	1.1km east	The site comprises a mosaic of herb rich grasslands, wet flushes, coastal heathland, rocky cliffs and rock pools. The site supports populations of nesting seabirds.
Deeside Old Railway LNCS	1.4km northwest	A valuable green corridor comprising of grassland, tall ruderal, small pockets of woodland, scattered trees and shrubs.

Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) and Native Woodland of Scotland (NWSS) Sites

- 5.1.4. There are four parcels of AWI, Long-Established (of plantation origin) found within 2km of the site boundary. The closest is located approximately 0.2km east of site within Tullos Hill LNCS. The next closest is approximately 1.8km west of site. All are shown on Figure 2.
- 5.1.5. There are eight parcels of NWSS woodland within 2km on the site. The closest is approximately 250m east of the site.

5.2. Habitats

- 5.2.1. The results of the Phase 1 habitat survey are shown on Figure 1.
- 5.2.2. Significant areas of hard standing are present on site, primarily the road and pavements. Due to the extent of these habitats and lack of ecological importance these areas are not presented on the Phase 1 habitat map and are not described below.
- 5.2.3. The following habitat types are present on site:





- Broadleaved woodland plantation (A1.1.2)
- Coniferous woodland- plantation (A1.2.2)
- Mixed woodland semi-natural (A1.3.1)
- Mixed woodland plantation (A1.3.2)
- Scrub scattered (A2.2)
- Broadleaved parkland/scattered trees (A3.1)
- Poor semi-improved grassland (B6)
- Other tall herb and fern ruderal (C3.1)
- Cultivated/disturbed land amenity grassland (J1.2)
- Cultivated/disturbed land ephemeral/short perennial (J1.3)
- Introduced scrub (J1.4)
- Intact hedge species poor (J2.1.2)
- Dry ditch (J2.6)
- Bare ground (J4)

Broadleaved Woodland – Plantation (A1.1.2)

5.2.4. The broadleaved woodland on site is almost exclusively ornamental planting along Wellington Road, the majority of which is at the northern end of the site. The broadleaved woodland includes the following species: white beam (*Sorbus aria*), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), oak (*Quercus robur*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), field maple (*Acer* campestre), wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*), wild cherry (*Prunus avium*), horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), lime (*Tilia x europaea*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

Coniferous Woodland- Plantation (A1.2.2)

5.2.5. Small areas of coniferous woodland are located to the north and south of the site, including species such as Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and Norway spruce (*Picea abies*).

Mixed Woodland – Semi-Natural (A1.3.1)

5.2.6. There is one area of semi-natural mixed woodland to the east of Wellington Road. Species present include sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Scots pine and beech. The ground flora is dominated by male fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*) and nettle (*Urtica dioica*).





Mixed Woodland – Plantation (A1.3.2)

5.2.7. Small parcels of young planted mixed woodland are located to the southern end of the site on both the eastern and western side of Wellington Road. Species include Scots pine, ash, sycamore, beech, alder, elder, goat willow (*Salix caprea*), Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) and Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*).

Scrub – Dense/Continuous (A2.1)

5.2.8. One small area of dense/continuous scrub is located on the western side of Wellington Road, dominated by dog rose (*Rosa canina*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

Scrub - Scattered (A2.2)

5.2.9. Areas of scattered scrub are located to the southern end of the site. The area located on the western side of Wellington Road is dominated by silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and Norway spruce saplings over semi-improved grassland. The area on the eastern side of Wellington Road is dominated by gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) and goat willow over rubble ground.

Broadleaved Parkland/Scattered Trees (A3.1)

5.2.10. Scattered trees are located throughout the entire site. This habitat includes field maple, Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), ash, sycamore, white beam, goat willow and rowan. Primarily over amenity grassland.

Poor Semi-improved Grassland (B6)

5.2.11. Areas of poor semi-improved grassland are located throughout the site including the species cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*).

Other Tall Herb and Fern – Ruderal (C3.1)

5.2.12. Small areas of tall ruderal are located to the southern end of the site. All areas dominated by cow parsley, red campion (*Silene dioica*), Yorkshire fog, dandelion and creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*).





Cultivated/Disturbed Land – Amenity Grassland (J1.2)

5.2.13. There are areas of heavily managed amenity grassland present throughout the site.

Cultivated/Disturbed Land – Ephemeral/Short Perennial (J1.3)

5.2.14. There is one area of landscaped land located to the north of the site. This is newly planted landscape scrub, mostly woodchip.

Introduced Scrub (J1.4)

5.2.15. Introduced scrub is located throughout the site, dominated by Japanese laurel (*Aucuba japonica*), New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*), rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) and creeping juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*).

Intact Hedge – Species Poor (J2.1.2)

5.2.16. There are seven beech hedgerows and one beech and hawthorn hedgerow across the site.

Dry Ditch (J2.6)

5.2.17. An 85m dry ditch runs alongside Wellington Road at the southern end of the site.

Bare Ground (J4)

5.2.18. One area of bare ground was located to the western side of Wellington Road.

5.3. Species and Species Groups Botany

- 5.3.1. NESBReC returned one record of wild pansy (*Ascophyllum nodosum*) approximately 850m of the site. Wild pansy is listed on the Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL) and UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP).
- 5.3.2. NESBReC returned four species listed on the North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan (NE LBAP) [10]: water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), greater spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*), bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*). The closest of these records, water-plantain, was located approximately 270m west of the site.





