Response ID ANON-B3JU-DSTC-2

Submitted to **Local Development Plan Main Issues Report 2019 Consultation**
Submitted on **2019-05-13 17:58:03**

About You

What is your name?

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On behalf of:
Tesco Stores

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1 Introduction

Section 1 provides a context for the Main Issues Report Do you have any comments in relation to this section?

Do you have any comments in relation to this section?:

2 Settlement Strategy

Question 1 New Housing Sites

Do you agree with our preferred housing sites? Are there any other sites that would be suitable for housing?:
Tesco has previously submitted proposals to include the former Dobbies commercial site at Hazledene Road as a potential housing site. The site has been rejected in response to the bid assessments with constraints on the site noted as Flooding, drainage, GSN, impact on protected species, habitats, local designations, tree loss & post development impacts.

Tesco request that the council reassess the site as a potential 'opportunity site' which would address tree management and ecological issues. The council is not in possession of protected species or habitat information and Tesco has therefore instructed the attached Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan. The report concludes that the site would benefit from management of woodland and water features and there are clear signs of degradation on the land and buildings on site which require management and security on an ongoing basis which can be achieved through redevelopment for low density housing or other sensitively developed uses appropriate to the site. The local development plan text should therefore recognise that there are potential benefits arising from redevelopment of this brownfield site.

The site is not a presently a conforming use within the greenbelt and it should therefore be recognised that the local development plan has a duty to sustainably manage its future land use to ensure that the site is upgraded and managed to the benefit of the local community and to protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological features. The site should be recognised in the local development plan as an opportunity site within the greenbelt which is in need of upgrading with potential future land uses being residential and/or recreational/tourism purposes suitable for the upgrading of a brownfield site in a greenbelt location. The justification for allowing reuse of the existing developed areas for housing would be to remove the existing non-conforming uses and to replace them with sustainable development within a managed woodland environment. The Opportunity Site designation could identify a maximum number of residential units which could be suggested as not being over 49 units, with the exact number of units being determined through an ecological appraisal aimed at maintaining features of nature and ecological worth within the site.

As the site has performed well against other appraisal scoring parameters it is evident that identifying the site as in need of upgrading will ensure that appropriate redevelopment proposals come forward in the future.

Question 2   Housing Allowances Beyond 2032

Is there a need for us to identify further Housing Allowances or sites for the period beyond 2032?:

Question 3 Brownfield and other Opportunity Sites

Are there any further brownfield or other opportunity sites which would be suitable for redevelopment?:
See answer to question 1. The former Dobbies Garden Centre site at Hazledene Road should be identified as a brownfield Opportunity Site for low density residential or leisure/recreational/tourist use.

Question 4 New Healthcare Facilities

Do you have any comments on these sites? Are there any other sites in these areas that we should be considering?:

Additional Documents

Please include comments on other documents below:

Please include comments on other documents below::
Development Bid Assessments: Site Number: B10/01. The assessment should be undertaken again taking account of the up to date ecological information lodged with this submission which identifies the site as having development potential which will allow the structed management of habitats, tress and ecological features on the site. The site scores well as a potential housing site and there is a need for the development plan to recognise that the existing non-conforming use requires to be addressed by a suitable and sustainable planning policy response.

Additional Files

If you have further information you would like to provide you may upload it here.:
ECPRT 8692 Former Dobbies ECOP_Final.pdf was uploaded

Former Dobbies, Aberdeen
Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP)

May 2019

Former Dobbies, Aberdeen
Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP)

Client:	Tesco Stores Ltd
Document number:	8692
Project number:	372471
Status:	Final
Author:	Gemma Nixon
Reviewers:	Mhairi Mackintosh and Matt Sullivan
Date of issue:	10 May 2019
Filename:	K: 372471/Outputs/Issued

Glasgow **Aberdeen** **Inverness** **Edinburgh**

Contents

Appendices

Tables

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Remit

EnviroCentre was commissioned by Tesco Stores Ltd to produce an Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP) for the former Dobbies, Hazledene Road, Aberdeen. An ECOP is a tool/visual plan that is used to present ecological information to a development design team to highlight ecological constraints and opportunities early in the design process. The use of an ECOP can assist with gaining the best outcomes for biodiversity[1] on a development site.

1.2 Site Location and Proposed Development

The existing site layout is presented in Appendix A and is located at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) NJ 89472 04940. The site currently comprises the former garden centre and a small selection of other apparently disused buildings with associated parking, a pond, grassland and small areas of broadleaved woodland and stands of coniferous woodland. Hazelhead Golf Course and Hazelhead Park are present to the north, mature woodland and recent residential development is present to the east, mature broadleaved woodland and pasture land is present to the south and west.

