



Stage 1 Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report

Hanmer Arms, Hanmer

Carlton Holdings

MAN.244.002.EC.R.002



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Stage 1 HRA Screening Report

Project:	Hanmer Arms, Hanmer
For:	Carlton Holdings
Status:	Final – Rev B
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1.0 Introduction and Approach

1.1 Commission

- 1.1.1 In January 2020 Enzygo Ltd was commissioned by Carlton Holdings [the client] to provide information in support of a Stage 1 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report in relation to their site at Hanmer Arms, Hanmer, Whitchurch SY13 3DE (central grid reference: SJ 45425 39971) located within the Wrexham County Borough Council planning authority (Overton ward).
- 1.1.2 This assessment has been produced following refusal of a previous application, consultation with Natural Resources Wales, and the identification of potential detrimental impacts of the proposals on Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar & Hanmer Mere SSSI following the Ecological Desk Study Addendum report (Enzygo, 2019a).

1.2 Development Details

- 1.2.1 The development would comprise siting 10 holiday lodges, with associated amenity block reception building, and gravelled access road and pitches. A site access would be created at the south-east boundary to connect to the existing access road to Hanmer Arms Public House. Refer to Appendix A for a plan of the proposed site layout.
- 1.2.2 The large Hanmer Mere lies 250m to the south and is designated as Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar and Hanmer Mere SSSI. A linear extension from the north of the lake also forms part of the Ramsar and SSSI designation. This extension runs along the south-eastern boundary of the proposed development site. It is confirmed that this extension represents a piped underground outflow from the northern end of the mere and not any above ground terrestrial features (i.e. no aquatic features such as drainage ditches are present on the surface along this south-eastern boundary). The watercourse 50m to the east of the site also forms part of designation area and flows northwards to a culvert beneath the A539 (i.e. not southwards to Hanmer Mere).
- 1.2.3 Refer to Appendix B (Drawing MAN.244.002.EC.D.001) for an illustration of the site in relation to the designated sites.

1.3 Identification of Likely Significant Effects

- 1.3.1 This study will consider whether there are any 'likely significant effects' of the development proposals on these statutory designated sites for nature conservation. This will identify whether there is any requirement for the competent authority to undertake an Appropriate Assessment to determine whether there will be any adverse effects on the features for which the nearby sites are designated for.
- 1.3.2 It is our understanding that in accordance with standing guidance from the Planning Inspectorate (Inspectorate, 2013) the Local Planning Authority are to undertake the actual HRA assessment and make a determination using the supplied information and following consultation with Natural England/Environment Agency as necessary. Additionally, that any relevant recent case law, such as "People over Wind" will be taken into consideration.
- 1.3.3 To provide baseline evidence to inform this assessment a *Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment* (EVR ecology, 2018), *GCN Ecological Impact Assessment* (Life & Wild, 2018) and *Ecological Desk Study Addendum* (Enzygo, 2019a) have been produced. In addition, the

assessment of potential run-off/pollution impacts is informed by an *Outline Drainage Strategy* (Enzygo, 2019b).

- 1.3.4 In the absence of additional information, this assessment assumes that the linear section of Ramsar and SSSI which runs adjacent to the south-eastern application boundary represents a below ground piped outflow from Hanmer Mere to the south. This will be retained as part of the proposed application, along with the waterbodies at the southern and north-eastern field corners. No detailed information for the reason for inclusion of this linear feature is included in any Ramsar description, however the Hanmer Mere SSSI citation states the mere “*overflows underground at its northern end.*” It is also confirmed that the water at the watercourse adjacent to the eastern field boundary flows northwards and not southwards into Hanmer Mere (and it is probable that any below ground pipe also flows in this direction). It is therefore assumed that the inclusion of this strip of land/below ground pipe is to maintain the hydrological functionality of the Mere and allow water levels to be maintained/excess water to flow away. No above ground aquatic features, such as drainage ditches or wet grassland, or any priority habitats/flora or invertebrates (as associated with Hanmer Mere) were detected during the *Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment* (EVR ecology, 2018) or visit to inform the *Outline Drainage Strategy* (Enzygo, 2019b).
- 1.3.5 Further consultation from a local advisor at Natural Resources Wales has been sought on the reasons for inclusion of this linear feature within the Ramsar boundary (email dated 15th August 2019), however at the time of writing no response has been received.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 This report provides information in support of Stage 1 of the Habitat Regulations Assessment process, which represents the screening stage. The objective of this stage is to determine whether the projects are likely to have a significant effect on the interest features of the designated site, either alone or in-combination with other consented schemes in the surrounding area.
- 1.4.2 The aim of this report and of this Stage 1 screening is to provide sufficient information for the competent authority to determine whether a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is required to determine whether there are implications on the designated site’s conservation objectives, which may subsequently lead to Stage 3 (assessment of alternative solutions) and Stage 4 (assessment of IROPI (imperative reasons of overriding public interest)).
- 1.4.3 To determine whether there will be ‘likely significant effects’ the objectives of this assessment are to:
- Identify all European Sites with the potential to be affected by the development proposals, by establishing a potential zone of influence considering the scale and nature of the proposals;
 - A review of each identified site within this potential zone of influence, including outlining the features for which the site is designated, the current conservation status and objectives of the site, and details of threats to these features;
 - Consider any other projects or plans in the surrounding area which may result in in-combination impacts on the designated sites; and
 - Where potential impacts are identified, consideration of suitable mitigation measures to avoid/mitigate/compensate potential impacts.

