A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme

Supplementary Consultation Environmental Note

HE551508-ARP-EGN-ZZ-TN-LE-000002

24 May 2022

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1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Environmental note provides additional information on the proposed changes which we are consulting on presented in the *Supplementary consultation booklet*. This note considers the potential implications on the environment both positive and negative of each of the proposed changes, in comparison to the previous design presented at the public consultation in autumn 2021.

1.1.2 Since the public consultation and publication of the Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report in autumn 2021, further work has been undertaken to respond to feedback raised and this has resulted in some proposed changes to the preliminary design. The proposed changes aim to further benefit local connectivity and accessibility, and reduce the scheme's impact on local communities, traffic and the environment.

1.1.3 A significant number of additional ecological surveys have also been undertaken in 2021. A number of baseline survey reports are available to view on the virtual exhibition room via the project website www.nationalhighways.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields. They present the results of these surveys, to support the information presented as part of this consultation.

1.1.4 The proposed changes since the public consultation relate to four broad categories:

- Transport, traffic flows and access (see section 2)
- Walking, cycling, horse-riding and disabled user access (see section 3)
- Environment (see section 4)
- Location of main construction compound (see section 5)

1.1.5 Further detail on the location of the design changes are shown in the *Supplementary consultation booklet* and in the *Summary of changes booklet* available to view on the virtual exhibition room via the project website www.nationalhighways.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields.

1.1.6 We are consulting on the proposed changes which include changes to the proposed biodiversity mitigation, as detailed within the *Supplementary consultation booklet*. You can give your feedback on all of these changes in the *feedback questionnaire*.

1.1.7 The preliminary design will be subject to further detailed assessment as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and published within the Environmental Statement (ES) which will be submitted with the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

2 Consideration of transport, traffic flows and access changes

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section presents a summary of the key environmental implications of the proposed changes within this category. A full description of each of the changes is detailed within the *Supplementary consultation booklet*.

2.2 Signalised junction to replace the Nexus 25 roundabout

2.2.1 The change proposes to replace the existing Nexus 25 roundabout with a signalised junction to better accommodate a crossing for walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and disabled users. The proposed signalised crossing would provide adequate capacity for the predicted traffic flows and allow more control over traffic movements by linking the operation of the signals to those at the M5 junction 25 roundabout.

Table 2-1 Environmental implications of the Nexus 25 signalised junction

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on cultural heritage.
Landscape	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on landscape and visual impact.
Biodiversity	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on biodiversity.
Geology and soils	The change would not intercept any potential land contamination sites. The previous land use has been cleared for the Nexus 25 development. The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on noise and vibration.
Population and health (including agriculture)	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on population and health. The change would reduce the amount of agricultural land required.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change would slightly reduce the area of existing floodplain occupied. Any loss of floodplain would be mitigated by the implementation of appropriate floodplain compensation measures incorporated into the design. The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

2.3 New connection at Mattock's Tree Green junction eastern roundabout and new signalised pedestrian crossing on the A378

2.3.1 The change proposes the addition of new connection on the Mattock's Tree Green junction eastern roundabout for direct access to Village Road and onward travel to Hatch Beauchamp.

Table 2-2 Environmental implications of the new connection at Mattock's Tree Green junction eastern roundabout and new signalised pedestrian crossing on the A378

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change in the location of operational traffic may result in slightly raised localised pollutant concentrations at some residential receptors adjacent to the change. However, they would not exceed air quality limit values. Therefore, the change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on cultural heritage.
Landscape	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on landscape and visual impact.
Biodiversity	The change would result in some additional loss of native species rich hedgerows supporting populations of hazel dormouse. Biodiversity mitigation has been updated to minimise the impacts on habitats and species.
Geology and soils	The design change brings the scheme closer to an existing service station due to the extended tie-in with the A378. However it is anticipated the works will be relatively shallow therefore the change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils in terms of potential land contamination.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on noise and vibration.
Population and health (including agriculture)	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on population and health.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

2.4 Realignment of Ash Road to Mattock's Tree Green junction connection

2.4.1 The change proposes to provide a new junction and link road from the Mattock's Tree Green junction. Removing the direct connection between Ash Road and Mattocks Tree Green junction would discourage drivers from using the previous direct connection to access the south of Taunton via Stoke St Mary.

Table 2-3 Environmental implications of the realignment of Ash Road to Mattock's Tree Green junction connection

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on cultural heritage.
Landscape	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on landscape and visual impact.

Topic	Implications of the design change
Biodiversity	The change would result in some additional loss of native species rich hedgerows supporting populations of hazel dormouse. Biodiversity mitigation has been updated to minimise the impacts on habitats and species.
Geology and soils	The change will reduce the potential interaction with Thornfalcon Refuse Tip (historic landfill site) and therefore reduce the potential to disturb landfill waste. Therefore the change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on noise and vibration.
Population and health (including agriculture)	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on population and health.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment assessment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

2.5 West Hatch Lane extension to Mattock's Tree Green junction

2.5.1 The change has proposed to provide a new road that would run alongside the A358 to connect West Hatch Lane to Mattocks Tree Green junction.

Table 2-4 Environmental implications of West Hatch Lane extension to Mattock's Tree Green junction

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change would remove the significant impact on the listed road bridge at National Grid Referece ST 2815 2249, but would increase the visibility of the scheme from another listed building.
Landscape	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on landscape and visual impact.
Biodiversity	The change would result in some additional loss of native species rich hedgerows supporting populations of hazel dormouse. Biodiversity mitigation has been updated to minimise the impacts on habitats and species.
Geology and soils	The change would introduce additional interaction with the infilled Great Western Railway cutting however it is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	The change has the potential for additional construction noise impacts on the Somerset Progressive School due to the close proximity of the new public road.Traffic volumes are predicted to be low therefore it is unlikely that there would be any significant operational noise impacts from the change. The potential for any significant noise impacts and mitigation will be considered within the Environmental Statement.
Population and health (including agriculture)	The change would require some additional agricultural land.

