Huntingdonshire Ecological Constraints Assessment to inform the preparation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan

Final Report

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LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

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Ecological Constraints Assessment to inform the preparation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan

A report to understand development implications in the context of National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest

For Huntingdonshire District Council

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About this report & notes for readers

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This assessment is based on the best available published information at the time of writing. No attempt to verify secondary data sources has been made and they have been assumed to be accurate as published. This report was prepared between July 2025 - July 2026 and is subject to and limited by the information available during this time.

Client comments can be sent to Lepus using the following contact details.

Eagle Tower,
Montpellier Drive
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 1TA
Telephone: 01242 525222
E-mail: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com
www.lepusconsulting.com

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Abbreviations

CEMP	Construction Ecological Management Plan
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
CRoW	Countryside and Rights of Way Act
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FCS	Favourable Condition Status
FLL	Functionally Linked Land
GEP	Good Ecological Potential
GES	Good Ecological Status
ha	Hectares
HBA	Habitat Biodiversity Audit
HDC	Huntingdonshire District Council
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LGS	Local Geological Site
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategy
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
m	Metre
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities
NCAP	Natural Capital Assessment Partnership
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OMP	Operation Management Plan
ORNEC	Operations Requiring Natural England's Consent
PEA	Preliminary Environmental Assessment
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act
WFD	Water Framework Directive

1 Introduction

1.1 About this report

1.1.1 The aim of this report is to assess the potential ecological constraints of proposed draft allocation sites in the Preferred Options Local Plan to 2046 in relation to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (NNR) and provide recommendations to inform the plan-making process in relation to the allocation of sites for development.

1.2 Local Plan review

1.2.1 Huntingdonshire District Council is preparing a full update to the adopted Local Plan[1] to provide an up-to-date vision and framework to guide decision making on how, where and when development can come forward in the district for the period up to 2046.

1.2.2 The new Huntingdonshire Local Plan, referred to as the 'Local Plan' hereafter, will cover the entirety of Huntingdonshire District. This area is henceforth referred to as the 'Plan area' and is illustrated in **Figure 1.1**. The Plan area includes the district's five main towns of Huntingdon, Godmanchester, Ramsey, St Neots and St Ives, together with a number of large and small villages and hamlets.

1.2.3 The Council is working towards a Preferred Options Local Plan after exploring growth strategy options for delivery of growth ambitions over the Plan period. The Preferred Options Local Plan is intended to be consulted upon in autumn 2025 at Regulation 18 and will include draft site allocations and planning policies.

1.3 Appointment and scope of work

1.3.1 Lepus Consulting has been appointed to undertake an assessment of ecological constraints at 67x proposed allocation sites which are being considered as part of the Local Plan at the Preferred Options Stage.

1.3.2 The Ecological Constraints Assessment will provide an ecological baseline of the vulnerabilities at 26x Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and 3x National Nature Reserves (NNRs) within the Plan area and in neighbouring authorities. These sites are considered to be ecologically sensitive due to meeting one or more of the following criteria.

- The draft allocation site is coincident with, adjacent to, or within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) (for the type of development proposed) of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- The draft allocation site is coincident with or adjacent to a National Nature Reserve (NNR); and,
- The draft allocation site is comprised of more than 20% medium to high distinctiveness habitat.

1.3.3 The assessment will identify threats and constraints from development at each of the 67 allocations on each SSSI and NNR within the Plan area and will follow the proceeding stages of assessment:

[1] Huntingdonshire District Council (2019) Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. Available at: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/190516-final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf [Date accessed: 22/07/25]

- Define an ecological baseline for each identified NNR and SSSI;
- Identify ecological constraints at each SSSI and NNR;
- Identify threats from development at 67x draft allocations and describe impact pathways;
- Identify high level mitigation measures likely to be required;
- Identify additional surveys that may be required; and,
- Identify opportunities to deliver ecological enhancement.

1.3.4 This report provides a desk-based description of the ecological features at each site, identifying potential impacts and outlining mitigation recommendations for development. It presents the results of a desk-based site appraisal only, and no site visits have been undertaken.

1.4 Geographic context of Huntingdonshire

1.4.1 Huntingdonshire District is located within the County of Cambridgeshire in the East of England region. Its northern boundary meets Peterborough City and Fenland District, while to the west it adjoins East Northamptonshire and Bedford Borough. The eastern boundary is shared with South Cambridgeshire District, and to the south it borders Central Bedfordshire. A map showing the location of Huntingdonshire District is presented in **Figure 1.1**.

1.4.2 The district covers approximately 91,300ha and includes the market towns of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey. The landscape is largely low-lying, shaped by the River Great Ouse and its tributaries, with extensive areas of open fenland and broad arable fields. Land use is predominantly agricultural, with large-scale arable cultivation interspersed with market towns, villages, and smaller settlements. Huntingdonshire benefits from strong transport connections, with the A1 and A14 providing major road links and the East Coast Main Line offering direct rail connections to London and the wider region.

1.5 Biodiversity

1.5.1 Biodiversity comprises the variety and abundance of plants and animals across the world. Biodiversity has its own intrinsic value but also provides essential services and functions for all aspects of human life alongside many other multi-functional benefits.

1.5.2 The natural environment is a key consideration for sustainable development. Achieving the right balance between growth and housing, alongside protection of the natural environment, provides a number of opportunities. These include connecting people to the environment, improving mental health and wellbeing, and protecting and recovering nature. These benefits are set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan[2] and its update, the Environmental Improvement Plan[3]. A decline or loss of biodiversity has the potential to cause environmental, social, and economic impacts.

[2] HM Government (2018) 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf [Accessed: 22/10/25]

[3] HM Government (2023) Environmental Improvement Plan 2023: Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-improvement-plan [Accessed: 22/10/25]

1.6 About the authors

1.6.1 This report has been authored by Benjamin Bayliss MSc (Qualifying Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology Environmental Management (CIEEM)), an Assistant Ecological Consultant at Lepus Consulting. The report has undergone internal review by Joseph Marcus MSc (Qualifying Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology Environmental Management (CIEEM)), an ecological consultant at Lepus with 2 years of professional experience, and Samantha Cheater MSc CEnv MCIEEM, a Principal Environmental Consultant at Lepus with over 15 years of professional experience. The report has been overseen by Project Director, Neil Davidson (CEnv, MCIEEM) with over 32 years of professional ecological planning experience.

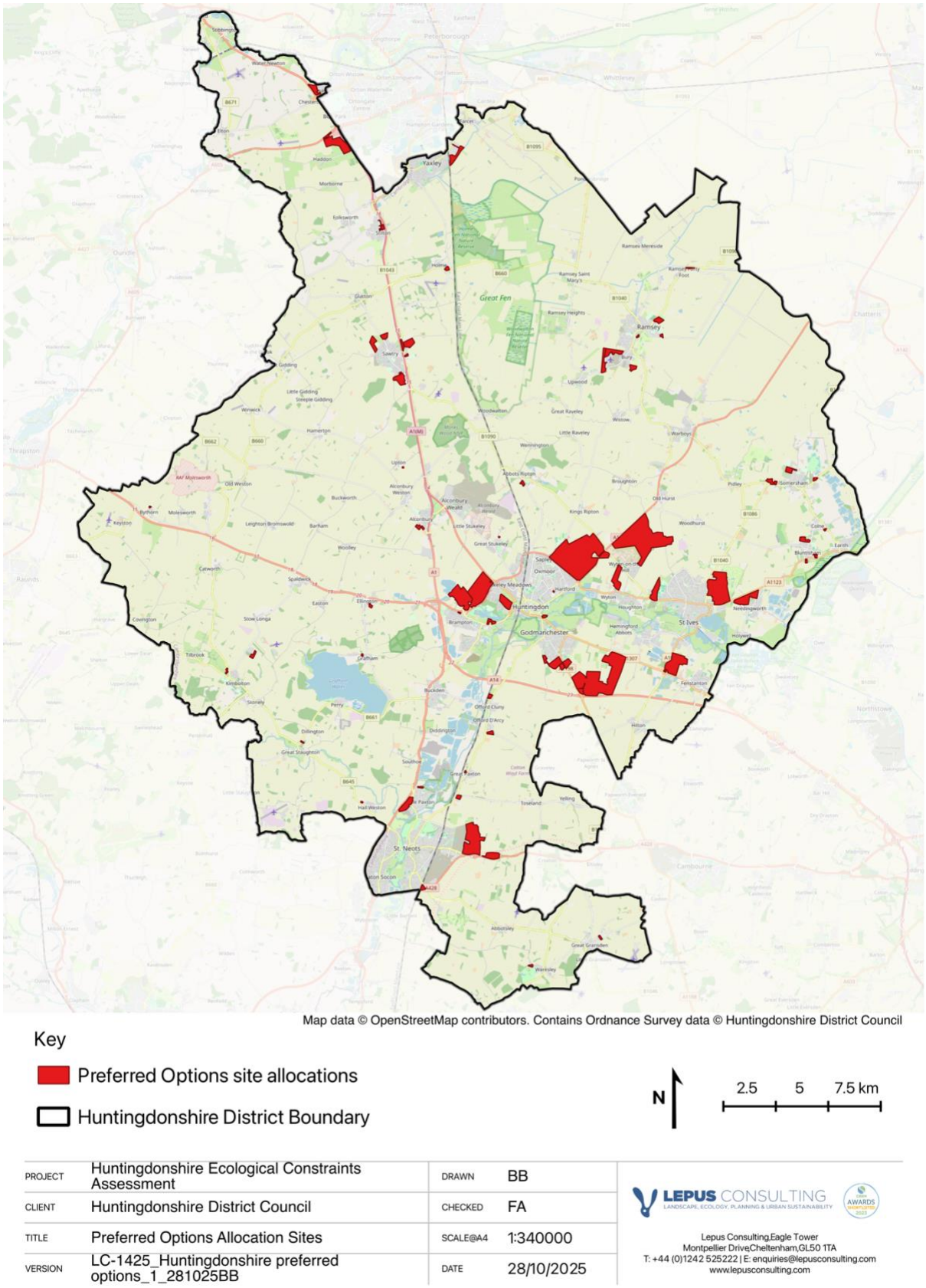

Figure 1.1: *Huntingdonshire District and potential development locations identified by the council*

2 Legislative and policy context

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 The following legislation sets out protection for the designated sites and habitats considered in this report and has informed the assessment of ecological constraints at each site[4]:

- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended)[5];
- The Ramsar Convention 1971[6];
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)[7];
- Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) 1992[8];
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000[9];
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006[10];
- Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Birds Directive) 2009[11];
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations) (as amended)[12];
- The Environment Act 2021[13]; and,
- The Management of Hedgerow Regulations 2024[14].

[4] Note: this project comprises an assessment of designated sites information only and has not provided any assessment of protected or invasive species.

[5] Legislation.gov.uk. National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/12-13-14/97/contents [Accessed 22/10/25].

[6] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1994) Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat.

[7] HMSO (1981) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

[8] European Council (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

[9] HMSO (2000) The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

[10] HMSO (2006) The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

[11] European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2009) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds

[12] HMSO (2017) The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

[13] HMSO (2021) The Environment Act 2021.

[14] HMSO (2024) The Management of Hedgerows Regulations 2024.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework

2.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[15] directs local authorities to make every effort to allocate land for development where it is of low environmental value. The NPPF also requires efforts to promote biodiversity enhancement and the creation of ecological networks through the planning process. In relation to ecology and biodiversity, the following paragraphs of the NPPF are of relevance. The following sections of the NPPF have been taken into consideration in the evaluation of sites and the formulation of recommendations for development.

Paragraph 187

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a. Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity […] (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
b. Recognising the […] wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services […];
d. Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
e. Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land stability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans".

Paragraph 188

"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework[16], take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries".

Paragraph 192

"To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

a. Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally

[15] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf [Accessed 22/10/25].

[16] *"Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality".*

designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation, and

b. Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity."

Paragraph 193

"When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
b. Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted […];
c. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
d. Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design".

2.3 Planning Practice Guidance

2.3.1 The Government publishes Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)[17] to accompany the NPPF. Of particular relevance to this assessment is guidance on the natural environment[18]. This PPG sets out the importance of ensuring that biodiversity and natural ecological systems are considered through the planning process and decision making to ensure their protection and enhancement.

[17] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (updated February 2024) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance [Accessed 22/10/25].

[18] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (updated June 2025) Natural Environment. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment [Accessed 22/10/25].

2.4 Huntingdonshire District Local Plan 2011 – 2036

2.4.1 Development Management Policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036[1] relating to biodiversity, as set out below, have been used to guide recommendations made for each site in terns of ecological mitigation and opportunities.

Policy LP 30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

"A proposal will be required to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated.

A proposal that is likely to have an impact, either direct or indirect, on biodiversity or geodiversity will need to be accompanied by an appropriate appraisal, such as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, identifying all individual and cumulative potential impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity. Any further research that is identified as necessary by this appraisal will need to have been carried out and submitted with the proposal. Where a proposal has potential to affect an internationally important site(28) an 'appropriate assessment' in accordance with the Habitats Directive will be required and sufficient information to enable such an assessment to be completed must be submitted with the proposal.

All possible efforts must be taken to avoid adverse impacts. If it is demonstrated that adverse impacts are unavoidable they must be minimised as far as possible and then mitigated. Only where this process of avoidance, minimisation and then mitigation is insufficient to fully address adverse impacts will consideration be given to compensation measures. Following this process a proposal will only be supported subject to a hierarchy where:

a. a site of international importance, being a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) or Ramsar site would be affected there has to be exceptional overriding reasons of human health, public safety or environmental benefit;
b. a site of national importance, such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National Nature Reserve (NNR) would be affected there has to be exceptional circumstances where the need for, and the benefits of, the proposal significantly outweigh both the potential impacts on the features of the site that make it of national importance and any broader impacts on the national network of such sites;
c. a protected species, a priority habitat or species, a site of local or regional importance, the achievement of water body good ecological potential, or the biodiversity value of the proposed development site as part of the wider network would be affected, the need for and the benefits of the proposal must clearly outweigh the assessed impacts.

A proposal will not be supported if potential impacts would lead to the deterioration of water body ecological status/ potential.

A proposal will ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type and location of development. Large scale development proposals should provide an audit of losses and gains in biodiversity produced according to a recognised methodology. In seeking to provide net gains for biodiversity reference

should be had to the Natural Cambridgeshire publication 'Developing with Nature Toolkit' and the proposal should prioritise measures that:

d. complement or enhance existing features of biodiversity value within the design and layout of development;
e. provide new biodiversity features within the development; f. help reverse the decline of species;
f. help reverse the decline of species;
g. assist in achieving local targets for priority habitats and species including those set out in Habitat Action Plans;
h. improve public access to nature;
i. ensure the effective management of biodiversity or geological features;
j. contribute to the provision of multi-functional green infrastructure to enhance ecological networks and the Green Infrastructure Priority Areas
k. contribute towards the achievement of good ecological status in water bodies (or not compromise achievement of good ecological potential) in accordance with the Anglian River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) and accompanying catchment action plans; or
l. will help species adapt to climate change."

Policy LP 31: Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows

"A proposal will be required to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated. Where investigations show that such adverse impacts are possible a statement will be required that:

a. a. assesses all trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows that would be affected by the proposal, describing and assessing their value;
b. b. sets out how the details of the proposal have been decided upon in terms of their impact on the value of trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows and how adverse impacts will be avoided as far as possible, or if unavoidable how they will be minimised as far as possible.

A proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development. In such cases the proposal will be expected to make reference to and follow the guidance contained in the Council's A Tree Strategy for Huntingdonshire (2015) or successor documents.

Loss, threat or damage to any tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of visual, heritage or nature conservation value will only be acceptable where:

c. c. it is addressed firstly by seeking to avoid the impact, then to minimise the impact and finally where appropriate to include mitigation measures; or
d. d. there are sound arboricultural reasons to support the proposal.

Where impacts remain the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location must clearly outweigh the loss, threat or damage.

Where loss, threat or damage cannot be fully addressed through minimisation and/ or mitigation measures the proposal may be supported if alternative measures such as reinstatement of features, additional landscaping, habitat creation or tree planting will

compensate for the harm and can be implemented and established before development starts.

A proposal for major scale development will be required to include additional new trees to form part of landscaping for the proposal, the form of which will be determined by negotiation."

3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This chapter describes the methods used in the ecological constraints assessment to evaluate all 29 statutory designated sites.

3.1.2 The assessment method is desk-based and high-level. It has borrowed from elements that can be sourced from guidance set out in 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition (2017)' published by CIEEM[19].

3.1.3 The assessment method has been designed to enable a rapid, high-level assessment of a large number of sites at this stage of the plan making process.

3.1.4 The objectives of this ecological assessment project are as follows:

- Define an ecological baseline for each proposed draft allocation site;
- Identify and map ecological constraints;
- Identify mitigation measures likely to be required, following the 'Mitigation Hierarchy';
- Identify additional surveys that may be required; and,
- Identify opportunities to deliver ecological enhancement.

3.1.5 The ecological constraints assessment has been undertaken through the following three steps:

- **Step 1:** Establish the ecological baseline;
- **Step 2:** Identify potential impacts; and,
- **Step 3:** Identify recommendations.

3.2 Step 1: Establish the ecological baseline

3.2.1 The ecological baseline has been prepared using desk-based mapping information. The following datasets have been considered as part of this assessment:

- **Allocation site information/context:** Aerial mapping and Ordnance Survey data have been reviewed in order to obtain an indication of the site's current use and potential habitat types present, alongside information on the site's setting within the wider landscape;
- **Proposed development information:** Information provided by HDC regarding the potential development use of each site has been analysed in the context of the above information and data;
- **Designated site information:** Publicly available data has been reviewed to identify designated sites located within the site boundary and surrounding area of each site, including statutory sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs). See also **Section 3.3**; and
- **Irreplaceable habitat:** Publicly available data has been used to determine the presence of ancient woodland, veteran trees or lowland fens coincident with, adjacent to or hydrologically linked to each site.

[19] CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Available at: https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Guidelines-for-Preliminary-Ecological-Appraisal-Jan2018-typo-edit.pdf [Accessed: 22/10/25]

Draft allocation site information/context

3.2.2 Site information/context includes information regarding the sites and their surrounding areas. This information provides an indication of the proposed development type (i.e. employment, residential or mixed-use) and contextual information about the setting of each site within its wider landscape. This information has been obtained through a review of aerial photography and Ordnance Survey maps.

3.2.3 In total, 67 allocation sites were subject to an assessment of ecological constraints, and these sites are shown **Figure 1.1**.

Designated site information

SSSIs and SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs)

3.2.4 SSSIs are of national significance and include the UK's best wildlife and geological sites. SSSIs form part of the national ecological site network and are notified and protected under the WCA[7].

3.2.5 Natural England has developed Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for each SSSI unit in the country. IRZs are a GIS tool which allow a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to SSSIs. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts. Data for IRZs is publicly available from Natural England[20].

3.2.6 This report uses IRZs data to flag up SSSIs which are likely to be sensitive to development at each site. Where multiple IRZs correspond with a site boundary, the assessment considers the IRZ with the worst-case scenario, in line with the Precautionary Principle[21]. This report only includes IRZ constraints that are likely to be relevant to the potential development use for each site as defined by Huntingdonshire District Council.

3.2.7 Natural England periodically assesses the conservation conditions of each SSSI unit, assigning it a Favourable Condition Status (FCS). FCS is defined as follows:

- Favourable;
- Unfavourable – recovering;
- Unfavourable – no change; or,
- Unfavourable – declining.

3.2.8 Information on the reasons for SSSI notification has been taken into consideration alongside their FCS in order to determine potential impacts from development and likely mitigation that may be required.

National Nature Reserves (NNRs)

[20] Natural England (September 2024) SSSI Impact Risk Zones (England) Available at: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/5ae2af0c-1363-4d40-9d1a-e5a1381449f8/sssi-impact-risk-zones-england [Accessed: 22/10/25].

[21] Defra (2023) Environmental principles policy statement. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-principles-policy-statement/environmental-principles-policy-statement [Accessed 22/10/25].

3.2.9 NNRs are exemplary, nationally important nature reserves, where nature conservation is the primary land use and significant benefits may be provided for people and the environment. They are designated, and sometime owned, by Natural England under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as amended by Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2006. A review of mapping data indicates that there are three NNRs within the Plan area.

Irreplaceable habitat

3.2.10 Irreplaceable habitats are habitats which are difficult to restore or replace once destroyed as a result of their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity[22]. Irreplaceable habitat therefore includes some of England's most ecologically valuable terrestrial and intertidal habitat, including the following[23] which are shown in **Figure 3.1**:

- Ancient and veteran trees;
- Ancient woodland;
- Blanket bog;
- Coastal sand dunes;
- Limestone pavements;
- Lowland fens;
- Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub; and,
- *Spartina* saltmarsh swards.

3.2.11 Irreplaceable habitats located within Huntingdonshire, and therefore considered in this ecological assessment, include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees and lowland fens.

3.2.12 As outlined in paragraph 193 of the NPPF[15], development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats should be, in the first instance, refused, unless there are exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

3.2.13 Ancient woodland is defined as an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600AD. Data for ancient woodlands is available from Natural England[24]. Data for ancient and veteran trees is available at the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory[25].

3.2.14 Lowland fens are peatland ecosystems that receive water from a combination of sources, including soil, underlying rock, groundwater, and rainfall. These habitats support a diverse range of plant and animal communities.

3.2.15 The assessment considers irreplaceable habitats situated either within the site boundaries or within 50 metres of the site boundary. This includes ancient woodland, ancient trees, and veteran trees, as well as lowland fens that are hydrologically linked to the site.

[22] Defra (2024) Irreplaceable habitat guidance. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/irreplaceable-habitats [Accessed: 22/10/25].

[23] Defra (2023) Irreplaceable habitats and BNG: what you need to know. Available at: https://defraenvironment.blog.gov.uk/2023/10/05/irreplaceable-habitats-and-bng-what-you-need-to-know/ [Accessed: 22/10/25].

[24] Natural England (2024) Ancient Woodland (England). Available at: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/9461f463-c363-4309-ae77-fdcd7e9df7d3/ancient-woodland-england [Accessed: 22/10/25].

[25] Woodland Trust. Ancient Tree Inventory. Available at: https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/tree-search/?v=2681164&ml=map&z=13&nwLat=51.92196130543839&nwLng=-2.1363348920981773&seLat=51.86549742096331&seLng=-2.0172018964927085 [Accessed: 22/10/25].

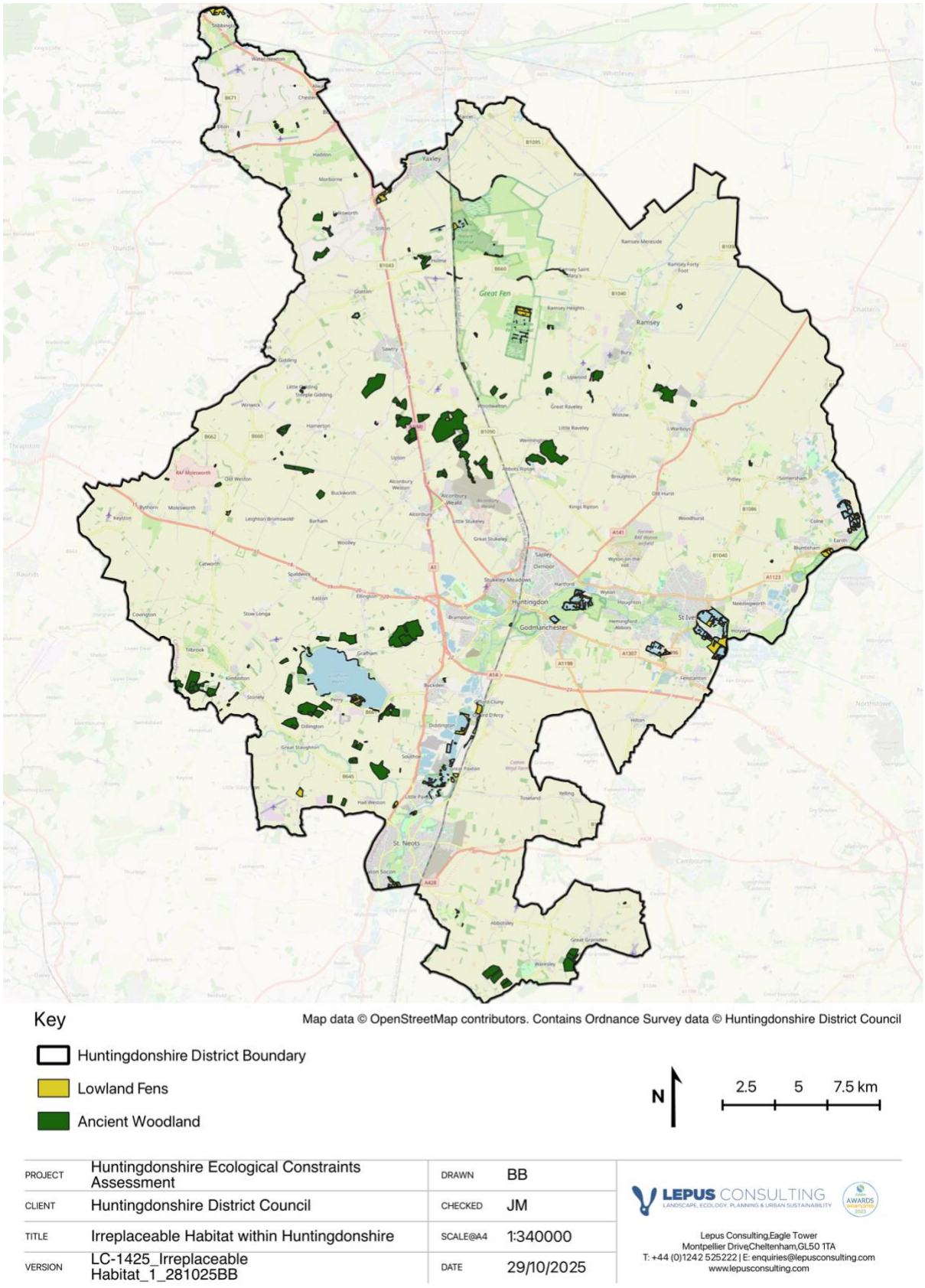

***Figure 3.1**: Irreplaceable habitat within Huntingdonshire, namely ancient woodland and lowland fen,*

3.3 Step 2: Identify potential impacts

3.3.1 Designated sites and sensitive habitat can be affected by land use plans in a number of different ways, including direct land take for new development, the type of use the land will be put to (for example, an extractive or noise-emitting use), or the pressure / threat a development generates (air pollution, water pollution or increased recreational pressure), and the resources used (for example water abstraction).