- 1.4.4 Although suitable mitigation measures are considered in the assessment where required, the recent ‘*People Over Wind*’ case ruling has been considered. In summary, this ruling states the mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when considering the screening test for ‘likely significant effects.’ It was previously standard practice that projects which may affect European designated sites could incorporate suitable mitigation measures in the screening stage which often prevented the need for projects to progress to full appropriate assessment.
- 1.4.5 In addition, the recent High Court judgement “*R (on the Application of Preston) v Cumbria County Council [2019] EWCA 1362*” has also been considered. In summary this judgement confirms that the competent authority carrying out an HRA for a project must undertake its own appropriate assessment on matters even if they are separately assessed or controlled by another competent authority (e.g. the Environment Agency). The Competent Authority must satisfy their own HRA duties in conducting their own assessment and providing their own judgement (albeit informed where appropriate by other bodies, such as the EA).
- 1.4.6 In accordance with standing guidance (Inspectorate, 2013) at Stage 1 of the HRA, for each European Site considered it will be concluded from the baseline information and consultation responses received that either:
- *There are no likely significant effects on the European site(s), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects and therefore no further assessment is required; or*
 - *Likely significant effects on the European site(s) exist, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, therefore requiring an appropriate assessment by the competent authority.*
- 1.4.7 Additionally, nationally designated sites (i.e. Sites of Special Scientific Interest) have also been considered where they form an integral part of a wider European designation.
- 1.4.8 This report has been produced with reference to the Nature England Habitat Regulations Assessment Standard (Natural England, 2017).

1.5 Background/Acknowledgments

- 1.5.1 An “*application for outline planning permission for 19 No. holidays, reception building and ancillary works*” (Wrexham County Borough Council reference P/2018/0965) was refused in January 2019. One reason for the refusal was that “*insufficient information has been submitted to enable an assessment of the impact of the development on the Hanmer Mere.*”
- 1.5.2 This application was supported by ecological survey and assessment information comprising a *Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment* (EVR ecology, 2018) and a *GCN Ecological Impact Assessment* (Life & Wild, 2018). These reports do not present any desk-study information regarding statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation sites. As a consequence of this lacking information, a Natural Resources Wales consultation response [dated 12th December 2018] highlighted concerns that based on the information provided “*significant effect from the proposed development on the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar cannot be ruled out.*”
- 1.5.3 A subsequent outline application for “*19 no. Holiday Lodges, Reception Buildings and Ancillary Works*” was submitted in September 2019 (planning reference P/2019/0711) which was again supported by the *Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment* (EVR ecology, 2018) and a *GCN Ecological Impact Assessment* (Life & Wild, 2018). However, this application was also supported by an *Ecological Desk Study Addendum* (Enzygo, 2019a) and a Stage 1 Habitat

Regulations Assessment Screening Report (Enzygo, 2019b), to provide additional assessment in relation to Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar as requested by Natural Resources Wales on the previous application.

- 1.5.4 In a consultation response on this 2019 application (dated 17th October 2019), Natural Resources Wales requested further information on the proposed foul drainage approach, but otherwise broadly accepted the findings of the submitted ecological assessments including that they “*concur with the findings of the Stage 1 HRA Screening Report.*” Recommended planning conditions in relation to sensitive lighting, Reasonable Avoidance Measures for Great Crested Newt, and invasive flora and biosecurity were put forward.