5.3.3. No notable plant species were recorded during the field survey and are not considered further in this report.

Invertebrates

5.3.4. Listed below in Table 3 are notable invertebrate species recorded within 2km of the site. These include species listed on the SBL and UKBAP.

Table 3. Results of the database search for notable invertebrate species records within 2km of site

Common Name	Scientific Name	Designations
Grey dagger	Acronicta psi	SBL, UKBAP
Garden tiger	Arctia caja	SBL, UKBAP
Northern brown argus	Coenonympha pamphilus	SBL,
Small square-spot	Diarsia rubi	SBL
Grass rivulet	Perizoma albulata	SBL, UKBAP
Shaded broad-bar	Scotopteryx chenopodiata	SBL
Small Heath	Coenonympha pamphilus	SBL, UKBAP
Latticed heath	Chiasmia clathrate	SBL, UKBAP
Rosy Minor	Litoligia literosa	UKBAP

Reptiles

- 5.3.5. There were no records of reptiles returned within 2km of the site.
- 5.3.6. No reptiles were recorded during the survey. The habitats on site do not provide good opportunities for foraging, basking and hibernating and therefore are considered unsuitable for reptiles. Furthermore, there is a lack of connectivity to any potentially suitable habitats. It is considered unlikely that reptiles will be present on site and are not considered further in this report.

Amphibians

- 5.3.7. One record of common toad (*Bufo bufo*) was returned from NESBReC, located 1.6km to the southeast of the site boundary. Common toad is listed on both the SBL and UKBAP.
- 5.3.8. Habitats on site do not provide suitable breeding habitat for common amphibians and are not considered further in this report.





Birds

5.3.9. Listed below in Table 4 are notable bird species recorded within 2km of the site. These include bird species listed on Schedule 1 part 1 and 2 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA1i & WCA1ii), Priority Species (SBL & UKBAP) and those with a conservation status currently listed as red (BRed) or amber (BAmb) by the 5th review of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) [11].

Table 4. Results of the database search for bird species records within 2km of site

Common Name	Scientific Name	Designations
Lesser redpoll	Acanthis cabaret	Red BoCC ¹
Goshawk	Accipiter gentilis	WCA-Sch 1
Reed warbler	Acrocephalus scirpaceus	SBL
Skylark	Alauda arvensis	SBL, Red BoCC
Kingfisher	Alcedo atthis	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Amber BoCC ²
Garganey	Anas querquedula	Amber BoCC
Greylag goose	Anser anser	Amber BoCC
Pink-footed goose	Anser brachyrhynchus	Amber BoCC
Swift	Apus apus	SBL, Red BoCC
Short-eared owl	Asio flammeus	SBL, Amber BoCC
Pochard	Aythya ferina	Red BoCC
Scaup	Aythya marila	Red BoCC
Brent goose	Branta bernicla	Amber BoCC
Barnacle goose	Branta leucopsis	WCA-Sch 1
Goldeneye	Bucephala clangula	Red BoCC
Dunlin	Calidris alpina	SBL
Purple sandpiper	Calidris maritima	SBL, Red BoCC
Black-headed gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus	Amber BoCC
Cuckoo	Cuculus canorus	SBL, Red BoCC

-

¹ Red is the highest conservation priority with species requiring urgent action and includes globally threatened species and species that have experienced a sever historical decline. A summary of relevant factors can be accessed via the RSPB website: https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/uk-conservation-status-explained/

² Amber is the next most critical group after red and includes species which have suffered a moderate decline. A summary of relevant factors can be accessed via the RSPB website: https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/uk-conservation-status-explained/





Common Name	Scientific Name	Designations
Whooper swan	Cygnus cygnus	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Amber BoCC,
Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella	SBL, Red BoCC
Reed bunting	Emberiza schoeniclus	SBL, Amber BoCC
Merlin	Falco columbarius	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Red BoCC
Peregrine falcon	Falco peregrinus	WCA-Sch 1, SBL
Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus	SBL, Amber BoCC
Brambling	Fringilla montifringilla	WCA-Sch 1, SBL
Snipe	Gallinago gallinago	Amber BoCC
Black-throated diver	Gavia arctica	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Amber BoCC
Great Northern diver	Gavia immer	WCA-Sch 1, SBL
Red-throated diver	Gavia stellata	WCA-Sch 1, SBL
Storm petrel	Hydrobates pelagicus	SBL, Amber BoCC
Herring gull	Larus argentatus	SBL, Red BoCC
Bar-tailed godwit	Limosa Iapponica	SBL, Amber BoCC
Black-tailed godwit	Limosa limosa	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Red BoCC
Linnet	Linaria cannabina	Red BoCC
Twite	Linaria flavirostris	Red BoCC
Grasshopper warbler	Locustella naevia	SBL, Red BoCC
Common scoter	Melanitta nigra	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Red BoCC
Red kite	Milvus milvus	WCA-Sch 1, SBL
Yellow wagtail	Motacilla flava	SBL, Red BoCC
Spotted flycatcher	Muscicapa striata	SBL, Red BoCC
Curlew	Numenius arquata	SBL, Red BoCC
Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Amber BoCC
House sparrow	Passer domesticus	SBL, Red BoCC
Tree sparrow	Passer montanus	SBL, Red BoCC
Snow bunting	Plectrophenax nivalis	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Amber BoCC
Golden plover	Pluvialis apricaria	SBL
Slavonian grebe	Podiceps auritus	SBL, Red BoCC
Dunnock	Prunella modularis	Amber BoCC
Balearic shearwater	Puffinus mauretanicus	SBL, Red BoCC
Manx shearwater	Puffinus puffinus	SBL, Amber BoCC
	1	1