3.3.2 Threats and pressures to which the designated features of a site are vulnerable have been identified through reference to data held by Natural England such as 'operations requiring Natural England's consent' (ORNECs). This review has also drawn upon assessors' experience of Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) and CIEEMs guidance on EIA. The potential for cumulative impacts has also been taken into consideration.

3.3.3 Potential impacts at designated sites and sensitive habitat have been identified and characterised through the application of a 'source-pathway-receptor' model. In particular, consideration has been given to whether HELAA site development has the potential to undermine the reasons for designation by changing the extent, function or structure of a habitat or the abundance or distribution of a species for which a site has been designated.

3.3.4 The potential impacts identified at each site include the following and considers both construction and operational phases of development:

- Change in water quality;
- Change in water levels;
- Change in air quality;
- Urbanisation effects (changes in visual disturbance, lighting, noise, littering, incidence of fire, spread of invasive species); and,
- Increased recreational pressure.

Air Quality

3.3.5 The main mechanisms through which air pollution can adversely affect SSSIs and NNRs are through eutrophication (nitrogen), acidification (nitrogen and sulphur) and direct toxicity (ozone, ammonia and nitrogen oxides). Excess atmospheric nitrogen deposition within semi-natural habitats can disrupt the balance of ecological processes. Increased nitrogen availability favours nitrophilic species (e.g. coarse grasses, nettles) over characteristic species of fens, meadows and ancient woodlands. This leads to a loss of species richness and alters habitat structure and resilience. Changes to the ammonium:nitrate balance can also affect soil chemistry and water quality within hydrologically connected wetlands. Nitrogen deposition and ammonia can also contribute to soil acidification and reduce buffering capacity. This process makes ecosystems more vulnerable to secondary stresses such as drought, frost, pest outbreaks or grazing pressure.

3.3.6 Natural England, the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) and CIEEM have issued guidance on the assessment of air quality impacts at designated sites. These establish critical loads and levels for nitrogen and ammonia and provide screening thresholds for assessment of traffic-related emissions. Air quality assessments undertaken as part of Habitats Regulations Assessments typically apply spatial thresholds to determine where impacts from traffic emissions are most relevant. It is widely accepted that air quality impacts are greatest within 200m of a road source, decreasing with distance [26,27,28] and this 200m rule has therefore become a standard screening tool. Similarly, a 10km buffer [29] is commonly applied to allocations to account for housing and employment development triggered by the local plan, and the cumulative increases in traffic related emissions. This distance reflects professional judgment and is supported by national modelling, including Nitrogen Futures, which already incorporates "business as usual" development beyond 10km[30].

3.3.7 While the 200m rule of thumb from major roads and the 10km plan-level buffer are typically applied to European sites, the same principles of exposure and sensitivity are relevant to designated SSSI and NNR sites, particularly where sensitive habitats are present (Natural England NEA001 guidance; IAQM 2019 guidance; CIEEM Air Quality Note).

3.3.8 NE's guidance (in the form of the questions below) has been applied to determine potential air quality impact pathways to European sites:

- Does the Local Plan give rise to emissions which are likely to reach a designated site?
- Are the qualifying features of sites within 200m of a road sensitive to air pollution?
- Could the sensitive qualifying features of the site be exposed to emissions?
- Application of screening thresholds (alone and then, if necessary, in-combination).

[26] The Highways Agency, Transport Scotland, Welsh Assembly Government, The Department for Regional Development Northern Ireland (2007) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 11, Section 3, Part 1: Air Quality. Available at: http://www.semmms.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Design-Manual-for-Roads-and-Bridges-Volume-11-Section-3-Part-1.-PDF-981Kb.pdf. [Date accessed: 22/10/25]

[27] Natural England (2018) Natural England's approach to advising competent authorities on the assessment of road traffic emissions under the Habitats Regulations (NEA001). Available at:

http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4720542048845824. [Date accessed: 22/10/25]

[28] Bignal, K., Ashmore, M. & Power, S. (2004) The ecological effects of diffuse air pollution from road transport. English Nature Research Report No.580, Peterborough. Available at: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/133002. [Date accessed: 22/10/25]

[29]Chapman, C., and Kite, B. (2021) Guidance on Decision-making Thresholds for Air Pollution. Available at: https://hub.jncc.gov.uk/assets/6cce4f2e-e481-4ec2-b369-2b4026c88447. [Date accessed: 22/10/25]

[30] Chapman, C., and Kite, B. (2021) Main Report Guidance on Decision-making Thresholds for Air Pollution. Available at: https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/6cce4f2e-e481-4ec2-b369-2b4026c88447/JNCC-Report-696-Main-FINAL-WEB.pdf. [Date accessed: 22/10/25]

3.4 Water Quantity and Quality

3.4.1 The impact of changes to water from development on SSSIs and NNRs can come about in two ways. Firstly, development can alter water quantity as increased water demand associated with development places pressure on existing abstraction sources. Over-abstraction can reduce river flows, groundwater levels and connectivity with floodplains and wetlands which is particularly damaging for habitats dependent on high groundwater tables or regular inundation, including washlands, wet grasslands, reedbeds and fen systems. Seasonal flow alteration may disrupt breeding and foraging cycles of species such as wading birds, wildfowl and aquatic invertebrates. Conversely, urbanisation can also increase impermeable surfaces, resulting in changes in runoff rates. These hydrological changes can destabilise habitats, degrade riparian vegetation, and fragment ecological networks that underpin SSSIs and NNRs.

3.4.2 Urban development also has the potential to reduce the quality of water entering rivers, streams and wetlands through increased diffuse pollution, contaminated surface water run-off, and higher volumes of point source effluent discharges from new development at Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) and other controlled discharge sources. Elevated nutrient inputs, such as nitrogen, phosphorus and ammonia, can drive eutrophication in lakes, rivers and washland systems. This process favours fast-growing algae and macrophytes, reduces dissolved oxygen concentrations, and leads to shifts in community structure, often at the expense of sensitive aquatic plants, invertebrates and fish. Pollutants such as hydrocarbons, heavy metals and fine sediments from urban surfaces can further degrade habitat quality. At protected sites, this can manifest as declines in characteristic plant assemblages in fen and grazing marsh habitats, loss of invertebrate diversity in river channels, and reduced food resource availability for waterbirds. Increased effluent discharges may also alter natural thermal and chemical regimes, stressing aquatic organisms and reducing the resilience of ecosystems to other pressures such as drought or invasive species.

3.4.3 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) sets out areas which require special protection. These include areas designated for “the protection of habitats or species where the maintenance or improvement of the status of water is an important factor in their protection including relevant Natura 2000 sites designated under Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive) and Directive 79/409/EEC (the Birds Directive)”[31]. This would include all SSSIs but not all NNRs. Despite this, this framework can still be used to assess sites likely to be impacted by changes in water quality or quantity.

3.4.4 Baseline information on Water Framework Directive (WFD) status, abstraction licensing strategies, water resource zones, and Water Resource Management Plans (WRMPs) are used to understand the condition of relevant waterbodies and the sensitivity of site features. For each allocation site, potential hydrological impact pathways on SSSIs and NNRs are identified, taking into consideration potential changes in water supply (through abstraction for water supply) and water quality (through surface water run-off and discharges from WwTWs). Sites with clear hydrological connections, water-dependent notified features, or association with waterbodies of less than “good” WFD status are considered at higher risk.

[31] Official Journal of the European Communities (2000) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Available at: https://eurlex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:5c835afb-2ec6-4577-bdf8-756d3d694eeb.0004.02/DOC_1&format=PDF. [Date accessed: 22/10/25]

3.5 Urbanisation

3.5.1 Development has the potential to result in disturbing activities. Disturbance effects may impact upon designated sites themselves, and their qualifying features, when outside a designated site boundary. These effects typically occur when development is located close to a site boundary. Impacts may include noise disturbance, lighting effects, cat predation, fly-tipping, wildfire, littering and vandalism. Strategic mitigation schemes elsewhere in the UK have set out to limit development (i.e. avoid a net increase in residential dwellings) on the basis of site-specific evidence on how to safeguard against these impacts.

3.5.2 It is common practice for urbanisation mitigation strategies in the UK to involve the implementation of a buffer zone. Typically, these zones extend around 400m from the edge of a designation. This accounts for likely impacts from pets (e.g. cat predation) and the distance from which people tend to access a site on foot.

3.6 Recreation

3.6.1 New housing development has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon sites which can result in damage to habitats in a number of ways, including through erosion and compaction; troubling of grazing stock; causing changes in behaviour to animals such as birds at nesting and feeding sites; spreading invasive species; dog fouling; and tree climbing.

3.6.2 The recreational draw of a designated site depends on a number of factors. These factors include the extent and range of facilities provided (in particular parking); accessibility, both within the designated site and in terms of linkages to the wider area beyond the site; incorporation of a site as part of a wider designation, such as a National Park; and promotion of the site. A review of Recreational Impact Assessments (RIAs) undertaken for European sites across the UK indicates that visitors typically live within 4.2 km (overall median value) of nature conservation sites and that the majority (75%) live within 12.6 km[32]. A buffer distance of 5km has been applied to the scoping of allocations to determine potential recreational impact pathways on designated sites.

3.7 Step 3: Identify recommendations

3.7.1 Where potential impacts are identified, **Section 78.5** outlines a series of recommendations to minimise the adverse impacts of development on ecological features. These include opportunities for ecological enhancement. Recommendations are underpinned by the Mitigation Hierarchy[33], as set out by the following:

- **Avoidance:** seek options that avoid harm to ecological features (for example, by locating development on an alternative site);
- **Mitigation:** negative effects should be avoided or minimised through mitigation measures, either through the design of the project or subsequent measures that can be guaranteed (for example, through a condition or planning obligation);

[32] Weitowitz, D, C. Panter, C. Hoskin, R. and Liley, D. (2019) The effect of urban development on visitor numbers to nearby protected nature conservation sites. Journal of Urban Ecology, 5(1). Available at: https://academic.oup.com/jue/article/5/1/juz019/5602629. [Date accessed: 22/10/25]

[33] CIEEM (2024) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Available at: https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/EcIA-Guidelines-v1.3-Sept-2024.pdf [Accessed 22/10/25].

- **Compensation:** where there are significant residual negative ecological effects despite the mitigation proposed, these should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures; and,
- **Enhancement:** seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation or compensation.

3.7.2 This report evaluates the sites and therefore the potential for development considering the ecological baseline, potential impacts of development and recommendations to mitigate the impact of development on ecological features. This is summarised in **Section 79**. This assessment takes into account policy and legal implications which may be relevant and applies the following categories:

Low ecological constraints

3.7.3 Development is possible across the majority of the site with mitigation

- Site may be located within an SSSI IRZ, but a review of impact pathways show limited potential for impacts[34];
- Local designations are not located on or adjacent to the site;
- There is no irreplaceable habitat located within or adjacent to the site.

Medium ecological constraints

3.7.4 Development is possible across sections of the site with mitigation

- Site is located within an SSSI IRZ, and a review of impact pathways show likely impacts which would require mitigation;
- Local designations are coincident with or adjacent to the site;
- Irreplaceable habitat associated with woodland features is located within 50m of the site; or,
- Irreplaceable habitat associated with lowland fen is located hydrologically connected to the development site.

High ecological constraints

3.7.5 An alternative site location should be considered

- Site coincident with or within a functionally significant distance of an SSSI, where ecological functioning is unlikely to be re-created within a significant period post-disturbance and adverse impacts appear impossible to avoid for the type of development proposed; or
- Irreplaceable habitat is located on site.

3.7.6 These categories are not absolute and should be used as a guiding framework within this high-level assessment. Further work is required such as detailed site assessments to support this evaluation.

3.8 Limitations

3.8.1 This assessment is solely desk-based, with no site visits conducted. Ecological records for each site and the surrounding area have not been collected, as this lies beyond the scope of this assessment.

3.8.2 While all designations within 1km are identified, only those designations or habitats within or directly adjacent to the site are considered during the assessment.

[34] Note: Subject to approval by Natural England.

3.8.3 A number of species are protected through European legislation under the Habitats Directive (as transcribed in England and Wales through the Habitats Regulations) and nationally protected through the WCA. Whilst a review of habitats on site and within the immediate surrounding area has been possible as part of this desk-based assessment, it is not possible to provide an assessment of the implications of development upon protected or invasive species.

3.8.4 Cambridgeshire County Council is currently preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The ecological constraints assessment presented in this report could be updated following the finalisation of the LNRS.

3.8.5 This report has not been able to draw on a specific hedgerow survey data set. It is considered that some potential development locations may include hedgerow habitats that can be considered to be medium or high habitats distinctiveness. Hedgerows have not therefore been evaluated in any detail as part of this report.

3.8.6 It has been assumed that employment locations will lead to impacts on water quantity in terms of intercepting pluvial rainfall, land-take and potentially demand for water as part of the development, once operational.

4 Designated Sites

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following sections describe the designated sites located within the plan area and neighbouring authorities which were considered **Table 4.1** when preparing the ecological baseline, and these are shown in All designated sites, and their potential sensitivity to impact pathways, are shown in **Table 4.1**.

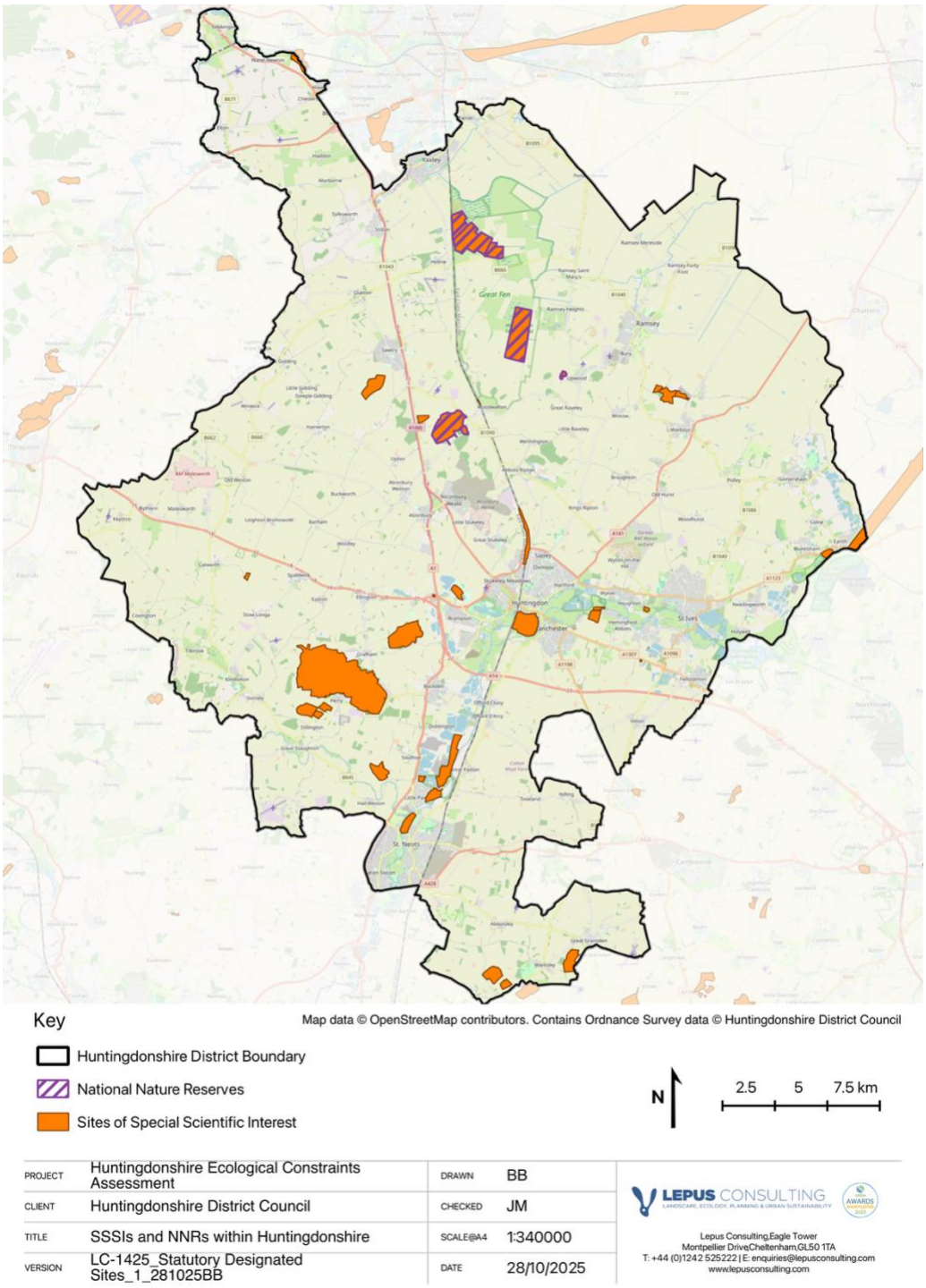

***Figure 4.1**: SSSIs and NNRs, located in and around Huntingdonshire*

4.2 Holme Fen (SSSI, NNR)

4.2.1 Holme Fen is designated for its lowland mixed deciduous woodland, comprising of species such as Birch (*Betula),* Pedunculate Oak *(Quercus robur),* Brambles *(Rubus fruticosus* agg.), and Elder (*Sambucus nigra)*. This site also contains relict mire flora, with species such as Swamp Sawgrass (*Cladium mariscus),* Common Heather *(Calluna vulgaris),* Cross-Leaved Heath *(Erica tetralix),* Purple Moor-Grass *(Molinia caerulea), and* Fen Wood-Rush *(Luzula pallescens*) present. The condition of the site is generally considered 'Favourable' for the lowland mixed deciduous woodland. However, the wet woodland is classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering', primarily due to the encroachment of scrub and birch into Sphagnum mire, which has led to a cover exceeding 15%, surpassing the 10% target. This encroachment is due to peat drying, meaning hydrological restoration is required. In the most recent assessment, Swamp Sawgrass was found at all visited locations, although Purple Moor-Grass was not recorded. The bryophyte targets have been met, indicating some degree of recovery in the ecosystem.

4.3 Woodwalton Fen (SSSI, NNR, Ramsar)

4.3.1 Woodwalton Fen is designated for its mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed, and ditch habitats, with communities of rare fen species like Fen Wood-rush and Fen Violet (*Viola persicifolia)*. Alongside this, there are notable aquatic flora such as Greater Bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*) and Water Violet (*Hottonia palustris)*. The site is in 'Unfavourable' condition across multiple habitat types: ditches, floodplain fen (lowland), lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, and vascular plant assemblages. Reedbed and tall-herb fen habitats have expanded with Common Reed (*Phragmites australis)*, encroaching on areas previously considered lowland neutral grassland. Although many species are locally abundant, both areas of reedbed and tall herb fen habitats lack consistent positive indicator plant species, covering less than 10% of the habitat area.

4.3.2 Negative indicator species, such as Common Reed and Common Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), are too frequent in the sward. While fen-meadow and acid soil grassland habitats have not suffered major losses, they are transitioning into reedbeds in some areas. Both fen habitat features lack enough positive indicator plant species and have a high percentage cover of negative indicators. Fen Violet was not recorded, and although Fen Wood-rush was found in fen meadow habitat, it was below the viable population size target. Similarly, Marsh Orchids (*Dactylorhiza* spp.) and Greater Water-parsnip (*Sium latifolium*) were recorded with numbers below the listed viable population size. The presence of Marsh Pea (*Lathyrus palustris*) was re-recorded and found at two former locations with a healthy population.

4.4 Monks Wood (SSSI, NNR)

4.4.1 Monks Wood is an ancient woodland dominated by wet Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)-Maple (*Acer*) woodland, with additional areas of Pedunculate Oak-Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) woodland, and oak (Quercus)-Hazel-Ash woodland, as well as pockets of Small-Leaved Elm (*Ulmus minor*). The rich shrub layer includes typical ancient woodland ground flora, including Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Wood Anemone (*Anemonoides nemorosa*), and Early-Purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*). The site also contains ponds, streams, and herb-rich grassland, which support species such as two species of Marsh Orchid and Adder's-Tongue Fern (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*). Monks Wood is an important site for invertebrates and breeding birds, notably Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*) and Nightingale (Luscinia megarhynchos).

4.4.2 The lowland mixed deciduous woodland is assessed as 'unfavourable-recovering'. Invertebrate assemblages A211, A212, and A213 are in 'Favourable' condition, while assemblage W221 is classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

4.5 Woodwalton Marsh (SSSI)

4.5.1 Woodwalton Marsh (SSSI) is a rare, species-rich neutral grassland on calcareous clay, an exceptional habitat type for Cambridgeshire. The area is characterised by a diverse range of plant species including Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Quaking Grass (*Briza media*), Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Cowslip (*Primula veris*), Dropwort (*Filipendula vulgaris*), Pepper-saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), Green-winged Orchid (*Orchis morio*), Sulphur Clover (*Trifolium ochroleucon*). The SSSI comprises of one unit in a 'favourable' condition.

4.6 Weavely & Sand Woods (SSSI)

4.6.1 Weavely & Sand Woods (SSSI) is an ancient ash-maple woodland, a habitat type restricted to lowland England, which contains unique underlying geological variation. Parts of the wood have been invaded by *Elm (Ulmus spp*.), while the rides and clearings support characteristic flora. Uncommon species present within the site include Herb-Paris (*Paris quadrifolia)*, Butterfly Orchid (*Platanthera chlorantha*), and Pignut (*Conopodium major*).

4.6.2 The SSSI comprises of one unit, Broadleaved, mixed and Yew (*Taxus baccata*) Woodland, in a 'Favourable' condition.

4.7 Waresley Wood (SSSI)

4.7.1 Waresely Wood in an ancient Ash-Maple woodland with a diverse shrub layer and rich ground flora, including *Primrose, Oxlip (Primula elatior), Early-purple Orchid, Violets (Viola spp.)*. Although some areas have been replanted with oak, beech, and sycamore, they continue to support significant botanical diversity. Woodland rides contribute further plant diversity, and a small stream provides additional habitat variation.

4.7.2 The SSSI site comprises of three SSSI units: two of which are in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, with the remaining unit in a 'Favourable' condition. Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) control is underway through a Woodland Improvement Grant, and reinstatement off a coppice cycle is needed. Ash Dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) is affecting approximately 60% of ash trees, with ongoing monitoring and felling planned. All units are showing improvement but require sustained management to achieve favourable conditions.

4.8 Warboys Claypit (SSSI)

4.8.1 Warboys Claypit, a geological SSSI site, is a key Oxfordian reference section in the East Midlands. The contains Oxford Clay and Ampthill Clay with ammonium zonation, making it an important Jurassic stratigraphic site. Although the SSSI comprises of one unit in a 'Favourable' condition, the pit is covered with landfill, with the capping extending beyond the original pit boundaries. As a result, access to the sequence would require a borehole. While trenching might reach the top of the Oxford clay, the exposure is likely to have weathered or disturbed any material. Any trial pit or borehole would need to be located near the property boundary where the capping material would be thinner.

4.9 Warboys and Wistow Woods (SSSI)

4.9.1 Warboys and Wistow Woods SSSI is an ancient ash-field maple (*Acer campestre*) coppice woodland typical of lowland England. The understory is composed primarily of Hazel, Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus oxyacanthoides*), and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), with Aspen (*Populus tremula*) occurring frequently in wetter areas. The ground flora is dominated by Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) and Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), alongside ancient woodland indicators such as Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*) and Wood Anemone. Woodland rides contribute additional biodiversity, supporting grassland species like Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Ragged Robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), and various Sedges (*Carex spp*.).

4.9.2 The SSSI comprises of two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland, which are in a 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition. Key pressures include deer browsing and Ash Dieback, which are reducing regeneration of canopy trees. Management efforts such as improved ride maintenance and the creation of open spaces have been noted, but further action is required, particularly in controlling deer populations and protecting saplings. The historic decline of the Black Hairstreak butterfly (*Satyrium pruni*) has been linked to insufficient Blackthorn management.

4.10 Upwood Meadows (SSSI, NNR)

4.10.1 Upwood Meadows is an unimproved clay grassland (MG5), designated for its ridge and furrow landscape and a large population of Green-winged Orchid (*Orchis morio*), alongside other characteristic species including Pepper-saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), Devil's-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), and Dropwort. This sites biodiversity is supported by additional habitats such as ponds and mature hedgerows. The SSSI comprises of one unit in a 'Favourable' condition.

