

Birmingham & Black Country Local Sites Assessment Report

EcoRecord Reference	Site Name	Grid Reference	Current Status [1]	Survey Date(s)
WV028	Land South of Citadel Junction	SO 96290 96490	SLINC / PSI	15/08/2022
Planning Authority	Site Ownership	Area/Length	Reason for Survey	Report Date
Wolverhampton City Council	Unknown	3ha	SINC / SLINC Review 2022	31/01/2023
Meets LS Criteria	SLINC	Type	Wildlife	i.e. Wildlife/Geological
Amendment(s)	Extension/ Deletion	i.e. None; New Site; Upgrade; Downgrade; Extension; Whole/Part Deletion		
Description	Include adjacent PSI into existing SLINC, delete area of site to west (as this has been lost to development)			

Citation (Summary of Value)

The centre of the site is dominated by a mosaic of grassland, tall herb vegetation and ruderal communities with significant areas of dense scrub and woodland to its north, south and east. Glades containing grassland and wetland occur within the woodland and dense scrub and a remnant pond transitioning to marsh / marshy grassland is located in its north-west corner. Here the wetland includes species such as Yellow Flag – *Iris pseudacorus*, False Fox-Sedge – *Carex otrubae*, Common Fleabane – *Pulicaria dysenterica*, Meadowsweet – *Filipendula ulmaria* and Hard Rush – *Juncus inflexus*.

Most notable within glades to the east of the site is Spiny Restharrow – *Ononis spinosa*, alongside species including Common Knapweed – *Centaurea nigra sens. lat. (=nigra/debauxii)*, Male Fern – *Dryopteris filix-mas*, Sedge species – *Carex* spp. and Purple-loosestrife – *Lythrum salicaria*. Tall herb vegetation with elements of semi-improved neutral grassland fringes the south-western boundary where Common Blue butterflies fly over a series of anthills.

Semi-improved neutral grassland makes up a core habitat west of the centre of the site with typical species including Common Knapweed, Bird's-foot Trefoil – *Lotus corniculatus*, Red Fescue – *Festuca rubra*, Yorkshire Fog – *Holcus lanatus*, Autumn Hawkbit – *Scorzonoides autumnalis* and Red Clover – *Trifolium pratense*. Also, notable here is Wild Thyme – *Thymus polytrichus* which is locally frequent.

Local Site Selection Criteria

Ecological

Habitat Diversity	M	Broad-leaved woodland, dense and scattered scrub, semi-improved neutral grassland, tall herb vegetation and marsh / marshy grassland habitats present, the site also includes areas of bare earth and rock and occasional anthills which provide additional micro-habitats. Areas of standing and fallen dead wood also provide habitat for birds, invertebrates and fungi within the scrub and woodland fringes.
Species Diversity	M	A diverse flora across the site with the tall herb vegetation, semi-improved neutral grassland and marsh / marshy grassland habitats having the highest range of species.
Habitat Rarity	M	Open water previously noted appears to have transitioned towards marsh / marshy grassland which is of local importance.
Species Rarity	H	The current survey includes five axiophyte species: Wild Carrot – <i>Daucus carota subsp. carota</i> , Meadowsweet, Hoary Ragwort – <i>Jacobaea erucifolia</i> , Red Bartsia – <i>Odontites vernus</i> and Common Fleabane as well as the locally uncommon Purple-loosestrife. However, the most notable species is the locally very rare Spiny Restharrow which occurs within several woodland glades in the eastern half of the site.
Size or Extent	M	A moderately sized site although the wetland areas are small (less than 0.25ha) with the remainder composed of scrub, broad-leaved woodland, semi-improved neutral grassland and tall herb / ruderal vegetation.
Naturalness	M	Semi-natural in character overall, however there are signs of past and more recent disturbance (e.g. the new spine road that took part of the original site) throughout.
Position & Connectivity	M	Positioned directly adjacent to areas of grassland / scrub and woodland to the south as well as links to the Walsall canal and the Alexander Metals site to the north.