Topic	Implications of the design change
	Pupils at Somerset Progressive School are likely to experience additional disturbance and amenity impacts during construction. Implications will be further considered within the Environmental Statement.
Road drainage and the water environment	The new road is located within the floodplain of the Meare Stream and areas at risk of surface water flooding. Any potential changes to localised flood risk would be mitigated through the implementation of the drainage design for the scheme which includes floodplain compensation areas. The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate

2.6 Changes to new bridge at Bickenhall Lane

2.6.1 The changes proposed to the new bridge at Bickenhall Lane would make the bridge narrower and move the bridge approximately 165m south. It is proposed to limit access to the overbridge to walkers, cyclists, horse-riders including disabled users, and to local landholders for farm access.

Table 2-5 Environmental implications of the new bridge at Bickenhall Lane

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on cultural heritage.
Landscape	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on landscape and visual impact.
Biodiversity	The change would move the bridge further away from Bickenhall Wood ancient woodland, reducing vegetation loss and the likelihood of indirect impacts upon the woodland. The design includes mitigation to minimise impacts on habitats and, in particular, bat species in this area.
Geology and soils	The bridge will be constructed on the site of the Bickenhall Lane waste transfer station site. However the previous design presented at public consultation also included direct interaction with this potential land contamination site and therefore the change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on noise and vibration.
Population and health (including agriculture)	The change would improve agricultural operations for landowners in this area. The change would provide improved access and connectivity for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders including disabled users across the road.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

2.7 New Capland link road

2.7.1 Following review of consultation feedback and further assessment of the options presented at this location at the public consultation in 2021, our preferred option is to provide a connecting link road between Capland Lane and Village Road. This would provide additional connectivity between settlements to the east of the A358 and extra resilience in case of flooding.

Table 2-6 Environmental implications of the new Capland link road

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change has the potential to result in slightly increased traffic related emissions at locations to the north of the A358 as a result of traffic generated along the new link road. However, it is unlikely that these emissions will be significant with a low risk of exceeding air quality objectives (limit values).
Cultural heritage	The change has the potential to alter the setting of a Grade II listed building but is unlikely that this would have a significant impact. One building (farm dwelling) would be demolished which is not designated but which may be of local interest and would be recorded prior to demolition.
Landscape	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on landscape and visual impact .
Biodiversity	Due to the demolition of a building (farm dwelling), it is assumed on a precautionary basis that this building has the potential to be supporting a bat roost. On this basis, biodiversity mitigation has been updated to minimise this impact.
Geology and soils	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on noise and vibration.
Population and health	The change would provide a new link between the villages of Stewley and Capland. The new link road would require additional agricultural land take and the demolition of a farm dwelling.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

2.8 Proposed works to some local roads

2.8.1 Following further traffic modelling and assessment of changes in traffic flows on the local road network, some changes are proposed to existing local roads to improve safety, reduce congestion and ensure the road is suitable for motorised vehicles and for walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and disabled users.

2.8.2 The changes proposed include:

- Local widening and passing bays on Hayden Lane and Stoke Road
- Traffic calming measures in Ashill Village
- Changes to Cad Road / Rapps Road junction
- Addition of passing bays on Broadway Street

2.8.3 The changes would not have any significant implications on the environment. Several of the options would require some loss of hedgerows, however this has been reduced as much as possible to minimise the impact on habitats and the species these hedgerows support, in particular hazel dormice. Any localised impacts on the water environment would be mitigated through the drainage design for the scheme.

3 Consideration of walking, cycling, horse-riding and disabled access changes

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section presents a summary of the key environmental implications of the proposed changes within this category. A full description of each of the changes is detailed within the *Supplementary consultation booklet*.

3.2 Jordans bridge

3.2.1 The change proposes a new link and bridge over the A358 for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders which can also be used by local landowners for farm access.

Table 3-1 Environmental implications of Jordans bridge

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change would alter localised view from some heritage assets, however it is unlikely that this would be a significant implication for the cultural heritage assessment.
Landscape	The change would result in some localised changes to landscape and visual effects.
Biodiversity	The change would result in some additional loss of hedgerows that support populations of hazel dormouse. The biodiversity mitigation has been updated to minimise impacts on habitats and species.
Geology and soils	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications for geology and soils.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	There will potentially be increased construction noise impacts during the construction of the overbridge and new link.
Population and health (including agriculture)	The change will provide improved access and connectivity for walking, cycling and horse riding across the road. The change improves operations and reduces journey times for landowners accessing farmland located either side of the scheme.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change will cross through an area identified as at high risk of surface water flooding. Any potential changes to localised flood risk will be mitigated through the implementation of drainage design incorporated into the scheme. However the change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

3.3 New restricted byway at Oldbroach Lane in Haydon

Provision of a new restricted byway at Oldbroach Lane to ensure continuity of access to local walking, cycling and horse-riding routes. A new public right of way on the off-road network on Oldbroach Lane would allow users to avoid Haydon Lane and improve connectivity to the Nexus 25 junction and Stoke Road.

Table 3-2 Environmental implications of the new restricted byway at Oldbroach Lane in Haydon

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on cultural heritage.
Landscape	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on landscape and visual impact.
Biodiversity	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on biodiversity.
Geology and soils	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on material assets and waste.
Noise and vibration	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on noise and vibration.
Population and health (including agriculture)	The change will provide improved access and connectivity for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on population and health.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

3.4 New signalised junction including pedestrian and cyclist crossing on the A358 west

3.4.1 The change proposes a new signalised junction including a pedestrian crossing on the existing A358 (west) close to the Southfields roundabout. This would provide improved connections between Horton Cross and Ilminster and provide a link with the local foot/cycle network.