Common Name	Scientific Name	Designations
Bullfinch	Pyrrhula pyrrhula	SBL, Amber BoCC
Woodcock	Scolopax rusticola	SBL, Red BoCC
Eider	Somateria mollissima	Amber BoCC
Artic skua	Stercorarius parasiticus	SBL, Red BoCC
Common tern	Sterna hirundo	SBL, Amber BoCC
Arctic tern	Sterna paradisaea	SBL, Amber BoCC
Sandwich tern	Sterna sandvicensis	SBL, Amber BoCC
Starling	Sturnus vulgaris	SBL, Red BoCC
Wood sandpiper	Tringa glareola	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Amber BoCC
Redshank	Tringa totanus	Amber BoCC
Redwing	Turdus iliacus	WCA-Sch 1, SBL, Amber BoCC
Song thrush	Turdus philomelos	SBL, Amber BoCC
Ring ouzel	Turdus torquatus	SBL, Red BoCC
Barn owl	Tyto alba	WCA-Sch 1, SBL
Lapwing	Vanellus vanellus	SBL, Red BoCC

5.3.10. The habitats across the site and immediately adjacent provide suitable breeding habitat for a large variety of bird species. Birds recorded during the site visits included black-headed gull, sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), sedge warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*), white throat (*Sylvia communis*), greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*) and goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*).

Bats

- 5.3.11. Eleven records of bats were recorded within 2km from the site boundary including common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus* pipistrellus), Nathusius's pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus* nathusii) and Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*). The two closest records were located 0.7km to the southwest of the site boundary.
- 5.3.12. Wellington Road is fully illuminated at night making it suboptimal for bats, however, the woodland area to the east of the site is unlit and offers good foraging and commuting habitat.
- 5.3.13. A preliminary roost assessment was undertaken on nine buildings and one tree within 30m of the site boundary. Eight of the buildings were assessed as having low potential and one as having moderate potential to support roosting bats. These are shown





on Figure 1 and labelled B1-B9. Descriptions of each, including bat roost potential (BRP) are provided in Table 5 below, with photographs presented below the table.

Table 5. Bat Building Descriptions

Ref. No.	Description	Bat Roost Potential
B1	Slate tile double pitched roof. Gaps visible under tiles and around windows.	Low
B2	Timber cladding, double pitched roof. Gaps around roof in gable end.	Low
В3	Old cottage building. Loose slate tiles on roof.	Moderate
B4	Loose slate tiles on roof.	Low
B5	Loose slate tiles on roof, particularly on the eastern aspect.	Low
B6	Loose slate tiles on roof, particularly on the eastern aspect.	Low
B7	Clay pantile, double pitched roof. Rotten barge board with gaps into roof cavity. Most prominent at corners.	Low
B8	Loose slate tiles on double pitched roof.	Low
В9	Slate roof with some gaps under tiles. Petrol station kiosk area so well disturbed.	Low

5.3.14. One sycamore tree (T1) was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats, shown on Figure 1 as T1 and below in Photo 10. The tree has one knothole on the southern side, approximately 2.5m high.



Photo 1: B1



Photo 2: B2







Photo 3: B3



Photo 4: B4



Photo 5: B5



Photo 6: B6



Photo 7: B7



Photo 8: B8









Photo 9: B9

Photo 10: T1

Otter and Water Vole

- 5.3.15. There were 18 records of otter returned from within 2km of the site, located primarily along the River Dee and Aberdeen Bay with the closest record located approximately 1.4km to the southwest of the site.
- 5.3.16. There were no records of water vole returned within 2km of the site.
- 5.3.17. Due to the lack of hydrological connectivity to the site and habitats on site not providing suitable habitat for otter and water vole they are not considered further in this report.

Badger

- 5.3.18. Three records of badger within 2km of the site were returned from the data search. The closest record is approximately 0.3km west of the site.
- 5.3.19. During the survey two latrines were recorded, providing evidence of badger using the woodland area to the east of Wellington Road. Additionally, mammal tracks were evident throughout the woodland, primarily along the fence line away from Wellington Road which also had an evident push-through to the other side.
- 5.3.20. The woodland area is suitable for sett creation but none were found during the survey.







Photo 11: Badger dung pits



Photo 12: Latrine with fresh badger dung

Pine Marten and Red Squirrel

- 5.3.21. There were five records returned for pine marten and one for red squirrel within 2km of the site boundary, the closest record was approximately 0.3km west of the site within Kincorth Hill LNCS.
- 5.3.22. Woodland habitats on site are suitable for both species, but connectivity is limited by the existing road system and urban areas. Connectivity to Kincorth Hill LNCS, which had previous recordings of pine marten, is limited by the existing road structure. There was no evidence recorded during the survey.

Invasive Non-native Plant Species

- 5.3.23. Six invasive non-native plant species (INNS) were returned from the data search within 2km of the site, including Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Himalayan knotweed (*Persicaria wallichii*), American skunk-cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*) and white butterbur (*Petasites albus*), all of which are considered to be among the most damaging INNS of plants in Scotland [12].
- 5.3.24. During the survey all INNS were observed within areas of ornamental planting, along Wellington Road. The species recorded included: rhododendron, spotted-laurel (*Aucuba japonica*), Thunberg's barberry (*Berberis thunbergia*), butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) and cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster* sp.). The locations are shown on Figure 1.