Geological

	N/A	Not assessed
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Social

Historical & Cultural		Unknown
Access	L/M	Access is rather limited with the only access route appearing to be through the Public Open Space to the south. In addition, part of the site has uneven ground and some steep slopes with areas of dense and rather impenetrable scrub and woodland.

Aesthetic	M	The isolation of the site together with dense scrub and woodland, buffers and conceals much of the surrounding industrial units, housing and road network. Not exactly a tranquil site, there are good viewing points to see the sweeping mosaic of habitats present and compared to the open space near housing to the south, a very low amount of litter and tipping.
Recorded History	M	The SLINC was designated following survey in 1989, and the boundary was amended (to exclude the part of the SLINC that had been subsequently developed) through the adoption of the Bilston Corridor Areas Action Plan in 2013
Value for Learning	L/M	Limited by poor access but there is potential if access were to be improved between the site and adjacent Public Open Space and there was increased awareness of the value of the site.

Site Description
<p>Located to the east of Bilston, the site is bordered by the industrial area of Dale Street along its western boundary and further industrial units to the immediate north. Originally the Walsall canal formed its eastern boundary but since the 1989 survey a new road has been built which now runs along the site to the immediate east.</p> <p>The previous survey in 1989 referred to the site being a former sludge bed of an adjacent sewage works and described an open water pool in the north-west corner and other areas of ditch and pool and embankments and fencelines indicative of a much more open site than is the case currently.</p> <p>Much of the north and east of the site is dominated by broadleaved woodland and dense scrub although some open glades, including interesting and diverse marshy grassland do still occur. A mosaic of semi-improved neutral grassland and tall herb ruderal vegetation is a feature of the south and west of the site where the grassland appears quite dry and free-draining although the far south-west corner is damp and low-lying.</p>

Habitats			
Phase 1 Name	Broadleaved Woodland – Semi-natural	Phase 1 Code	A1.1.1
<p>Concentrated in the north-west and east of the site, the canopy is composed of abundant Ash – <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> with frequent Willow species – <i>Salix</i> spp., Pedunculate Oak – <i>Quercus robur</i>, Wild Cherry – <i>Prunus avium</i> and Birch species – <i>Betula</i> spp., with occasional Alder – <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and Sycamore – <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>. The understorey mirrors the species composition of surrounding dense scrub with Hazel – <i>Corylus avellana</i>, Hawthorn – <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> and Blackthorn – <i>Prunus spinosa</i> all frequent. These habitats may be of value for bird and invertebrate species.</p>			
Phase 1 Name	Scrub – dense / continuous & scattered	Phase 1 Code	A2.1 & A2.2
<p>A large compartment of dense scrub, surrounded by broadleaved woodland is located within the eastern half of the site with Hazel, Hawthorn and Blackthorn all frequent and Bramble – <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg occasional to locally dominant and Dog Rose – <i>Rosa canina</i> agg occasional. These species also feature within the rather more linear band of scrub adjacent to an old embankment that runs north to south across the centre of the site, where patches of Gorse – <i>Ulex europaeus</i> are also found. These habitats may be of value for bird and invertebrate species.</p> <p>Scattered scrub, often Hawthorn, occurs amongst other habitat types within the western half of the site.</p>			
Phase 1 Name	Neutral Grassland – semi-improved	Phase 1 Code	B2.2
<p>Concentrated within the centre of the western part of the site, this dry, fairly level and free draining area of grassland is composed of species typical of neutral grassland including Common Knapweed, Bird's-foot Trefoil, Red Fescue, Yorkshire Fog, Autumn Hawkbit and Red Clover. It also includes locally frequent patches of Wild Thyme, a species more often associated with unimproved calcareous grassland swards as well as a range of species characteristic of grassland which has been subject to disturbance, such as Red Bartsia, Ribbed Melilot - <i>Melilotus officinalis</i>, Hairy Tare – <i>Vicia hirsuta</i> and Common Toadflax - <i>Linaria vulgaris</i>. These habitats may be of value for bird and invertebrate species.</p>			
Phase 1 Name	Marshy Grassland	Phase 1 Code	B5
<p>The principal area, albeit no more than 0.1ha, is found in the north-west of the site, towards the boundary with Dale Street (TN003). Meadowsweet – <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> is locally abundant with Sedge species and Hard Rush – <i>Juncus inflexus</i> being at least occasional. Hoary Ragwort and Wild Teasel – <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i> are also locally frequent and the area is fringed by Willow species. Another small and discrete area of marshy grassland is found to the east of the site (TN002) with frequent Sedge species and Wild Teasel alongside Yellow Iris and Purple-loosestrife. These habitats may be of value for amphibian, invertebrate and bird species, but are unlikely to be utilised by water voles (the site being quite isolated and these habitat patches limited in scope)</p>			
Phase 1 Name	Other Tall Herb & Fern	Phase 1 Code	C3.1
<p>There are elements of tall herb ruderal vegetation associated with the broad wetland, grassland and scrub habitats on site. A significant area is situated along the western boundary (TN006) where abundant Great Willowherb – <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> occurs as a linear band of vegetation for approximately 100 metres alongside the perimeter of the site. Another important area occurs as a glade within the dense scrub and woodland to the east adjacent to TN001 and TN002. These habitats may be of value for bird and invertebrate species.</p> <p>Along the southern boundary the tall herb vegetation is interspersed by a patch of Japanese Knotweed.</p>			
Notes			