Table 3-3 Environmental implications of the new signalised junction including pedestrian and cyclist crossing on the A358 west

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on cultural heritage.
Landscape	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on landscape and visual impact.
Biodiversity	The change would result in some additional loss of young woodland and hedgerow that are assumed on a precautionary basis to support

Topic	Implications of the design change
	hazel dormice, which have been found in similar habitats along the proposed scheme. The biodiversity mitigation has been updated to minimise impacts on habitats and species.
Geology and soils	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on noise and vibration.
Population and health (including agriculture)	The change will provide improved connectivity across the road. The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on population and health.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

4 Changes to environmental mitigation

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section provides further information on the proposed changes to the biodiversity mitigation, as detailed within the *Supplementary consultation booklet*. You can give your feedback on the changes we are consulting on in the *feedback questionnaire* which can be accessed via the project website www.nationalhighways.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields.

4.1.2 The existing A358 is an ecologically diverse habitat corridor supporting multiple protected species including badger, bats, birds (including barn owl), hazel dormouse, great crested newt, otter, reptiles and water vole.

4.1.3 Following feedback from the public consultation in autumn 2021, the biodiversity mitigation has been amended to reflect new data from additional habitat and species surveys which were undertaken in 2021, details of which are available within the biodiversity survey reports available to view via the project website www.nationalhighways.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields. The proposed changes aim to improve habitat functionality and connectivity within the wider landscape. The main changes to biodiversity mitigation since the public consultation include:

- Areas proposed for offsite mitigation
- Hedgerow improvements
- Woodland improvements

4.1.4 A summary of all the proposed changes made to the scheme including to the biodiversity mitigation is provided in the *Summary of changes booklet*, which includes areas where mitigation has been reconfigured to accommodate design changes as well as minor changes in line with updated survey findings.

4.2 Hedgerow improvements

4.2.1 Ecology surveys undertaken throughout 2021 have identified the presence of hazel dormice within hedgerows, scrub and woodland habitat across the scheme and surrounding area. As the existing hedgerow network is well-established, it is proposed that mitigation would focus on improving this existing network, in addition to the creation of new hedgerows in areas impacted by site clearance.

4.2.2 Hedgerow improvements are proposed across the length of the scheme as shown on the *Environmental masterplans* (available via the project website www.nationalhighways.co.uk/a358-taunton-tosouthfields), with an example provided in Figure 4-1. The proposed improvements would consist of changes to the existing management regime, avoiding activities during the period between the March to September breeding / nesting season (inclusive) and being cut on a three-year rotation, targeting different sections of hedgerow each year, to make sure there are always flowers in spring and berries in autumn to support the hazel dormice, as well as reducing disturbance to nests within this habitat.

4.2.3 The hedgerow improvements are also proposed to enhance connectivity to adjacent woodland areas for foraging and commuting bats and have additional benefits for breeding birds and pollinators. Buffer strips adjacent to hedgerows are also important for most species, therefore a two-metre strip of uncut grass is proposed as part of the hedgerow improvements to provide habitat for birds, insects and small mammals, including hazel dormice.