4.11 St Neot's Common (SSSI)

4.11.1 St Neot's Common is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats (MG8, MG11, MG13) such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr. It features wet grasslands with Marsh Foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*), Floating Sweet-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*), and Sedges, as well as herbs such as Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*), Southern Marsh-orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*), and Marsh Arrowgrass (*Triglochin palustris*). Dier areas show a calcareous influence, and the site supports diverse aquatic flora and notable amphibian populations. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

4.12 Portholme (SSSI)

4.12.1 Portholme is designated for being one of the largest alluvial flood meadows in the UK. The site is a traditionally managed lammas meadow (MG4), and supports a species rich environment with Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Yellow Oat-grass (*Trisetum flavescens*), Meadow Foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), and Meadow Fescue (*Festuca pratensis*), alongside herbs including Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*), Pepper-saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), and Great Burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*). Its watercourses support uncommon invertebrates such as the nationally restricted Scarce Chaser dragonfly (*Libellula fulva*). The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

4.13 Perry Woods (SSSI)

4.13.1 Perry Woods is an ash-maple ancient woodland on Oxford and Boulder Clays, a habitat type now scarce in country and lowland England. The site consists of mixed coppice with Ash, Hazel, and Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), with frequent Pedunculate Oak stands. The site supports species-rich ground flora featuring ancient woodland indicators such as Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*) and Early-purple Orchid. The field layer is dominated by Dog's Mercury and Bluebell, while additional habitats from woodland fringes, rides, streams, and adjacent grasslands, with species like Cowslip (*Primula veris*) and Salad Burnet (*Poterium sanguisorba*), enhance woodland edge value for invertebrates. The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

4.14 Ouse Washes (SSSI)

4.14.1 Ouse Washes is an internationally important washland for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders, supporting large numbers of *Teal (Anas crecca), Northern Pintail (Anas acuta), Eurasian Wigeon (Anas penelope), Common Shoveler (Anas clypeata), Common Pochard (Aythya ferina), and Bewick's Swan (Cygnus bewickii).*

4.14.2 Its unimproved neutral grassland area is characterised by Greater Reed Mace (*Glyceria maxima*), Floating Sweet-grass, Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Marsh Foxtail, together with a range of sedges, rushes, and herbs such as Amphibious Bistort (*Polygonum amphibium*), Water-pepper (*Polygonum hydropiper*), and Water-dropwort. Associated dykes and rivers are species rich, supporting Pondweeds (*Potamogeton* spp.), Fringed Water-lily (*Nymphoides peltata*), Greater Water-parsnip, and Duckweeds (*Lemna* spp.), while the old Bedford and Depth rivers add further value as examples of base-rich lowland channels, supporting Fan-leaved Water-crowfoot (*Ranunculus circinatus*), Yellow Water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*), Arrowhead, Long-stalked Pondweed (*Potamogeton praelongus*), Perfoliate Pondweed (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*), and River Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fluviatilis*). The aquatic and semi-aquatic fauna is similarly diverse.

4.14.3 The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable – no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'.

4.14.4 Wintering birds are largely 'Favourable', but Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) and Wigeon are in 'Unfavourable' condition. Wigeon numbers have declined by over 30% since 2015 and habitat loss from prolonged flooding has reduced feeding opportunities. Overall, habitat quality has been stable since 2002 with no further decline, but grassland loss from repeated deep flooding with poor-quality Ouse water continues to limit some birds populations, particularly wigeons. The population target has been met but there has been a 30% decline since 2015, leading to the five year mean falling by 33%, close to dropping below the SSSI threshold.

4.15 Little Paxton Wood (SSSI)

4.15.1 Little Paxton Wood is a wet ash-field maple coppice woodland on calcareous boulder clay, with oak standards in the north and willows (*Salix spp.*) and Aspen in wetter areas. Its shrub layer is dominated by Derelict Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) coppice, Scattered Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*, *C. laevigata*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Wild Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*), Wayfaring-Tree (*Viburnum lantana*), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), and Guelder-Rose (*Viburnumopulus*). The ground flora varies with soil moisture: drier areas support dog Mercury, Bluebell, Enchanter's Nightshade And Yellow Archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*), while wetter areas support Primrose , Violets, Sedges (*Carex sylvatica*), Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*), Herb-Paris, Wood Spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides*), Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*), and several orchids including Common Spotted-Orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*), Twayblade (*Listera ovata*), Greater Butterfly-Orchid (*Platanthera chlorantha*), and Violet Helleborine (*Epipactis purpurata*). Ancient woodland indicators such as Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*), Sweet Violet (*Viola odorata*), and Spiked Star-Of-Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum pyrenaicum*). occur along the western woodbank. Additional habitats include a stream, unimproved neutral grassland, and blackthorn, which provide additional habitat diversity and enhance overall wildlife value. The site's lowland mixed deciduous woodland unit is in a 'Favourable' condition.

4.16 Little Paxton Pits (SSSI)

4.16.1 Little Paxton Pits is designated for its extensive gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh, and terrestrial habitats. Open water pits range from recently flooded basins with little vegetation to older pools fringed by Reedmace (*Typha latifolia*), Common Reed and Common Club-Rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*), with Willow (*Salix carr)* around mature pits. Marsh communities support species such as Meadowsweet and Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), while aquatic plants include Lesser Reedmace (*Typha angustifolia*) and Fringed Yellow Water-Lily (*Nymphoides peltata).* The site is nationally important for wintering wildfowl, with Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) regularly exceeding 1% of the British population. Breeding birds include Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), Snipe, Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*), kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*), and a small heronry. The surrounding habitats of woodland, scrub, hedgerows, and dry grassland add value, supporting locally scarce plants such as Common Spotted Orchid, Bee Orchid (*Ophrys apifera*), Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acer*), Hare's-Foot Clover (*Trifolium arvense*), and Knotted Clover (*Trifolium striatum*).

4.16.2 The SSSI comprises of two units, invertebrate assemblage (reed-fen and pools) is 'Unfavourable – recovering', while aggregations of non-breeding birds (Gadwall) are not recorded.

4.17 Little Catworth Meadow (SSSI)

4.17.1 Little Catworth Meadow is a herb-rich grassland surrounded by mature hedgerows. The grassland is of calcareous loam type, which is scarce for Britain. The meadow holds a variety of grasses and herbs such as Salad Burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*), Dropwort and Great Burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*). Of special interest is the presence of Green-Winged Orchid (*Orchis morio*) and Adder's-Tongue Fern (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*). The whole area is managed along traditional lines of mowing for hay, grazing and hedge layering. This has maintained the high wildlife value of the SSSI site. As a result, similar areas are rare in Cambridgeshire. The SSSI comprises of one unit of lowland neutral grassland in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

4.18 Houghton Meadows (SSSI)

4.18.1 Houghton Meadows SSSI is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, which are now rare in Cambridgeshire and declining nationally. The SSSI site is akin to the calcareous pasture type which is geographically restricted to the south of the country. Characteristic plant species include Lady's Bedstraw, Downy Oat-Grass (*Helictotrichon pubescens*), Cowslip and Salad Burnet. The rich variety of broadleaved herbs also includes Common Knapweed, Meadowsweet and Meadow Crane's-Bill (*Geranium pratense*). The SSSI comprises of two units, one of which is in a 'Favourable' condition and the other in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

4.19 Hemingford Grey Meadow (SSSI)

4.19.1 Hemingford Grey Meadow (SSSI) is designated for its species-rich meadow of the calcareous clay pasture type, a type restricted nationally to the south of the country and declining due to changes in traditional management practices. The grassland type is characterised by the presence of Sweet Vernal-Grass, Red Fescue and Downy Oat-Grass, together with Adder's-Tongue Fern, Cowslip and Green-Winged Orchid. Other grasses include Meadow Foxtail , Yellow Oat-Grass and Quaking-Grass. The variety of herbs present includes Common Knapweed , Oxeye Daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*) and Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*). The presence of the orchids Common Twayblade and Common Spotted-Orchid is unusual for this part of England, reflecting the special conditions of soil and drainage at the site. The boundary hedgerows enhance the value of the site for invertebrates and provide an important buffer to this small meadow in an arable setting. The SSSI comprises of one unit of lowland neutral grassland in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

4.20 Great Stukeley Railway Cutting (SSSI)

4.20.1 Great Stukeley Railway Cutting (SSSI) is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous grassland, designated for being a scarce habitat across Huntingdonshire as a result of reclamation for agriculture. Two grassland communities occur: the steep cutting is the most herb-rich, dominated by Tor Grass (*Brachypodium pinnatum*), False Oat-Grass, Red Fescue and Glaucous Sedge (*Carex flacca*), with a variety of herbs including Spiny Restharrow (*Ononis spinosa*), Dropwort, Dyer's Greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*), Sulphur Clover (*Trifolium ochroleucon*), Zigzag Clover (*T. medium)* and pyramidal orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*). In contrast, areas away from the steep cutting are less species-rich, dominated by coarse grasses, particularly false oat grass. Intermittent burning and rabbit grazing have maintained this valuable habitat in an intensively farmed landscape. Additional features include ponds and low scrub, the latter supporting a breeding colony of the Great Green Bush-Cricket (*Tettigonia viridissima*), a predominantly southern species at the edge of its British range.

4.20.2 The SSSI comprises of one unit of lowland calcareous grassland in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

4.21 Grafham Water (SSSI)

4.21.1 Grafham Water SSSI is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon. It is of national importance for its populations of Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), Tufted Duck, Coot (*Fulica atra*), and for large numbers of Mute Swan in late summer. It is also one of the East Midlands' key sites for passage migrants and wintering bird diversity. The reservoir, margins, and active sludge lagoons support a rich variety of breeding wetland bird such as Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*), Great Crested Grebe, Gadwall, Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), Tufted Duck, Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*) and Ringed Plover. The area of active sludge lagoons is of particular importance for breeding birds as well as for autumn passage migrants. Areas of grassland, scrub, marsh, and temporarily inundated shoreline provide additional habitats for wildlife and notable plants such as Golden Dock (*Rumex maritimus*), Marsh Dock (*Rumex palustris*), and Hairy Buttercup (*Ranunculus sardous*). A small pond on the shore also supports a colony of the nationally uncommon Warty Newt (*Triturus cristatus*).

4.21.2 The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition. The aggregations of non-breeding birds are all in favourable condition, with recent WeBS 5-year peak means exceeding baseline targets: Coot 1,699 (target 1,035), Great Crested Grebe 391 (target 100), Mute Swan 72 (target 51), and Tufted Duck 1,967 (target 560). The variety of wintering species is also assessed as favourable, based on the least favourable historic unit condition, while the breeding bird assemblage of lowland open waters and margins is likewise favourable, though confidence in this assessment was classed as low under Natural England's desk-based project using existing records and earth observation data.

4.22 Godmanchester Eastside Common (SSSI)

4.22.1 Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI comprises of two areas of neutral grassland, separated by a dismantled railway line, representing scarce calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types in both the British Isles and the East Midlands. The southern field shows ridge-and-furrow features and many anthills, with swards locally dominated by Hard Rush (*Juncus inflexus*) and Tufted Hair-Grass. A large number of grass species are present on both parts of the site, including Crested Hair-Grass (*Koeleria macrantha*), Heath-Grass (*Danthonia decumbens*), Quaking-Grass, and Meadow Oat-Grass. Characteristic herbs include Devil's-bit Scabious, Rough Hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), and Lady's Bedstraw, with notable species such as Meadow Saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*) and Trailing Tormentil (*Potentilla anglica*) on the northern bank. The adjacent hay meadow, a flood meadow type, holds a different range of plants such as Brown Sedge (*Carex disticha*) and Great Burnet. Hedgerows, ditches, and two ponds provide additional wildlife habitat.

4.22.2 The SSSI comprises of two units of lowland neutral grassland, one of which is 'Favourable' and the other 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

4.23 Gamlingay Wood SSSI

4.23.1 Gamlingay Wood is an ancient woodland which holds well developed plants and animal communities. It is of the ash-maple woodland type and represents a scarce lowland England habitat that is notable in Cambridgeshire for its occurrence on sandy loam soils. Most of the wood is mixed coppice of Oak, Ash, Hazel, and Field Maple. On calcareous marl over Boulder Clay, the nationally restricted Oxlip is a key ground flora species, alongside Dog's Mercury, Bluebell, Yellow Archangel, and Wood Anemone. On sandy loam over Boulder Clay on Greensand, oak becomes is more abundant, with ash being replaced by birch. The ground flora includes Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and Creeping Soft-Grass (*Holcus mollis*), characteristic of rare dry oak woods on acid soils in the county and extremely rare in the country. Though some areas have been altered by plantation, natural vegetation persists with potential for restoration through sympathetic management.

4.23.2 This SSSI comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'. Gamlingay Wood SSSI is managed through minimum intervention, coppice, and ride management. The canopy is dominated by Oak and Ash, with Hazel coppice, and supports a good deadwood resource. However, Ash Dieback is widespread, regeneration is restricted by heavy deer browsing, and recreational pressure in wet conditions is damaging ride edges, threatening associated flora. Distinct flora include scattered oxlip (*Primula elatior*), distinctive sandy-soil glade communities, W8 NVC flora, ancient woodland indicators, Sand-Lens flora, and ride-associated species.

4.24 Castor Flood Meadows (SSSI)

4.24.1 Castor Flood Meadows Remnant is a species-rich alluvial grassland within the River Nene floodplain, maintained by traditional hay-cutting and grazing. The vegetation reflects soil moisture gradients: wet hollows and river margins support marsh foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*), floating sweet-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*), common spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), and tubular water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*). Most of the site is alluvial meadow grassland with creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), crested dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), meadow fescue (*Festuca pratensis*), and a diverse herb layer including great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), and common meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*). Locally, slender tufted-sedge (*Carex acuta*), early marsh-orchid (*Dactylorhiza incarnata*), and the nationally restricted narrow-leaved water-dropwort (*Oenanthe silaifolia*) occur. Wetter ground also holds marsh arrow-grass (*Triglochin palustris*), marsh ragwort (*Senecio aquaticus*), and brown sedge (*Carex disticha*). On drier calcareous loam soils, grassland is characterised by sweet vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), yellow oat-grass (*Trisetum flavescens*), with herbs including lady's bedstraw (*Galium verum*), salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*), hoary plantain (Plantago media), burnet saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifraga*), and the locally notable meadow saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*).

4.24.2 The River Nene and associated waterbodies add further interest, with stands of yellow water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*), arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*), and a diverse invertebrate assemblage including banded agrion (*Calopteryx splendens*) and red-eyed damselfly (*Erythromma najas*). Breeding birds include snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) and yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*), while flooded meadows in winter attract large flocks of duck.

4.24.3 The SSSI comprises 4 units: Lowland neutral grassland (MG4), Lowland neutral grassland (MG5), Lowland wet neutral grassland (MG11, MG13), and Lowland neutral and wet neutral grassland (MG4, MG5, MG11, MG13). These were all classified as being in in favourable condition. All targets for conditions have been met with good diversity of indicators, including marsh orchid, adder's-tongue fern, autumn hawkbit, jointed rush and meadowsweet. Unit 1 is the most species-rich, while Units 2–3 show lower diversity but remain within favourable condition.

4.25 Brampton Wood (SSSI)

4.25.1 Brampton Wood is an ancient wet ash–field maple (Fraxinus excelsior–Acer campestre) woodland on chalky Boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. Much of the site remains as mixed coppice of ash, field maple, and hazel (*Corylus avellana*), with birch (*Betula* spp.), aspen (*Populus tremula*), and occasional oak (Quercus robur) standards. The ground flora is characteristic of the dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*)–bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) type, with ancient woodland indicators including wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), wood sedge (*Carex sylvatica*), remote sedge (*C. remota*), yellow archangel (*Galeobdolon luteum*), primrose (*Primula veris*), and violets (*Viola* spp.). Woodland rides support species-rich neutral grassland communities with smooth meadow-grass (*Poa pratensis*), quaking-grass (*Briza media*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), and crested dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*). Herbs include yellow pimpernel (*Lysimachia nemorum*), greater bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus uliginosus*), yellow rattle (Rhinanthus minor), devil's-bit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), and primrose. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the site's overall ecological value despite localised forestry modification.

4.25.2 The site is designated for two units, Lowland mixed deciduous woodland currently classified as being in 'Unfavourable – recovering' condition, and population of nationally scarce butterfly species, Black Hairstreak (*Strymonidia pruni*), in 'Favourable' condition.

4.26 Brampton Racecourse (SSSI)

4.26.1 Brampton Racecourse is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook, with a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity. Vegetation is representative of hardhead–crested dog's-tail (*Centaurea nigra–Cynosurus cristatus*) neutral grassland, with transitions towards meadow foxtail–great burnet (*Alopecurus pratensis–Sanguisorba officinalis*) flood meadow in the lower furrows. Such unimproved grasslands are nationally scarce and rare in Cambridgeshire. The sward is species-rich, characterised by sweet vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), meadow oat-grass (*Avenula pratensis*), and quaking-grass (*Briza media*), with prominent herbs including dropwort (Filipendula vulgaris), salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*), pepper-saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), hardhead (*Centaurea nigra*), and great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*). Notable species include saw-wort (*Serratula tinctoria*) and the county's largest population of green-winged orchid (*Orchis morio*). Management is by hay-cutting and more intensive mowing.

4.26.2 The site is designated for Lowland neutral grassland (MG5), currently classidifd as being in 'favourable' condition. The most recent assessment found all the targets for favourable condition to have been met. A comparison with the previous survey showed an increase in species richness and a decrease in the cover of graminoid species.

4.27 Brampton Meadow (SSSI)

4.27.1 A small species-rich meadow exhibits plant communities of the calcareous clay pasture type. Grasslands of this type are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. The plant community is characterised by the occurrence of species such as Quaking-grass (*Briza media*), Adder's tongue (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*), and Cowslip (*Primula veris*). Also present are the Green-winged Orchid (*Orchis morio*) and Meadow Saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*).

4.27.2 The lowland neutral grassland (MG5) is in 'unfavourable – declining' condition due to frequent creeping thistles throughout that have increased cover, and hemlock and grass dominating north of the site. Young brambles are also found throughout and will result in the loss of grassland feature to scrub without consistent, appropriate management being reinstated. The south-east corner of the site is particularly herb-rich with fewer creeping thistles. Positive indicator species are present in the southern half of the site at a sufficient frequency but in places are visibly growing through bramble and dense creeping thistle. The amount of bare ground is appropriate and there are no indications of waterlogging.

4.28 Berry Fen (SSSI)

4.28.1 A washland habitat of ornithological value and holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. The site is located close to the internationally important Ouse Washes and this factor influences the use of Berry Fen by wintering wildfowl, especially when the Washes are too deeply flooded. In particular, the Bewick's swan numbers reach nationally significant levels.

4.28.2 The wash grassland is characterised by grasses such as marsh foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*) and reed canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). This wet grassland grades into stands of reed sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*) towards the wetter parts of the site, together with clumps of slender-tufted sedge (*Carex acuta*). Other herbs include the purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) and meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*). The ditches add further diversity, retaining open water into the summer months. Wetland herbs such as the local sneezewort (*Achillea ptarmica*), marsh ragwort (*Senecio aquaticus*) and the uncommon narrow-leaved water-dropwort (*Oenanthe silaifolia*) occur. Most of the site floods irregularly during winter and wildfowl other than Bewick's swan may reach numbers of county significance.

4.28.3 The site is designated for a number of features. Lowland wetland including basin fen, valley fen, floodplain fen, waterfringe fen, spring/flush fen and raised bog lagg is in 'Unfavourable – recovering' condition. Lowland wet neutral grassland (MG11, MG13) is in 'Unfavourable – declining' condition, as are Breeding bird assemblages in lowland damp grasslands are with only Reed bunting and Sedge warbler recorded (score 2 vs target 16); waders and wildfowl once present are now absent, though some closed-habitat species remain. Lowland wet neutral grassland (MG11, MG13) is also unfavourable–declining, following prolonged flooding and algal growth in 2024. Vegetation height targets failed, with sedge swamp expanding at the expense of diversity, though narrow-leaved water dropwort persists. Broader lowland wetland habitats (fen and bog types) are unfavourable – recovering, based on the lowest previously recorded unit assessments.

4.29 Aversley Wood (SSSI)

4.29.1 Aversley wood is an ancient wet ash–field maple (*Fraxinus excelsior–Acer campestre*) woodland on heavy clay soils of lowland England, with origins predating the Middle Ages. The woodland is managed as coppice-with-standards, dominated by oak (*Quercus robur*), ash, and field maple, with elm (*Ulmus* spp.) locally abundant. Wild service tree (*Sorbus torminalis*), a species characteristic of ancient woodland, is also present.

4.29.2 The ground flora is of the dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*)–bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) type, enriched with ancient woodland indicators including yellow archangel (*Galeobdolon luteum*), early-purple orchid (*Orchis mascula*), wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), and stinking iris (*Iris foetidissima*). Woodland rides support a diverse grassland flora with meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), devil's-bit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), and betony (*Stachys officinalis*). Grassland margins along the south-east and south-west boundaries provide valuable edge habitat, particularly for invertebrates. Additional features include ancient earthworks, ridge-and-furrow from medieval cultivation, a small stream, and ponds, all contributing to the site's ecological and historical richness.

4.29.3 The condition of units is based on least favourable historical unit, and puts the lowland mixed deciduous woodland in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition, but no recent feature-specific assessment notes provided.

4.30 Swineshead Wood (SSSI)

4.30.1 Swineshead Wood SSSI is an ancient semi-natural woodland situated in Bedfordshire. It represents one of the county's largest and most intact examples of ash–field maple (*Fraxinus excelsior–Acer campestre*) woodland on heavy Boulder Clay, a habitat type now nationally restricted in extent. The woodland canopy is dominated by Ash, Field Maple, and Oak (*Quercus robur*), with Elm (*Ulmus* spp.) locally present. The varied shrub layer typically includes Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus oxyacanthoides*), and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*). The ground flora is characteristic of ancient clay woodlands, with abundant Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Yellow Archangel (*Galeobdolon luteum*), and Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*). Wetter microhabitats hold species such as Remote Sedge (*Carex remota*) and Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*), while glades and rides support more open herb-rich communities. The diversity of structural niches and long continuity of woodland cover provide suitable conditions for invertebrates, breeding birds, and other taxa associated with ancient woodland.

4.30.2 The site comprises two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland, both in 'Favourable' condition. They show a good range of standard oaks and ash, with well-developed understories and full field layers. Dead wood is present throughout both units, including standing timber and fallen limbs, providing important habitat for invertebrates and fungi. The understory is robust, featuring hazel, hawthorn, midland hawthorn, and field maple, with some notable specimens of hawthorn and field maple. Much of the hazel is former coppice; however, deer browsing has limited natural regeneration, leading to the cessation of coppicing practices. Despite dense understory in many areas, both units retain open sections with abundant light reaching the ground. Bare ground is minimal, and the ground flora is well-developed across the majority of both units, supporting a diverse woodland flora assemblage.

4.31 Orton Pit (SSSI)

4.31.1 Orton Pit SSSI is a nationally important site in Peterborough which represents one of the country's most significant populations of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and supports a network of meso-eutrophic standing water habitats that host an assemblage of nationally rare and scarce charophyte species. The site comprises extensive former brick clay workings, forming linear spoil heaps and a series of rain-fed ponds locally described as 'ridge and furrow.' This varied topography has encouraged the development of a mosaic of habitats including open and dense scrub, rough grassland, ruderal vegetation, emergent and aquatic vegetation, and open water pools. The aquatic habitats are structurally diverse and of high quality, with ponds of varying ages and successional stages supporting abundant pondweeds (*Potamogeton* spp.), mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), spiked water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), and extensive charophyte populations. The nationally rare bearded stonewort (*Chara canescens*) is associated with the youngest ponds, while four other nationally scarce charophyte species are also present (*Chara aculeolata*, *Chara curta*, *Nitella flexilis*, *Tolypella glomerata*). The terrestrial habitats surrounding the pools provide essential foraging and hibernation areas for great crested newts, smooth newts (*Triturus vulgaris*), common toads (*Bufo bufo*), common frogs (*Rana temporaria*), common lizards (*Zootoca vivipara*), and grass snakes (*Natrix natrix*). The site also supports protected mammals including badger (Meles meles), water vole (*Arvicola terrestris*), and foraging bats, along with a diverse invertebrate assemblage.

4.31.2 The site comprises two units, two units of Standing Open Water (one in ‘favourable’ condition and one in ‘unfavourable – recovering’ condition), two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland – lowland (both in ‘favourable’ condition), and two units of Standing Open Water and Canals (in ‘unfavourable – recovering’ and ‘favourable’ conditions).

4.32 Eversden and Wimpole Woods (SSSI)

4.32.1 Eversden Wood SSSI is a nationally important ancient semi-natural woodland located near Wimpole Park in Cambridgeshire. The site represents one of the largest remaining examples of ancient ash–field maple–dog's mercury woodland on the Cambridgeshire chalky boulder-clay and supports a nationally important summer maternity roost for the barbastelle bat (*Barbastella barbastellus*), The site comprises a mosaic of ancient coppice woodland and adjoining high forest woodland of more recent origin creating a structurally diverse woodland landscape of high ecological value. The varied woodland structure, together with woodland rides and glades, supports a diverse range of habitats and contributes to the site's high biodiversity. The ground flora is particularly species-rich and characteristic of ancient woodland, being dominated by dog's mercury and bluebell. Damp soil conditions support locally abundant meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and tufted hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), whilst a diverse assemblage of ancient woodland indicator species includes yellow archangel (*Galeobdolon luteum*), wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), and the nationally scarce oxlip (*Primula elatior*), a species largely confined to damp chalky boulder-clay woodlands of eastern England.

4.32.2 The woodland provides essential roosting, breeding, commuting and foraging habitat for the barbastelle bat, with mature trees supporting a nationally important summer maternity colony. Female barbastelles utilise tree crevices as maternity roosts during the breeding season, whilst the surrounding woodland and rides provide important foraging habitat and commuting corridors to areas beyond the site. A total of six bat species have been recorded, including soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*), and noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), reflecting the high quality and structural diversity of the woodland habitat.

4.32.3 The site comprises two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland – lowland, one in 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition and the other in 'Favourable' condition.