Habitats of Note [2]						
Phase 1 Name	Phase 1 Code	EHD	NERC	LBAP	Rarity	Year
N/A						
Notes						

Species of Note [2]							
Flora							
Species	Statutory	NERC	LBAP	RDL	Rarity	Axiophyte	Year
Agrostis canina - Velvet Bent					U	Y	1989
Carduus nutans - Musk Thistle					U		1987
Daucus carota subsp. carota - Wild Carrot					F	Y	2022
Filipendula ulmaria – Meadowsweet					F	Y	2022

Jacobaea erucifolia - Hoary Ragwort					U	Y	2022
Lythrum salicaria - Purple-loosestrife					U		2022
Odontites vernus - Red Bartsia					F	Y	2022
Ononis spinosa - Spiny Restharrow				RLENG. Lr(NT)	VR		2022
Pulicaria dysenterica - Common Fleabane					U	Y	2022
Reseda lutea - Wild Mignonette					F	Y	1989
Trifolium medium - Zigzag Clover					F	Y	1989

Notes

Fauna

Species	Statutory	NERC	LBAP	RDL	Concern	Rarity	Year
Coenonympha pamphilus - Small Heath		Y		RLGB.L r(NT)		U	2005
Chiasmia clathrata - Latticed Heath		Y				C	2005
Triturus cristatus - Great Crested Newt	HabRegs2, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.4c, WCA5/9.5a	Y	Y			U	1995
Alauda arvensis - Skylark		Y	Y		BRed	C	1989
Apus apus - Swift					BRed	C	1989
Chloris chloris - Greenfinch					BRed	C	1989
Emberiza schoeniclus - Reed Bunting		y			BAmb	C	1989
Linaria cannabina - Linnet					BRed	C	1989
Sturnus vulgaris - Starling					BRed	VC	1987

The following Species of Note have been recorded within 500m of the assessment site boundary.