The proposed development includes a low density residential development with associated access and amenity space, with the possibility of incorporating leisure facilities. The layout was not available at the time of producing this document.

1.3 Report Usage

The information and recommendations contained within this report have been prepared in the specific context stated above and should not be utilised in any other context without prior written permission from EnviroCentre.

If this report is to be submitted for regulatory approval more than 12 months following the report date, it is recommended that it is referred to EnviroCentre for review to ensure that any relevant changes in data, best practice, guidance or legislation in the intervening period are integrated into an updated version of the report.

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EnviroCentre accepts no liability for use of the report for purposes other than those for which it was originally provided, or where EnviroCentre has confirmed it is appropriate for the new context.

[1] Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* Second Edition (*December 2017*)

2 METHODS

2.1 Desk Study

In order to anticipate the potential ecological sensitivities at the site, a desk study was conducted in advance of the survey. The following sources of information were used:

- North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC)[2], data request for available notable species or habitat records and information on non-statutory sites, native or ancient woodland within 1km of the site.
- Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) SiteLink[3] website for information on statutory designated sites considered to be ecologically connected to the site.
- Review of existing site knowledge from baseline ecological surveys conducted at the site by EnviroCentre in 2015.

2.2 Field Survey

A survey of the site and adjacent woodland was undertaken by Senior Ecologist Gemma Nixon, who is a member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). The survey was designed and undertaken with reference to the guidelines endorsed by SNH and CIEEM[4]. The survey was undertaken on the 7th May 2019, when the temperature was 7°C and it was mostly dry with passing light showers and a light breeze.

An ECOP aims to identify the following (where relevant), in accordance with BS 42020:2013 Clause 5.4:

- areas and features that, by virtue of their importance, should be retained and avoided by both construction activities and the overall footprint of the project;
- areas and features where opportunities exist to undertake necessary mitigation and compensation;
- areas and features with potential for biodiversity enhancement; and
- areas needing protection on site and/or in adjacent areas (e.g. from physical damage on site or pollution downstream) during the construction process.

[2] http://www.nesbrec.org.uk/ (Accessed 26/04/2019)
[3] SNH (2009). SiteLink, available from https://sitelink.nature.scot/map (Accessed 16/04/2018)
[4] British Standard document 42020:2013 *Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development* (2013)

3 RESULTS

3.1 Desk Study

Maps identifying notable species or habitats of interest during the desk study are available in Appendix B. EnviroCentre survey results maps from 2015 are presented in Appendix C.

3.1.1 Designated Sites

No statutory designated sites are located on site and no statutory designated sites present in the wider landscape are considered to be ecologically connected to the site. There are three non- statutory sites, Aberdeen City Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) on and within 1km of the site:

Den Wood
Den Wood LNCS which forms the east, west and south boundary of the site is described as '*Predominantly a mixture of woodland types, including pine woodland, mixed woodland, birch woodland and other broadleaved and coniferous species'*.

Walker Dam and Rubislaw Link
Walker Dam and Rubislaw Link LNCS is located approximately 500m north east of the site, the main feature is consider to be areas of wet woodland to the east and west. This LNCS is considered to be ecologically linked to the site via fragmented woodland and an unnamed minor watercourse.

Hazelhead Park
Hazelhead Park LNCS is located approximately 500m north west of the site and is described as having *'a significant amount of Scot's Pine supporting Red Squirrels. Small areas of heathland on periphery of golf course'.* This LNCS is consider to be ecologically linked to the site via woodland and treelines.

3.1.2 Ancient Woodland

Den Wood, Walker Dam and Rubislaw Link and sections of Hazelhead Park feature on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) as a long established (of plantation origin).

3.1.3 Protected or Notable Species

The desk study returned the following designated species recorded within 1km of the site:

Protection of Badgers Act (1992)
- Eurasian Badger (*Meles meles*)

EC Birds Directive ANNEX 2.2
- Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*)

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)
- Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)
- Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
- Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)
- Eurasian Red Squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*)
- Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)

- Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)
- Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)
- Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)
- Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
- Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*)
- Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)
- Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)
- Small Square-spot (*Diarsia rubi*)
- Garden Tiger (*Arctia caja*)
- Brown-spot Pinion (*Agrochola litura*)
- Latticed Heath (*Chiasmia clathrata*)
- Streak (*Chesias legatella*)
- Small Phoenix (*Ecliptopera silaceata*)
- Rosy Minor (*Litoligia literosa*)

Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL) Schedule 5 (Decline of 25% or more in Scotland in last 25 years)

- Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*)
- Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)
- Wild Pansy (*Viola tricolor*)
- Large-flowered Hemp-nettle (*Galeopsis speciose*).