1.6 Site Context

- 1.6.1 The approximately 0.5ha site lies to the north of the village of Hanmer approximately 8km west of the town of Whitchurch. As report by the previous Phase I Survey (EVR ecology, 2018), the site comprises a field of species-poor semi-improved pasture, with species-poor boundary hedgerows and occasional trees, with fencing defining the south-eastern boundary. The A539 lies approximately 30m to the north, Hanmer Village Road lies approximately 50m to the east, and the Hanmer Arms Hotel grounds are to the south. The wider landscape is dominated by pasture, arable farmland and open countryside, and the large Hanmer Mere which lies 250m to the south.

Figure 1 – Site Boundary



Image courtesy of Google Image Pro 7.3.2.5491, [Grid Ref: SJ 45425 39971 and 82m Elevation]. Imagery date 27th June 2018. Image accessed 27th January 2020.

Figure 2 – Photographs of site (taken July 2019)



Site photos taken 25th July 2019

2.0 Baseline Information

2.1 Identification of European Sites

- 2.1.1 The European Sites which are within an expected zone of influence of the proposed development have been identified through the desk study process (Enzygo, 2019a). Considering the scale and nature of the proposals, it has been determined the assessment is to include all European designated sites for nature conservation within a 5km radius of the development. No sites outside of this radius have been considered.
- 2.1.2 Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 it is the duty of the statutory nature conservation body to provide conservation objectives for a European designated site to the relevant competent authority responsible for that's site, including details and advice on any operations which may cause deterioration of the features for which that site is designated.
- 2.1.3 As a result, in this case, conservation objectives are set by the statutory nature conservation body (in this instance Natural Resources Wales) to ensure that the obligations of the Habitats Regulations are met, particularly to ensure that there should be no deterioration or significant disturbance of the qualifying features from their condition at the time the status of the site was formally identified. The conservation objectives are also essential in determining whether the effects of a plan or project are likely to have a significant effect on the qualifying interests of the site.
- 2.1.4 Information on the conservation objectives and sensitives of the identified sites have been gathered through reviewing the relevant Joint Nature Conservation Committee data sheets (JNCC, 2019), reviewing available information through the Natural Resources Wales website and reviewing the Shropshire Council HRA Screening Report (Shropshire Council, 2018).

2.2 Identifying Projects for In-Combination Affects Assessment

- 2.2.1 In addition to an assessment of likely significant effects of the project 'alone' on the European Sites, it is also necessary to consider addition projects in the local area which may result in likely significant effects 'in-combination' with the application site.
- 2.2.2 Information on relevant projects in the local area has been acquired through a search of the Wrexham County Borough Council planning website. Any pertinent applications, supporting ecological assessment information (including Habitats Regulations Assessment information, where available) and consultation responses, have been reviewed to inform the assessment of in-combination likely significant effects.

2.3 Supporting Technical Information/Evidence

- 2.3.1 The following supporting information has been reviewed to inform the assessments made within this report:
- Ecological Desk Study Addendum (Enzygo, 2019a);
 - Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment (EVR ecology, 2018);
 - GCN Ecological Impact Assessment (Life & Wild, 2018); and
 - Outline Drainage Strategy (Enzygo, 2019b)