Scotopteryx chenopodiata - Shaded Broad-bar		Y				F	2010
Tyria jacobaeae - Cinnabar		Y				C	2003
Bufo bufo - Common Toad	WCA5/9.5a	Y	Y			F	2005
Lissotriton vulgaris - Smooth Newt	WCA5/9.5a		Y			F	1987
Rana temporaria - Common Frog	WCA5/9.5a		Y			F	1998
Chroicocephalus ridibundus - Black-headed Gull					BAmb	C	1987
Passer domesticus - House Sparrow		Y			BRed	VC	1987
Perdix perdix - Grey Partridge		Y	Y		BRed	U	1988
Phylloscopus trochilus - Willow Warbler					BAmb	C	1987
Prunella modularis - Dunnock					BAmb	VC	1987
Vanellus vanellus - Lapwing		Y				F	2007
Arvicola amphibius - European Water Vole	WCA5/9.4.a , WCA5/9.4b	Y				C	2000
Erinaceus europaeus - West European Hedgehog		Y				C	2009
Meles meles - Eurasian Badger	PBA		Y			C	2017
Pipistrellus pipistrellus - Common Pipistrelle	HabRegs2, WCA5/9.4b, WCA5/9.5a		Y				2014

Notes

Site/Habitat Suitability for Other Species of Note (not recorded during the survey)

Description/Notes	The site is highly suitable in terms of foraging and refugia for a range of amphibia including Common Frog, Common Toad, Great Crested Newt and Smooth Newt. The mosaic of grassland, scrub and tall herb vegetation is highly suitable as a resting / foraging location for a range of passage / migrant bird species.
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Invasive Species [3]

Species	Location	Abundance (DAFOR)	Year Recorded
Elodea canadensis - Canadian Waterweed	-	-	1989
Fallopia japonica – Japanese Knotweed	SO 96331 96432	R	2022

Notes

Geology

Solid/Drift Formation	Bedrock: Pennine Middle Coal Measures Formation – Mudstone, siltstone & sandstone.
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	Superficial deposits: Till, Devensian – Diamicton.
Description	Bedrock: Sedimentary bedrock formed between 318 & 309.5 million years ago during Carboniferous period. Superficial deposits: Sedimentary superficial deposit formed 116 to 11.8 thousand years ago during Quaternary period.
Features of Value	
1	
2	

Soils

Loamy soils with naturally high groundwater

Public Access & Site Usage

Land Use	Public Open Space
Access Level	Unrestricted
Access Type(s)	Open access

Comparison with Previous Survey(s) Results

Approximately 0.2ha of the eastern section of the PSI has been lost to road development since the last survey. There has also been new industrial development immediately north of the site which may have had an impact. There are no recent signs of grazing management taking place although fly-grazing still occurs on POS land to the south of the site. Further encroachment of scrub and woodland and loss of open water / wetland areas appears to have occurred.

Summary of Assessment

The site comfortably qualifies as a SLINC as it is of at least moderate value for most of the ecological criteria. The presence of a number of locally uncommon / rare species adds to its interest. It serves as an important assemblage of habitats within a local context. Key wetland habitat remains on site, but it is becoming diminished over time as scrub and woodland advances. However, this can be redressed through appropriate intervention and site management.

Recommendations (including further survey & site management/enhancement)

1	Development of a vision and management plan for the site to include management and retention of wetland and grassland habitat (TN001 & TN003), enhanced management of grassland (TN004) and management of woodland / scrubland glades (e.g. TN001).
2	Investigate feasibility of controlled pony grazing of grassland and other habitat
3	Control / eradication of Japanese Knotweed
4	Further monitoring / surveillance of key species (e.g., Spiny Restharrow)
5	Survey to establish the presence/ likely absence of Great Crested Newt in waterbodies within 500m of the Site.
6	Further Survey to establish the presence of Canadian Waterweed and map extent, where relevant, to determine control and mitigation measures