3.1.4 Existing Site Knowledge (October 2015)

- Evidence of red squirrel was identified in woodlands in the south of the site.
- Bat droppings were identified on buildings in the north of the site and these buildings were considered to offer roosting potential to bats. Several trees within and adjacent to the site were identified as hosting potential roosting features for bats.
- Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) an invasive non-native species, was identified south of the pond and in the south west corner of the site.
- New Zealand pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*) an invasive non-native waterweed was present within the pond on site.
- Wetland habitats consisting of marshy grassland and wet woodland were identified on site, further survey to their classification; and their status in regard to Ground Water Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE) was recommended.

3.2 Field Survey

The site layout and habitat status remains much the same as mapped in 2015.

Habitats

The former garden centre and a small selection of other apparently disused buildings with associated parking are located in the north and central areas of the site. Mature trees border the access to the north and a variety of ornamental trees are present to the north east of the garden centre buildings. In the east is a pond with marshy grassland beyond, colonised in sections by young broad-leaved and conifer trees. A minor tributary flows from the pond along the stone wall within and adjacent to the north east boundary of the site. A stone wall borders the east of the site lined by mature conifer and broadleaved trees beyond. In the south are small stands of densely planted semi mature coniferous woodland amongst grassland. Some of the woodland has been cut back away from the overhead powerlines causing some windblow from exposed trees. Signs of recreational activities within the western woodland block is evident via a tree house and littering. To the west

are small grassland paddocks currently grazed by horses, bordered by lines of mature *Leylandii sp*. A row of semi mature Scot's pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) is present between the conifer woodland block and the grass paddocks in the west of the site. Mature woodland known as Den Wood surround the site to the east, south and west.

Fauna
Squirrel foraging was identified in woodland on and adjacent to site, particularly in conifer dominated areas. A grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) was identified in an area of broadleaved woodland south of the pond during the survey.

The existing buildings and some trees on and adjacent to site offer potential roosting features for bats. The woodland and wet habitats on site offer optimal foraging and commuting habitats for bats species present in the locale.

The pond, woodland and grassland habitats on site offer nesting and foraging resources for a wide range of bird species. Numerous birds, including notable or protected species were identified on site during the survey including:

- Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)
- Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)
- Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)
- Tree Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*)
- Bullfinch
- Song Thrush
- Dunnock
- Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)
- Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)
- Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)
- Great Tit (*Parus major*)

3.3 Potential and Known Site Constraints

Habitats
- Marshy grassland and wet woodland in the east of the site are potential UKBAP priority habitats and GWDTE's.
- Ponds and running water in the east of the site are listed as priority habitats in the UKBAP.
- Broadleaved woodland on and adjacent to the site are potential UKBAP priority habitats.
- Den Wood surrounding the site to the east south and west is a LNCS and features on the AWI.

Fauna
- Red squirrel and bats are likely to utilise the variety and connectivity of woodland on site as a means of commuting and foraging and potentially resting sites (dreys, potential roost features)
- Buildings on site offer features that could be utilised by roosting bats and nesting birds.
- Woodland, trees, shrubs and overgrowth on site offer potential for a variety of breeding birds.
- Woodland and shrubs on site offer suitable habitat for hedgehogs which are a UKBAP species.
- The pond and marshy grassland offer suitable habitat for a range of amphibian species.

3.4 Opportunities for Mitigation, Compensation and Ecological Enhancement

The location of key mitigation, compensation or enhancement opportunities are identified with photos in the ECOP in Appendix D.

Habitats

- Retain and protect or recreate standing and running water features on site. The existing pond is subject to poor management and an aquatic invasive species is present.
- Consider the current site drainage and maintain and enhance wetland habitats on site post development.
- Permeable surface materials[5] could be utilised for parking areas post-development to help manage site drainage and reduce contaminated surface runoff.
- The control of Japanese knotweed and removal of other non-native species such as snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) and *Rhododendron* on site will allow for establishment or replanting of more desirable woodlands, scrub or grassland habitats on site.
- Avoid removal of boundary trees or woodland that provide a wind shelter to interior woodland to avoid wind fall and woodland degradation.
- Avoid removal of mature woodland and good quality mature trees groups/ features on site where possible and protect adjacent woodland with appropriate mitigation zones/ fencing.
- Geoweb[6] could be used to protect tree rooting areas where footpaths, access or development is required within or adjacent to rooting areas of retained trees and woodland.