6. Implications, Requirements and Recommendations

- 6.1.1. The evaluation in this section is based on the site survey in May 2023. For purposes of the assessment, it is assumed there has been no change in the condition of the site since the site survey (unless otherwise stated).
- 6.1.2. Listed below are recommendations which must be followed to comply with legal requirements; or which should be followed to minimise adverse ecological impacts to protected or notable species. The recommendations for additional surveys are also outlined
- 6.1.3. As the project progresses through DMRB stages it is **recommended** that impacts on any protected species would be reassessed by an ecologist.

6.2. Protected and Designated Sites Designated Sites

- 6.2.1. No statutory designated sites are expected to be impacted by the scheme. Impacts are considered unlikely due to the lack of hydrological and terrestrial connectivity to the site Furthermore, consultation with NatureScot [13] confirmed that a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) would not be required for this project.
- 6.2.2. Non-statutory sites are also considered unlikely to be impacted by the scheme. Kincorth Hill and Tullos Hill LNCS are both within 200m of the site, but connectivity is limited by the existing road system and urban areas. Both are designated for habitat types only and therefore disturbance is not considered. The next closest site, Loirston Loch LNCS, is designated for overwintering waterfowl, but due to the existing disturbance from the heavy traffic on Wellington Road it is not considered likely to be impacted by the scheme over 200m away.
- 6.2.3. It is considered **best practice** that appropriate precautions be taken, documented and implemented through a Pollution Prevention Plan (PPP) to safeguard habitats from being detrimentally impacted during the pre-construction (e.g. ground investigation works), construction and maintenance phases of the project. Best practice and guidance would be considered in the preparation of the PPP and will include SEPA's Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPPs [14]). These measures include but are not limited to appropriate storage of fuels/oils, treatment of arisings and silt/pollution protection.





Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) and Native Woodland of Scotland (NWSS) Sites

- 6.2.4. No parcels of AWI and/or NWSS will be impacted by the scheme and are therefore not considered a constraint. If the proposed design is significantly changed and tree clearance within these areas is anticipated, then further assessment should be sought.
- 6.2.5. It is **recommended** that vegetation clearance and tree felling across the site is kept to a minimum. The Scottish Government's Policy on Control of Woodland Removal [15] provides guidance on whether removal of woodland is likely to be permitted. There is a strong presumption against removal of woodland in Scotland. If design proposals include felling of woodland, then consultation with the planning department within Aberdeen City Council is recommended to establish whether the proposed extent of removal would be permitted.

6.3. Protected and Notable Species and Habitats Birds

- 6.3.1. The nests and eggs of all wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Birds which are listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act are afforded additional protection.
- 6.3.2. The site and surrounding area are suitable for a variety of nesting birds in buildings, hedgerows, tall ruderal, grassland, woodland and scrub.
- 6.3.3. It is a **mandatory requirement** that nesting birds (or their nests or eggs), including ground and bank nesting birds and waterfowl, would not be killed or injured or their active nests destroyed as a result of activities on site.
- 6.3.4. It is **recommended** that clearance of vegetation that is suitable for nesting birds is undertaken outside the core nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) and if the works programme cannot be amended to facilitate this, that a pre-works check for nesting birds be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist one week and then no more than 48 hours prior to works. If active nests were found, there would be no other option but to delay works in this immediate area until chicks have fledged which could be a period of up to ten weeks.





Bats

- 6.3.5. All bat species found in Scotland are classed as European protected species. They receive full protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended).
- 6.3.6. Due to the existing disturbance from the heavy traffic on Wellington Road it is considered likely that any potentially present bats in the nearby buildings will be habituated to a certain level of noise disturbance. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that any of the buildings assessed as having potential to support roosting bats will be impacted by the works. However, it is **recommended** that a review of this assessment is undertaken once the detailed design for the new road is known. Following the assessment, any buildings considered likely to be impacted would require further surveys to determine presence/absence of bats. Buildings categorised as having low potential would require one dusk emergence or pre-dawn re-entry survey and the building categorised as having moderate potential would require two surveys. These must be undertaken between May and August in line with Bat Conservation Trust best practice guidance [4].
- 6.3.7. The tree (T1) assessed as having low potential will not be impacted by the works and will not require any further surveys. At the time of the survey, it was understood that the woodland area to the east of the road would not be directly impacted by the works and a full assessment of the trees for bats was not undertaken. If the scope of works changes and the woodland will be impacted, then it is **recommended** that a detailed assessment of all trees to be lost is undertaken to determine suitability to support roosting bats.
- 6.3.8. The majority of Wellington Road is currently lit by streetlamps. It is **recommended** that any currently unlit areas, particularly the woodland to the east, should not be illuminated during construction or post-construction as this provides optimal foraging and commuting habitat for bats. If the lighting within the site is to be considerably altered, it is further **recommended** that a sensitive lighting plan is to be produced which will cover the construction and operation of the development to minimise disturbance to bats, and would be reviewed by a suitably qualified ecologist [16] [17].

Badger

- 6.3.9. Badger and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 as amended by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 6.3.10. Evidence of badger was recorded in the woodland to the east of the road, however, no setts were found. Within the site boundary this area is considered the only





habitat suitable for badger sett creation, however, the nearby LNCSs also offer good habitat for this species.