Data Sources

	Source	Date
Species and Habitat Data Source(s)	EcoRecord Data Search 2022	15/09/2022
Geological Data Source(s)	Soils: Cranfield Soil & Agrifood Institute - Soilscape soil types viewer - National Soil Resources Institute. Cranfield University (landis.org.uk) Geology: British Geological Survey (BGS) - BGS Geology Viewer (BETA)	15/09/2022
Historic Data Sources(s)	Wolverhampton Phase 2 Survey – Land East of Dale Street, 1989. Reproduced by EcoRecord the Ecological Database for the Black Country and Birmingham on behalf of Wolverhampton CC and The Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust (BBWT)	15/09/2022
Assessment Author and Organisation	Julian Jones / Julian Jones Ecology Services on behalf of BBWT. Edited by Alexander Lane and Andrew Slater of BBWT.	17/10/2022

[1] Definitions of Local Sites in B&BC (SINCs & SLINCs) and Potential Sites of Importance (PSIs)

In Birmingham and the Black Country Local Wildlife and Geological Sites encompass what are termed Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (**SINCs**) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (**SLINCs**). This two-tier system aims to ensure that all sites of substantive local nature conservation

and geological value are selected by assessing sites in both a sub-regional (i.e. Birmingham and the Black Country) and metropolitan borough or city context (either Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall or Wolverhampton). The two designations are defined as:

- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (**SINC**) - Sites of substantive nature conservation value in the context of Birmingham and the Black Country.
- Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (**SLINC**) - Sites of substantive nature conservation value in the context of a metropolitan borough.

Potential Sites of Importance (**PSIs**) have not yet been assessed against the Local Wildlife and Geological Sites selection criteria but may potentially support species of note, areas of important semi-natural habitat or valuable geological features. PSIs are identified primarily through the use of aerial photography, but also through reference to old maps, existing records and local knowledge. Commonly these sites will not have been subject to the survey work necessary to undertake a Local Wildlife and Geological Sites assessment.

[2] Habitats/Species of Note Tables – Attribute Definitions

STATUTORY (PROTECTED) - **EHD** = EU Habitats Directive (plus where relevant the Annexe II or IV) | **WCA S1** = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 1 (birds protected at all times) | **WCA S5** = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 5 (animals with various levels of protection) | **WCA S8** = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 8 (higher and lower plants with various levels of protection) | **PBA** = Protection of Badgers Act 1992 | **HabRegs2** = The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2010 (Schedule 2) | **HabRegs4** = The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2010 (Schedule 4).

NERC – **Y** = Habitats/Species included on the current list of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006 or amended).

LBAP – **Y** = Habitats/Species included on the latest B&BC LBAP list of Priority Habitats/Species.

RDL - Species included on Global IUCN & British Red Data Lists: **BRed** = Bird Population Status – red | **BAmb** = Bird Population Status - amber | **RLGB.EN** = IUCN (2001) – Endangered | **RLGB.VU** = IUCN (2001) – Vulnerable | **RDBGB.R** = IUCN (pre 1994) – Rare | **RLGB.Lr(NT)** = IUCN (2001) - Lower risk - near threatened | **RDBGB.IK** = RDB - Insufficient known | **RLGB.DD** = IUCN (2001) - Data Deficient

RARITY (HABITATS) - BIRMINGHAM & BLACK COUNTRY - **Y** = Habitats included on the B&BC list of locally rare habitats (administered by EcoRecord).

RARITY (FLORA SPECIES) - BIRMINGHAM & BLACK COUNTRY - (based on data held and managed by EcoRecord): **VR** = Very Rare - a species present in less than 1.0% of 1Km squares, tetrads, or 5Km squares in B&BC | **R** = Rare - a species present in 1.0% - 4.3% of 1Km squares, tetrads, or 5Km squares in B&BC | **U** = Uncommon - a species present in 4.3% - 12% of 1Km squares, tetrads or 5Km squares in B&BC | **NR** = no recent B&BC records.