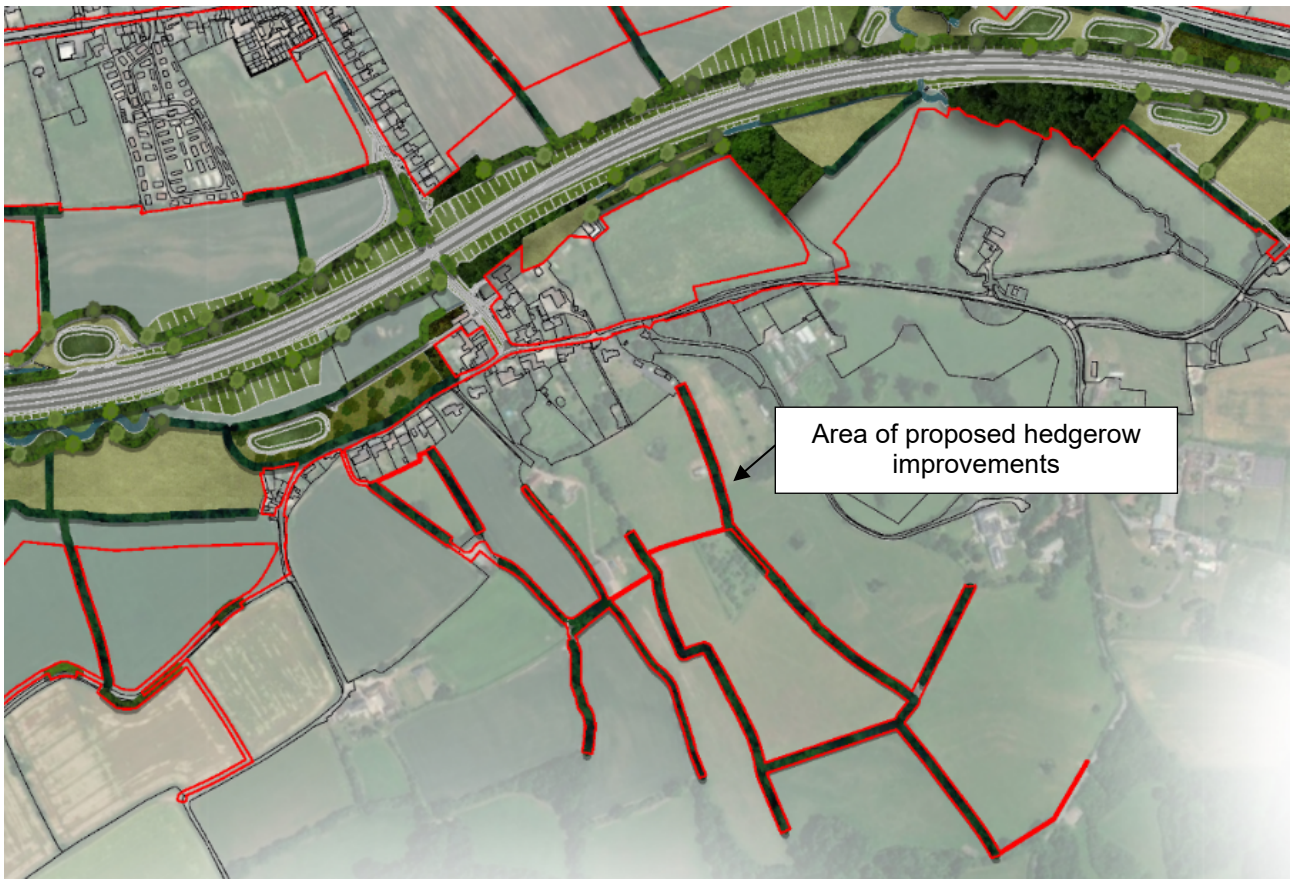


Figure 4-1 Example showing an area of proposed hedgewow improvements

4.3 Woodland improvements

4.3.1 During construction of the scheme, hazel dormice would need to be relocated into areas of retained habitat whilst areas of new planting are establishing. Several areas of existing woodland have been identified across the scheme, as shown on the *Environmental masterplans* (available via the project website www.nationalhighways.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields), with an example provided in Figure 4-2.

4.3.2 Within the areas of existing woodland it is proposed that hazel dormouse boxes are installed in addition to implementing woodland management (as appropriate), such as coppicing. Where implemented, this would be undertaken on a rotational basis in small non-adjacent blocks, to open up the tree canopy allowing ground level vegetation to develop across sections of the woodland. Hazel dormice are often associated with the early stages of woodland habitat, as well as woodland edges, therefore appropriate woodland management is important for maintaining areas of suitable habitat for this species.

4.3.3 These measures aim to increase the number of hazel dormice which existing habitats can support. They have been located adjacent to proposed habitat creation areas to facilitate movement and dispersal into existing and newly created habitats throughout the long-term operation of the scheme.

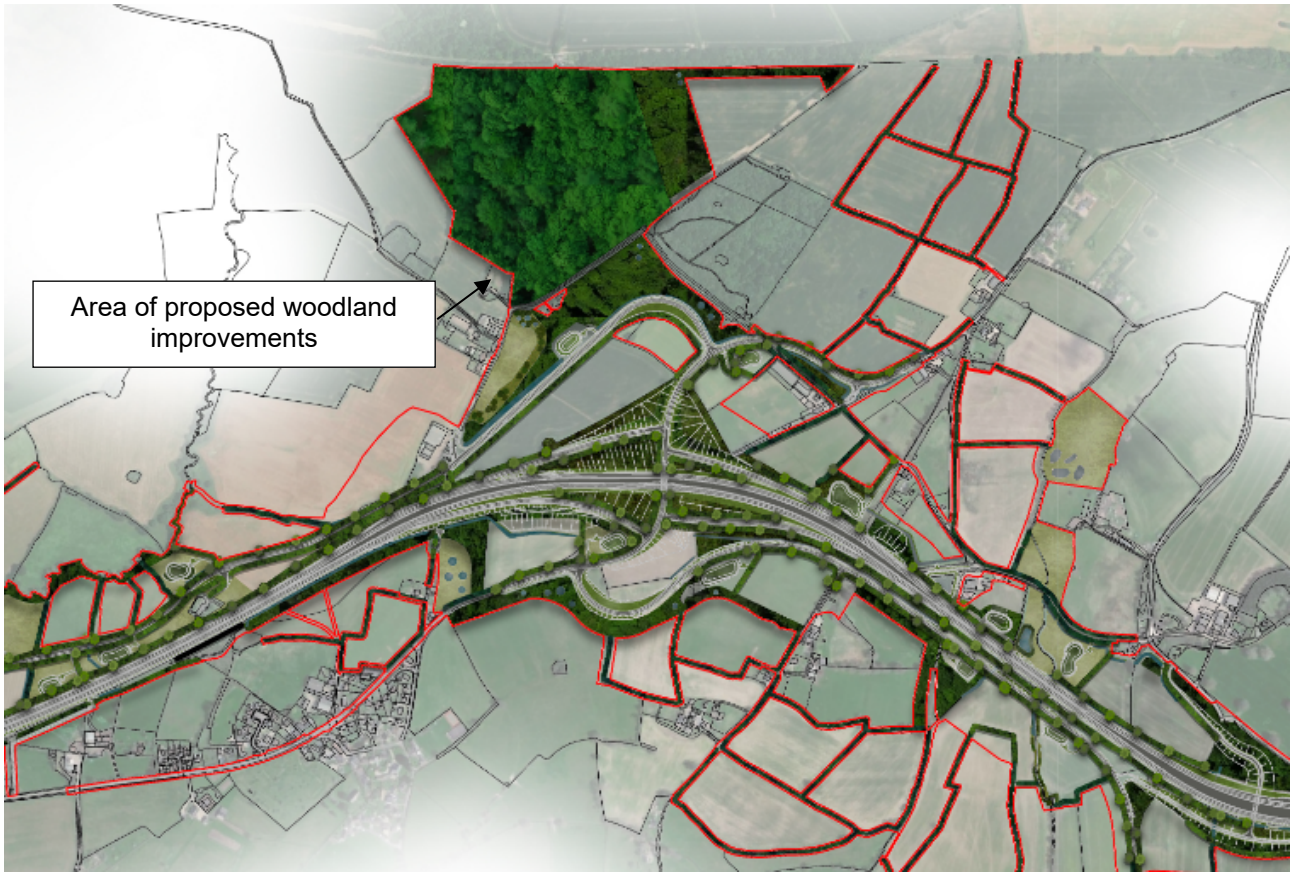
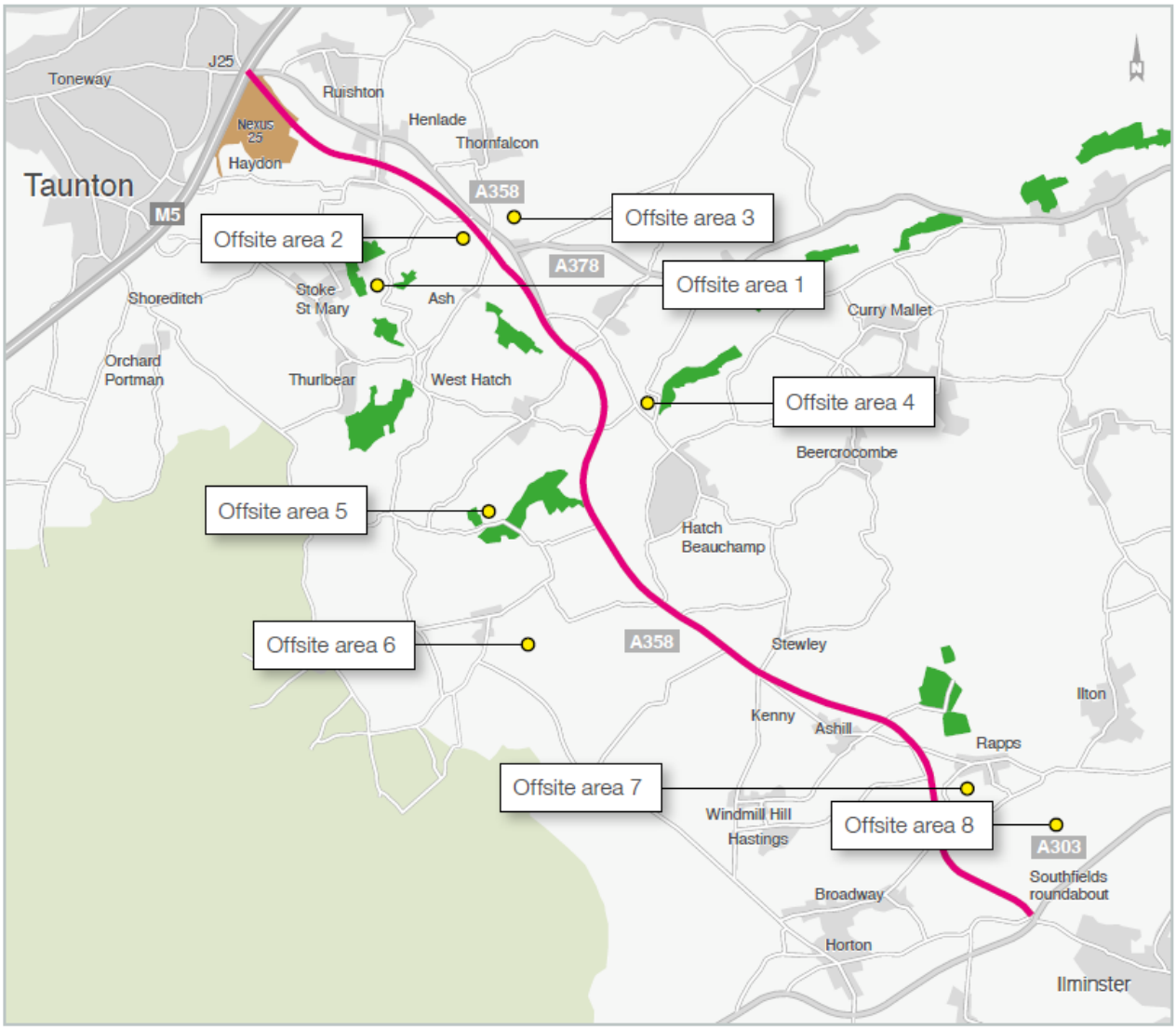