***Figure 4.2**: Species associated with NNRs and SSSIs Huntingdonshire:*

***1.** Fen Violet, **2.** Wood Anemone, **3.** Green Winged Orchid, **4.** Black Hairstreak, **5.** Great Crested Grebe, **6.** Snipe*

Table 4.1: *Designated sites ecological constraints/ Impact Pathways*

SSSI/NNR	Air Quality Change	Water Quality Change	Water Quantity Change	Urban Development	Recreation
Holme Fen (SSSI and NNR)	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Woodwalton Fen (SSSI, NNR and RAMSAR)	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Monks Wood (SSSI and NNR)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Woodwalton Marsh (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Weaveley And Sand Woods (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Waresley Wood (SSSI)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Warboys Claypit (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	N
Warboys And Wistow Woods (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Upwood Meadows (SSSI and NNR)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
St. Neot's Common (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Portholme (SSSI)	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Perry Woods (SSSI)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Ouse Washes (SSSI)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

SSSI/NNR	Air Quality Change	Water Quality Change	Water Quantity Change	Urban Development	Recreation
Little Paxton Wood (SSSI)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Little Paxton Pits (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Little Catworth Meadow (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Houghton Meadows (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Hemingford Grey Meadow (SSSI)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting (SSSI)	N	N	N	Y	N
Grafham Water (SSSI)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Godmanchester Eastside Common (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	N
Gamlingay Wood (SSSI)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Castor Flood Meadows (SSSI)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Brampton Wood (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Brampton Meadow (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Berry Fen (SSSI)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

SSSI/NNR	Air Quality Change	Water Quality Change	Water Quantity Change	Urban Development	Recreation
Aversley Wood (SSSI)	N	N	Y	N	Y
Swineshead Wood (SSSI)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Orton Pit (SSSI)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

5 Abbots Ripton 1: Home Farm South

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 Home Farm South is a 2.83 ha site located in Abbots Ripton near the centre of Huntingdonshire and proposed for Mixed-Use, with a residential capacity of 15 and a commercial capacity of 0.5ha.

5.1.2 It is located in the south of Abbots Ripton, approximately 3.2km north of Huntingdon. The site comprises of two modified grassland fields enclosed by hedgerows with trees, with developed land; sealed surface also located within the site including two buildings. To the east is the B1090 and to the west is the East Coast Main Line Railway.

5.2 Ecological baseline

Designated Sites

5.2.1 Proposed development at the Home Farm South site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI

5.2.2 Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is located approximately 1.2km to the north-west of the site. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

5.2.3 The site is located within an IRZ associated with the Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI. The IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

5.2.4 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

5.3 Summary of potential impacts

5.3.1 **Table 5.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 5.1: *Abbots Ripton 1 Site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N

5.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Abbots Ripton 1. Given the location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts, this allocation has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

6 Alconbury 1: South of Great North Road

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 The South of Great North Road site is a 1.4 ha site located in Alconbury near the centre of Huntingdonshire and proposed residential use, with a capacity of about 30 homes.

6.1.2 It is located in the south of Alconbury, approximately 4.7km northwest of Huntingdon. The site comprises of part of an arable field, enclosed by hedgerows and hedgerows with trees, with some areas of scrub onsite. It sits on the Great North Road, along the site's northern border, and the A1 runs to its east.

6.2 Ecological baseline

Designated Sites

6.2.1 Proposed development at the South of Great North Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Brampton Meadow SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Monks Wood NNR and Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI

6.2.2 The closest designated site to the allocation is Brampton Meadow SSSI, approximately 3.3km to the southeast of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices.

6.2.3 Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is located approximately 4.6km to the east of the site. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

6.2.4 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is also around 3.1km, to the east of the allocation site, an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook, with a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

6.2.5 Additionally, Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is within 4km of the South of Great North Road Allocation. The site is comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Monks Wood NNR or the Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI.

6.2.6 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Brampton Meadow SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

6.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

6.3 Summary of potential impacts

6.3.1 **Table 6.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 6.1: *Alconbury 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Monks Wood NNR and Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

6.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Alconbury 1. Given the location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts, this allocation has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Brampton Racecourse SSSI, Brampton Meadow SSSI or Monks Wood NNR and Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

7 Alconbury 2: East of Globe Lane

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 The Alconbury 2 site is a 3.5 ha site located in Alconbury near the centre of Huntingdonshire and proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 60 homes.

7.1.2 It is located in the south of Alconbury, approximately 5.3km northwest of Huntingdon. The site comprises of agricultural land, sitting adjacent to Globe Lane, along the site's western border. Residential houses sit adjacent to the site's northern boundary, and the A1 runs to the east of the site.

7.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

7.2.1 Proposed development at the East of Globe Lane site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Brampton Meadow SSSI
- Monks Wood NNR and Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI

7.2.2 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 3.3km to the southeast of the site. It is a small 1.0 ha species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

7.2.3 Additionally, Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR is within 4km of the South of Great North Road Allocation. The site is comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

7.2.4 The allocation site is located within an IRZ associated with Brampton Meadow SSSI and Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

7.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

7.3 Summary of potential impacts

7.3.1 **Table 7.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 7.1: *Alconbury 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	N	N	N	Y

7.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Alconbury 2. This allocation has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Brampton Meadows SSSI and Monks Wood NNR and Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

8 Bluntisham 1: South of Rectory Road

8.1 Overview

8.1.1 South of Rectory Road is a 1.53 ha site located in Bluntisham in the east of Huntingdonshire and proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 20 homes.

8.1.2 It is located in the south of Bluntisham, approximately 13km to the northeast of Huntingdon. The site comprises of grassland enclosed by hedgerows, sitting adjacent the A123, along the site's northern border.

8.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

8.2.1 Proposed development at the South of Rectory Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

8.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is located approximately 0.7km to the east of the site. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

8.2.3 Ouse Washes SSSI is within 2km of the site. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'.

8.2.4 The South of Rectory Road Site is located within an IRZ associated with Berry Fen SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

8.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

8.3 Summary of potential impacts

8.3.1 **Table 8.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 8.1: *Bluntisham 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	N	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	Y	N	N	N	Y

8.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Bluntisham 1, and it has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

9 Bluntisham 2: Land off 18 Holliday's Road

9.1 Overview

9.1.1 The Land of 18 Holiday's Road is a 2ha site located in Bluntisham, in the east of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 35 homes.

9.1.2 The site is located in the east of Bluntisham, approximately 13km to the northeast of Huntingdon. The site comprises of three modified grassland fields with several buildings, located at the north boundary and western borders of the site. It sits on the A123, along the site's southern border, with residential housing on the western border.

9.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

9.2.1 Proposed development at the Land off 18 Holliday's Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

9.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is located approximately 230m to the east of the site. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

9.2.3 Ouse Washes SSSI is within 1.5km of the site. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'.

9.2.4 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

9.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

9.3 Summary of potential impacts

9.3.1 **Table 9.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 9.1: *Bluntisham 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	Y	N	N	N	Y

9.3.2 There are Medium ecological constraints at Bluntisham 2, and so it is necessary to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts on Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI from any development to ensure compliance with national legislation and policy. This must be demonstrated through an assessment, careful consideration of mitigation measures and consultation and approval from Natural England. Should the nature of development lead to any impacts on a SSSI, this would be subject to appropriate mitigation to ensure no adverse effects as set out in Section 78.5.

10 Bluntisham 3: Land West of Colne Road

10.1 Overview

10.1.1 Land West of Colne Road is a 7.78 ha site located in Bluntisham, in the east of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for Mixed-Use, with a residential capacity of about 85 homes, 0.2ha of land for parking to serve the nearby St Helen's Primary School and a proposed -open space capacity of 3 ha.

10.1.2 This site is located to the north of Bluntisham, approximately 12km to the northeast of Huntingdon. The site comprises of agricultural land, with residential housing adjacent to the southern border, and Colne Road sitting adjacent to the east of the site.

10.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

10.2.1 Proposed development at the Land West of Colne Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

10.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is located approximately 1km to the southeast of the site. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

10.2.3 Ouse Washes SSSI is within 2km of the site. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'.

10.2.4 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI. This IRZ does require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site; there is potential for the proposed development to have a harmful effect on terrestrial SSSIs as the allocation meets the description of a '*Residential development of 50 units or more*'.

Irreplaceable Habitat

10.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

10.3 Summary of potential impacts

10.3.1 **Table 10.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 10.1**: Bluntisham 3 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation

Berry Fen SSSI	Y	N	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	Y	N	N	N	Y

10.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at Bluntisham 3. It is necessary to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts on Berry Fen SSSI or the Ouse Washes SSSI from any development at the site to ensure compliance with national legislation and policy. This must be demonstrated through an assessment, careful consideration of mitigation measures and consultation and approval from Natural England. Should the nature of development lead to any impacts on a SSSI, this would be subject to appropriate mitigation to ensure no adverse effects as set out in Section 78.5.

11 Great Gransden 1: South of Caxton Road

11.1 Overview

11.1.1 This site is a 1.8 ha site located in Great Gransden, in the south of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for Commercial use and is considered capable of delivering about 7,000sqm of employment floorspace.

11.1.2 The site is located in the north-east of Great Gransden, approximately 15km to the south of Huntingdon. The site comprises of grassland and sits in between Sand Road and Caxton Road, with an industrial estate sitting adjacent to the eastern boundary.

11.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

11.2.1 Proposed development at the South of Caxton Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Waresley Wood SSSI
- Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI

11.2.2 Waresley Wood SSSI is located approximately 1.2km to the south-west of the site. This is a 54 ha site is an ancient ash-maple woodland with a diverse shrub layer and rich ground flora. The SSSI site comprises of three SSSI units: two of which are in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, with the remaining unit in a 'Favourable' condition.

11.2.3 Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI is located 6.3km to the south-east of the site. This 66ha site is a structurally diverse ancient semi-natural ash-maple-dogs mercury woodland, also designated for providing roosting, commuting and foraging habitat for barbastelle bats. The SSSI site comprises of two SSSI units: one of which is in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, with the other unit in a 'Favourable' condition.

11.2.4 The site is located within a IRZ associated with Waresely Wood SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site. The site will also fall within the updated IRZ for Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI. Natural England advises that this site should therefore avoid impacting potentially functionally linked habitats for bats.

Irreplaceable Habitat

11.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

11.3 Summary of potential impacts

11.3.1 **Table 11.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 11.1: *Great Gransden 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Waresely Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	N

Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI	N	N	N	N	N

11.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Great Gransden 1. This allocation has the potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that it avoids adverse effects upon Waresley Wood SSSI, Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI, and their potentially functionally linked habitats, particularly trees, hedgerows, watercourses, and wet grassland which may be used by foraging, roosting or commuting bats, particularly Barbastelles. Adverse effects can be avoided or mitigated through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5, such as the requirement for an ecologically sensitive lighting strategy in accordance with Guidance Note 8 - GN08 Bats[45] and Artificial Lighting from the Institute of Lighting Professionals.

12 Great Staughton 1: East of B661, The Green

12.1 Overview

12.1.1 This site is a 0.9 ha site located in Great Staughton, in the south-west of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 15 homes.

12.1.2 The site is located to the north-east of Great Staughton, approximately 12km to the south-west of Huntingdon. The site is comprised of agricultural land, with the B661 sitting on the sites western border and residential homes sitting adjacent to the south of the site.

12.2 Ecological Baseline

Designate Sites

12.2.1 Proposed development at the Land between the West Lodge and Home Farm site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Perry Woods SSSI
- Grafham Water SSSI

12.2.2 Perry Woods SSSI is located approximately 1.2km to the east of the site. This 66 ha site is an ash-maple ancient woodland on Oxford and Boulder Clays, a habitat type now scarce in country and lowland England. The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

12.2.3 Grafham Water SSSI is located 2.8km from the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

12.2.4 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Perry Woods SSSI and Grafham Waters SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

12.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

12.3 Summary of potential impacts

12.3.1 **Table 12.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 12.1: *Great Staughton 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Perry Woods SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Grafham Waters SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

12.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Great Staughton 1, and so has the potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Perry Woods SSSI and Grafham Waters SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

13 Hemingford Abbots 1: The Lattenburys (land to the South of the A1307 and North of A14, and West of A1198)

13.1 Overview

13.1.1 This site is a large, 243 ha site located in Hemingford Abbots, in the south-east of Huntingdonshire. It Is proposed for Mixed-Use, with a residential capacity of 3800, commercial capacity of 9.7ha and BNG/Open Space of 26 ha.

13.1.2 This site is located to the south of Hemingford Abbots and east of Godmanchester, approximately 4 km to the south-east of Huntingdon. The site is comprised of arable fields and grassland, with buildings situated at the north and west of the site. The site is sat between the A1207 on the northern border and the A14 on the southern border.

13.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

13.2.1 Proposed development at The Lattenburys has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Portholme SSSI
- Houghton Meadow SSSI

13.2.2 Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI is located approximately 0.8km to the east of the site. This 0.6 ha site is a species-rich meadow of the calcareous clay pasture type, a type restricted nationally to the south of the country. The SSSI comprises of one unit of lowland neutral grassland in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

13.2.3 Godmanchester Eastside Common is located approximately 2km to the north of the site. This SSSI is 28 ha, and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

13.2.4 Portholme SSSI is a 106 ha site located approximately 2.5km to the west of the site. It contains a Special Area of Conservation. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grasslands communities in the country. The SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

13.2.5 Houghton Meadows SSSI is situated approximately 2.2km to the north. This site is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

13.2.6 The site is within IRZs for Portholme SSSI, Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI and Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI. Pipelines, roads and other infrastructure as part of this allocation may mean that there is potentially harmful effects on SSSIs, and so Natural England should be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

13.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

13.3 Summary of potential impacts

13.3.1 **Table 13.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 13.1: *Hemingford Abbots 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Houghton Meadows SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

13.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at The Lattenburys given the review of impacts pathways showing limited potential for impacts. The scale of the proposed site offers opportunities for strategic scale new green infrastructure which can help to mitigate impact on nearby nature sites. Given the size of the site, its proximity to numerous SSSIs, and the associated urbanisation and recreation impact pathways, this site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI, Houghton Meadows SSSI, Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI and Portholme SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

14 Needingworth 1: Giffords Park, East of B1040

14.1 Overview

14.1.1 The Giffords Park site is a 122ha site proposed for a mix of uses with a residential capacity of 1,750, 5ha for a local centre, 4ha for a primary school, 3.3ha for a solar farm, a commercial capacity of 4.6ha and 65.5ha of green infrastructure and land to safeguard against flooding.

14.1.2 The site is located in the east of Huntingdonshire on the eastern edge of St Ives within Holywell-cum-Needingworth parish, approximately 6.4km from Huntingdon. The southern border sits along the A1123 and the Marley Gap Brook runs along the eastern border. The site's current use is primary agricultural fields, with the Gifford Farm buildings themselves also included within the allocation.

14.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

14.2.1 Proposed development at the Giffords Park site has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Houghton Meadows SSSI
- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

14.2.2 Houghton Meadows SSSI is the closest designated site to the allocation, approximately 2.8km west of Giffords Park. This site is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

14.2.3 Berry Fen SSSI is also located close to the Giffords Park site, situated approximately 4.6km to the east. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

14.2.4 Ouse Washes SSSI is 6km east of the site and is immediately downstream of Berry Fen SSSI. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

14.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Houghton Meadows SSSI and Berry Fen SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

14.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

14.3 Summary of potential impacts

14.3.1 **Table 14.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 14.1: *Needingworth 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Houghton Meadows SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N

14.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at Needingworth 1 given the hydrological, recreational and urban impact pathways to Berry Fen SSSI, recreational impacts on Houghton Meadows SSSI, and hydrological impacts on Ouse Washes SSSI. It is necessary to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts on Berry Fen SSSI and Houghton Meadows SSSI from any development at the allocation to ensure compliance with national legislation and policy. This must be demonstrated through an assessment, careful consideration of mitigation measures and consultation and approval from Natural England. The scale of the proposed site offers opportunities for strategic scale new green infrastructure which can help to mitigate impact on nearby nature sites. Should the nature of development lead to any impacts on a SSSI, this would be subject to appropriate mitigation to ensure no adverse effects as set out in Section 78.5.

15 Needingworth 2: South of A1123

15.1 Overview

15.1.1 South of A1123 is a 35 ha site located in Needingworth, in the east of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for Mixed-Use, with a residential capacity of 290 and a retail capacity of 0.6 ha and land to safeguard against flooding.

15.1.2 The site is located to the north of Needingworth, approximately 9.3km to the east of Huntingdon. The site is comprised of modified grassland, split into five Sections. The A11123 sits on the sites northern border, with an area of scrub and residential housing on the southern border.

15.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

15.2.1 Proposed development at the South of A1123 site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Houghton Meadows SSSI

15.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is situated approximately 3.3km to the east of the site. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

15.2.3 Houghton Meadows SSSI is located approximately 4km to the west. This site is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

15.2.4 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Berry Fen SSSI and Houghton Meadows SSSI This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

15.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

15.3 Summary of potential impacts

15.3.1 **Table 15.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 15.1: *Needingworth 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	N	N	N	Y
Houghton Meadows SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

15.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Needingworth 2, given location of the nearest SSSI and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts, and it has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Berry Fen SSSI and Houghton Meadows SSS through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

16 Houghton and Wyton 1: Ruddles Lane

16.1 Overview

16.1.1 Ruddles Lane is a 28 ha site located in Houghton and Wyton, near the centre of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for renewable use, with a capacity of 16.8 ha.

16.1.2 The site is located to the north of Houghton and Wyton and south of Wyon on the Hill, approximately 4km to the north-east of Huntingdon. The site is comprised of modified grassland, with a small area of scree on the eastern border. The B1090 sits on the sites northern border, with the A1123 to the south. A small lake is present in between the site and the A1123 to the south.

16.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

16.2.1 Proposed development at the Ruddles Lane site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Houghton Meadows SSSI

16.2.2 Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI is located approximately 1.3 km to the south of the site. This SSSI is 28 ha, and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

16.2.3 Houghton Meadows SSSI is approximately 1.6km to the south-east of the site. This site is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

16.2.4 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI and Houghton Meadows SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

16.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

16.3 Summary of potential impacts

16.3.1 **Table 16.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 16.1: *Houghton and Wyton 1 potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	N	N	N	N

Houghton Meadows SSSI	N	N	N	N	N

16.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Houghton and Wyton 1, given location of the nearest SSSI and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts, and so it has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI and Houghton Meadows SSSI through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

17 Offord D'Arcy 1: West of Graveley Road, Offord D'Arcy

17.1 Overview

17.1.1 West of Gravely Road is a 4.1 ha site located in The Offords, in the south of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 80 homes.

17.1.2 The site is located in the south of The Offords, approximately 5.6 km to the south of Huntingdon. The site comprises of an arable field, with residential housing on the north border and Graveley Road on the sites eastern border. The B1043 runs to the west of the site.

17.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

17.2.1 Proposed development at the West of Graveley Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI

17.2.2 Little Paxton Pits SSSI is located approximately 1.2 km to the south-west of the site. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

17.2.3 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Little Paxton Pits SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

17.2.4 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

17.3 Summary of potential impacts

17.3.1 **Table 17.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 17.1: *Offord D'Arcy 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

17.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Offord D'Arcy 1, given location of the nearest SSSI and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts, and so has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

18 Offord Cluny 1: West of High Street and North of Dunstall Close, Offord Cluny

18.1 Overview

18.1.1 West of High Street and North of Dunstall Close is a 2.8 ha site located in The Offords, in the south of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 45 homes.

18.1.2 The site is located in the north of The Offords, approximately 5.5km to the south of Huntingdon. The site comprises of grassland, with a railway line adjacent to the west of the site and the B1043 on the eastern border. Residential housing sits to the south and the River Great Ouse runs to the west.

18.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

18.2.1 Proposed development at the Land between the West of High Street and North of Dunstall Close site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI

18.2.2 Little Paxton Pits SSSI is located approximately 2.3 km to the south of the site. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

18.2.3 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Little Paxton Pits SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

18.2.4 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

18.3 Summary of potential impacts

18.3.1 **Table 18.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 18.1: *Offord Cluny 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

18.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Offord Cluny 1, given location of the nearest SSSI and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

19 Stilton 1: Rear of The Stilton Cheese Inn, 24 North Street

19.1 Overview

19.1.1 24 North Street is a 0.44 ha site located in Stilton, in the north of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 8 homes.

19.1.2 The site is located in the northeast of Stilton, approximately 20km to the north of Huntingdon. The site is comprised of scrub, with a building situated in the west. North Street is adjacent to the west of the site and the A1 runs to the east.

19.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

19.2.1 Proposed development at the Rear of the Stilton Cheese Inn site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Holme Fen NNR and SSSI

19.2.2 Holme Fen NNR and SSSI is located approximately 3.3km to the east of the site. It is 268 ha and comprised of lowland mixed deciduous woodland containing a mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed and ditch habitats. The SSSI NNR is comprised of two units, one of which is classified as 'Favourable', the other as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

19.2.3 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Holme Fen SSSI and NNR. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

19.2.4 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

19.3 Summary of potential impacts

19.3.1 **Table 19.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 19.1: *Stilton 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Holme Fen SSSI and NNR	N	N	N	N	Y

19.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Stilton 1, given the size of the allocation, location of the nearest SSSI and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Holme Fen SSSI and NNR through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

20 Stilton 2: Rear of 16 to 58 North Street

20.1 Overview

20.1.1 Rear of 16 to 58 North Street is a 3.18 ha site located in Stilton, in the north of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 55 homes.

20.1.2 The site is located on the eastern side of Stilton, approximately 20km to the north of Huntingdon. The site is comprises of grassland, split into three fields separated by trees. Street runs to the west of the site and the A1 runs to the east.

20.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

20.2.1 Proposed development at the Rear of 16 to 58 North Street site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Holme Fen NNR and SSSI

20.2.2 Holme Fen NNR and SSSI is located approximately 3.3km to the east of the site. It is 268 ha and comprised of lowland mixed deciduous woodland containing a mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed and ditch habitats. The SSSI NNR is comprised of two units, one of which is classified as 'Favourable', the other as 'Unfavourable-recovering'

20.2.3 The site is located within an IRZ associated with Holmes Fen NNR and SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

20.2.4 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

20.3 Summary of potential impacts

20.3.1 **Table 20.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 20.1: *Stilton 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Holme Fen SSSI NNR	N	N	N	N	Y

20.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Stilton 2, given location of the nearest SSSI and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Holme Fen SSSI NNR through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

21 Bury 1: Bury Industrial Estate, Old Station Road, Bury

21.1 Overview

21.1.1 Bury Industrial Estate is a 0.96 ha site located in Ramsey and Bury, in the north of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 30 homes.

21.1.2 The site is located in Bury, approximately 13.4 km to the northeast of Huntingdon. The site is comprised of buildings in the north and modified grassland in the south. Old Station Road sits on the western border, with a golf course on the eastern border.

21.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

21.2.1 Proposed development at the Bury Industrial Estate site has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Warboy's and Wistow Woods SSSI
- Warboys Claypit SSSI
- Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI

21.2.2 Warboy's and Wistow Woods SSSI is located approximately 2.5 km to the southeast of Bury Industrial estate. It is 43 ha and is comprised of ancient ash-field maple coppice woodland typical of lowland England. The site has two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Year Woodland, both classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

21.2.3 Warboys Claypit SSSI is located approximately 3.5km to the southeast of Bury Industrial Estate. It is a geological SSSI and is a key Oxfordian reference section showing Upper Oxford Clay and Ampthill Clay with ammonite zonation. It is an important Jurassic stratigraphic site for the East Midlands. One unit is classified as 'Favourable'.

21.2.4 Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI is located approximately 3.8km to the southeast of the site. This site is designated for its clay grassland with ridges and furrows. The SSSI NNR site contains one unit of lowland neutral grassland classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

21.2.5 Bury Industrial Estate is located within an IRZ associated with Warboy's and Wistow Wood SSSI, Warboys Claypit SSSI and Upwood Meadows SSSI NNR. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Designated Sites

21.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

21.3 Summary of potential impacts

21.3.1 **Table 21.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 21.1: *Bury 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation

Warboys and Wistow Woods SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Warboys Claypit SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Upwood Meadows SSSI NNR	N	N	N	N	Y

21.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Bury 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI, Warboys Claypit SSSI and Upwood Meadows SSSI NNR through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

22 Bury 2: Off Cheveril Lane, Bury

22.1 Overview

22.1.1 Off Cheveril Lane is a 6.4 ha site located in Ramsey and Bury, in the north of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for open space and land to safeguard from flooding, with a capacity of 6.4 ha.

22.1.2 This site is located to the south of Bury, approximately 12.8km to the northeast Huntingdon. It is comprised of grassland bounded by hedgerows. The High Lode River runs adjacent to the eastern border and residential houses are to the west of the site.

22.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

22.2.1 Proposed development at the Off Cheveril Lane site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Warboy's and Wistow Woods SSSI
- Warboys Claypit SSSI

22.2.2 Warboy's and Wistow Woods SSSI is located approximately 1.4 km to the southeast of Bury Industrial estate. It is 43 ha and is comprised of ancient ash-field maple coppice woodland typical of lowland England. The site has two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Year Woodland, both classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

22.2.3 Warboys Claypit SSSI is located approximately 2.3km to the southeast of Bury Industrial Estate. It is a geological SSSI and is a key Oxfordian reference section showing Upper Oxford Clay and Ampthill Clay with ammonite zonation. It is an important Jurassic stratigraphic site for the East Midlands. The one unit is classified as 'Favourable'.

22.2.4 The Off Cheveril Lane site is within a IRZ for Warboys and Wistow SSSI and Warboys Claypit SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

22.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

22.3 Summary of potential impacts

22.3.1 **Table 22.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 22.1: *Bury 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Warboys and Wistow Woods SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Warboys Claypit SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N

22.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Bury 2, given location of the nearest SSSI and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. However, due to the site bordering the High Lode River, it is necessary to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts on either Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI and Warboys Claypit SSSI due to their sensitivity to changes in water quantity. This allocation site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI and Warboys Claypit through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

23 Bury 3: RAF Upwood – Phase 3

23.1 Overview

23.1.1 RAF Upwood is a 17.69 ha site in Ramsey and Bury, in the north of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for Mixed-Use, with a residential capacity of about 170 homes and 11.5ha of green infrastructure.

23.1.2 The site adjoins the former RAF Upwood, approximately 12.8km to the northeast of Huntingdon. The site comprises of modified grassland, with a former glider field to the north.