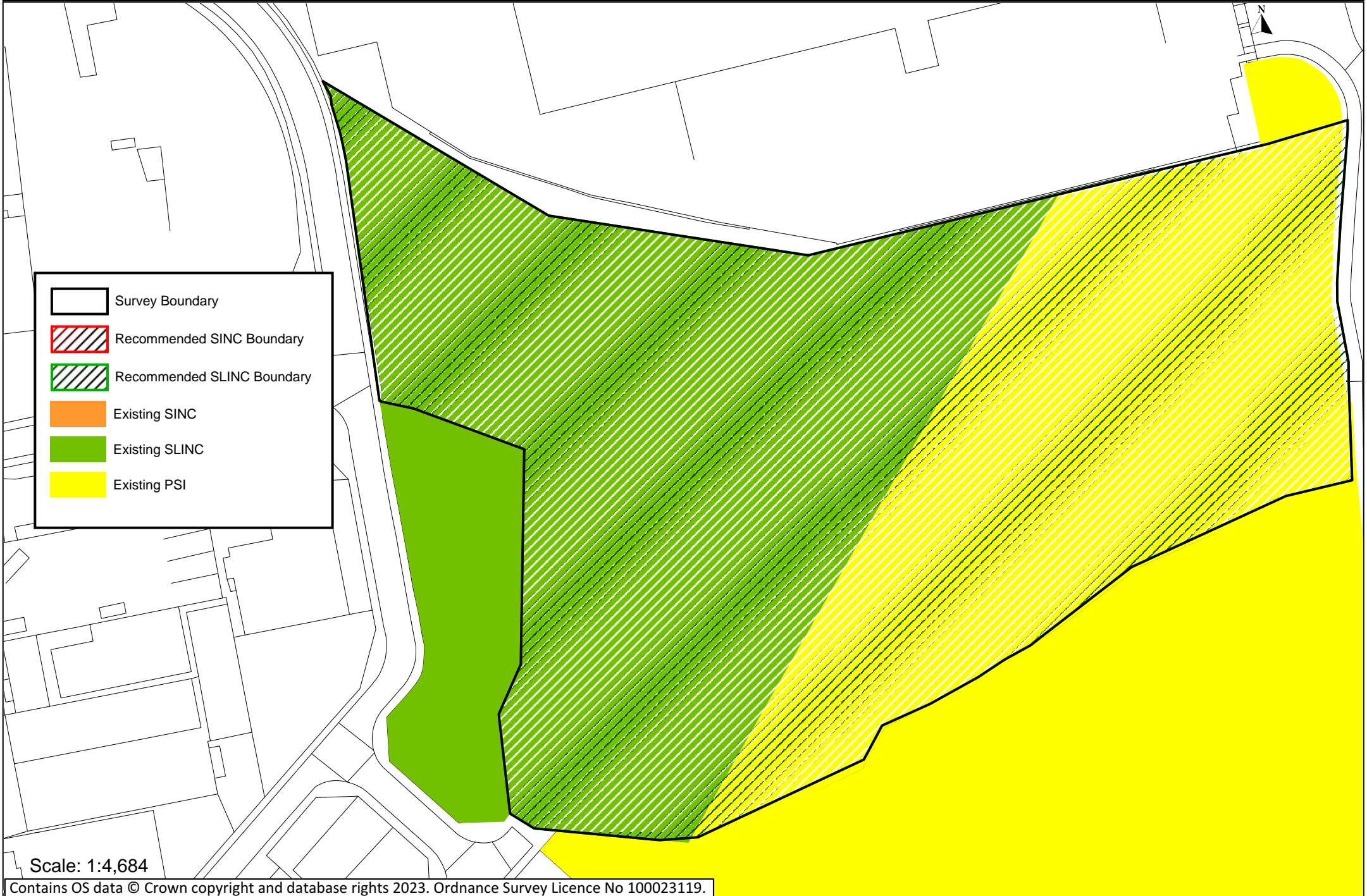
AXIOPHYTE - **BBCF_Ax** = included on the Birmingham & the Black Country list of axiophytes (administered by EcoRecord).