Figure 4-2 Example showing an area of proposed woodland improvements

4.4 Offsite mitigation areas

4.4.1 Following a review of further survey data, we've identified a number of offsite mitigation areas for habitat creation. Areas of woodland planting and grassland creation or enhancement are proposed in eight locations, as shown in Figure 4-3. The provision of offsite habitat allows for the areas to establish during the main construction of the scheme, facilitating any translocation of animals that might be required as well as safeguarding them throughout the construction period and into the future.



Diagrammatic plan not to scale © Crown copyright and database rights 2022 OS 100030649

Figure 4-3 Location of offsite mitigation areas

Offsite area 1

4.4.2 Surveys undertaken throughout 2021 have identified an extensive number of bat species within the vicinity of the A358. Stoke Wood has been identified as supporting 13 of the 17 UK breeding bat species, with maternity roosts identified for several species, including barbastelle and Bechstein's.

4.4.3 Due to the significant level of bat activity within this area and the loss of suitable roosting and foraging habitat (woodland and scattered trees) to facilitate construction of the scheme, the creation of additional woodland habitat is proposed in proximity to the known maternity roosts to support this bat population over the long term.

4.4.4 The proposed woodland planting in this location would connect pockets of existing woodland and provide foraging opportunities away from the proposed scheme. This will have the benefit of reducing disturbance impacts from noise and car headlights during construction and operation of the proposed scheme. In addition, providing habitat away from the scheme allows for early establishment of this habitat prior to construction works commencing.