23.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

23.2.1 Proposed development at the RAF Upwood site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Warboy's and Wistow Woods SSSI
- Warboys Claypit SSSI
- Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI

23.2.2 Warboy's and Wistow SSSI is located approximately 2.4 km to the southeast of Bury Industrial estate. It is 43 ha and is comprised of ancient ash-field maple coppice woodland typical of lowland England. The site has two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Year Woodland, both classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

23.2.3 Warboys Claypit SSSI is located approximately 3.3km to the southeast of Bury Industrial Estate. It is a geological SSSI and is a key Oxfordian reference section showing Upper Oxford Clay and Ampthill Clay with ammonite zonation. It is an important Jurassic stratigraphic site for the East Midlands. The one unit is classified as 'Favourable'.

23.2.4 Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR is located approximately 2km to the southeast of the site. This site is designated for its clay grassland with ridges and furrows. The SSSI NNR site contains one unit of lowland neutral grassland classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

23.2.5 The site is within a IRZ for Upwood Meadows SSSI, Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI and Warboys Claypit SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

23.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

23.3 Summary of potential impacts

23.3.1 **Table 23.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 23.1: *Bury 3 potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

Warboys Claypit SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR	N	N	N	Y	Y

23.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Bury 3, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI, Warboys Claypit SSSI and Upwood Meadows SSSI NNR. through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

24 Huntingdon 2: Amber Centre, 36 Mayfield Road, Huntingdon

24.1 Overview

24.1.1 The Amber Centre site in Huntingdon is a 0.35ha site proposed residential use with a capacity of about 12 homes.

24.1.2 The site is in within Huntingdon surrounded by residential areas. The site's current use is community uses but is currently vacant, and much of the site is already developed land. The B1514 and the River Great Ouse run 0.2km and 0.4km south of the site respectively.

24.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Site

24.2.1 Proposed development at the Amber Centre site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Portholme SSSI
- Great Stukeley railway Cutting SSSI
- Godmancester Eastside Common SSSI

24.2.2 Portholme SSSI is the closest designated site, located approximately 1.5km to the south of the allocation. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grasslands communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

24.2.3 Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is located approximately 1.7km to the north-west of the site. The site is an extensive railway cutting designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland; a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. It This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

24.2.4 Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI is located approximately 2.1 km to the south of the site. This 28ha SSSI comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

24.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Portholme SSSI and Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

24.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however the Godmanchester Nature Reserve, 0.9km to the southeast, does feature lowland fen priority habitat.

24.3 Summary of potential impacts

24.3.1 **Table 24.1**summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 24.1: *Huntingdon 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Portholme SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	N	N	N	N

24.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Huntingdon 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Portholme SSSI, Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI and Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

25 Huntingdon 1: Hinchingbrooke Hospital site, Hinchingbrooke Park Road, Huntingdon

25.1 Overview

25.1.1 The Hinchingbrooke Hospital site is a proposed 22 ha site in Huntingdon to comprise the redevelopment of the hospital, including necessary enabling works, ambulance station, medical/student accommodation, green ifrastrucutre, parking and educational facilities. There is no set quantum for development to retain flexibility around its final use.

25.1.2 The allocation site is centrally located within the district being in Huntingdon. The site's current use is as the Hinchingbrooke Hospital, and much of the site is already developed land with some small areas of modified grassland open space. The A1307 runs north of the site and the A141 runs to its west. The Alconbury and Brampton Brooks also flow 0.4km south of the site.

25.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

25.2.1 Proposed development at the Hinchingbrooke Hospital site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Portholme SSSI
- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

25.2.2 There are a number of SSSIs within 5km of the allocation site, the closest being Portholme SSSI, located approximately 0.7km to the southeast of the allocation. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grasslands communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

25.2.3 Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is approximately 1.7km of the site to the north. The site is an extensive railway cutting designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland; a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. It This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

25.2.4 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is also around 1.7km, to the east of the allocation site, an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook, with a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

25.2.5 Ouse Washes SSSI is 16.2km east of the site and has hydrological links to the site by the River Great Ouse. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

25.2.6 The allocation does fall within an IRZ for these SSSIs. Information on the quantum of housing and commercial development for the Hinchingbrooke Hospital site is not set, and therefore, it has been assumed that development at this allocation would trigger the requirement to consult with Natural England. Once further information on the nature and scale of development at this site is understood this assessment can be revisited.

Designated Sites

25.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

25.3 Summary of potential impacts

25.3.1 **Table 25.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 25.1: *Huntingdon 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N

25.3.2 With no set quantum for the development, a precautionary approach has been taken which assumes medium ecological constraints at this site, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Portholme SSSI, Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI from any development at this site to ensure compliance with national legislation and policy. This must be demonstrated through an assessment, careful consideration of mitigation measures and consultation and approval from Natural England. Should the nature of development lead to any impacts on a SSSI, this would be subject to appropriate mitigation to ensure no adverse effects as set out in Section 78.5.

26 Ramsey 2: North of Hollow Lane

26.1 Overview

26.1.1 The North of Hollow Lane site is a 1.7ha site proposed for residential use in Ramsey with a capacity of about 20 homes.

26.1.2 The allocation site is in the northeast of Huntingdonshire on the eastern edge of Ramsey on an area of land currently consisting of field, with a hedgerow on its eastern edge. Hollow Lane borders the site to the south, and Bury Brook runs approximately 0.7km to the east.

26.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

26.2.1 Proposed development at the North of Hollow Lane site has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Warboy's and Wistow Woods SSSI
- Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI

26.2.2 Warboy's and Wistow SSSI is located approximately 2.5 km to the south of the allocation site and is comprised of ancient ash-field maple coppice woodland typical of lowland England. The site has two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Year Woodland, both classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

26.2.3 Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI is located approximately 4.8km to the southwest of the site. This site is designated for its clay grassland with ridges and furrows. The SSSI NNR site contains one unit of lowland neutral grassland classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

26.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Warboy's and Wistow SSSI and Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

26.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

26.3 Summary of potential impacts

26.3.1 **Table 26.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 26.1: *Ramsey 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR	N	N	N	N	Y

26.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Ramsey 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI and Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

27 Ramsey 3: East of Wood Lane

27.1 Overview

27.1.1 The East of Wood Lane site is a 8.3ha site proposed for a mix of uses including about 14 homes and 7.7ha of community open space uses.

27.1.2 The allocation site is on the northeast of Ramsey and its current use is as an agricultural field. Wood Lane runs along the site's western border, with residential areas to the south and further agricultural fields to the east.

27.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

27.2.1 Proposed development at the East of Wood Lane site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Warboy's and Wistow Wood SSSI
- Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI
- Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI

27.2.2 Warboy's and Wistow SSSI is located approximately 3.1km to the south of the allocation site and is comprised of ancient ash-field maple coppice woodland typical of lowland England. The site has two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Year Woodland, both classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

27.2.3 Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI is located approximately 4.9km to the southwest of the site. This site is designated for its clay grassland with ridges and furrows. The SSSI NNR site contains one unit of lowland neutral grassland classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

27.2.4 Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI is 5.7km west of the allocation and is designated for its mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed, and ditch habitats and communities of rare fen and aquatic flora. The site is in 'Unfavourable' condition across multiple habitat types: ditches, floodplain fen (lowland), lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, and vascular plant assemblages.

27.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Warboy's and Wistow SSSI, Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR, and Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

27.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however lowland fen priority habitat is found 0.8km to the northeast.

27.3 Summary of potential impacts

27.3.1 **Table 27.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 27.1: *Ramsey 3 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR	N	N	N	N	Y
Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR	N	N	N	N	Y

27.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Ramsey 3, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI, Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR, and Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

28 St Neots 2: South West of Potton Road

28.1 Overview

28.1.1 The South West of Potton Road site is a 3.9ha site proposed for residential uses in St Neots with a capacity of about 80 homes.

28.1.2 The allocation site is in the southwest of Huntingdonshire about 2km out from the centre of St Neots. The site sits between the A428, B1046, and the East Coast Mainline, and currently consists of an agricultural field surrounded by hedgerows and areas of woodland or scrub. Abbotsley and Hen Brooks run 0.5km north of the site.

28.2 Ecological Baseline

28.2.1 Proposed development at the South West of Potton Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- St Neot's Common SSSI

28.2.2 The only nearby designated site, St Neots Common SSSI, is 2.3km northwest and is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr, with direr areas that show a calcareous influence. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

28.2.3 The site is within an IRZ for St Neot's Common. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

28.2.4 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

28.3 Summary of potential impacts

28.3.1 **Table 28.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 28.1: *St Neots 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
St Neot's Common SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

28.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at St Neots 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon St Neot's Common, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

29 St Neots 1: East of Loves Farm (Tithe Farm), St Neots

29.1 Overview

29.1.1 The East of Loves Farm site is a 99.5ha site proposed for a mix of uses on the edge of St Neots with a residential capacity of about 1,100 homes, a commercial capacity of 3.7ha, a neighbourhood centre, 40 ha of green infrastructure and associated infrastrucutre.

29.1.2 The site is in the south of Huntingdonshire, east of St Neots. The site currently comprises multiple agricultural fields, enclosed and divided by hedgerows between Priory Hill Road and Cambridge Road. Abbotsley and Hen Brooks run 1.7km to the south of the allocation site.

29.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

29.2.1 Proposed development at the East of Loves Farm site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI
- Little Paxton Wood SSSI
- St Neot's Common SSSI

29.2.2 There are a number of designated sites nearby, the closest of which is Little Paxton Pits SSSI 1.6km to the northwest. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

29.2.3 St Neots Common SSSI, is 2.6km west and is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr, with direr areas that show a calcareous influence. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

29.2.4 Little Paxton Wood SSSI is a wet ash-field maple coppice woodland on calcareous boulder clay, is 4.2km from the site and features a lowland mixed deciduous woodland unit which is in 'Favourable' condition.

29.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for St Neot's Common SSSI and Little Paxton Pits SSSI. This IRZ may require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site, as there is potential for it to meet the criteria of "*Rural Residential: Any residential development of 100 or more units outside existing settlements/urban areas*".

Irreplaceable Habitat

29.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

29.3 Summary of potential impacts

29.3.1 **Table 29.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 29.1**: St Neots 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
St Neot's Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Little Paxton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

29.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at St Neots 1. It is necessary to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts on Little Paxton Pits SSSI, St Neot's Common SSSI and Little Paxton Wood SSSI to ensure compliance with national legislation and policy. The scale of the proposed site offers opportunities for strategic scale new green infrastructure which can help to mitigate impact on nearby nature sites. This must be demonstrated through an assessment, careful consideration of mitigation measures and consultation and approval from Natural England. Should the nature of development lead to any impacts on a SSSI, this would be subject to appropriate mitigation to ensure no adverse effects as set out in Section 78.5.

30 Ramsey 1: RAF Upwood – Phase 4

30.1 Overview

30.1.1 The RAF Upwood – Phase 4 site is a 14ha site proposed Mixed-Use with a commercial capacity of 4.8ha and 9.2ha for green infrastructure.

30.1.2 The site is in the northeast of Huntingdonshire, south of Bury and Ramsey, and consists predominantly of grassland or agricultural fields on the former RAF Upwood Site. The southern end borders Ramsey Road, with High Lode River running 0.48km to the south.

30.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

30.2.1 Proposed development at the RAF Upwood site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI
- Warboy's and Wistow Woods SSSI
- Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI

30.2.2 The closest designated site is Upwood Meadows NNR and SSSI is located approximately 1.6km to the southwest of the site. This site is designated for its clay grassland with ridges and furrows. The SSSI NNR site contains one unit of lowland neutral grassland classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

30.2.3 Warboy's and Wistow SSSI is 2.6km to the southeast of the allocation site and is comprised of ancient ash-field maple coppice woodland typical of lowland England. The site has two units of Broadleaved, Mixed and Year Woodland, both classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

30.2.4 Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSS is 3.6km west of the allocation and is designated for its mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed, and ditch habitats and communities of rare fen and aquatic flora. The site is in 'Unfavourable' condition across multiple habitat types: ditches, floodplain fen (lowland), lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, and vascular plant assemblages.

30.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Warboy's and Wistow SSSI, Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR, and Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

30.2.6 An area of ancient woodland is located 0.2km to the south, however there are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

30.3 Summary of potential impacts

30.3.1 **Table 30.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 30.1**: Ramsey 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation

Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR	N	N	N	N	Y
Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR	N	N	N	N	Y

30.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Ramsey 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI, Upwood Meadows SSSI and NNR, and Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

31 St Ives 1: North of Houghton Road

31.1 Overview

31.1.1 The North of Houghton Road site is a 23.9ha site proposed for a Mixed-Use development located on the edge of St Ives with a residential capacity of about 350 homes, 12ha of open space and land for a new junction on the A1123/Sawtry Way junction.

31.1.2 The site is in the east of Huntingdonshire between Wyton and St Ives, and currently consists of agricultural fields. The southern end borders Houghton Road, with The River Great Ouse running 0.7km to the south.

31.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

31.2.1 Proposed development at the North of Houghton Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Houghton Meadows SSSI

31.2.2 The allocation site is only 0.6km north of Houghton Meadows SSSI and NNR, designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

31.2.3 Godmanchester Eastside Common is approximately 2.3km to the southwest of the site and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

31.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Houghton Meadows SSSI. This IRZ requires Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site, as it meets the criteria of "*Rural Residential: Any residential development of 100 or more units outside existing settlements/urban areas*".

Irreplaceable Habitat

31.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however lowland fen priority habitat is found 2.2km to the southeast.

31.3 Summary of potential impacts

31.3.1 **Table 31.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 31.1**: St Ives 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Houghton Meadows SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

31.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at St Ives 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Houghton Meadows SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

32 North Huntingdon 2: North of A141, between Huntingdon Racecourse and A1307

32.1 Overview

32.1.1 The Land North of A141, between Huntingdon Racecourse and A1307 site is a 103.5ha site proposed for commercial uses. Due to its location the site is considered appropriate for B2 light industrial and B8 storage and distribution uses, with two thirds of the site expected to consist of B8 uses. The site is considered capable of delivering about 240,000 sqm of employment floorspace.

32.1.2 The site is in the centre of Huntingdonshire, to the west of Huntingdon and east of Brampton, and currently consists of agricultural fields surrounded by hedgerows, with a small area o developed land in the northeast. The A1307 runs north of the site and the site borders the A141 to the east of the site. The Alconbury Brook also borders the site at its southern boundary.

32.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

32.2.1 Proposed development at the North of A141, between Huntingdon Racecourse and A1307 site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI
- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Portholme SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

32.2.2 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is close to the allocation site, 0.3km to the southwest, and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook, with a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

32.2.3 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 1.6km to the southwest of the site. It is a small 1.0 ha species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

32.2.4 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is also around 1.6km from the allocation site, to the northeast. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

32.2.5 Portholme SSSI is approximately 1.8km east of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

32.2.6 Ouse Washes SSSI is 17km southeast of the site and has hydrological links to the site through the River Great Ouse. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

32.2.7 The site is within an IRZ for Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, Portholme SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI and Brampton Meadow SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

32.2.8 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

32.3 Summary of potential impacts

32.3.1 **Table 32.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 32.1**: North Huntingdon 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N

32.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at North Huntingdon 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing potential for impacts on some sites, such as hydrological impact pathways on Brampton Racecourse SSSI, Portholme SSSI and Ouse Washes from potential change to Alconbury Brook, alongside recreational impact pathways as identified across man other allocations. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Brampton Racecourse SSSI, Brampton Meadow SSSI, Portholme SSSI and Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI from any development at this site to ensure compliance with national legislation and policy. This must be demonstrated through an assessment, careful consideration of mitigation measures and consultation and approval from Natural England. Should the nature of development lead to any impacts on a SSSI, this would be subject to appropriate mitigation to ensure no adverse effects as set out in Section 78.5.

33 North Huntingdon 1: Huntingdon Racecourse

33.1 Overview

33.1.1 The Huntingdon Racecourse site is a 71ha site proposed commercial use including continued use of the site for the racecourse, equine support facilities and Huntingdon and District Rugby Football Club, and complementary conference and events facilities, outdoor recreational and leisure facilities.

33.1.2 The site is in the centre of Huntingdonshire, to the west of Huntingdon and north of Brampton, and currently consists of the racecourse itself, with some agricultural fields to the north and west and a large pond in the southwest of the site. The A1307 is north of the site and A141 runs to the south and east of the site. The Alconbury Brook also follows the southern border of the site, and flows through an area of the site in the southeast.

33.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

33.2.1 Proposed development at the Huntingdon Racecourse site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI
- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Portholme SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

33.2.2 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is entirely within the allocation site. This designated site is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook, with a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

33.2.3 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 0.6km to the west of the site. It is a small 1.0 ha species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

33.2.4 Portholme SSSI is approximately 2.3km southeast of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

33.2.5 Ouse Washes SSSI is 18.03km east of the site and has hydrological links to the site through the River Great Ouse. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

33.2.6 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is around 2.8km from the allocation site, to the northeast. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

33.2.7 The site is within an IRZ for Portholme SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI and Brampton Meadow SSSI, alongside entirely overlapping the Brampton Racecourse SSSI itself. This indicates that at this location, there is potential for all proposed developments to have a harmful effect on terrestrial SSSIs, and therefore requires Natural England to be consulted for advice on the nature of the potential impacts and how these might be avoided or mitigated.

Irreplaceable Habitat

33.2.8 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

33.3 Summary of potential impacts

33.3.1 **Table 33.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 33.1**: North Huntingdon 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N

33.3.2 There are high ecological constraints at North Huntingdon 1. Given the presence of Brampton racecourse SSSI within the site boundary, the location of other SSSIs in close proximity to the site, and hydrological impact pathways to other sites such as Portholme SSSI, it is concluded that there are considerable constraints to the development of the Brampton Racecourse site. It is therefore recommended that alternative sites be identified which may be more ecologically suitable for development of this scale.

33.3.3 Where alternatives site locations are not feasible, it is recommended that sensitive design and site layout avoid and ensure the protection of ecologically sensitive features associated with Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, Portholme SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI, Brampton Meadow SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI. This should be undertaken in consultation with Natural England. It is necessary to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts from any development at the allocation site to ensure compliance with national legislation and policy. This must be demonstrated through an assessment, careful consideration of mitigation measures and consultation and approval from Natural England. Should the nature of development lead to any impacts on a SSSI, this would be subject to appropriate mitigation to ensure no adverse effects as set out in Section 78.5.

34 North Huntingdon 4: Wyton Airfield

34.1 Overview

34.1.1 The Wyton Airfield site is a 253.9ha site proposed for a new community north of Wyton with a residential capacity of about 4,000, commercial capacity of 15ha, transport infrastructure, 6.4ha for a local centre, educational and community facilities and green infrastructure.

34.1.2 The site is in the east of Huntingdonshire, around 4km east of Huntingdon, and was formerly used as an airfield, with developed land and infrastructure interspersing large areas of grassland. In the northeast, there is area featuring parcels of woodland and scrub, alongside further areas of grassland and eclosed by hedgerows. The A1307 is north of the site and A141 runs to the south and east of the site. The Marley Gap Brook begins at the site, with approximately 0.35km of the brook within the site boundary, and flows eastwards out of the site. The A141 runs along the site's northwestern border, and RAF Wyton is adjacent to the site in the south.

34.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

34.2.1 Proposed development at the Wyton Airfield site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Houghton Meadows NNR and SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Portholme SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

34.2.2 The allocation site is 2.1km north of Houghton Meadows NNR and SSSI, designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

34.2.3 Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI is approximately 2.7km to the southwest of the site and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

34.2.4 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is around 3.9km from the allocation site, to the west. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

34.2.5 Portholme SSSI is approximately 4.9km southwest of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

34.2.6 Ouse Washes SSSI is 8.43km east of the site and has hydrological links to the site through the River Great Ouse. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

34.2.7 The site is within an IRZ for Houghton Meadows SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

34.2.8 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however lowland fen priority habitat is found 3.7km to the southeast and is hydrologically connected to the allocation via Marley Gap Brook.

34.3 Summary of potential impacts

34.3.1 **Table 34.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 34.1**: North Huntingdon 4 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Houghton Meadows SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N

34.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at North Huntingdon 4, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. The scale of the proposed site offers opportunities for strategic scale new green infrastructure which can help to mitigate impact on nearby nature sites. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Houghton Meadows SSSI, Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI, Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, and Portholme SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

35 North Huntingdon 3: Lodge Farm, North of A141

35.1 Overview

35.1.1 The Lodge Farm site is a 317.7ha site proposed for a new community development with a residential capacity of about 4,900 homes, commercial capacity of 8ha, 6.5ha for a local centre, educational dn community facilities, transport infrastructure and green infrastructure.

35.1.2 The site is adjacent to the north eastern edge of Huntingdon, and currently consists of multiple agricultural fields, separated by hedgerows. The B1090 follows its northeastern border and the A141 borders the site on its southeastern and southwestern boundaries. The River Great Ouse flows 2.3km to its south.

35.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

35.2.1 Proposed development at the Lodge Farm, North of A141 site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Houghton Meadows SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI

35.2.2 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is around 0.9km from the allocation site, to the west. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

35.2.3 Houghton Meadows SSSI is 3.3km southeast of, designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

35.2.4 Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI is approximately 1.6km to the southwest of the site and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

35.2.5 Portholme SSSI is approximately 2.6km southwest of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

35.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Great Stukeley Railways Cutting SSSI, Portholme SSSI, and Godmanchester Eastside Common. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

35.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however lowland fen priority habitat is found 0.6km to the south.

35.3 Summary of potential impacts

35.3.1 **Table 35.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 35.1**: North Huntingdon 3 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Houghton Meadows SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

35.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at North Huntingdon 3, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. The scale of the proposed site offers opportunities for strategic scale new green infrastructure which can help to mitigate impact on nearby nature sites.This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Houghton Meadows SSSI, Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI, Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, and Portholme SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

36 Brampton 2: Land off Huntingdon Road

36.1 Overview

36.1.1 The Land off Huntingdon Road site is a 5.97ha site proposed for open space and car parking facilities for Hinchingbrooke County Park.

36.1.2 The site is located to the east of Brampton and west of Huntingdon, and currently consists of agricultural fields enclosed by hedgerows. The B1514 follows its southern border of the site, and the Alconbury Brook flows 0.3km to the north of the site. The site's northern border is also around 15m from a large waterbody which sits between the allocation site and the brook.

36.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

36.2.1 Proposed development at the Land off Huntingdon Road site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Portholme SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI
- Brampton Wood SSSI
- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

36.2.2 Portholme SSSI is the closest designated site to the allocation, approximately 0.9km east of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

36.2.3 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 1.4km to the northwest and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

36.2.4 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 2.6km to the northwest of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

36.2.5 Brampton Wood SSSI is situated approximately 3.2km to the west of the site. The SSSI is designated for its wet ash-field maple woodland on chalky boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the sites overall ecological value. It comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

36.2.6 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is around 2.9km from the allocation site, to the northeast. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

36.2.7 Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI is approximately 4.4km to the southwest of the site and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

36.2.8 Ouse Washes SSSI is 17.12km east of the site and has hydrological links to the site through the River Great Ouse. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

36.2.9 The site is within an IRZ for Great Stukeley Railways Cutting SSSI, Portholme SSSI, and Godmanchester Eastside Common. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

36.2.10 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however lowland fen priority habitat is found 0.8km to the southeast.

36.3 Summary of potential impacts

36.3.1 **Table 36.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 36.1**: site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Brampton Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N

36.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Brampton 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Houghton Meadows SSSI, Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI, Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, Portholme SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

37 Brampton 1: Wallis Land, Thrapston Road

37.1 Overview

37.1.1 The Wallis Land site is a 0.7ha site proposed for a mix of uses comprising of about 10 homes and 0.4ha of open space.

37.1.2 The site is located on the northern edge of Brampton, and currently consists of open grassland. The B1514 follows its southern border of the site, and the A141 runs just north of the site. The Alconbury and Brampton Brooks also flow 0.3km to the north.

37.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

37.2.1 Proposed development at the Wallis Land site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Portholme SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI
- Brampton Wood SSSI
- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI

37.2.2 Portholme SSSI is approximately 2.6km east of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

37.2.3 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 0.5km to the north and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

37.2.4 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 1.2km to the northwest of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

37.2.5 Brampton Wood SSSI is situated approximately 2km to the southwest of the site. The SSSI is designated for its wet ash-field maple woodland on chalky boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the sites overall ecological value. It comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

37.2.6 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is around 3.7km from the allocation site, to the northeast. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

37.2.7 The site is within an IRZ for Brampton racecourse SSSI, and Portholme SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

37.2.8 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however lowland fen priority habitat is found 2.5km to the southeast.

37.3 Summary of potential impacts

37.3.1 **Table 37.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 37.1**: Brampton 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Portholme SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Brampton Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	N	N	N	N

37.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Brampton 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

38 Fenstanton 1: Galley Hill, Fenstanton

38.1 Overview

38.1.1 The Galley Hill site is a 61ha site proposed for a mix of uses including a commercial capacity of 25ha and 36ha of open space to safeguard against flooding.

38.1.2 The site is in the east of Huntingdonshire, between Fenstanton and Hemingford Grey and south of St Ives, and currently consists of agricultural fields with some areas of scrub and hedgerows in the southwest. The site borders two A-roads, the A1307 to the south and the A1096 to the west. The River Ouse runs through the site in its northern half.

38.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

38.2.1 Proposed development at the Galley Hill site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI
- Houghton Meadow SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Portholme SSSI

38.2.2 Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI is located approximately 1.1km to the west of the site. This 0.6 ha site is a species-rich meadow of the calcareous clay pasture type, a type restricted nationally to the south of the country. The SSSI comprises of one unit of lowland neutral grassland in ‘Unfavourable-recovering’ condition.

38.2.3 Houghton Meadows SSSI is situated approximately 2.1km to the northwest. This site is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a ‘Favourable‘ Condition.

38.2.4 Godmanchester Eastside Common is located approximately 3.7km to the northwest of the site. This SSSI is 28 ha, and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a ‘Favourable’ condition and the other classified as ‘Unfavourable-recovering’.