6.3.11. It is **recommended** that a detailed badger survey is undertaken during the winter months to identify any setts in the woodland to the east of the site, up to 100m from the site boundary. Furthermore, as detailed above for bats, it is **recommended** that the woodland areas remain unlit during construction and post-construction to avoid causing disturbance to commuting badger.

Pine Marten and Red Squirrel

- 6.3.12. Both pine marten and red squirrel are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 6.3.13. No evidence of either species was recorded during the survey and connectivity to Kincorth Hill LNCS, which had previous recordings of pine marten, is limited by the existing road structure. Furthermore, the woodland to the east of the site is the only suitable habitat for these species on site and it is not expected to be directly impacted. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that either species will be impacted under the current scope of works. If the scope of works changes to include further impacts to woodland, then further recommendations may be required.

Invasive Non-native Species

- 6.3.14. The law on invasive non-native species (INNS) is covered by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011), making it an offence to allow non-native species to grow in the wild.
- 6.3.15. No species considered the most damaging in Scotland were recorded on site [12], however it is **recommended** that if any INNS recorded during the survey are to be removed it is done so in a responsible manner and any waste is stored so as not to facilitate further spread of INNS. The details of any INNS removal and storage should be detailed in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
- 6.3.16. The activities involved in the management and disposal of INNS are subject to regulatory control. It is a **mandatory requirement** to demonstrate that reasonable steps to avoid unlawful spread of INNS have been taken and ensure compliance with Scottish Government's Code of Practice [18].





Opportunities for Enhancement

- 6.3.17. It is recommended that the following ecological enhancements appropriate for the scheme should be considered for inclusion:
 - Use of native plant species in the landscaping plans
 - Inclusion of wildflowers and other 'plants for pollinators'
 - Bird and bat boxes erected onto retained trees
 - Inclusion of log piles for invertebrates
 - Enhancement of any proposed sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to benefit wildlife





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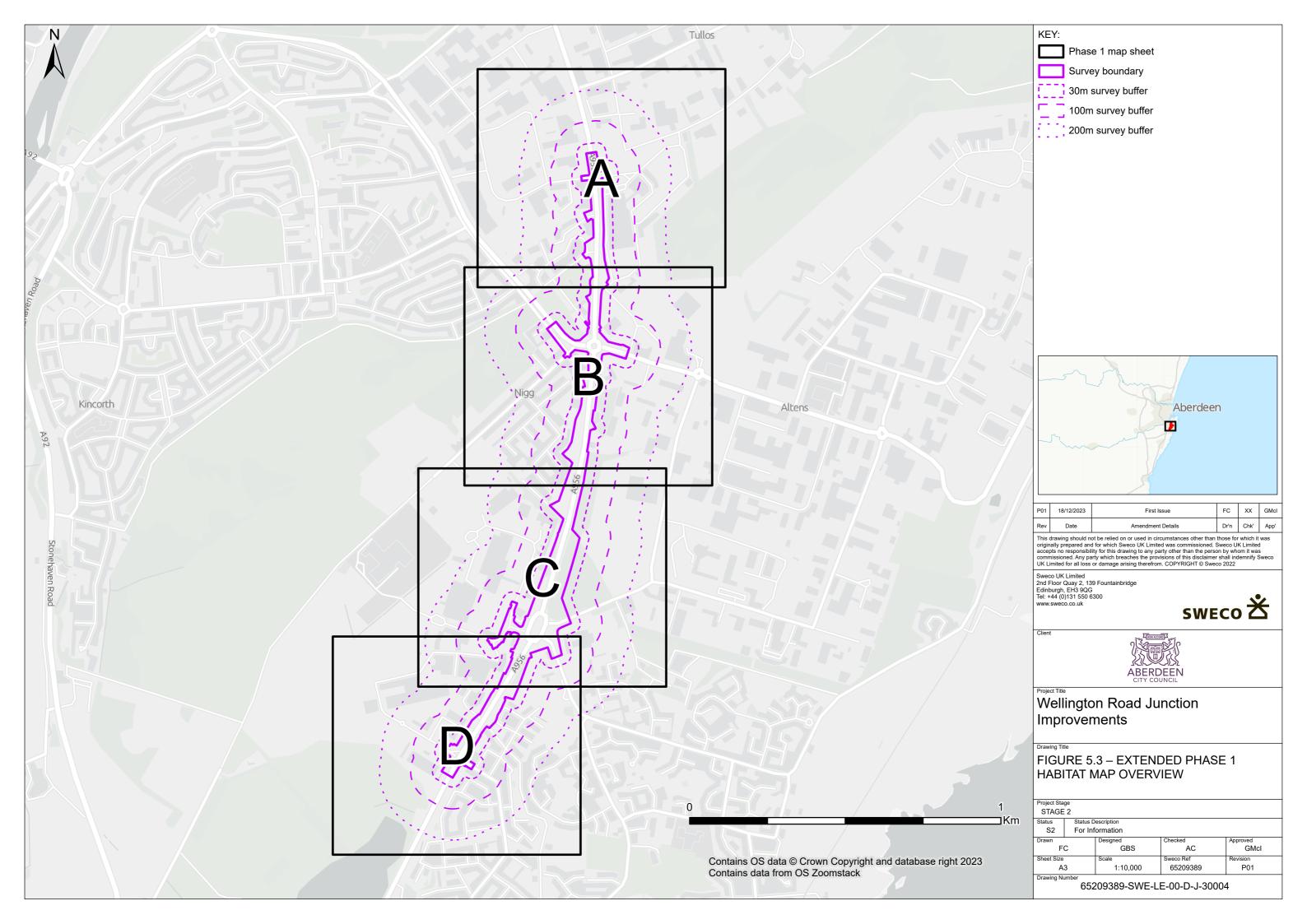