3.0 Designated Sites Details

Table 1 – Designated Sites and Qualifying Features

Designated Site	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Vulnerability i.e. factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting site's ecological character (as identified by JNCC and Shropshire Council HRA Screening Report)
Midland Mere & Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar	Ramsar Criterion 1 – the site comprises a diverse range of habitats from open water to raised bog. <i>(the Hanmer Mere SSSI citation identifies the habitats present as open water, emergent fringe and marginal fen vegetation, and surrounding wet woodland)</i>	<i>For Ramsar sites conservation objectives are not set. However, management objectives for the assessment have been established from those of the Hanmer Mere SSSI (CCW, 1994).</i> - Water Quality – maintain the water quality avoiding any deterioration of water entering the mere from its catchment; - Agricultural management and grazing – maintain agricultural land within the drainage catchment as relatively low intensity pasture with limited input of artificial fertilisers (note that search of the EA Catchment Explorer confirms the Application Site does not lie within the catchment area of Hanmer Mere); - Fishery management and angling – <i>avoid any intensification of the existing low intensity fishing</i>; - Management of marginal vegetation – <i>marginal fen and wet woodland to develop naturally, with any clearing or cutting conducted sensitively and on rotational basis</i>; - Birds – <i>care should be taken to avoid impacts on other waterfowl through the occasional culls of Canada Geese</i>; - Recreational Interest – <i>maintain the low intensity recreational use of the mere</i>; - Woodland Management – <i>continue to allow wet woodland to develop naturally</i>; and, - Associated semi-natural habitats – <i>encourage any opportunities to expand the reed bed at the north of the mere</i>.	- Water Quality – eutrophication and declines in water quality through nutrient enrichment and sediment – <i>major impact on and off-site</i> - Introduction/invasion of non-native plant species – <i>major impact on-site</i> - Pollution – pesticides/agricultural run-off – <i>major impact off-site</i> - Land take for development (i.e. agricultural practices and urban runoff are likely to affect the sites through nutrient enrichment and sedimentation) - Recreational pressure and disturbance (i.e. through trampling and erosion)
	Ramsar criterion 2(a) – supports a number of rare species of plants associated with wetlands, including the nationally scarce Cowbane (<i>Cicuta virosa</i>) and, Elongated Sedge (<i>Carex elongate</i>). Also present are the nationally scarce bryophytes <i>Dicranum affine</i> and <i>Sphagnum pulchrum</i> .		
	Ramsar criterion 2(b) – supports an assemblage of invertebrates including several rare species. There are 16 species of British Red Data Book insect listed for this site including the following endangered species: the moth <i>Glyphipteryx lathamella</i> , the caddisfly <i>Hagenella clathrata</i> and the sawfly <i>Trichiosoma vitellinae</i> .		

4.0 Screening of Likely Significant Effects During Construction and Operation

Table 2 – Screening Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

Designated Site	Qualifying Feature	Identification of potential Impacts/Effect to Qualifying Feature	Summary/Assessment of Supporting Evidence	Avoidance/mitigation/compensation measures	Likely Significant Effect
Midland Mosses & Mere Phase 2 Ramsar	Diverse range of habitats from open water to raised bog.	Potential run-off pollution during construction causing degradation of habitats	No further assessment conducted/necessary.	To avoid potential pollution and run-off impacts, site works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice and the through adoption best practice pollutions prevention guidelines, namely <i>Works and maintenance in or near water: GPP 5</i> and <i>Working at construction and demolition sites: PPG6</i> .	No
		Potential modification of surface water run-off during operation causing degradation of habitats	Outline Drainage Strategy (Enzygo, 2019b) confirms the operational drainage solution will ensure no significant change to the water quality and surface water run-off volume.	As described in the Outline Drainage Strategy (Enzygo, 2019b) surface water run-off and water quality will be managed through a 'treatment train' to avoid impacts on the existing adjacent watercourse include: 1) Gully pots to remove physical sediment and contamination; 2) Hydrocarbon interceptor; 3) Attenuation pond; and, 4) Ordinary watercourse. Attenuation storage is also proposed to reduce the post-application surface water run-off to the calculated greenfield runoff rates (Enzygo, 2019b). No change in the connectivity (hydrological or otherwise) between Hanmer Mere and the watercourse to the east are anticipated.	No
		Potential direct damage during construction, including to watercourse to the east and below ground features along the south-east boundary	No further assessment conducted/necessary.	During construction the watercourse to the east of the site will be protected through erecting protective fencing (i.e. Heras or similar). No construction works, material storage or machinery to stray beyond the protection fencing. In addition, at the detailed design stage the presence of the indicated below-ground feature of the statutory site along the south-east boundary will be established and necessary protection measures implemented to ensure no damage is inflicted during the construction stage.	No
	Supports a number of rare species of plants associated with wetlands, including the nationally scarce Cowbane (<i>Cicuta virosa</i>) and, Elongated Sedge (<i>Carex elongate</i>). Also present are the nationally scarce bryophytes <i>Dicranum affine</i> and <i>Sphagnum pulchrum</i> .	Potential run-off pollution during construction causing degradation of suitable habitats	No further assessment conducted/necessary.	To avoid potential pollution and run-off impacts, site works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice and the through adoption best practice pollutions prevention guidelines, namely <i>Works and maintenance in or near water: GPP 5</i> and <i>Working at construction and demolition sites: PPG6</i> .	No
		Potential modification of surface water run-off during operation causing degradation of suitable habitats	Outline Drainage Strategy (Enzygo, 2019b) confirms the operational drainage solution will ensure no significant change to the water quality and surface water run-off volume.	As described in the Outline Drainage Strategy (Enzygo, 2019b) surface water run-off and water quality will be managed through a 'treatment train' to avoid impacts on the existing adjacent watercourse include: 1) Gully pots to remove physical sediment and contamination; 2) Hydrocarbon interceptor; 3) Attenuation pond; and, 4) Ordinary watercourse. Attenuation storage is also proposed to reduce the post-application surface water run-off to the calculated greenfield runoff rates (Enzygo, 2019b).	No