38.2.5 Portholme SSSI is approximately 6.2km west of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as ‘Unfavourable-recovering’.

38.2.6 The site is within an IRZs for Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI and Houghton Meadow SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

38.2.7 Lowland fen is located less than 20m from the site to the east. The River Ouse also acts as a hydrological link from the site to another large area of lowland fen 1km to the northeast of the site.

38.2.8 Lowland fen vegetation develops in shallow valleys and lake basins where poor drainage, combined with constant water flow or periodic flooding, leads to waterlogging. These habitats support a diverse range of plant and animal communities, including insects such as Dragonflies (*Anisoptera* spp.)[35]. Typical wetland species found in fens include Reeds (*Phragmites australis* spp.), Rushes (*Juncaceae* spp.), and Sedges (*Cyperaceae* spp.). Fen habitat across the UK has been lost due to the decline of traditional management practices and drainage activities. The quality of remaining fen areas is often further degraded by factors such as water extraction, flood prevention measures, and nutrient pollution from agricultural run-off[36]. Development on this site is likely to result in adverse impacts on the lowland fen habitat through a change in water quality or water quantity.

38.3 Summary of potential impacts

38.3.1 **Table 38.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 38.1**: Fenstanton 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Houghton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N

38.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at Fenstanton 1. The site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI, Houghton Meadow SSSI or Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures. The location of Lowland Fen Priority Habitat within 50m to the eastern site boundary requires careful mitigation measures to ensure the habitat is not adversely impacted by hydrological and recreation effects as set out in Section 78.5, and similarly adverse impacts upon the Lowland Fen habitat to the northeast through hydrological links via the River Ouse must be appropriately mitigated.

[35] JNCC (2008) UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions: Lowland Fens. Available at: https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/6fe22f18-fff7-4974-b333-03b0ad819b88/UKBAP-BAPHabitats-27-LowlandFens.pdf [Accessed 06/09/25].

36 The Wildlife Trust. Lowland Fen. Available at: https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/habitats/wetlands/lowland-fen [Accessed: 03/09/25].

39 Godmanchester 1: Former RGE Engineering site and HDC Car Park, The Avenue

39.1 Overview

39.1.1 The Former RGE Engineering site and HDC Car Park site is a 2.46ha site proposed for residential development consisting of about 85 homes.

39.1.2 The site is located on the edge of Huntingdon within Godmanchester and currently consists of developed land and infrastructure. The site borders The Avenue to the west, with the A3107 running south.

39.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

39.2.1 Proposed development at the South of Godmanchester site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Houghton Meadows SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Portholme SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Great Stukeley

39.2.2 Portholme SSSI is approximately 0.3km west of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

39.2.3 Houghton Meadows SSSI is situated approximately 4.6km to the northwest. This site is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

39.2.4 Godmanchester Eastside Common is located approximately 2km to the north of the site. This SSSI is 28 ha, and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

39.2.5 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 2.6km to the north and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

39.2.6 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is around 2.2km from the allocation site, to the northeast. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

Irreplaceable Habitat

39.2.7 Lowland fen is located less than 30m from the site to the southeast. There is also further hydrological links between the proposed site and more Lowland Fen Habitat to the east.

39.2.8 Lowland fen vegetation develops in shallow valleys and lake basins where poor drainage, combined with constant water flow or periodic flooding, leads to waterlogging. These habitats support a diverse range of plant and animal communities, including insects such as Dragonflies (*Anisoptera* spp.)[37]. Typical wetland species found in fens include Reeds (*Phragmites australis* spp.), Rushes (*Juncaceae* spp.), and Sedges (*Cyperaceae* spp.). Fen habitat across the UK has been lost due to the decline of traditional management practices and drainage activities. The quality of remaining fen areas is often further degraded by factors such as water extraction, flood prevention measures, and nutrient pollution from agricultural run-off[38]. Development on this site is likely to result in adverse impacts on the lowland fen habitat through a change in water quality or water quantity.

39.3 Summary of potential impacts

39.3.1 **Table 39.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 39.1**: Godmanchester 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Houghton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N

39.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at Godmanchester 1. The site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Portholme SSSI in particular, but also Brampton Racecourse SSSI, Great Stukeley Railway Cutting, Houghton Meadow and Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures to ensure they are not adversely impacted by hydrological, urbanisation and recreation effects as set out in Section 78.5.

[37] JNCC (2008) UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions: Lowland Fens. Available at: https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/6fe22f18-fff7-4974-b333-03b0ad819b88/UKBAP-BAPHabitats-27-LowlandFens.pdf [Accessed 06/09/25].

38 The Wildlife Trust. Lowland Fen. Available at: https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/habitats/wetlands/lowland-fen [Accessed: 03/09/25].

40 Godmanchester 2: South of Godmanchester, off the A1198

40.1 Overview

40.1.1 The South of Godmanchester off the A1198 is a 39.6ha site proposed for a mix of uses including about 520 homes, at least 5.1ha of land for BNG, 0.8ha for a cemetery extension, green infrastructure and transport infrastructure.

40.1.2 The site is in the east of Huntingdonshire, to the south of Godmanchester, and currently consists of agricultural fields with some hedgerows demarcating boundaries between fields. The site borders the A1198 to the east and Silver Street to the west.

40.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

40.2.1 Proposed development at the South of Godmanchester site and HDC Car Park site has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI
- Houghton Meadows SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Portholme SSSI
- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI

40.2.2 Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI is located approximately 3.3km to the east of the site. This 0.6 ha site is a species-rich meadow of the calcareous clay pasture type, a type restricted nationally to the south of the country. The SSSI comprises of one unit of lowland neutral grassland in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

40.2.3 Houghton Meadows SSSI is situated approximately 4.1km to the northwest. This site is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

40.2.4 Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI is located approximately 2km to the north of the site. This SSSI is 28 ha, and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

40.2.5 Portholme SSSI is approximately 0.9km east of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

40.2.6 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 4.5km to the north and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

40.2.7 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is around 4.1km from the allocation site, to the northeast. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

40.2.8 The site is within an IRZ for Portholme SSSI. This IRZ notes 100 residential units or more require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

40.2.9 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

40.3 Summary of potential impacts

40.3.1 **Table 40.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 40.1**: Godmanchester 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Houghton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N

40.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Godmanchester 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI, Houghton Meadow SSSI, Portholme SSSI, Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI, Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI and Brampton Racecourse SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

41 Godmanchester 3: Former Motorway Compound Site, North of A1198 roundabout

41.1 Overview

41.1.1 The Former Motorway Compound Site is a 5.2ha site proposed for commercial uses. The site would be suitable for a range of employment uses with buildings comprising about 15,000 sqm of floorspace

41.1.2 The site is in the east of Huntingdonshire, southeast of Godmanchester, and currently consists of land formerly used as a construction compound for the A14 and is mainly covered in hardstanding although all buildings have now been cleared. The A14 runs to the south of the site, the A1196 runs along its western border and the A1307 borders the site to the north.

41.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

41.2.1 Proposed development at the Former Motorway Compound Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI
- Houghton Meadows SSSI
- Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI
- Portholme SSSI

41.2.2 Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI is located approximately 3 km to the east of the site. This 0.6 ha site is a species-rich meadow of the calcareous clay pasture type, a type restricted nationally to the south of the country. The SSSI comprises of one unit of lowland neutral grassland in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

41.2.3 Houghton Meadows SSSI is situated approximately 4.6km to the northwest. This site is designated for its ridge-and-furrow meadows holding neutral grassland communities, a unit currently in a 'Favourable' Condition.

41.2.4 Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI is located approximately 3km to the north of the site. This SSSI is 28 ha, and comprises of two areas of neutral grassland separated by a dismantled railway line. The main grassland types are calcareous loam and calcareous clay pasture types, which are both of restricted extent and distribution throughout the British Iles and the East Midlands. This SSSI sites comprises of two units of Lowland neutral grassland, one in a 'Favourable' condition and the other classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

41.2.5 Portholme SSSI is approximately 3.2km east of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

41.2.6 The site is within an IRZ, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

41.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

41.3 Summary of potential impacts

41.3.1 **Table 41.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 41.1**: Godmanchester 3 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Houghton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N

41.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Godmanchester 3, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Hemingford Grey Meadow SSSI, Houghton Meadow SSSI, Portholme SSSI, Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

42 Kimbolton 1: Brittens Farm, Station Road

42.1 Overview

42.1.1 The Brittens Farm Site is a 1.4ha site proposed for residential development in Kimbolton with a capacity of about 25 homes and 0,5ha of open space to safeguard against flooding.

42.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, in the northwest of Kimbolton, and currently consists agricultural fields enclosed by hedgerows and lines of trees. The B660 borders the north of the site, and the River Kym runs along the southwestern corner.

42.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

42.2.1 Proposed development at the Former Motorway Compound Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Swineshead Wood SSSI
- Grafham Water SSSI
- Little Catworth Meadow SSSI
- Perry Woods SSSI

42.2.2 Perry Woods SSSI is located approximately 3.8km to the east of the site. This 66 ha site is an ash-maple ancient woodland on Oxford and Boulder Clays, a habitat type now scarce in country and lowland England. The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

42.2.3 Grafham Water SSSI is located 3.3km from the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

42.2.4 Little Catworth Meadow SSSI lies 4.1km to the north of the allocation and is a herb-rich grassland of a calcareous loam type which is scarce in Britain, and is surrounded by mature hedgerows. This SSSI features one unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Unfavourable – recovering' condition.

42.2.5 Swineshead Wood SSSI lies 3.2km to the west and demonstrates the structural and biological diversity associated with ancient, semi-natural woodland, increasingly scarce both within Bedfordshire and nationally, and is an example of ash/maple woodland that is characteristic of heavy Oxford and Boulder Clay. The SSSI features two units of Lowland mixed deciduous woodland, both in 'favourable' condition.

42.2.6 The site is within an IRZ, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

42.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however numerous instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

42.3 Summary of potential impacts

42.3.1 **Table 42.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 42.1**: Kimbolton 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Swineshead Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Little Catworth Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Perry Woods SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

42.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Kimbolton 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Grafham water SSSI, Little Catworth Meadow SSSI, Perry Woods SSSI and Swineshead Wood SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

43 Kimbolton 2: South East of Bicton Industrial Estate

43.1 Overview

43.1.1 The South East of Bicton Industrial Estate Site is a 4.8ha site proposed for commercial uses. It can form an extension to the Bicton Industrial Park/ Harvard Industrial Estate and is considered capable of delivering about 14,000sqm of employment floorspace.

43.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, in the northwest of Kimbolton, and currently consists agricultural fields and extends from a pre-existing industrial estate connected to Stow Road. The River Kym flows 1.3km to the south of the allocation site.

43.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

43.2.1 Proposed development at the South East of Bicton Industrial Estate Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Swineshead Wood SSSI
- Grafham Water SSSI
- Little Catworth Meadow SSSI
- Perry Woods SSSI

43.2.2 Perry Woods SSSI is located approximately 3.8km to the east of the site. This 66 ha site is an ash-maple ancient woodland on Oxford and Boulder Clays, a habitat type now scarce in country and lowland England. The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

43.2.3 Grafham Water SSSI is located 3.3km from the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

43.2.4 Little Catworth Meadow SSSI lies 4.1km to the north of the allocation and is a herb-rich grassland of a calcareous loam type which is scarce in Britain, and is surrounded by mature hedgerows. This SSSI features one unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Unfavourable – recovering' condition.

43.2.5 Swineshead Wood SSSI lies 3.2km to the west and demonstrates the structural and biological diversity associated with ancient, semi-natural woodland, increasingly scarce both within Bedfordshire and nationally, and is an example of ash/maple woodland that is characteristic of heavy Oxford and Boulder Clay. The SSSI features two units of Lowland mixed deciduous woodland, both in 'favourable' condition.

43.2.6 The site is within an IRZ, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

43.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however numerous instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

43.3 Summary of potential impacts

43.3.1 **Table 43.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 43.1**: Kimbolton 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Swineshead Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Little Catworth Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Perry Woods SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N

43.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Kimbolton 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Grafham water SSSI, Little Catworth Meadow SSSI, Perry Woods SSSI and Swineshead Wood SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

44 Little Paxton 1: North of St James Road

44.1 Overview

44.1.1 The North of St James Road site is a 1.3ha site proposed for residential uses in Little Paxton with a capacity of about 35 homes.

44.1.2 The site is in the south of Huntingdonshire, on the northern edge of Little Paxton, and currently consists of open grassland surrounded by small areas of woodland. Residential areas lie to the south and Weedy Lake is to the northeast.

44.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

44.2.1 Proposed development at the North of St James Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI
- St Neots Common SSSI
- Little Paxton Wood SSSI
- Grafham Water SSSI

44.2.2 There are a number of designated sites nearby, the closest of which is Little Paxton Pits SSSI, only 34m north. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

44.2.3 St Neots Common SSSI, is 1.4km west and is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr, with direr areas that show a calcareous influence. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

44.2.4 Little Paxton Wood SSSI is a wet ash-field maple coppice woodland on calcareous boulder clay, is 1.4km from the site and features a lowland mixed deciduous woodland unit which is in 'Favourable' condition.

44.2.5 Grafham Water SSSI is located 3.8km from the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

44.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Little Paxton Pits SSSI. This indicates that there is potential for the proposed development to have a harmful effect on terrestrial SSSIs, and so Natural England should be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

44.2.7 There are records of Lowland Fen Priority Habitat adjacent to the site to the east, directly bordering the site.

44.2.8 Lowland fen vegetation develops in shallow valleys and lake basins where poor drainage, combined with constant water flow or periodic flooding, leads to waterlogging. These habitats support a diverse range of plant and animal communities, including insects such as Dragonflies (*Anisoptera* spp.)[39]. Typical wetland species found in fens include Reeds (*Phragmites australis* spp.), Rushes (*Juncaceae* spp.), and Sedges (*Cyperaceae* spp.). Fen habitat across the UK has been lost due to the decline of traditional management practices and drainage activities. The quality of remaining fen areas is often further degraded by factors such as water extraction, flood prevention measures, and nutrient pollution from agricultural run-off[40]. Development on this site is likely to result in adverse impacts on the lowland fen habitat through a change in water quality or water quantity.

44.3 Summary of potential impacts

44.3.1 **Table 44.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 44.1**: Little Paxton1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
St Neots Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Little Paxton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

44.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at Little Paxton 1. The site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI in particular, but also St Neots Common SSSI, Little Paxton Wood SSSI, and Grafham Water SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures to ensure they are not adversely impacted by hydrological, urbanisation and recreation effects, as set out in Section 78.5. Similarly, the location of Lowland Fen Priority Habitat within 50m to the eastern site boundary requires careful mitigation measures to ensure the habitat is not adversely impacted.

[39] JNCC (2008) UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions: Lowland Fens. Available at: https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/6fe22f18-fff7-4974-b333-03b0ad819b88/UKBAP-BAPHabitats-27-LowlandFens.pdf [Accessed 06/09/25].

40 The Wildlife Trust. Lowland Fen. Available at: https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/habitats/wetlands/lowland-fen [Accessed: 03/09/25].

45 Little Paxton 2: West of Great North Road

45.1 Overview

45.1.1 The West of Great North Road Site is a 20.4ha site proposed for residential uses in Little Paxton with a capacity of about 220 homes.

45.1.2 The site is in the south of Huntingdonshire, located on the western edge of Little Paxton, and currently consists of a large agricultural field enclosed by hedgerows and trees. The site borders the A1 on its northwestern border, with Great North Road enclosing it to the southeast. The River Kym bends around the southern end of the site, 0.3km at its closest point.

45.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

45.2.1 Proposed development at the West of Great North Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI
- St Neots Common SSSI
- Little Paxton Wood SSSI
- Grafham Water SSSI

45.2.2 Little Paxton Pits SSSI lies 0.7km to the east at its closest point. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

45.2.3 St Neots Common SSSI, is 0.5km southeast and is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr, with direr areas that show a calcareous influence. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

45.2.4 Little Paxton Wood SSSI is a wet ash-field maple coppice woodland on calcareous boulder clay, is 1.3km northwest of the site and features a lowland mixed deciduous woodland unit which is in 'Favourable' condition.

45.2.5 Grafham Water SSSI is located 4km from the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

45.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Little Paxton Pits SSSI and St. Neots Common SSSI. This IRZ requires Natural England to be consulted on residential developments of 100 units as there is potential for the proposed development to have a harmful effect on terrestrial SSSIs.

Irreplaceable Habitat

45.2.7 There are records of Lowland Fen Priority Habitat within 50m of the site's western boundary, with potential hydrological links to further Lowland Fen Habitat to the east via the River Kym.

45.2.8 Lowland fen vegetation develops in shallow valleys and lake basins where poor drainage, combined with constant water flow or periodic flooding, leads to waterlogging. These habitats support a diverse range of plant and animal communities, including insects such as Dragonflies (*Anisoptera* spp.)[41]. Typical wetland species found in fens include Reeds (*Phragmites australis* spp.), Rushes (*Juncaceae* spp.), and Sedges (*Cyperaceae* spp.). Fen habitat across the UK has been lost due to the decline of traditional management practices and drainage activities. The quality of remaining fen areas is often further degraded by factors such as water extraction, flood prevention measures, and nutrient pollution from agricultural run-off[42]. Development on this site is likely to result in adverse impacts on the lowland fen habitat through a change in water quality or water quantity.

45.3 Summary of potential impacts

45.3.1 **Table 45.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 45.1**: Little Paxton 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
St Neots Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Little Paxton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

45.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at Little Paxton 2. The site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI, St Neots Common SSSI, Little Paxton Wood SSSI, and Grafham Water, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures to ensure they are not adversely impacted by hydrological, urbanisation and recreation effects, as set out in Section 78.5. Similarly, the location of Lowland Fen Priority Habitat within 50m to the eastern site boundary requires careful mitigation measures to ensure the habitat is not adversely impacted.

[41] JNCC (2008) UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions: Lowland Fens. Available at: https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/6fe22f18-fff7-4974-b333-03b0ad819b88/UKBAP-BAPHabitats-27-LowlandFens.pdf [Accessed 06/09/25].

42 The Wildlife Trust. Lowland Fen. Available at: https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/habitats/wetlands/lowland-fen [Accessed: 03/09/25].

46 Sawtry 3: West of Toll Bar Way and Green End Road

46.1 Overview

46.1.1 The West of Toll Bar Way and Green End Road site is a 18,8ha site proposed for a mixed use development in Sawtry comprising of about 330 homes and about 3ha of open space to safeguard against flooding.

46.1.2 The site is located on the southern edge of Sawtry and currently consists of agricultural fields. The site borders Green End Road and Toll Bar Way, with the A1 motorway running to the east.

46.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

46.2.1 Proposed development at the West of Toll Bar Way and Green End Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Aversley Wood SSSI
- Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR
- Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI

46.2.2 Aversley Wood lies 0.3km to the southwest of the site, and is an Ancient wet ash–field maple woodland on heavy clay soils of lowland England, managed as coppice-with-standards. There is one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, currently in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition.

46.2.3 Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is 1.7km southeast of the site. It comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

46.2.4 Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI is 4.9km east of the allocation and is designated for its mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed, and ditch habitats and communities of rare fen and aquatic flora. The site is in 'Unfavourable' condition across multiple habitat types: ditches, floodplain fen (lowland), lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, and vascular plant assemblages.

46.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Aversley Wood SSSI and Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

46.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

46.3 Summary of potential impacts

46.3.1 **Table 46.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 46.1**: Sawtry 3 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Aversley Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y
Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

46.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Sawtry 3, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Aversley Wood SSSI, Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR, Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR, and Holme Fen SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

47 Sawtry 4: Off Old North Road, Sawtry

47.1 Overview

47.1.1 The site off Old North Road in Sawtry is a 4ha site proposed for a mixed use development comprising of 1.5ha of commercial and retail uses, 1ha for industrial uses and 1ha for open space.

47.1.2 The site is in Sawtry, and currently consists of an area of grassland, with a small area of woodland. The site borders the A1 motorway to the west and Old North Road to the east, with the Middle Level watercourse running 0.5km to the northeast at its nearest point.

47.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

47.2.1 Proposed development at the Off Old North Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Aversley Wood SSSI
- Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR
- Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI
- Holme Fen SSSI and NNR

47.2.2 Aversley Wood SSSI lies 1.6km to the southwest of the site, and is an Ancient wet ash–field maple woodland on heavy clay soils of lowland England, managed as coppice-with-standards. There is one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, currently in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition.

47.2.3 Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is 3.3km southeast of the site. It is comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

47.2.4 Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI is 4.9km east of the allocation. It is designated for its mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed, and ditch habitats and communities of rare fen and aquatic flora. The site is in 'Unfavourable' condition across multiple habitat types: ditches, floodplain fen (lowland), lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, and vascular plant assemblages.

47.2.5 Holme Fen NNR and SSSI is located approximately 4.9km to the northeast of the site. It is 268 ha and comprised of lowland mixed deciduous woodland containing a mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed and ditch habitats. The SSSI NNR is comprised of two units, one of which is classified as 'Favourable', the other as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

47.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Aversley Wood SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

47.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

47.3 Summary of potential impacts

47.3.1 **Table 47.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 47.1**: Sawtry 4 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Aversley Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y
Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Holme Fen SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y

47.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Sawtry 4, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Aversley Wood SSSI, Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR, Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR, and Holme Fen SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

48 Sawtry 5: Land at Little Common Farm

48.1 Overview

48.1.1 The land at Little Common Farm is a 14.6ha site proposed for a mixed use development comprising of commercial uses and d about 2,5ha of open space to safeguard against flooding. The site has potential to provide development of a scale that could be integrated into the existing business cluster and is considered capable of delivery about 30,000 sqm of employment floorspace.

48.1.2 The site is in Sawtry, and currently consists of an agricultural field enclosed by hedgerows. Old North Road borders the site to the west, and the Middle Level watercourse follows the eastern borders of the site.

48.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

48.2.1 Proposed development at the Land at Little Common Farm Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Aversley Wood SSSI
- Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR
- Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI
- Holme Fen SSSI and NNR

48.2.2 Aversley Wood SSSI lies 1.8km to the southwest of the site, and is an Ancient wet ash–field maple woodland on heavy clay soils of lowland England, managed as coppice-with-standards. There is one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, currently in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition.

48.2.3 Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is 3.4km to the southeast. It is comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

48.2.4 Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI is 4.4km east of the allocation and is hydrologically linked through the Middle Level Watercourse. It is designated for its mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed, and ditch habitats and communities of rare fen and aquatic flora. The site is in 'Unfavourable' condition across multiple habitat types: ditches, floodplain fen (lowland), lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, and vascular plant assemblages.

48.2.5 Holme Fen NNR and SSSI is located approximately 4.5km to the northeast of the site. It is 268 ha and comprised of lowland mixed deciduous woodland containing a mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed and ditch habitats. The SSSI NNR is comprised of two units, one of which is classified as 'Favourable', the other as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

48.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Aversley Wood SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

48.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

48.3 Summary of potential impacts

48.3.1 **Table 48.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 48.1**: Sawtry 5 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Aversley Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	N
Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N
Holme Fen SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	N

48.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Sawtry 5, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Aversley Wood SSSI, Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR, Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR, and Holme Fen SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

49 Sawtry 1: West of Glatton Road

49.1 Overview

49.1.1 The West of Glatton Road Site is a 12.5ha site in Sawtry proposed for a mixed use scheme comprising of about 330 homes and about 2ha of open space to safeguard against flooding.

49.1.2 The site is in the north east of Sawtry, and currently consists of agricultural fields enclosed by hedgerows with a residential area to the southeast. Glatton Road runs 0.3km to the west, Gidding Road runs 0.1km to the south, and Sawtry Brook borders the southeast of the site.

49.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

49.2.1 Proposed development at the West of Glatton Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Aversley Wood SSSI
- Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR

49.2.2 Aversley Wood SSSI lies 1.3km to the south of the site, and is an Ancient wet ash–field maple woodland on heavy clay soils of lowland England, managed as coppice-with-standards. There is one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, currently in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition.

49.2.3 Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is 3.8km southwest of the site. It comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

49.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Aversley Wood SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

49.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

49.3 Summary of potential impacts

49.3.1 **Table 49.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 49.1**: Sawtry 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Aversley Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	N

49.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Sawtry 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Aversley Wood SSSI, and Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

50 Sawtry 2: East of Glatton Road and North of Brookside Industrial Estate

50.1 Overview

50.1.1 The East of Glatton Road and North of Brookside Industrial Estate Site is a 6.5ha site in Sawtry proposed for a mixed use development comprising of about 170 homes and about 1ha of open space to safeguard against flooding.

50.1.2 The site is on the north west of Sawtry, and currently consists of agricultural fields enclosed by hedgerows with some areas of developed land and farm infrastructure in the north. An industrial area borders the site to the south with residential area further south. Glatton Road borders the site to the southwest.

50.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

50.2.1 Proposed development at the East of Glatton Road and North of Brookside Industrial Estate site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Aversley Wood SSSI
- Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR
- Holme Fen SSSI and NNR

50.2.2 Aversley Wood SSSI lies 1.9km to the south of the site, and is an Ancient wet ash–field maple woodland on heavy clay soils of lowland England, managed as coppice-with-standards. There is one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, currently in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition.

50.2.3 Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is 4.1km southeast of the site. It is comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

50.2.4 Holme Fen NNR and SSSI is located approximately 4.9km to the northeast of the site. It is 268 ha and comprised of lowland mixed deciduous woodland containing a mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed and ditch habitats. The SSSI NNR is comprised of two units, one of which is classified as 'Favourable', the other as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

50.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Aversley Wood SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

50.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

50.3 Summary of potential impacts

50.3.1 **Table 50.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 50.1**: Sawtry 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Aversley Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y
Holme Fen SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y

50.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Sawtry 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Aversley Wood SSSI, Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR, and Holme Fen SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

51 Sawtry 6: North of Black Horse Industrial Estate

51.1 Overview

51.1.1 The North of Black Horse Industrial Estate Site is a 1.4ha site in Sawtry proposed for a mixed use development comprising of commercial uses and about 0.3ha of open space to safeguard against flooding. The site is capable of providing about 4,000sqm of employment floorspace.