YEAR - The most recent year the species has been recorded.

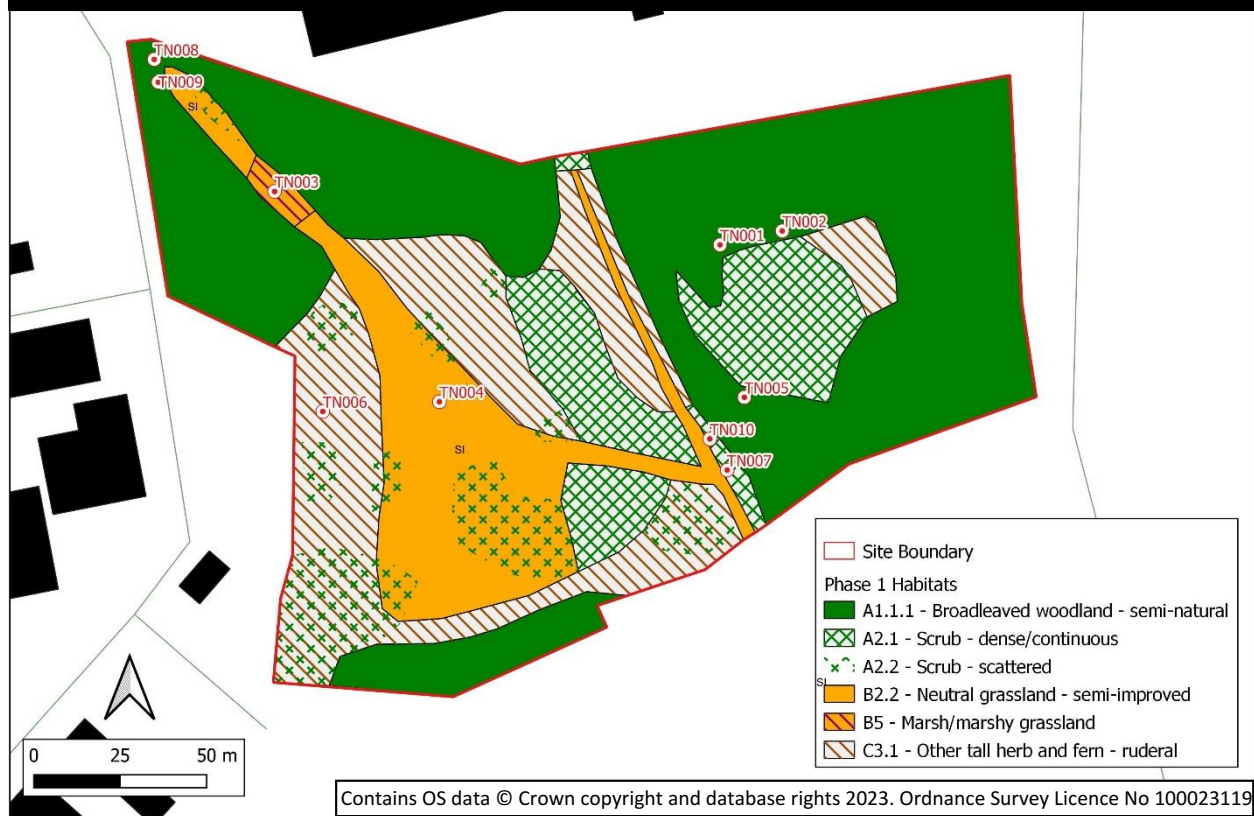
[3] Species listed on Schedule 9 part 1 (animals) and part 2 (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended - this lists animals which may not be released or allowed to escape into the wild and plants which may not be planted or otherwise caused to grow in the wild.