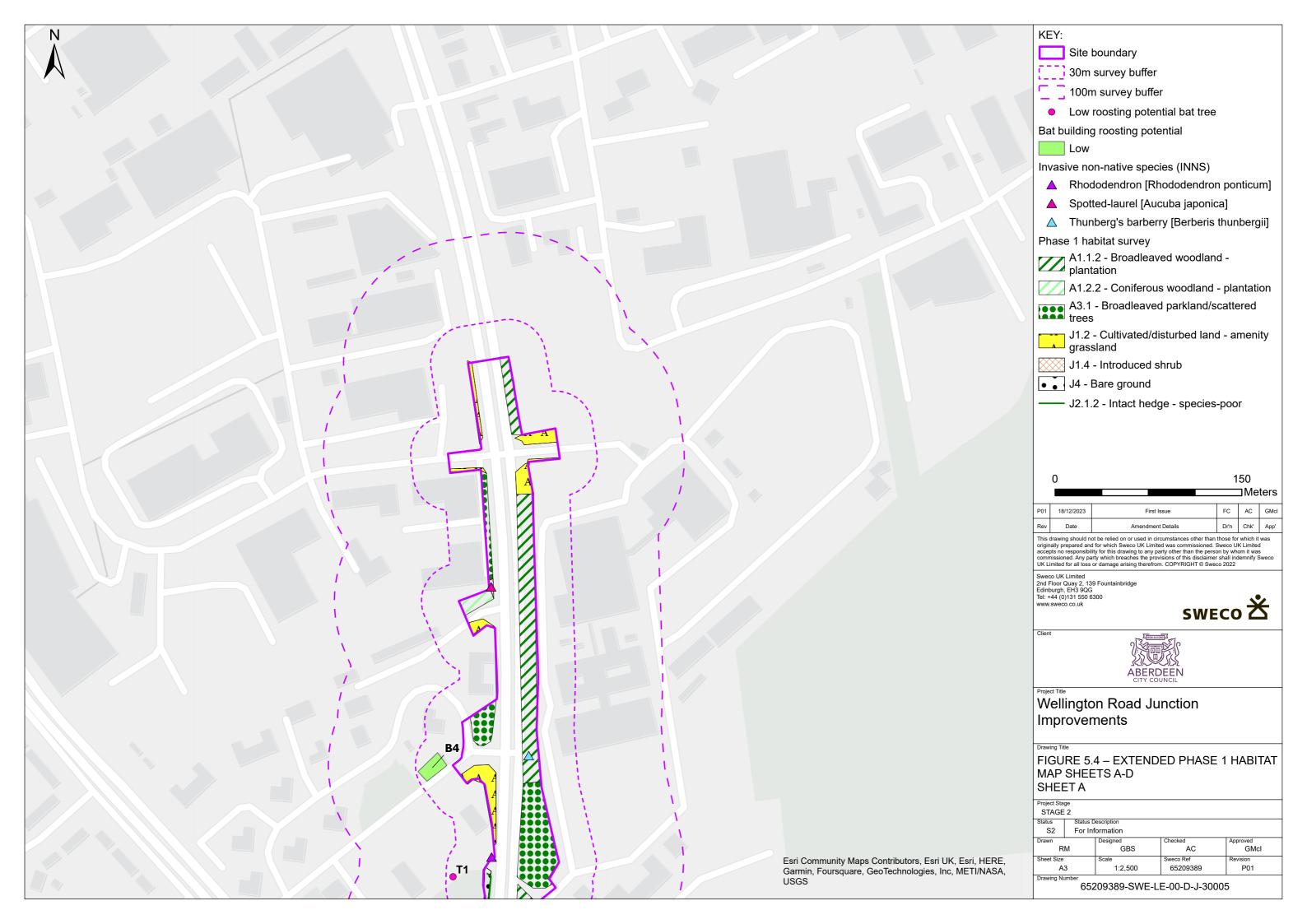
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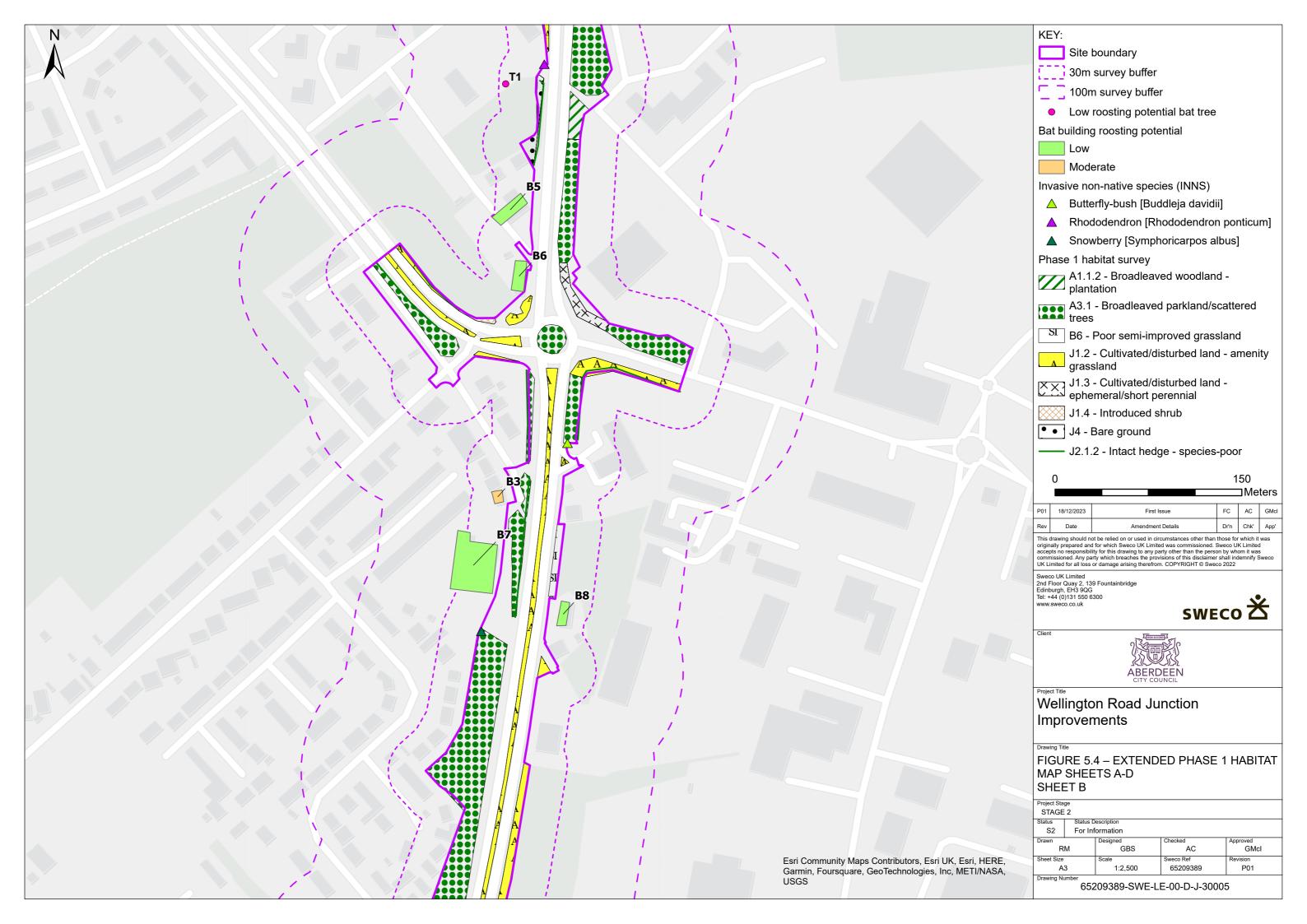