51.1.2 The site is to the east of Sawtry, and currently consists of an agricultural field enclosed by scrub and hedgerows. Infrastructure such as industrial estates lie to both the north and south of the site, with the B1043 adjacent to the site to the west and the A1 50m to the west. The Middle Level watercourse runs along the eastern border of the site.

51.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

51.2.1 Proposed development at the North of Black Horse Industrial Estate Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Aversley Wood SSSI
- Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR
- Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI

51.2.2 Aversley Wood SSSI lies 1.4km to the southwest of the site, and is an Ancient wet ash–field maple woodland on heavy clay soils of lowland England, managed as coppice-with-standards. There is one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, currently in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition.

51.2.3 Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is 3.1km south of site. It comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

51.2.4 Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI is 4.6km east of the allocation and has potential hydrological links to the site. It is designated for its mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed, and ditch habitats and communities of rare fen and aquatic flora. The site is in 'Unfavourable' condition across multiple habitat types: ditches, floodplain fen (lowland), lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, and vascular plant assemblages.

51.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Aversley Wood SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

51.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

51.3 Summary of potential impacts

51.3.1 **Table 51.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 51.1**: Sawtry 6 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Aversley Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y
Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	Y

51.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Sawtry 6, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Aversley Wood SSSI, Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR, and Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

52 Somersham 3: Dews Bus and Coach Depot, Chatteris Road

52.1 Overview

52.1.1 The Dews Bus and Coach Depot Site is a 2.2ha site proposed for residential development of about 50 homes in Somersham.

52.1.2 The site is in the northeast of Huntingdonshire, on the eastern edge of Somersham, and currently consists of an open field of grassland in the northeast, and developed land and infrastructure in the south. It borders Chatteris Road to the east, and past this is the Cranbrook Drain.

52.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

52.2.1 Proposed development at The Dews Bus and Coach Depot Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

52.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is located approximately 3.5km to the south of the site. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

52.2.3 Ouse Washes SSSI is 3.2km southeast of the site and is hydrologically linked through the Cranbrook Drain. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

52.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site. This site is also within or adjacent to the Ouse Washes Goose and Swan IRZ. Whilst the site is unlikely be Functionally Linked Land (FLL) itself as the habitats present are unlikely to be suitable for these species, proposals here will need to consider mitigation measures to avoid disturbance of the surrounding land.

Irreplaceable Habitat

52.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

52.3 Summary of potential impacts

52.3.1 **Table 52.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 52.1**: Somersham 3 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	Y	Y	Y	N	Y

52.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at the Somersham 3. The site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Berry Fen SSSI or Ouse Washes SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures to ensure they are not adversely impacted by hydrological, urbanisation and recreation effects, as set out in Section 78.5. Additionally, due to its proximity to FLL, mitigation measures such as adequate screening around the site boundary and implementation of an ecologically sensitive lighting strategy, should be implemented to avoid disturbance of the surrounding land, such as the lakes at Colne Fen.

53 Somersham 1: West of Parkhall Road, College Farm, Somersham

53.1 Overview

53.1.1 The West of Parkhall Road Site is a 6.3ha site in Somersham proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 120 homes.

53.1.2 The site is in the northeast of Huntingdonshire, on the northwestern edge of Somersham, and currently consists of 2-3 grassland or agricultural fields, enclosed by hedgerows, and bordering Parkhall road on its easternmost border,

53.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

53.2.1 Proposed development at the West of Parkhall Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

53.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is located approximately 4.1km to the south of the site. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

53.2.3 Ouse Washes SSSI is 4.4km southeast of the site. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

53.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

53.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

53.3 Summary of potential impacts

53.3.1 **Table 53.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 53.1**: Somersham 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	Y	Y	N	N	Y

53.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Somersham 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

54 Somersham 2: South of College Farm

54.1 Overview

54.1.1 The South of College Farm Site is a 5.6ha site in Somersham proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 140 homes.

54.1.2 The site is in the northeast of Huntingdonshire, on the eastern edge of Somersham, and currently consists of agricultural fields enclosed by hedgerows and borders St Ives Road on its southern border.

54.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

54.2.1 Proposed development at the South of College Farm Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

54.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is located approximately 4.1km to the southeast of the site. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

54.2.3 Ouse Washes SSSI is 4.8km east of the site, and is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

54.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

54.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

54.3 Summary of potential impacts

54.3.1 **Table 54.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 54.1**: Somersham 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	Y	Y	N	N	Y

54.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Somersham 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

55 Somersham 4: College Farm, West of Newlands Industrial Estate

55.1 Overview

55.1.1 The College Farm Site is a 1.8ha site in Somersham proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 45 homes.

55.1.2 The site is in the northeast of Huntingdonshire, on the eastern edge of Somersham and currently consists of one agricultural field enclosed by hedgerows, bordering the Newlands Industrial Estate to the east and St Ives Road on the southern site border.

55.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

55.2.1 Proposed development at the College Farm, West of Newlands Industrial Estate Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

55.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is located approximately 4.1km to the east of the site. It is a 15.3 ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

55.2.3 Ouse Washes SSSI is 4.7km to the east of the site. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'. The allocation does not however fall within the IRZ of Ouse Washes SSSI.

55.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

55.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

55.3 Summary of potential impacts

55.3.1 **Table 55.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 55.1**: Somersham 4 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	Y	Y	N	N	Y

55.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Somersham 4, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Berry Fen SSSI or Ouse Washes SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

56 Yaxley 1: Eagle Business Park, Phase 3

56.1 Overview

56.1.1 The Eagle Business Park Site is a 16ha site in Yaxley proposed for commercial development with a capacity of 16ha. The site adjoins the Eagle Business Park and seeks to provide a third phase to the employment area. The site could deliver commercial, business, industrial and storage and distribution uses within use classes E(g)(i-iii), B2 and B8. The B8 use could support last mile logistics and smaller scale storage and distribution appropriate to the scale and nature of the employment area. The site is considered capable of delivering about 32,000sqm.

56.1.2 The site is in the north of Huntingdonshire, on the eastern edge of Yaxley and south of Peterborough, and currently consists of agricultural fields and adjoining the Eagle Business Park to the north. The Middle Level watercourse borders the site to the southeast, with a railway line adjacent to the site to the east.

56.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

56.2.1 Proposed development at the Eagle Business Park Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Holme Fen SSSI and NNR
- Orton Pit SSSI

56.2.2 Holme Fen NNR and SSSI is located approximately 2.5km to the south of the site. It is 268 ha and comprised of lowland mixed deciduous woodland containing a mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed and ditch habitats. The SSSI and NNR is comprised of two units, one of which is classified as 'Favourable', the other as 'Unfavourable – recovering'.

56.2.3 Orton Pit SSSI is 2.6km from the site to the northwest. This site is of special scientific interest for its population of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and a network of meso-eutrophic standing water habitats which support an assemblage of nationally rare and scarce charophyte (stonewort) species. The site comprises of six units in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable – recovering' condition, alongside SSSI features in 'unrecorded' or 'favourable' condition.

56.2.4 The site does fall within and IRZ, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

56.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

56.3 Summary of potential impacts

56.3.1 **Table 56.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 56.1**: Yaxley 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Holme Fen SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	N
Orton Pit SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N

56.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Yaxley 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Holme Fen SSSI and NNR and Orton Pit SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

57 Abbotsley 1: North of Wintringham Hall

57.1 Overview

57.1.1 The North of Wintringham Hall Site is a 19ha site in Abbotsley proposed for commercial development. The site is considered capable of delivery about 40,000sqm of employment floorspace.

57.1.2 The site is in the south of Huntingdonshire, east of St Neots. The site is located north of Wintringham Hall and the A428 and south of the safeguarded route for East West Rail. The site currently comprises multiple agricultural fields, enclosed and divided by hedgerows between Priory Hill Road and Cambridge Road. Abbotsley and Hen Brooks run 1.7km to the south of the allocation site.

57.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

57.2.1 Proposed development at the North of Wintringham Hall site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI
- St Neot's Common SSSI

57.2.2 Little Paxton Pits SSSI lies 3.2km to the northwest. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

57.2.3 St Neots Common SSSI, is 3.6km west and is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr, with direr areas that show a calcareous influence. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

57.2.4 The site does fall within and IRZ, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

57.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

57.3 Summary of potential impacts

57.3.1 **Table 57.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 57.1**: Abbotsley 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
St Neot's Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N

57.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Abbotsley 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI and St Neots Common SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

58 Alwalton 1: North Of 23 To 33 Oundle Road, Alwalton

58.1 Overview

58.1.1 The North Of 23 To 33 Oundle Road Site is a 12.9ha site in Alwalton proposed for a mixed use scheme comprising of a residential capacity of about 165 homes and 4ha of open space to safeguard against flooding.

58.1.2 The site is in the north of Huntingdonshire, east of Peterborough, and currently consists of an agricultural field with patches of scrub and woodland, enclosed by hedgerows and further woodland. The A1 borders the site to the southeast and Oundle Road to the south, with the River Nene adjacent to the site to the north.

58.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

58.2.1 Proposed development at the North Of 23 To 33 Oundle Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Castor Flood Meadows SSSI
- Castor Hanglands NNR and SSSI
- Orton Pit SSSI

58.2.2 Castor Flood Meadows SSSI lies 0.4km to the northwest and is potentially hydrologically linked to the allocation site via the River Nene. This SSSI is a species-rich alluvial grassland within the River Nene floodplain, maintained by traditional hay-cutting and grazing. The vegetation reflects soil moisture gradients. The River Nene and associated waterbodies add further interest in plant species, invertebrates and breeding birds. The SSSI comprises 4 units, all classified as being in in favourable condition.

58.2.3 Castor Hanglands SSSI and NNR, 4.4km to the north of the site, possesses a range of habitat types from ancient broadleaved woodland to unimproved grassland and scrub over soils of limestone, clay, cornbrash and sands, some of these habitats being scarce in Britain and all scarce in the East Midlands. Other habitats on the site include ponds and ditches which provide additional habitat diversity and hold a good aquatic fauna including a population of warty newt *Triturus cristatus*. The whole area is of high value for invertebrates and some nationally uncommon species are present. Designated features of lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, Lowland mixed deciduous woodland, lowland neutral grassland scrub and Population of nationally scarce butterfly species the Black Hairstreak are all in 'favourable' condition, with only lowland calcareous grassland in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition.

58.2.4 Orton Pit SSSI is 2.5km from the site to the northwest. This site is of special scientific interest for its population of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and a network of meso-eutrophic standing water habitats which support an assemblage of nationally rare and scarce charophyte (stonewort) species. The site comprises of six units in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable – recovering' condition, alongside SSSI features in 'unrecorded' or 'favourable' condition.

58.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Castor Flood Meadows SSSI, and this IRZ indicates that residential developments of 100 units or more have potential to have a harmful impact of terrestrial SSSIs, and so Natural England should be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

58.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

58.3 Summary of potential impacts

58.3.1 **Table 58.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 58.1**: Alwalton 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Castor Flood Meadows SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Castor Hanglands NNR and SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Orton Pit SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	Y

58.3.2 There are medium ecological constraints at Alwalton 1. The site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Castor Flood Meadows SSSI, Castor Hanglands SSSI, and NNR, and Orton Pit SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures to ensure they are not adversely impacted by hydrological, urbanisation and recreation effects, as set out in Section 78.5.

59 Bythorn 1: West of Warren Lane, Bythorn

59.1 Overview

59.1.1 The West of Warren Lane Site is a 0.5ha site in Bythorn proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 10 homes.

59.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, on the northern edge of Bythorn, and currently makes up a portion of land in the southeast of a larger agricultural field. It borders Warren Lane on its western boundary.

59.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

59.2.1 There are no designated sites within 5km of the allocation site, and it falls into no impact risk zones requiring Natural England to be consulted on development likely associated with the proposed end use of the site

Irreplaceable Habitat

59.2.2 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

59.3 Summary of potential impacts

59.3.1 There are low ecological constraints at Bythorn 1, given the lack of designated sites or priority habitat within the surrounding area. This site has potential to be taken forward for development.

60 Colne 1: Land at Ramadie, Earith Road

60.1 Overview

60.1.1 The Land at Ramadie, Earith Road Site is a 0.85ha site in Colne proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 15 homes.

60.1.2 The site is in the east of Huntingdonshire, on the eastern edge of Colne, and currently consists of an open area of field and some residential properties in the east. Residential areas surround the site to the north and east, with the B1050 adjacent to the site on its easternmost border and the East Street to the north.

60.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

60.2.1 Proposed development at the Land at Ramadie site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Berry Fen SSSI
- Ouse Washes SSSI

60.2.2 Berry Fen SSSI is located approximately 1.1km to the south of the site. It is a 15.3ha washland habitat of ornithological value, holding neutral grassland communities of a type now scarce in Britain. This SSSI comprises of three units, two are assessed as 'Unfavourable-declining', one assessed as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

60.2.3 Ouse Washes SSSI is 1.5km east of the site. It is an extensive washland of international importance for breeding and wintering wildfowl and waders. The sites includes Special Areas of Conservation. The SSSI comprises of 17 SSSI units, eight of which are in a 'Unfavourable-no change' condition, one in a 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, and the remaining eight in a 'Favourable condition'.

60.2.4 The Land at Ramadie site is located within an IRZ associated with Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI. This IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

60.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

60.3 Summary of potential impacts

60.3.1 **Table 60.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 60.1: *Colne 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Berry Fen SSSI	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Ouse Washes SSSI	Y	Y	N	N	Y

60.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Colne 1, and it has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

61 Ellington 1: Old Sheds at Manor Farm, High Street

61.1 Overview

61.1.1 The Old Sheds at Manor Farm Site is a 2ha site in Ellington proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 35 homes.

61.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, on the south eastern egde of Ellington, and currently consists of an agricultural field, some scrub and woodland, and an area of developed land and infrastructure in the centre. The northwestern corner adjoins High Street, with Thrapston Road to the north, and surrounded to the west. Ellington Brook flows 0.3km north of the site and a tributary runs 0.2km south of the site.

61.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

61.2.1 Proposed development at the Old Sheds at Manor Farm Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Grafham Water SSSI
- Brampton Wood SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI

61.2.2 Grafham Water SSSI is located 2.7km south of the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

61.2.3 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 3.8km to the east and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

61.2.4 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 2.9km to the east of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

61.2.5 Brampton Wood SSSI is situated approximately 1.7km to the southeast of the site. The SSSI is designated for its wet ash-field maple woodland on chalky boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the sites overall ecological value. It comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

61.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Brampton Wood SSSI and Grafham Water SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

61.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

61.3 Summary of potential impacts

61.3.1 **Table 61.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 61.1**: Grafham 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Brampton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

61.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Ellington 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Grafham Water SSSI, Brampton Wood SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI and Brampton Meadows SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

62 Grafham 1: Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close

62.1 Overview

62.1.1 The Site Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close is a 0.88ha site in Grafham proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 20 homes.

62.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, on the western edge of Grafham, and currently consists of an open field enclosed by hedgerows and trees. It borders Church Road to the south with residential areas to the east.

62.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

62.2.1 Proposed development at the Site Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Grafham Water SSSI
- Perry Woods SSSI
- Brampton Wood SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI

62.2.2 Perry Woods SSSI is located approximately 3km to the south of the site. This 66 ha site is an ash-maple ancient woodland on Oxford and Boulder Clays, a habitat type now scarce in country and lowland England. The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

62.2.3 Grafham Water SSSI is located 0.5km south of the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

62.2.4 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 5km to the northeast and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

62.2.5 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 4.2km to the northeast of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

62.2.6 Brampton Wood SSSI is situated 1.3km northeast of the site. The SSSI is designated for its wet ash-field maple woodland on chalky boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the sites overall ecological value. It comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

62.2.7 The site is within an IRZ for Grafham Water SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

62.2.8 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

62.3 Summary of potential impacts

62.3.1 **Table 62.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 62.1: *Grafham 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Perry Woods SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

62.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Grafham 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Grafham Water SSSI, Perry Woods SSSI, Brampton Wood SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI, and Brampton Meadow SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

63 Great Paxton 1: West of High Street, Great Paxton

63.1 Overview

63.1.1 The West of High Street Site is a 0.5ha site in Great Paxton proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 10 homes.

63.1.2 The site is in the south of Huntingdonshire, along the western edge of Great Paxton, and currently consists of unmanaged scrub, grassland and woodland. The site joins High Street at its easternmost border, and the River Great Ouse flows 0.5km to the west.

63.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

63.2.1 Proposed development at the West of High Street Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI
- Little Paxton Wood SSSI
- St Neot's Common SSSI
- Grafham Water SSSI

63.2.2 There are a number of designated sites nearby, the closest of which is Little Paxton Pits SSSI 0.5km to the west at its closest. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

63.2.3 St Neots Common SSSI, is 3.1km southwest and is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr, with direr areas that show a calcareous influence. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

63.2.4 Little Paxton Wood SSSI is a wet ash-field maple coppice woodland on calcareous boulder clay, 3.6km west of the site, and features a lowland mixed deciduous woodland unit which is in 'Favourable' condition.

63.2.5 Grafham Water SSSI is located 4.8km northwest of the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

63.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Little Paxton Pits SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

63.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

63.3 Summary of potential impacts

63.3.1 **Table 63.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 63.1: *Great Paxton 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
St Neot's Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Little Paxton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	N

63.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Great Paxton 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI, St Neots Common SSSI, Little Paxton Wood SSSI and Grafham Water SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

64 Great Paxton 2: Land North of Harley Industrial Park

64.1 Overview

64.1.1 The Land North of Harley Industrial Park Site is a 3.6ha site in Great Paxton proposed for commercial development. It is considered capable of delivering about 11,500sqm of employment floorspace. The site adjoins Harley Industrial Estate to the south (an Established Employment Area) providing an expansion to an Established Employment Area.

64.1.2 The site is in the south of Huntingdonshire, 0.6km south of Great Paxton, and currently consists of an agricultural field. The site borders Paxton Road to the west, with the Harley Industrial Estate adjacent to the south. The River Great Ouse flows 0.2km to the west.

64.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

64.2.1 Proposed development at the Land North of Harley Industrial Park Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI
- Little Paxton Wood SSSI
- St Neot's Common SSSI

64.2.2 There are a number of designated sites nearby, the closest of which is Little Paxton Pits SSSI 6km to the west at its closest. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

64.2.3 St Neots Common SSSI, is 2.1km southwest and is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr, with direr areas that show a calcareous influence. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

64.2.4 Little Paxton Wood SSSI is a wet ash-field maple coppice woodland on calcareous boulder clay, 3.3km from the site, and features a lowland mixed deciduous woodland unit which is in 'Favourable' condition.

64.2.5 The site is within an IRZ for Little Paxton Pits SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

64.2.6 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

64.3 Summary of potential impacts

64.3.1 **Table 64.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 64.1: *Great Paxton 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
St Neot's Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Little Paxton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

64.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Great Paxton 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI, St Neots Common SSSI, Little Paxton Wood SSSI and Grafham Water SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

65 Haddon 1: West of the A1 and South of Peterborough Motorway Services

65.1 Overview

65.1.1 The West of the A1 and South of Peterborough Motorway Services Site is a 48.2ha site located south of Peterborugh Services. It is proposed for commercial development and is considered capable of delivering about 116,000sqm of employment floorspace.

65.1.2 The site is in the north of Huntingdonshire, southwest of Peterborough, and currently consists of multiple agricultural fields enclosed and partitioned by hedgerows, and some areas of scrub or woodland. The Peterborough Services are to the north, with the A1 running along the northeastern border and the A605 adjoining the site to the north.

65.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

65.2.1 Proposed development at the West of the A1 and South of Peterborough Motorway Services Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Castor Flood Meadows SSSI
- Orton Pit SSSI

65.2.2 Castor Flood Meadows SSSI lies 2.9km to the northwest and is potentially hydrologically linked to the allocation site via the River Nene. This SSSI is a species-rich alluvial grassland within the River Nene floodplain, maintained by traditional hay-cutting and grazing. The vegetation reflects soil moisture gradients. The River Nene and associated waterbodies add further interest in plant species, invertebrates and breeding birds. The SSSI comprises 4 units, all classified as being in in favourable condition.

65.2.3 Orton Pit SSSI is 1km from the site to the northwest. This site is of special scientific interest for its population of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and a network of meso-eutrophic standing water habitats which support an assemblage of nationally rare and scarce charophyte (stonewort) species. The site comprises of six units in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable – recovering' condition, alongside SSSI features in 'unrecorded' or 'favourable' condition.

65.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Orton Pit SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

65.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

65.3 Summary of potential impacts

65.3.1 **Table 65.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 65.1: *Haddon 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation

Castor Flood Meadows SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Orton Pit SSSI	N	Y	Y	N	N

65.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Haddon 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Castor Flood Meadows SSSI or Orton Pit SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

66 Hail Weston 1: West of 5 High Street

66.1 Overview

66.1.1 The West of 5 High Street Site is a 0.8ha site in Hail Weston proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 8 homes.

66.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, on the western edge of Hail Weston, and currently consists of an open field of grassland. Residential areas lie to the east of the site and the site adjoins High Street in its southeastern corner, with the B645 running to the south of the allocation site.

66.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

66.2.1 Proposed development at the West of 5 High Street Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Little Paxton Pits SSSI
- Little Paxton Wood SSSI
- St Neot's Common SSSI
- Grafham Water SSSI
- Perry Woods SSSI

66.2.2 Little Paxton Pits SSSI is 3km to the northwest. This SSSI is designated for its extensive flooded gravel workings of varied age, supporting diverse aquatic, marsh and terrestrial habitat. It comprises of one unit classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

66.2.3 St Neots Common SSSI, is 1.7km west and is designated for its alluvial grassland habitats such as ponds, ditches, and willow carr, with direr areas that show a calcareous influence. The SSSI comprises of three units in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition.

66.2.4 Little Paxton Wood SSSI is a wet ash-field maple coppice woodland on calcareous boulder clay, 1.2km from the site, and features a lowland mixed deciduous woodland unit which is in 'Favourable' condition.

66.2.5 Grafham Water SSSI is located 4km from the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

66.2.6 Perry Woods SSSI is located approximately 4.2km to the east of the site. This 66 ha site is an ash-maple ancient woodland on Oxford and Boulder Clays, a habitat type now scarce in country and lowland England. The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

66.2.7 The site is within an IRZ for Little Paxton Wood SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

66.2.8 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

66.3 Summary of potential impacts

66.3.1 **Table 66.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 66.1: *Hail Weston 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Paxton Pits SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Little Paxton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
St Neot's Common SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Perry Woods SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

66.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Hail Weston 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI, Little Paxton Wood SSSI, St Neot's Common SSSI, Grafham Water SSSI, and Perry Woods SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

67 Holme 1: North of Station Road

67.1 Overview

67.1.1 The North of Station Road Site is a 3ha site in Holme proposed for a mixed use development comprising of about 50 homes and 0.3ha for local retail and health facilities.

67.1.2 The site is in the north of Huntingdonshire, within Holme, and currently consists of an open area of grassland enclosed by hedgerows, with some individual trees scattered throughout, and residential property in the southwestern quarter. The B660 runs along its southern borders with smaller roads adjoining along the other site boundaries, and the Middle Level Watercourse runs to the southeast.

67.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

67.2.1 Proposed development at the North of Station Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Holme Fen SSSI and NNR
- Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI

67.2.2 Holme Fen SSSI and NNR is located approximately 0.7km to the north of the site. It is 268 ha and comprised of lowland mixed deciduous woodland containing a mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed and ditch habitats. The SSSI NNR is comprised of two units, one of which is classified as 'Favourable', the other as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

67.2.3 Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI is 3.7km east of the allocation and has potential hydrological links to the site. It is designated for its mosaic of fen, mire, swamp, reedbed, and ditch habitats and communities of rare fen and aquatic flora. The site is in 'Unfavourable' condition across multiple habitat types: ditches, floodplain fen (lowland), lowland mire grassland and rush pasture, and vascular plant assemblages.

67.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Holme Fen, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

67.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

67.3 Summary of potential impacts

67.3.1 **Table 67.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 67.1: *Holme 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Woodwalton Fen NNR and SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Holme Fen SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y

67.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Holme 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Holme Fen SSSI and NNR, or Woodwalton Fen SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

68 Ramsey Forty Foot 1: Ramsey Forty Foot Village rural mooring

68.1 Overview

68.1.1 The Ramsey Forty Foot Village rural mooring is a 1.4ha site proposed for leisure moorings and land to safeguard against flooding

68.1.2 The site is in the northeast of Huntingdonshire, located on the northern edge of Ramsey Forty Foot along the Forty Foot/ Vermuden's Drain water way. It includes a 0.4km long section of canal and the associated bank to the south which consists mostly of grassland and scrub. It borders Hollow Road to the south and it adjoins Ramsey Road, which runs southwest, and there are residential areas following it southwest.

68.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

68.2.1 There are no designated sites within 5km of the allocation site, and it falls into no impact risk zones requiring Natural England to be consulted on development likely associated with the proposed end use of the site

Irreplaceable Habitat

68.2.2 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

68.3 Summary of potential impacts

68.3.1 There are low ecological constraints at Ramsey Forty Foot 1, given the lack of designated sites or priority habitat within the surrounding area. This site has potential to be taken forward for development.

69 The Stukeleys 1: Between 76 and 86 Owl End

69.1 Overview

69.1.1 The Site Between 76 and 86 Owl End is a 0.3ha site in Great Stukeley proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 3 homes.

69.1.2 The site is in the centre of Huntingdonshire, on the northern edge of Great Stukeley, and currently consists mostly of grassland, with some trees, scrub and potentially areas of developed or artificially unvegetated land. The site adjoins Owl End on its eastern border, with residential areas to the south.