Report Maps

Map 1: Land South of Citadel Junction Current and Recommended Designations



Map 2: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map for Land South of Citadel Junction



Target Notes

Target Note Ref.	Target Note Description
TN001	Woodland glade at NGR: SO 96329 96497 with patches of Spiny Restharrow.
TN002	A damp hollow within a woodland glade at NGR SO 96347 96501 with Spiny Restharrow and Purple-loosestrife.
TN003	Marsh / marshy grassland area with locally abundant Meadowsweet and locally frequent Yellow Iris and Water Mint – <i>Mentha aquatica</i> .
TN004	Anthills within open semi-improved neutral grassland habitat
TN005	Recently felled trees within broadleaved woodland
TN006	Tall herb ruderal community with scattered scrub dominated by Great Willowherb
TN007	Japanese Knotweed within tall herb / ruderal community at NGR SO 96331 96432
TN008	Unauthorised access / egress point through gap in metal railings
TN009	Evidence of littering / fly-tipping
TN010	Clumps of Tansy and Fennel



Photo 1: View of marsh / marshy grassland in north-west of site (TN003)



Photo 2: Showing expanse of semi-improved neutral grassland and scattered scrub (TN004) looking toward industrial units to the north of site



Photo 3: Small area of marsh / marshy grassland amongst tall herb vegetation (TN002)



Photo 4: Tall herb ruderal vegetation along western boundary (TN006)

Species Records

FLORA

Whole Site

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder
<i>Armoracia rusticana</i>	Horse-radish
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch
<i>Betula pubescens</i>	
<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	Butterfly-bush
<i>Carex otrubae</i>	False Fox-sedge
<i>Centaurea nigra</i> sens. lat. (= <i>nigra</i> / <i>debauxii</i>)	Common Knapweed
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay Willowherb
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle
<i>Cornus</i>	flowering plant
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	Crested Dog's-tail
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot
<i>Daucus carota</i> subsp. <i>carota</i>	Wild Carrot
<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Wild Teasel
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> agg.	fern

Elytrigia repens	Common Couch
Epilobium ciliatum	American Willowherb
Epilobium hirsutum	Great Willowherb
Epilobium montanum	Broad-leaved Willowherb
Equisetum arvense	Field Horsetail
Fallopia japonica	Japanese Knotweed
Festuca rubra subsp. rubra	flowering plant
Filipendula ulmaria	Meadowsweet
Foeniculum vulgare	Fennel
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire-fog
Iris pseudacorus	Yellow Iris
Jacobaea erucifolia	Hoary Ragwort
Jacobaea vulgaris	Common Ragwort
Juncus inflexus	Hard Rush
Linaria vulgaris	Common Toadflax
Lotus corniculatus	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil
Lythrum salicaria	Purple-loosestrife
Medicago lupulina	Black Medick
Melilotus officinalis	Ribbed Melilot
Mentha aquatica	Water Mint
Odontites vernus	Red Bartsia
Oenothera	Evening Primrose
Ononis spinosa	Spiny Restharrow
Plantago lanceolata	Ribwort Plantain
Potentilla reptans	Creeping Cinquefoil
Prunus avium	Wild Cherry
Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn
Pulicaria dysenterica	Common Fleabane
Quercus robur	Pedunculate Oak
Rosa canina agg.	flowering plant
Rubus fruticosus agg.	Bramble
Salix	Willow
Scorzoneroide autumnalis	Autumn Hawkbit
Solidago canadensis	Canadian Goldenrod
Sonchus asper	Prickly Sow-thistle
Sorbus aucuparia	Rowan
Tanacetum vulgare	Tansy
Taraxacum officinale agg.	Dandelion
Thymus polytrichus	Wild Thyme
Trifolium pratense	Red Clover
Tussilago farfara	Coltsfoot
Ulex europaeus	Gorse
Vicia sativa subsp. sativa	Cultivated Vetch

FAUNA

Whole Site

Scientific Name	Common Name
Polyommatus icarus icarus	Common Blue
Pyronia tithonus britanniae	Gatekeeper