Fauna

- Maintain and enhance woodland connectivity within the site and surrounding network via partial retention and replanting of coniferous woodland and trees lines. Replanted species could provide enhancement through using tree and shrub species that are native and provide valuable foraging and resting resource for local wildlife.
- Avoid removal of any trees of vegetation or demolition of buildings during the bat roosting and bird breeding season (March to September inclusive).
- A variety of bird and bat boxes could be installed upon trees and non- residential buildings around the site to compensate and enhance roosting and nesting provisions.
- 'Slow down for red squirrels' signs and speed bumps could be placed along site access to raise awareness and avoid collisions.
- Converse with the Scottish Wildlife Trusts Saving Scotland Red Squirrels team to ensure the ongoing control of grey squirrels in the locale.
- 'Hedgehog highways' could be included via small gaps under or in any fence panels (15x15cm) within and surrounding the development.
- Log piles could be left to provide habitat for invertebrates; and a food source and sheltering for species such as hedgehog.
- Plant amenity green space with a seed mix suitable for butterfly and bumblebees to maintain and enhance presence of these species in the locale post development.

[5] Permeable surface information available at: https://www.susdrain.org/delivering-suds/using-suds/suds-components/source-control/pervious-surfaces/pervious-surface-types/permeable-surfacing-options.html
[6] Geoweb details can be found at http://greenfix.co.uk/geoweb/

3.5 Further Survey Recommendations

Table 3-1: Summary of Recommendations

Survey	Timescale
Update tree constraints survey of trees within and adjacent to the site boundary within influence of the development	Anytime
National Vegetation Survey (NVC) of wet woodland and marshy grassland areas to confirm and Identify potential GWDTEs	Optimal survey period extends from June to early August
Protected species survey focussing on squirrel dreys and potential roost features in trees	Preliminary surveys can be undertaken anytime of the years, further monitoring/ inspection surveys may be required to confirm activity.
Bat activity surveys of buildings on site	May to August
Breeding Bird Surveys	April to July
Tree survey of trees within and adjacent to the site boundary within influence of the development	Tree survey can be undertaken year-round

APPENDICES

A EXISITING SITE LAYOUT

Notes:

REV:	DESCRIPTION:	BY:	DATE:

STATUS:

gmcsurveys

Surveys, Setting Out, Civil Engineering Design

[redacted]

CLIENT:

Goodson Associates

[redacted]

SITE:

Hazeldene Road, Aberdeen

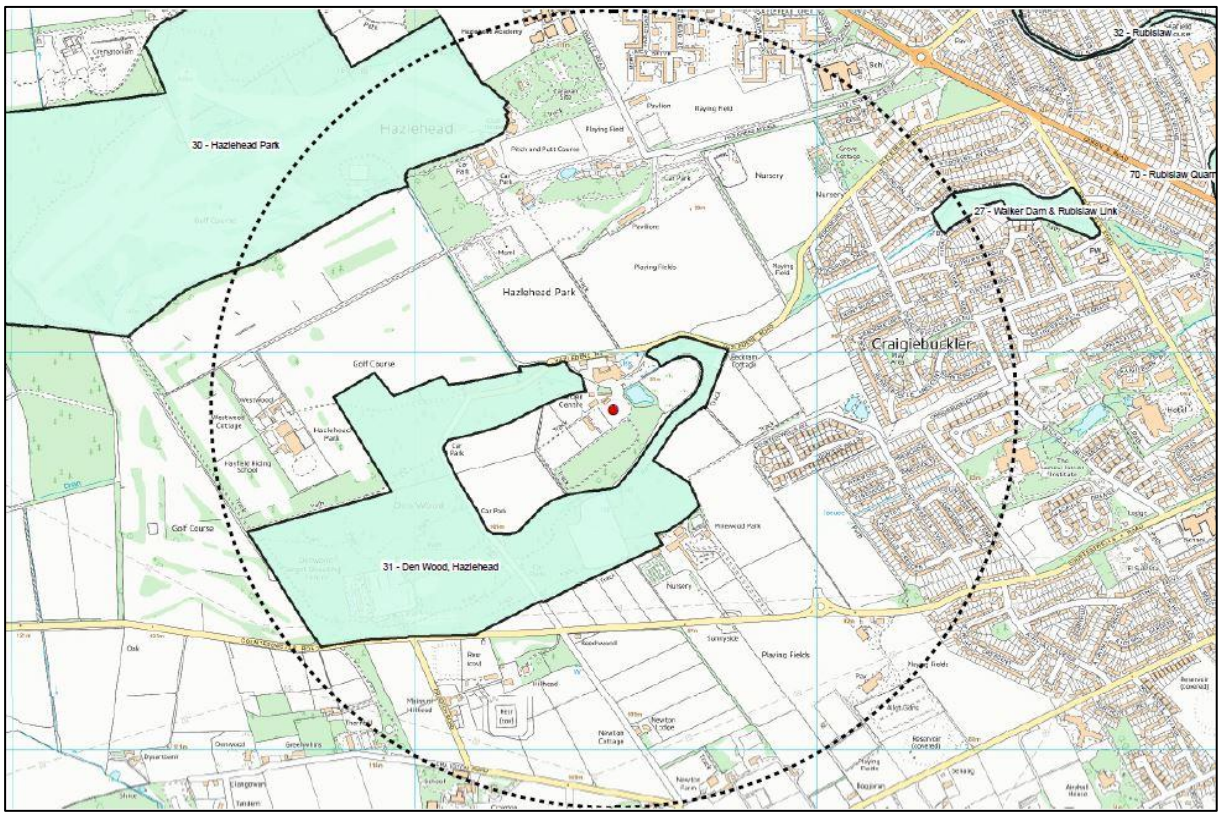
TITLE:

Topographical

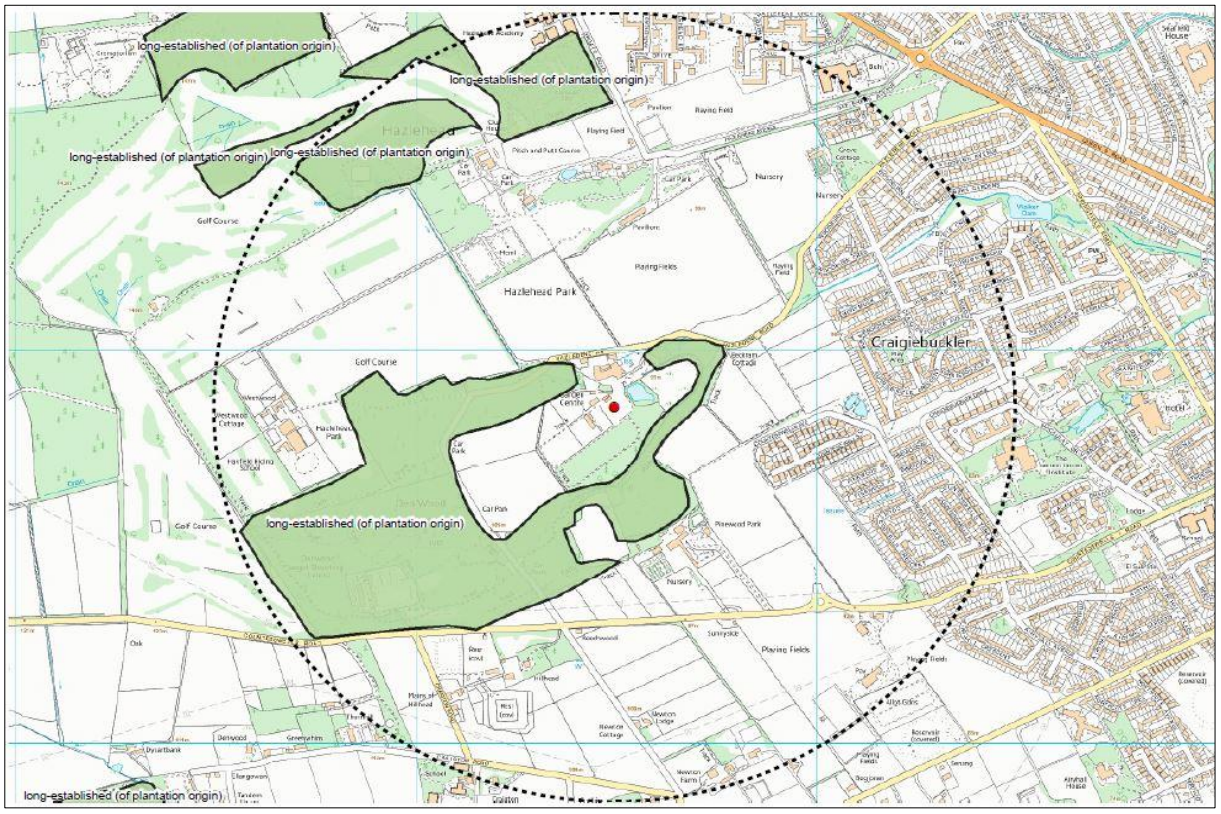
SCALE AT A1:	DATE:	DRAWN:	CHECKED:
1:1,000	16.03.18	MS	