69.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

69.2.1 Proposed development at the Between 76 and 86 Owl End Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Portholme SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI
- Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR

69.2.2 The Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI is around 1.2km from the allocation site, to the east. The site is designated for its Lowland calcareous grassland, a unit currently in an 'Unfavourable – Recovering' condition. it is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This habitat type was once widespread in Huntingdonshire but is now scarce, both within the county and also throughout its normal range in Britain.

69.2.3 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 3km to the southwest and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

69.2.4 Portholme SSSI is approximately 3.8km south of the allocation site. It is one of the largest alluvial flood meadow grassland communities in the country and SSSI comprises of one unit of Lowland neutral grassland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

69.2.5 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 3.2km to the southwest of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

69.2.6 Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is 4.9km northwest of site. It comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

69.2.7 The site is within an IRZ for Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

69.2.8 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

69.3 Summary of potential impacts

69.3.1 **Table 69.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 69.1: *The Stukeleys 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI	N	N	N	N	N
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Portholme SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y

69.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at The Stukeleys 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI, Portholme SSSI, Brampton Meadow SSSI, and Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

70 Upton 1: South West of South Farm, Upton

70.1 Overview

70.1.1 The South West of South Farm Site is a 0.39ha site in Upton proposed for residential development with a capacity of about 7 self and custom build homes.

70.1.2 The site is in the centre of Huntingdonshire, on the southern edge of Upton, and currently consists of grassland enclosed by woodland and hedgerows. It adjoins Pig Market End to the northwest, with Main Street to the north, the A1 running 0.9km to the east and the Alconbury Brook 1km to the south.

70.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

70.2.1 Proposed development at the South West of South Farm Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR
- Aversley Wood SSSI

70.2.2 Monks Wood NNR and the associated Monks Wood and Odd Quarter SSSI is 1.9km northeast of site. It comprises mostly of wet ash-maple ancient lowland woodland and Natural England describes it as one of Britain's most essential lowland woods.

70.2.3 Aversley Wood lies 3.5km to the southwest of the site, and is an Ancient wet ash–field maple woodland on heavy clay soils of lowland England, managed as coppice-with-standards. There is one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, currently in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition.

70.2.4 The site is within an IRZ for Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and Aversley Wood SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

70.2.5 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

70.3 Summary of potential impacts

70.3.1 **Table 70.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 70.1: *Upton 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Aversley Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Monks Wood and The Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR	N	Y	N	N	Y

70.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Upton 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Monks Wood and the Odd Quarter SSSI and NNR, and Aversley Wood SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

71 Waresley 1: Land between the West Lodge and Home Farm

71.1 Overview

71.1.1 The Land between the West Lodge and Home Farm is a 1.6 ha site located in Waresley near the centre of Huntingdonshire. It is proposed for residential use, with a capacity of about 10 self and custom homes.

71.1.2 It is located in the south of Huntingdonshire, approximately 6.3km southeast of St. Neot's. The site consists mostly of grassland and woodland with hedgerows along the northern border. It is connected to the B1040 to the east by Manor Farm Road and the site is adjacent to Waresley Park to the south.

71.2 Ecological baseline

Designated Sites

71.2.1 Proposed development at the Land between the West Lodge and Home Farm site has the potential to impact the following designated sites:

- Gamlingay Wood SSSI
- Waresley Wood SSSI
- Weaveley and Sand Woods SSSI
- Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI

71.2.2 A number of ancient woodland designated sites are close in proximity to the allocation site, the closest of which being Gamlingay Wood SSSI, an ancient ash-maple woodland less than 1km from the allocation site. It represents a scarce lowland England habitat that is notable in Cambridgeshire for its occurrence on sandy loam soils. This SSSI features one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

71.2.3 Waresely Wood SSSI, another ancient ash-maple woodland, is approximately 1.5km with a diverse shrub layer and rich ground flora, The SSSI site comprises of three SSSI units: two of which are in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, with the remaining unit in a 'Favourable' condition.

71.2.4 Weavely and Sand Woods SSSI is approximately 3.5km away, an ancient ash-maple woodland and contains unique underlying geological variation. The SSSI comprises of one unit, Broadleaved, mixed and Yew Woodland, in a 'Favourable' condition.

71.2.5 Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI is located 6.3km to the south-east of the site. This 66ha site is a structurally diverse ancient semi-natural ash-maple-dogs mercury woodland, also designated for providing roosting, commuting and foraging habitat for barbastelle bats. The SSSI site comprises of two SSSI units: one of which is in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition, with the other unit in a 'Favourable' condition.

71.2.6 The allocation site is located within an IRZ associated with Waresley Wood SSSI, Gamlingay Wood SSSI and Weaveley and Sand Woods SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site. The site will also fall within the updated IRZ for Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI. Natural England advises that this site should therefore avoid impacting potentially functionally linked habitats for bats.

Irreplaceable Habitat

71.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat located within, or within 50m of, the site boundary.

71.3 Summary of potential impacts

71.3.1 **Table 71.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 71.1: *Waresley 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Waresley Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Gamlingay Wood SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Weaveley and Sand Woods SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y
Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI	N	N	N	N	Y

71.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Waresley 1. This allocation has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Gamlingay Wood SSSI, Weaveley and Sand Woods SSSI, Waresley Wood SSSI and Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI or their potentially functionally linked habitats, particularly trees, hedgerows, watercourses, and wet grassland which may be used by foraging, roosting or commuting bats, particularly Barbastelles. Adverse effects can be avoided or mitigated through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5, such as the requirement for an ecologically sensitive lighting strategy in accordance with Guidance Note 8 - GN08 Bats and Artificial Lighting from the Institute of Lighting Professionals[45].

72 Bythorn 1: Home Farm, Bythorn

72.1 Overview

72.1.1 The Home Farm Site is a 0.98ha site in Bythorn proposed for residential development with a capacity 15 homes.

72.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, in the southwest of Bythorn, and currently consists of farm buildings and associated infrastructure and hardstanding. It borders Thrapston Road on its southern boundary.

72.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

72.2.1 There are no designated sites within 5km of the allocation site, and it falls into no impact risk zones requiring Natural England to be consulted on development likely associated with the proposed end use of the site

Irreplaceable Habitat

72.2.2 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

72.3 Summary of potential impacts

72.3.1 There are low ecological constraints at Bythorn 1, given the lack of designated sites or priority habitat within the surrounding area. This site has potential to be taken forward for development.

73 Grafham 2: Field south of Village Farm, Grafham

73.1 Overview

73.1.1 The Field south of Village Farm Site is a 1.62ha site in Grafham proposed for residential development with a capacity of 35 homes.

73.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, on the southern edge of Grafham, and currently consists of an open field enclosed by hedgerows and trees. It borders Buckden Road to the east with residential areas to the north.

73.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

73.2.1 Proposed development at the Field south of Village Farm has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Grafham Water SSSI
- Perry Woods SSSI
- Brampton Wood SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI

73.2.2 Perry Woods SSSI is located approximately 3km to the south of the site. This 66 ha site is an ash-maple ancient woodland on Oxford and Boulder Clays, a habitat type now scarce in country and lowland England. The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

73.2.3 Grafham Water SSSI is located 0.5km south of the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

73.2.4 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 5km to the northeast and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

73.2.5 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 4.2km to the northeast of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

73.2.6 Brampton Wood SSSI is situated 1.3km northeast of the site. The SSSI is designated for its wet ash-field maple woodland on chalky boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the sites overall ecological value. It comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

73.2.7 The site is within an IRZ for Grafham Water SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

73.2.8 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

73.3 Summary of potential impacts

73.3.1 **Table 73.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

Table 73.1: *Grafham 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Perry Woods SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

73.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Grafham 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Grafham Water SSSI, Perry Woods SSSI, Brampton Wood SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI, and Brampton Meadow SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

74 Ellington 2: Land west of Grafham Road, Ellington

74.1 Overview

74.1.1 The Land west of Grafham Road Site is a 1.87ha site in Ellington proposed for residential development with a capacity of 35 homes.

74.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, on the south of Ellington, and currently consists of an open field. Grafham Road runs along its eastern border, and is surrounded by further fields to the south and west, with residential areas east and north. Ellington Brook flows 0.66km north of the site and a tributary runs 0.12km south of the site.

74.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

74.2.1 Proposed development at the Land west of Grafham Road has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Grafham Water SSSI
- Brampton Wood SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI

74.2.2 Grafham Water SSSI is located 2.7km south of the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

74.2.3 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 3.8km to the east and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

74.2.4 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 2.9km to the east of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

74.2.5 Brampton Wood SSSI is situated approximately 1.7km to the southeast of the site. The SSSI is designated for its wet ash-field maple woodland on chalky boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the sites overall ecological value. It comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

74.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Brampton Wood SSSI and Grafham Water SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

74.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

74.3 Summary of potential impacts

74.3.1 **Table 74.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 74.1**: Ellington 2 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Brampton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

74.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Ellington 2, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Grafham Water SSSI, Brampton Wood SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI and Brampton Meadows SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

75 Ramsey Forty Foot 2: Woodlane Farm, Ramsey Forty Foot

75.1 Overview

75.1.1 The Woodlane Farm, West of Ramsey Road is a 1.4ha site proposed for residential development with a capacity of 25 homes.

75.1.2 The site is in the northeast of Huntingdonshire, located in the south of Ramsey Forty Foot along the Ramsey Road. It consists mostly of an open field of grassland bordered by hedgerows and scrub, with residential areas to the northeast.

75.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

75.2.1 There are no designated sites within 5km of the allocation site, and it falls into no impact risk zones requiring Natural England to be consulted on development likely associated with the proposed end use of the site

Irreplaceable Habitat

75.2.2 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

75.3 Summary of potential impacts

75.3.1 There are low ecological constraints at Ramsey Forty Foot 2, given the lack of designated sites or priority habitat within the surrounding area. This site has potential to be taken forward for development.

76 Spaldwick 1: Land east of Stow Road

76.1 Overview

76.1.1 The Land east of Stow Road Site is a 6.1ha site in Spaldwick proposed for residential development with a capacity of 90 homes.

76.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, in the south of Spaldwick, and currently consists of an unmanaged grassland field. Stow Road runs along its western border, and is surrounded by further fields to the south and west, with residential areas to the north. Ellington Brook flows 0.37km north of the site.

76.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

76.2.1 Proposed development at the Land to East of Stow Road Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Grafham Water SSSI
- Brampton Wood SSSI
- Brampton Racecourse SSSI
- Brampton Meadow SSSI

76.2.2 Grafham Water SSSI is located 2.7km south of the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

76.2.3 The Brampton Racecourse SSSI is 7.2km to the east and is an extensive unimproved neutral grassland within the floodplain of Alconbury Brook. It has a strong calcareous influence and ridge-and-furrow topography adding structural diversity, with a unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Favourable' condition.

76.2.4 Brampton Meadow SSSI is situated approximately 6.4km to the east of the site. It is a small species-rich meadow which exhibits calcareous clay pasture plant communities which are restricted to the south of the country and are generally declining due to changes from traditional management practices. It is comprised of one site in 'Unfavourable-declining' condition.

76.2.5 Brampton Wood SSSI is situated approximately 5.1km to the southeast of the site. The SSSI is designated for its wet ash-field maple woodland on chalky boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the sites overall ecological value. It comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

76.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Grafham Water SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

76.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

76.3 Summary of potential impacts

76.3.1 **Table 76.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 76.1**: Spaldwick 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Brampton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Racecourse SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Brampton Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

76.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Spaldwick 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Grafham Water SSSI, Brampton Wood SSSI, Brampton Racecourse SSSI and Brampton Meadows SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

77 Catworth 1: Fruit Field opposite Victory Playing Field

77.1 Overview

77.1.1 The Fruit Field opposite Victory Playing Field Site is a 2.19ha site in Catworth proposed for residential development with a capacity of 25 homes.

77.1.2 The site is in the west of Huntingdonshire, in the south of Catworth, and currently consists of an agricultural field. Station Road runs along its eastern border, and is surrounded by further fields to the south and west, with residential areas to the north.

77.2 Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

77.2.1 Proposed development at the Fruit Field Site has the potential to impact the following designated sites.

- Little Catworth Meadow SSSI
- Grafham Water SSSI
- Brampton Wood SSSI
- Perry Woods SSSI

77.2.2 Little Catworth Meadow SSSI lies 1.5km to the east of the allocation and is a herb-rich grassland of a calcareous loam type which is scarce in Britain, and is surrounded by mature hedgerows. This SSSI features one unit of Lowland neutral grassland in 'Unfavourable – recovering' condition.

77.2.3 Grafham Water SSSI is located 5.1km south of the site. This large, 806 ha site is an extensive reservoir situated approximately 7km south-west of Huntingdon which supports a rich variety of breeding wetland bird. The SSSI comprises of six units, all of which are in a 'Favourable' condition.

77.2.4 Brampton Wood SSSI is situated approximately 8.8km to the southeast of the site. The SSSI is designated for its wet ash-field maple woodland on chalky boulder Clay, a habitat type nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The range of habitats provides notable invertebrate interest, enhancing the sites overall ecological value. It comprises of one unit of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, classified as 'Unfavourable-recovering'.

77.2.5 Perry Woods SSSI is located approximately 7.3km to the south of the site. This 66ha site is an ash-maple ancient woodland on Oxford and Boulder Clays, a habitat type now scarce in country and lowland England. The SSSI comprises of one unit in 'Unfavourable-recovering' condition.

77.2.6 The site is within an IRZ for Little Catworth Meadow SSSI, however this IRZ does not require Natural England to be consulted on development likely to be associated with the proposed end use of the site.

Irreplaceable Habitat

77.2.7 There are no records of irreplaceable habitat within, or within 50m of, the site boundary, however instances of Ancient Woodland occur to the southwest.

77.3 Summary of potential impacts

77.3.1 **Table 77.1** summarises the potential development impact pathways from the allocation on designated sites.

***Table 77.1**: Catworth 1 site potential development impact pathways and receptors*

	Air Quality	Water Quantity	Water Quality	Urbanisation	Recreation
Little Catworth Meadow SSSI	N	Y	N	N	N
Grafham Water SSSI	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Brampton Wood SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y
Perry Woods SSSI	N	Y	N	N	Y

77.3.2 There are low ecological constraints at Catworth 1, given location of the nearest SSSIs and the review of impact pathways showing limited potential for impacts. This site has potential to be taken forward for development subject to demonstrating that there would be no adverse effects upon Little Catworth Meadow SSSI, Grafham Water SSSI, Brampton Wood SSSI, and Perry Woods SSSI, through sensitive site design and the adoption of appropriate mitigation measures as set out in Section 78.5.

78 Recommendations

78.1 Introduction

78.1.1 This chapter sets out recommendations designed to minimise the adverse impacts of development on ecological receptors at each potential development site. All recommendations are underpinned by the Mitigation Hierarchy as set out **Section 3.7** and include opportunities for ecological enhancement.

78.1.2 When considering the possibility for mitigation, the following questions have been posed:

- Can habitats and sites of ecological value be retained and enhanced using embedded mitigation?
- What is the value and replaceability of habitats that could not be protected by embedded mitigation?
- Is it feasible that special design and mitigation measures could overcome the adverse effect, while maintain and enhancing biodiversity on site and in the local area?
- Considering designated sites and protected species in the surrounding area, will adverse indirect effects arise from development? Can these be mitigated using design and mitigation measures?

78.2 Statutory designated sites

78.2.1 In plan-making, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) require planning authorities to take reasonable steps to protect and enhance the special features of the site, with a legal obligation (under the WCA, CRoW and NERC – see **Section 2.2**) to avoid adverse effects from development. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 193b) states that "development on land within or outside a SSSI, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted". While consideration of mitigation can often be put in place at the planning application stage, some impact pathways are better addressed at the plan level, such as strategic issues like recreational impacts, and consideration of this may be required by Natural England at a Local Plan level in some cases.

78.2.2 The mitigation hierarchy, detailed in **Section 78.5**, recommends that avoidance should be prioritised where possible. SSSIs are designated for a wide range of features, and so there are many different pressures impacting them, and in many cases, these are easiest addressed at the plan-making stage.

78.3 Irreplaceable habitat

78.3.1 By definition irreplaceable habitat cannot be replaced. In line with national policy (see **Section 2.2**), development which may result in the loss of irreplaceable habitats should be avoided and an alternative site location selected. Direct and indirect effects of development on irreplaceable habitat must be assessed and avoided or reduced, according to the mitigation hierarchy through the adoption of measures set out below in Section 78.5[43].

[43] Natural England and Forestry Commission (2022) Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions [Accessed 27/10/25].

78.4 Protected species

78.4.1 It is recommended that ecological walkover be undertaken at each development site and biological records obtained to allow the identification of each site's potential to support protected species. The outputs from these surveys will inform the need for detailed protected species surveys, the requirement for protected species licences and, if necessary, the design of mitigation / enhancement measures. These considerations should be required as part of any future planning applications, especially in the cases of sites identified as medium to high risk.

78.5 Scheme design and layout

Avoidance

78.5.1 Where development coincides with non-statutory designations or habitat of medium to high distinctiveness, it should avoid these habitats and ensure they are retained through sensitive site design and layout. Where possible, planting should increase the connection of ecologically valuable habitats to the wider landscape to improve connectivity.

Mitigation

78.5.2 Where adverse impacts cannot be wholly or partially avoided, they should be minimised through sensitive site design or the use of effective mitigation measures as set out below.

78.5.3 Buffer zones should be incorporated into site design to ensure the protection of designated sites and ecologically sensitive habitats and features. Buffer zones around woodland and trees should be of a sufficient width to ensure the protection of root zones during both construction and operation. Buffer zones should be incorporated alongside waterbodies and within areas of floodplain to protect water quality and quantity. Opportunities to incorporate buffer areas into innovative sustainable nature-based drainage solutions should be sought which may also assist with flood mitigation. Where possible quite areas within buffer zones should be provided with limited public access and protection from light spill, noise and visual disturbance. Footpaths should be re-routed to avoid trampling and soil compaction in buffer zones.

78.5.4 Development exclusion zones and screening should be used to protect fauna which may be vulnerable to cat predation. An increased risk of cat predation associated with residential development has been mitigated at other schemes throughout the country through the adoption of a 400m development exclusion zone. The incorporation of features such as waterbodies and dense scrub into planting schemes are also recommended to deter cats from sensitive sites.

78.5.5 Sensitive construction techniques and operational best practice should be employed to ensure noise, water, land, air quality and visual disturbance impacts are avoided. These measures can be implemented through a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) or Operation Management Plan (OMP). The exact nature and details contained in a CEMP or OMP will be informed by site visits and final site design. Best practice construction and operation techniques may include the sensitive design of lighting schemes to avoid light spill onto adjacent wildlife corridors[44,45] , the use of low noise and dust emitting construction techniques, fencing of sensitive areas during construction and the adoption of a considerate constructor scheme. Construction activities should take place outside of the bird breeding season and construction timings to take into consideration the presence of any other protected species which may be present on site. Operational measures may include the implementation of site Travel Plans which may encourage the use of sustainable forms of travel and the choice / design of site to encourage active modes of transport.

Compensation

78.5.6 Where the unavoidable loss of designated sites or habitat occurs or impacts upon ecologically sensitive features cannot be mitigated, compensation should be designed. Compensation is a last resort and should include the remediation of lost habitats and/or the creation of new habitats of ecological value to improve connectivity and the provision of measures to minimise effects on protected or notable species.

Enhancement

78.5.7 Opportunities should be sought within design to connect habitats on development sites with those across the Plan area to provide bigger, better and more joined up habitat and wildlife corridors at the landscape scale.

78.5.8 Where feasible, features of poor ecological value on site should be enhanced and all habitats should be monitored and managed throughout the lifetime of a development. Hedgerows and watercourses on and adjacent to a site should be recorded and maintained as they provide particularly important wildlife corridors across the wider landscape

78.5.9 Landscape planting should focus on species of local provenance and drainage features should be integrated into an ecological design.

[44] Bat Conservation Trust (2023) Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. Available at: https://theilp.org.uk/resource/gn08-bats-and-artificial-lighting-pdf.html [Date Accessed: 27/10/25]

[45] Institute of Lighting Professionals (2023) Guidance Note 8 – GN08 Bats and Artificial Lighting. Available at: https://theilp.org.uk/resource/gn08-bats-and-artificial-lighting-pdf.html (Date Accessed: 01/07/26)

79 Site Evaluation

79.1 Introduction

79.1.1 As set out in **Section 3**, an assessment has been made of consequences for decision makers and recommendations in terms of the suitability of each site for development, based on ecological considerations. This takes into account policy and legal implications outlined in **Section 2**, which may be relevant. Site evaluations are provided in **Table 79.1.** As outlined in **Section 3.7**, the following categories have been applied:

- Low ecological constraints - development is possible across the majority of the site with mitigation
- Medium ecological constraints - development is possible across areas of the site with mitigation
- High ecological constraints - an alternative site location should be considered

Table 79.1: *Ecological constraints and developability site evaluation*

Preferred Options Local Plan Reference	Low ecological constraints *Development is possible across the majority of the site with mitigation*	Medium ecological constraints *Development is possible across areas of the site with mitigation*	High ecological constraints *An alternative location should be considered*
Abbots Ripton 1	L		
Alconbury 1	L		
Alconbury 2	L		
Bluntisham 1	L		
Bluntisham 3		M	
Bluntisham 2		M	
Great Gransden 1	L		
Great Staughton 1	L		
Hemingford Abbots 1	L		
Needingworth 2	L		
Houghton and Wyton 1	L		
Offord D'Arcy 1	L		
Offord Cluny 1	L		
Stilton 1	L		
Stilton 2	L		
Bury 1	L		
Bury 2	L		
Bury 3	L		

Preferred Options Local Plan Reference	Low ecological constraints *Development is possible across the majority of the site with mitigation*	Medium ecological constraints *Development is possible across areas of the site with mitigation*	High ecological constraints *An alternative location should be considered*
Needingworth 1		M	
Huntingdon 2	L		
Huntingdon 1		M	
Ramsey 2	L		
Ramsey 3	L		
St Neots 2	L		
St Neots 1		M	
Ramsey 1	L		
St Ives 1	L		
North Huntingdon 2		M	
North Huntingdon 1			H
North Huntingdon 4	L		
North Huntingdon 3	L		
Brampton 2	L		
Brampton 1	L		
Fenstanton 1		M	
Godmanchester 1		M	
Godmanchester 2	L		
Godmanchester 3	L		
Kimbolton 1	L		
Kimbolton 2	L		
Little Paxton 1		M	
Little Paxton 2		M	
Sawtry 3	L		
Sawtry 4	L		
Sawtry 1	L		
Sawtry 2	L		
Sawtry 5	L		
Sawtry 6	L		
Somersham 3		M	

Preferred Options Local Plan Reference	Low ecological constraints *Development is possible across the majority of the site with mitigation*	Medium ecological constraints *Development is possible across areas of the site with mitigation*	High ecological constraints *An alternative location should be considered*
Somersham 1	L		
Somersham 2	L		
Somersham 4	L		
Yaxley 1	L		
Abbotsley 1	L		
Alwalton 1		M	
Bythorn 1	L		
Colne 1	L		
Ellington 1	L		
Grafham 1	L		
Great Paxton1	L		
Great Paxton 2	L		
Haddon 1	L		
Hail Weston 1	L		
Holme 1	L		
Ramsey Forty Foot 1	L		
Great Stukeley 1	L		
Upton 1	L		
Waresley 1	L		
Bythorn 1	L		
Grafham 2	L		
Ellington 2	L		
Ramsey Forty Foot 2	L		
Spaldwick 1	L		
Catworth 1	L		

79.1.2 The evaluation identified 60 sites with low ecological constraints, 12 with medium ecological constraints and one with high ecological constraints. Sites identified as having low ecological constraints account for over 80% of all identified sites. These are able to be developed, as long as any necessary mitigation is put in place, which should be reviewed as part of planning applications.

79.1.3 Sites with medium ecological constraints are still able to be developed, or parts may be developed. However, further work should be commissioned to look at these sites in more detail if they are to be allocated before going further with the local plan, as there may be constraints that are not clear from high level assessment which may become evident with further. More detailed assessment.

79.1.4 Only one site was identified to have high ecological constraints, and this site should not be associated with development as it may have significant impacts on nearby designated sites.

80 Conclusion

80.1 About this report

80.1.1 This report comprises a desk-based assessment of the ecological constraints of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 at the Preferred Options Stage in relation to the allocation of sites for development.

80.1.2 This report identifies the ecological constraints at each of the proposed draft allocation sites and provides an overall evaluation on the sensitivity of each site. Recommendations for mitigation and adaptation measures are provided to ensure no adverse impacts on the ecological constraints identified.

80.2 Ecological constraints

80.2.1 A total of 79 sites have been evaluated as part of the report, Informed by the location and sensitivity of ecological characteristics including SSSIs, NNRs, and irreplaceable habitat (see Section 3.2), the overall ecological constraints have been assessed and described using the three point scale (low, medium, high).

80.2.2 The evaluation identified 60 sites with low ecological constraints, 12 with medium ecological constraints, and 1 with high ecological constraints. Sites with low ecological constraints can be taken forward without issue, while those identified to have medium constraints may require further assessment, and the single site identified as having high ecological constraints should be avoided.

80.3 Next steps

80.3.1 This report should inform Huntingdonshire District Council of the ecological constraints at the allocation sites for the Preferred Options using best available desk-based information.

80.3.2 Recommendations made following the assessment of the sensitivity of nature designations at each site should inform the selection of allocations and development of the new Local Plan.

Habitats Regulations Assessments

Sustainability Appraisals

Strategic Environmental Assessments

Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments

Green Belt Reviews

Expert Witness

Ecological Impact Assessments

Habitat and Ecology Surveys

LEPUS CONSULTING

LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

Eagle Tower

Montpellier Drive

Cheltenham

GL50 1TA

T: 01242 525222

E: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com

www.lepusconsulting.com

CHELTENHAM

Lepus Consulting
Eagle Tower
Montpellier Drive
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL50 1TA

t: 01242 525222
w: www.lepusconsulting.com
e: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com