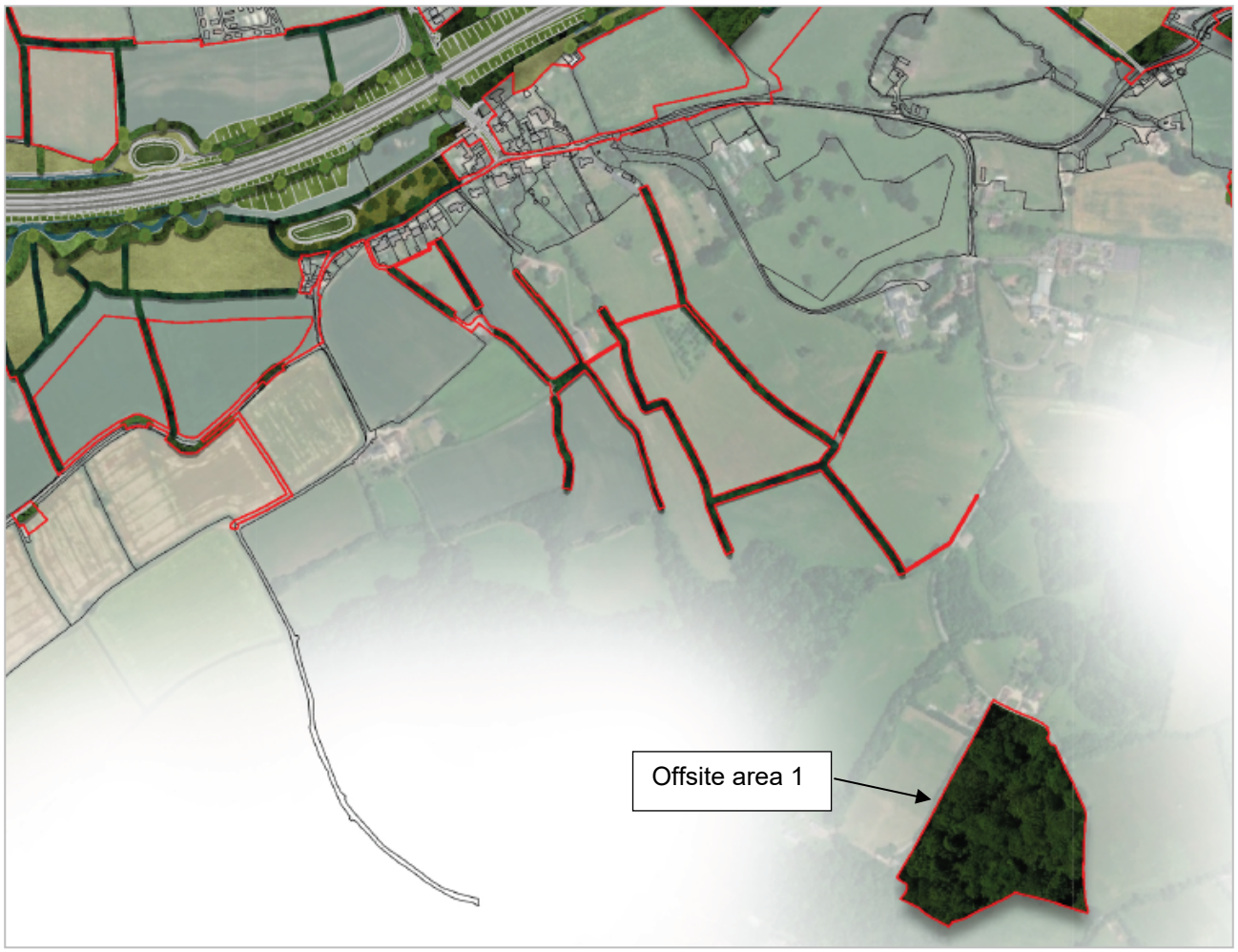


Figure 4-4 Location of offsite area 1

Offsite area 2

4.4.5 To facilitate construction of the proposed scheme in the vicinity of the Mattock's Tree Green junction, reptile populations will need to be relocated to an appropriate alternative location where their existing habitats are impacted by site clearance. This needs to be undertaken in advance of construction works to avoid significant impacts to grass snake, adder and slow worm, which have all been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed Mattocks Tree Green junction.

4.4.6 This location, immediately north of Ashe Farm Caravan Site, is proposed to act as a reptile receptor site and to support amphibians also found in this area. The proposed habitat will consist of grassland and pond areas. This field is connected to the disused railway on its eastern boundary. This provides additional suitable habitat and a potential dispersal route into existing and newly created habitats throughout the long-term operation of the scheme.

Figure 4-5 Location of offsite area 2

Offsite area 3

4.4.7 To facilitate construction of the scheme in the vicinity of the Mattock's Tree Green junction, reptile populations will need to be relocated to an appropriate alternative location where their existing habitats are impacted by site clearance. This needs to be undertaken in advance of construction works to avoid significant impacts to grass snake, adder and slow worm, which have all been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed Mattock's Tree Green junction. In addition, suitable nesting habitat for skylark, a common farmland bird, is also required in the form of suitable grassland provision.

4.4.8 This location, north of the existing A358 at Thorn Clump Local Wildlife Site (LWS), is proposed to act as a reptile receptor site and breeding birds, specifically skylark. The proposed habitat will consist of grassland and artificial refugia, such as log piles. This field is well connected to surrounding suitable habitat by hedgerows and arable field margins, with ponds also located within 250 metres.

Figure 4-6 Location of offsite area 3

Offsite area 4

4.4.9 To facilitate construction of the scheme in the vicinity of Griffin Lane, reptile populations will need to be relocated to an appropriate alternative location where their existing habitats are impacted by site clearance. This needs to be undertaken in advance of construction works to avoid significant impacts to grass snake and slow worm, which have been recorded in this section of the scheme.

4.4.10 This location, adjacent to the disused railway off Village Road, is proposed to act as a reptile receptor site. The proposed habitat will consist of grassland and artificial refugia, such as log piles. This field is connected to the disused railway on its eastern boundary, which provides further suitable habitat and a potential dispersal route into existing and created habitats over the long-term during operation of the scheme.

Figure 4-7 Location of offsite area 4

Offsite area 5

4.4.11 Surveys undertaken throughout 2021 have identified an extensive number of bat species within the vicinity of the A358. Bickenhall Wood has been identified as supporting at least eight of the 17 UK breeding bat species, with maternity roosts identified for several species, including barbastelle and Bechstein's.

4.4.12 Due to the significant level of bat activity within this area and the loss of suitable roosting and foraging habitat (woodland and scattered trees) to facilitate construction of the scheme, the creation of additional woodland habitat is proposed in proximity to the known maternity roosts to support this bat population over the long-term.