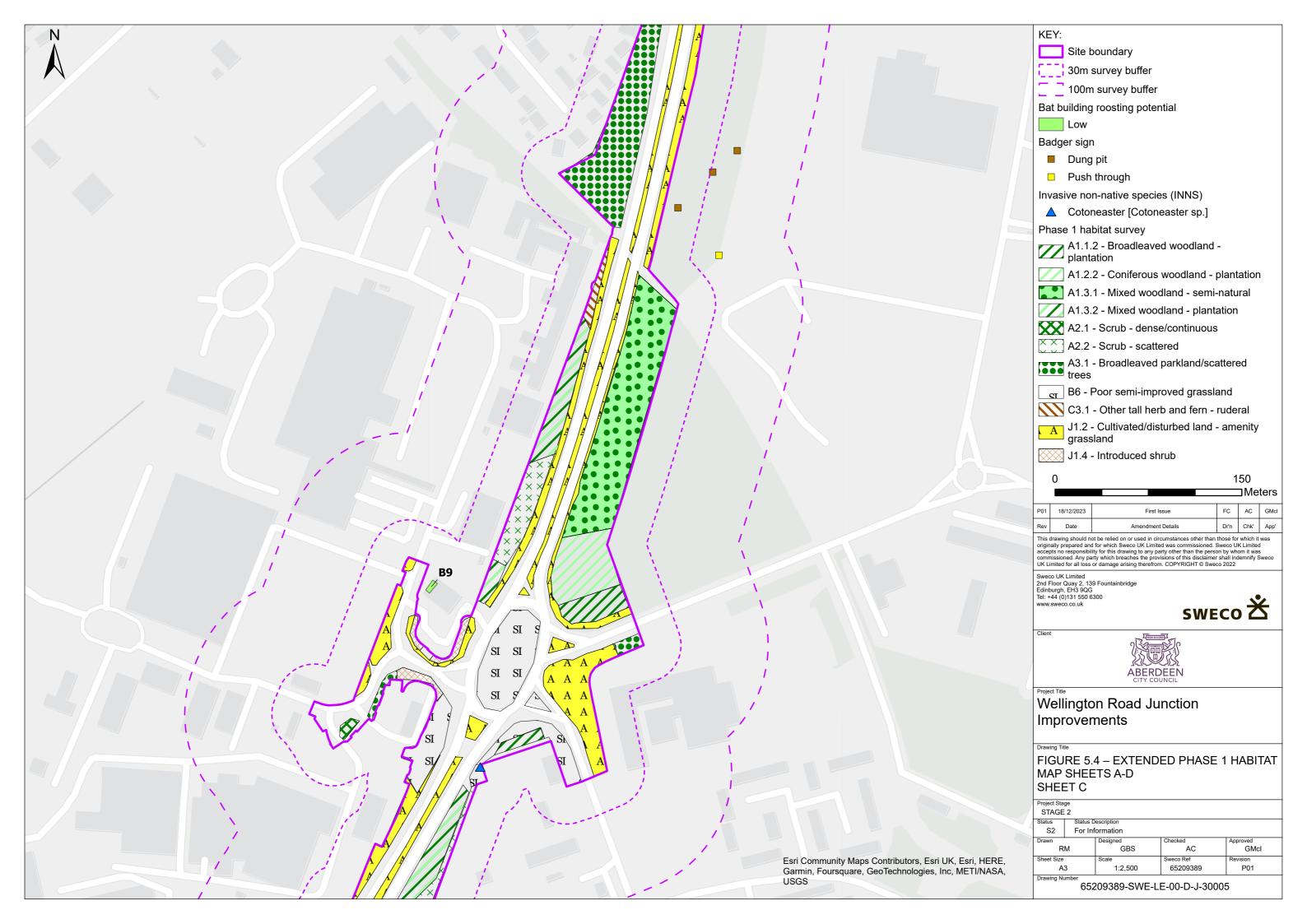


Figure 1: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map