PROJECT NO:	DRAWING NO:	REVISION:
HZD/01	001	

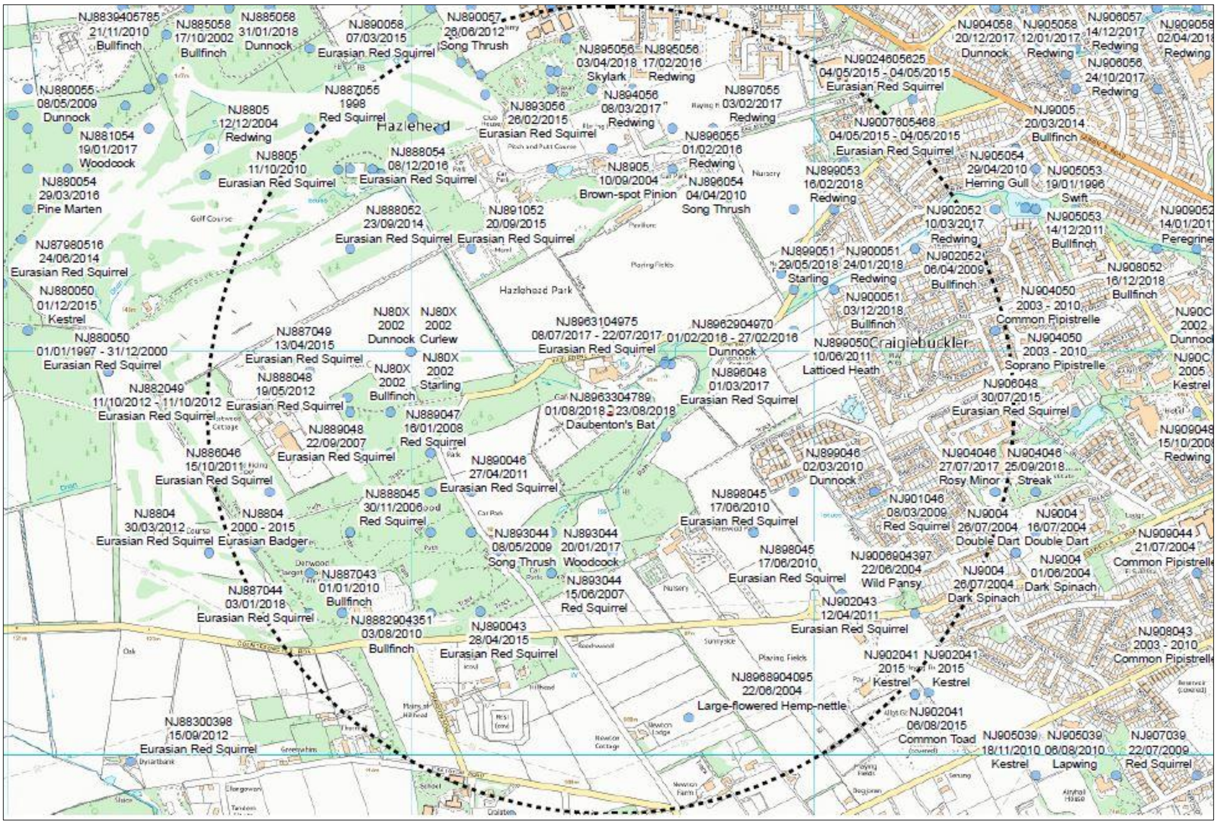
B NESBREC DATA MAPS



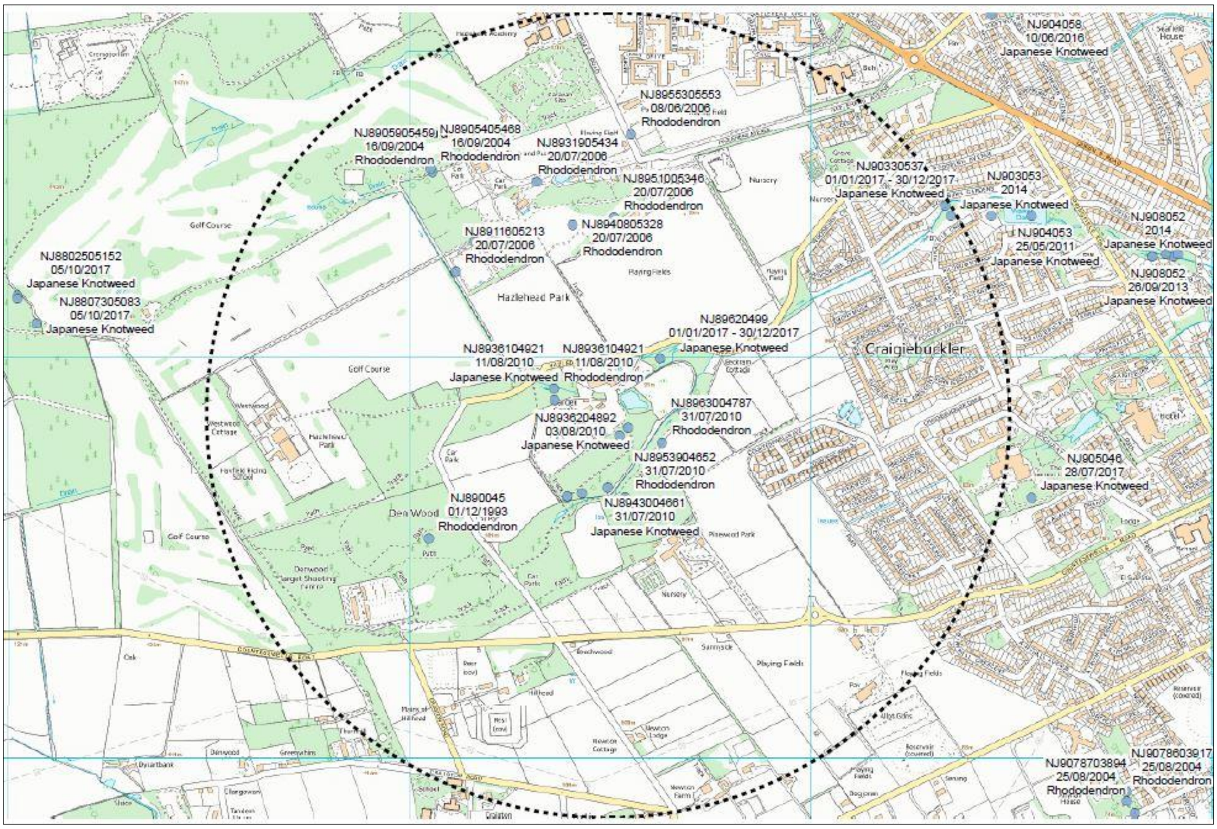
LNCS Map



Ancient Woodlands



Protected or Notable Faunal Species Records



INNS Records

C HABITAT AND PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEY PLANS SEPTEMBER 2015

Legend

Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- A1.1.1 Broadleaved Semi-natural Woodland
- A1.1.2 Broadleaved Plantation Woodland
- A1.2.2 Coniferous Plantation Woodland
- A1.3.2 Mixed Plantation Woodland
- A2.2 Scattered Scrub
- A3.1 Broadleaved Scattered Trees
- A3.2 Coniferous Scattered Trees
- A3.3 Mixed Scattered Trees
- B2.2 Semi-improved Neutral Grassland
- B4 Improved Grassland
- B5 Marshy Grassland
- C3.1 Tall Ruderal
- G1 Standing Water
- I2.2 Artificial: Spoil
- J1.2 Amenity Grassland
- J3.6 Buildings
- J4 Bare Ground
- J2.5 Wall
- G2 Running Water
- J2.8 Embankment
- Telegraph Line
- Japanese Knotweed Stands
- Photo Points

Do not scale this map

Client

[redacted]