4.4.13 The proposed woodland planting in this location would provide improved connectivity between Bickenhall Wood and Boon's Copse, immediately adjacent to the proposed woodland planting, providing foraging opportunities for bats away from the scheme. This will have the benefit of reducing disturbance impacts from noise and car headlights during construction and operation of the scheme. In addition, providing habitat away from the scheme allows for early establishment of this habitat prior to construction works commencing.

Figure 4-8 Location of offsite area 5

Offsite area 6

4.4.14 To facilitate construction of the scheme in the vicinity of Village Road overbridge and the Capland link road, reptile populations will need to be relocated to an appropriate alternative location where their existing habitats are impacted by site clearance. This needs to be undertaken in advance of construction works to avoid significant impacts to grass snake and slow worm, which have been recorded in this section of the scheme.

4.4.15 This location, adjacent to Fivehead River, is proposed to act as a reptile receptor site. The proposed habitat will consist of grassland and artificial refugia, such as log piles. This field is connected to Abbey Hill Farm Meadow LWS on its eastern boundary and the Fivehead River corridor on its western boundary, providing further suitable habitat and potential dispersal routes into existing and created habitats over the long-term during operation of the scheme.

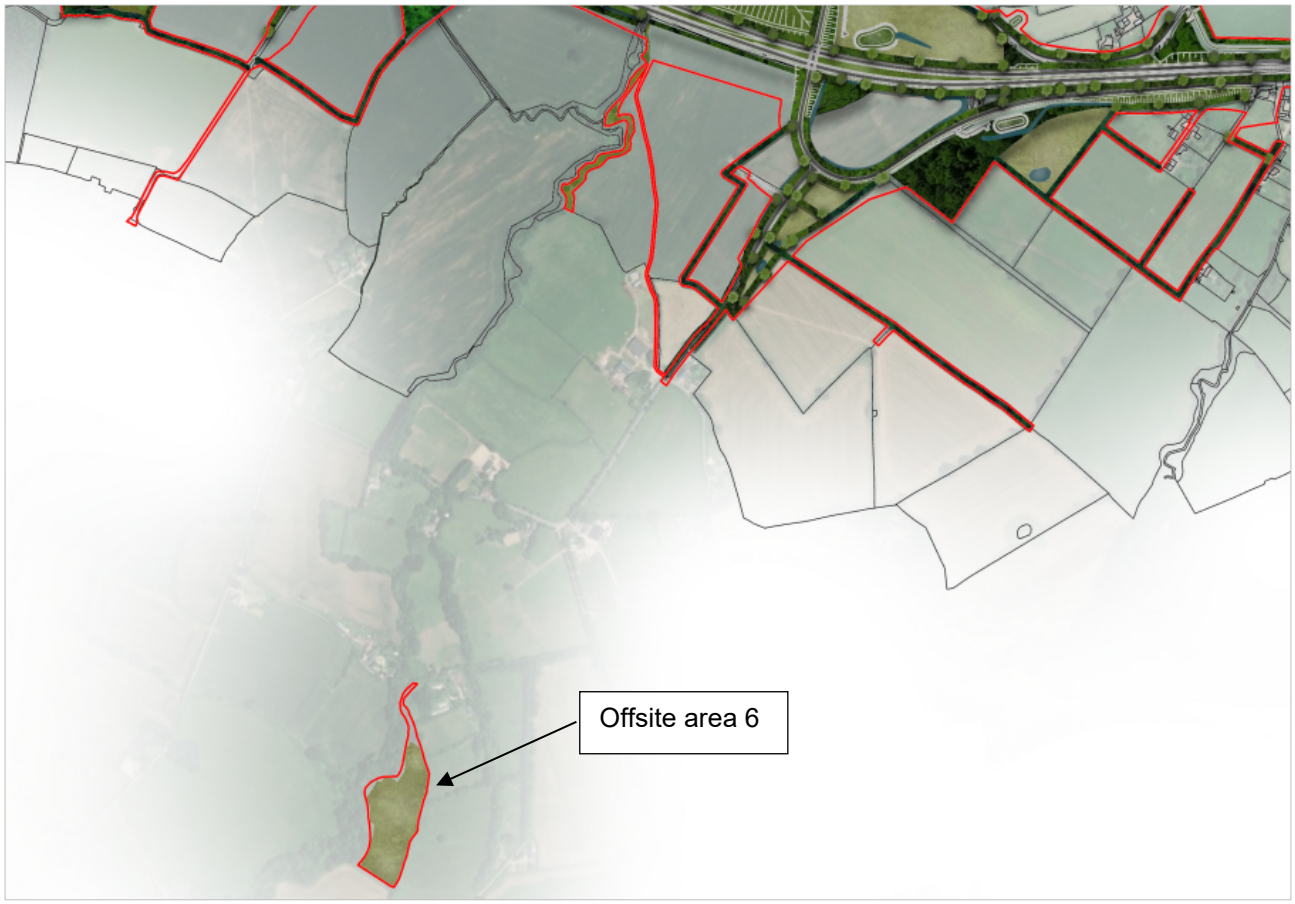


Figure 4-9 Location of offsite area 6

Offsite area 7

4.4.16 Surveys undertaken throughout 2021 have identified water voles using sections of Cad Brook, particularly to the east of the existing A358. To facilitate construction of the scheme in the vicinity of Cad Brook, water voles will need to be translocated from the sections of existing channel that are subject to site clearance. This needs to be undertaken in advance of construction works to avoid significant impacts to this species.

4.4.17 It is proposed that a new channel, designed to be suitable for water voles, is created within this field adjacent to Cad Brook, providing further suitable open water habitat for this species. This field is also proposed to act as a reptile receptor site, with habitat consisting of grassland, ponds and artificial refugia, such as log piles. This receptor site would support reptiles that need to be relocated from existing habitats subject to site clearance south of Ashill junction.