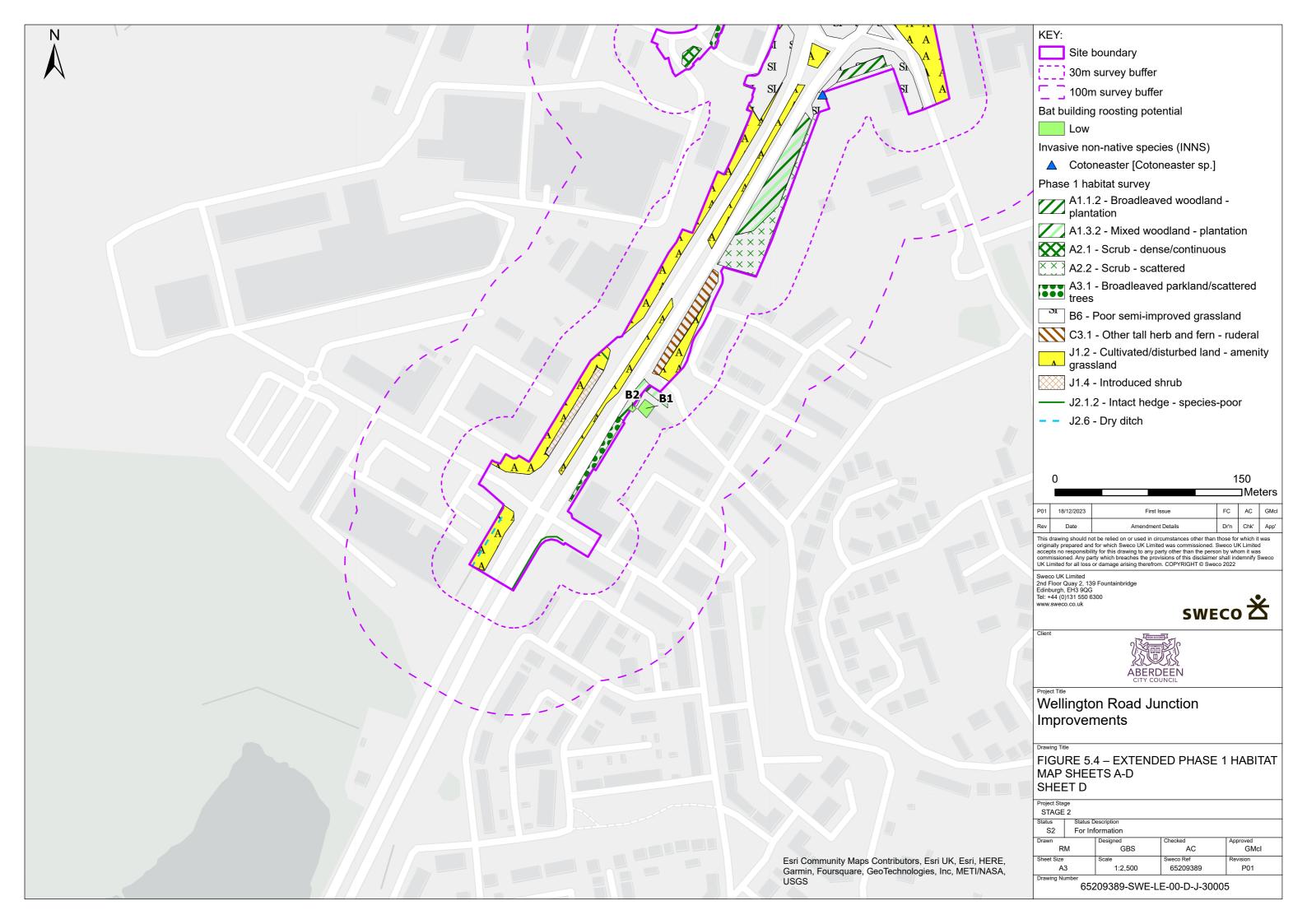






Figure 2: Designated Sites and Protected Woodland