Project

Former Dobbies Site near Hazelhead, Aberdeen

Title

Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Status

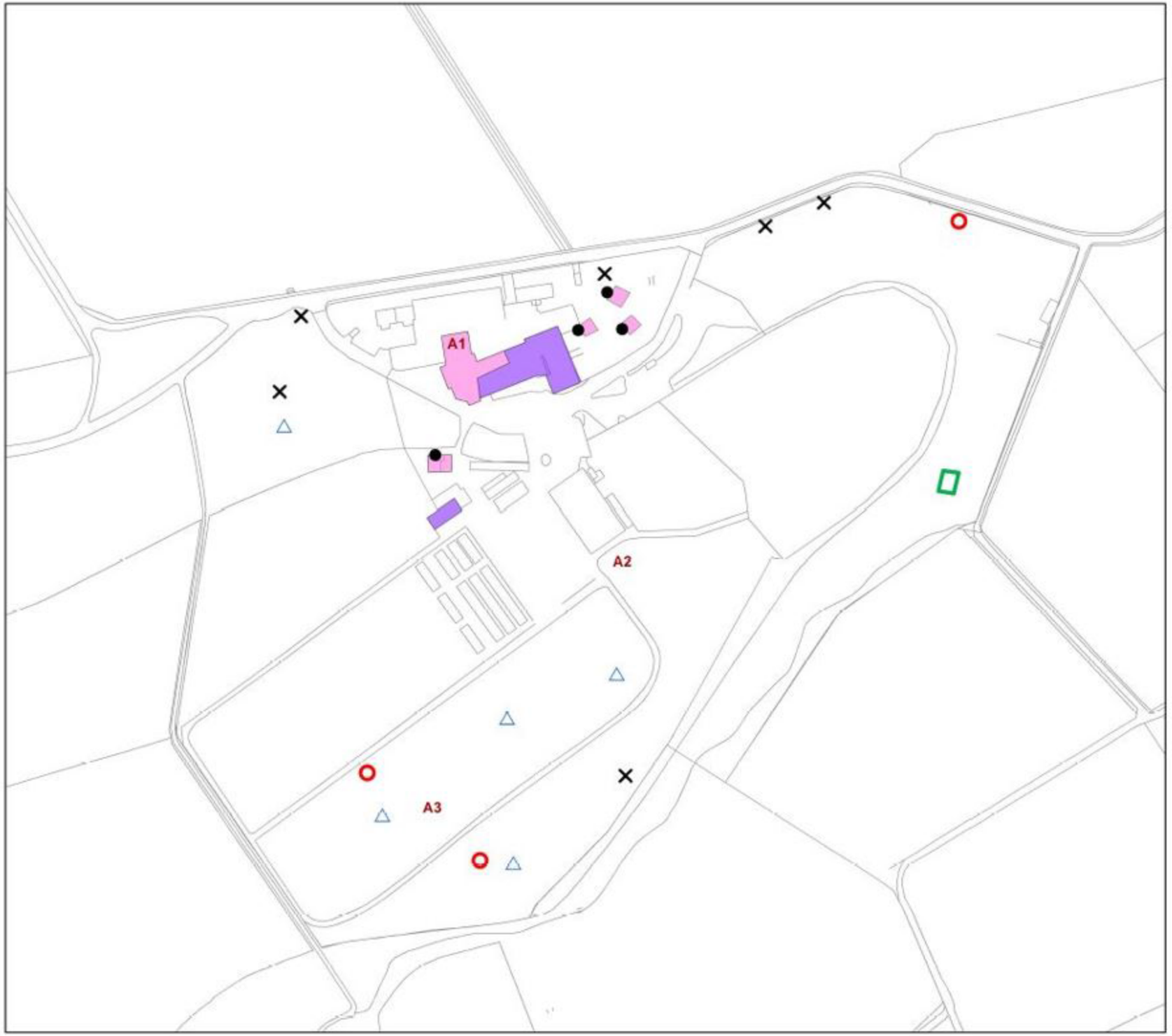
Final

Drawing No.	Revision
367367 - 001	A

Scale		Date
1:2,000	A3	13 Nov 2015

Drawn	Checked	Approved
JP	JP	DB

ENVIRO Centre



Legend

- Squirrel Drey
- Squirrel Foraging
- Squirrel Box
- Category 1 BRP Tree
- Bat Droppings
- Low BRP Buildings
- Moderate BRP Buildings
- A1, A2, A3 Anabats

Do not scale this map

Client
[redacted]

Project
Former Dobbies Site near Hazelhead, Aberdeen

Title
Protected Species Survey

Status
Final

Drawing No.	Revision
367367 - 002	

Scale		Date
1:2,000	A3	15 October 2015

Drawn	Checked	Approved
JP	JP	GN

ENVIRO Centre

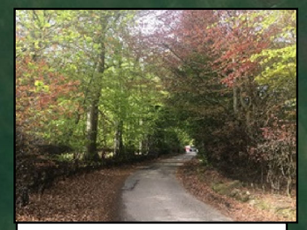
[redacted]

D ECOP

389000
389500
390000
805000
804500

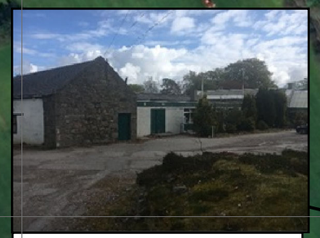
Ponds to be managed for INNS within and on banks

Future hard standing/ parking could utilise permeable materials to improve drainage and reduce chemical runoff



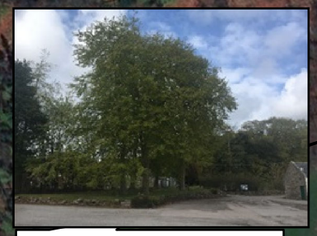
Mature trees along access in north to be retained and protected

Burn in north east of site to be retained and protected



Existing buildings to be surveyed for bats and nesting birds pre-demolition

Den wood adjacent to east site boundary to be protected during development



Mature beech trees recommended for retention/protection and installation of bat/ bird boxes

Marshy grassland and young conifer and wet woodland in the east, potential GWDTE

Line of semi mature Scot's pine, consider retention and protection

Squirrel foraging in confer woodland stands in south

Japanese knotweed stand to south of pond, requires treatment

Legend

Site Boundary (Approx.)

Do not scale this map

Client
Tesco Stores Ltd

Project
Former Dobbies Site, Hazeldene Road

Title
Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP)

Status
Final

Drawing No.
372471-001

Revision

Scale
1:3,600

A3

Date
10 May 2019

Drawn	Checked	Approved
JEP	GN	MS

ENVIRO Centre

[redacted]