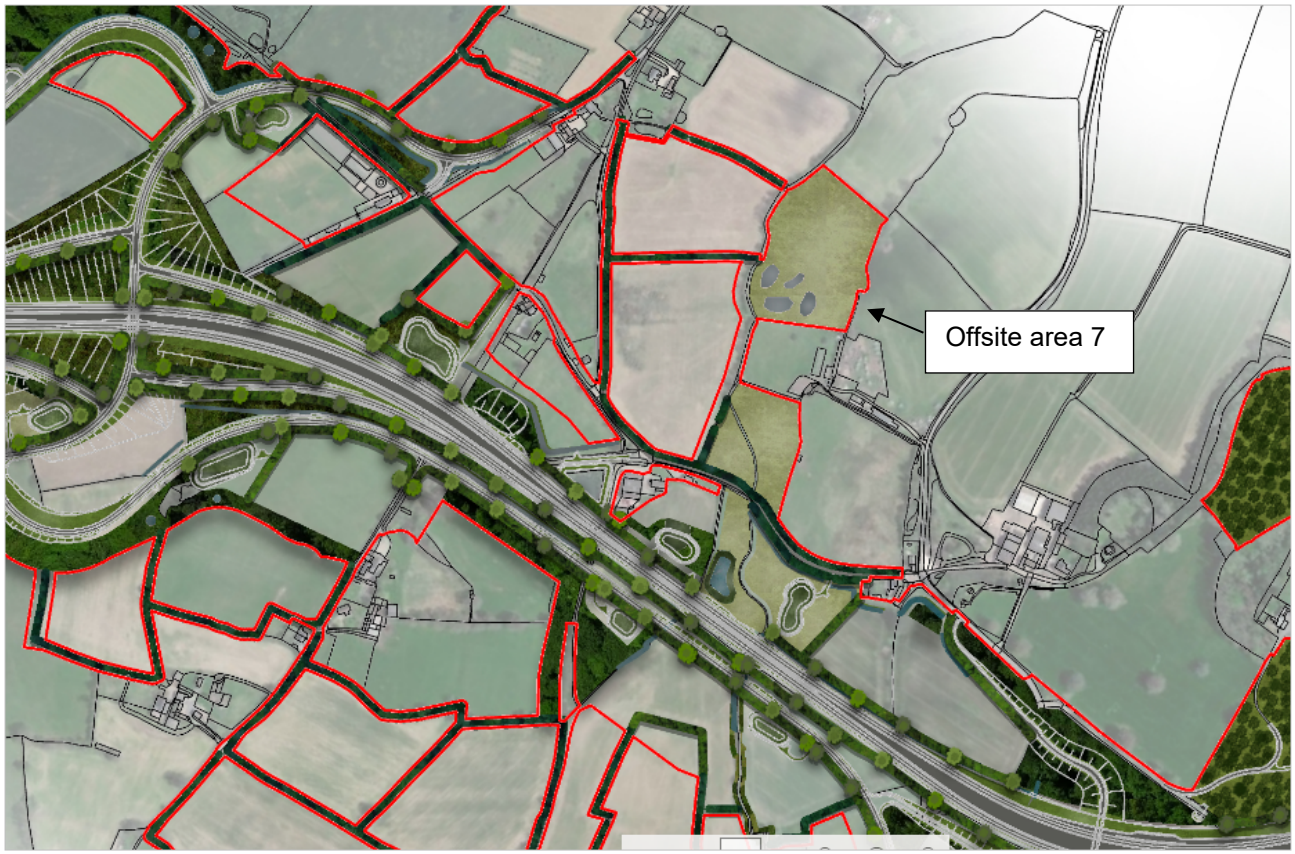


Figure 4-10 Location of offsite area 7

Offsite area 8

4.4.18 To facilitate construction of the scheme in the vicinity of Jordans Park and Southfields roundabout, reptile populations will need to be relocated to an appropriate alternative location where their existing habitats are impacted by site clearance. This needs to be undertaken in advance of construction works to avoid significant impacts to grass snake and slow worm, which have been recorded in this section of the scheme. In addition, construction of this section of the scheme would result in the loss of hedgerow and woodland that currently support hazel dormice. Whilst hedgerow improvements are proposed across this area, further habitat creation is required to support this species over the long term.

4.4.19 This location, adjacent to the disused railway and canal, is proposed to act as a reptile receptor site and to provide additional suitable habitat for hazel dormice. The proposed habitat will consist of woodland planting, grassland, ponds and artificial refugia, such as log piles. These fields are connected to the disused railway, which provides further suitable habitat and a potential dispersal route into existing and created habitats over the long-term during operation of the scheme.

Figure 4-11 Location of offsite area 8

5 Consideration of the change to the location of the main construction compound

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section presents a summary of the key environmental implications of the proposed change to the location of the main construction compound. A full description of the change is detailed within the *Supplementary consultation booklet*.

5.2 New location for the main construction compound

5.2.1 The change proposes to relocate the main construction compound for the scheme from the Nexus 25 development site to near the Mattock's Tree Green junction and provide a temporary bridge east of the existing A358/A378 junction. This would allow a proportion of the site traffic to access and leave the compound without the need to travel on the public highway.

Table 5-1 Environmental implications of the new main construction compound

Topic	Implications of the design change
Air quality	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on air quality.
Cultural heritage	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on cultural heritage. However, further archaeological surveys will be undertaken to investigate the archaeological potential of the area.
Landscape	The change would result in some localised temporary and reversible changes to landscape and visual receptors.
Biodiversity	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on biodiversity.
Geology and soils	The proposed compound area is within 100m east of a service station and caravan sales site, it is assumed there would be only shallow disturbance of soils, therefore the change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on geology and soils in terms of potential land contamination.
Material assets and waste	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on materials and waste.
Noise and vibration	There is the potential for additional temporary noise impacts at nearby noise sensitive receptors from the construction compound. This would be minimised as much as possible through the use of appropriate mitigation.
Population and health	The change would require additional agricultural land. The change may have a localised health impact on receptors from increased construction noise but it is not considered this would be significant.
Road drainage and the water environment	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on the water environment.
Climate	The change is unlikely to result in any significant implications on climate.

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