Designated Site	Qualifying Feature	Identification of potential Impacts/Effect to Qualifying Feature	Summary/Assessment of Supporting Evidence	Avoidance/mitigation/compensation measures	Likely Significant Effect
				No change in the connectivity (hydrological or otherwise) between Hanmer Mere and the watercourse to the east are anticipated.	
		Potential direct damage during construction, including to watercourse to the east and below ground features along the south-east boundary	No further assessment conducted/necessary.	During construction the watercourse to the east of the site will be protected through erecting protective fencing (i.e. Heras or similar). No construction works, material storage or machinery to stray beyond the protection fencing. In addition, at the detailed design stage the presence of the indicated below-ground feature of the statutory site along the south-east boundary will be established and necessary protection measures implemented to ensure no damage is inflicted during the construction stage.	No
	Supports an assemblage of invertebrates including several rare species. There are 16 species of British Red Data Book insect listed for this site including the following endangered species: the moth <i>Glyphipteryx lathamella</i> , the caddisfly <i>Hagenella clathrata</i> and the sawfly <i>Trichiosoma vitellinae</i> .	Potential run-off pollution during construction causing degradation of suitable habitats	No further assessment conducted/necessary.	To avoid potential pollution and run-off impacts, site works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice and the through adoption best practice pollutions prevention guidelines, namely <i>Works and maintenance in or near water: GPP 5</i> and <i>Working at construction and demolition sites: PPG6</i> .	No
		Potential modification of surface water run-off during operation causing degradation of suitable habitats	Outline Drainage Strategy (Enzygo, 2019b) confirms the operational drainage solution will ensure no significant change to the water quality and surface water run-off volume.	As described in the Outline Drainage Strategy (Enzygo, 2019b) surface water run-off and water quality will be managed through a 'treatment train' to avoid impacts on the existing adjacent watercourse include: 1) Gully pots to remove physical sediment and contamination; 2) Hydrocarbon interceptor; 3) Attenuation pond; and, 4) Ordinary watercourse. Attenuation storage is also proposed to reduce the post-application surface water run-off to the calculated greenfield runoff rates (Enzygo, 2019b). No change in the connectivity (hydrological or otherwise) between Hanmer Mere and the watercourse to the east are anticipated.	No
		Potential direct damage during construction, including to watercourse to the east and below ground features along the south-east boundary	No further assessment conducted/necessary.	During construction the watercourse to the east of the site will be protected through erecting protective fencing (i.e. Heras or similar). No construction works, material storage or machinery to stray beyond the protection fencing. In addition, at the detailed design stage the presence of the indicated below-ground feature of the statutory site along the south-east boundary will be established and necessary protection measures implemented to ensure no damage is inflicted during the construction stage.	No

5.0 Assessment of Potential In-combination Effects

- 5.1.1 It is assessed that the only pathway through which in-combination effects may occur is through cumulative run-off/pollution impacts leading to degradation of habitats associated with the wetland site.
- 5.1.2 A search of the Wrexham County Borough Council has not revealed any other consented schemes through which there are anticipated potential in-combination effects. All applications in the local area surrounding the site are significantly minor in nature and are not considered to contribute to any potential in-combination effects. As long as the best practice pollution prevention measures, as described above, are implemented in full there remains no likely significant effect.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1.1 A single European designated site has been identified and all qualifying features have been assessed. Through assessment of the evidence/information available, it is concluded there is no anticipated likely significant effect of the proposals on the Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar (or the overlapping Hanmer Mere SSSI).
- 6.1.2 It is hoped that the provided information is sufficient to demonstrate that the requirements of Regulations 63 and 64 of the Habitats Regulations have been fully considered, and will allow the competent authority to undertake an HRA Screening exercise and reach the same conclusion as detailed within this report i.e. no significant residual effect upon any statutory designated site.

7.0 References

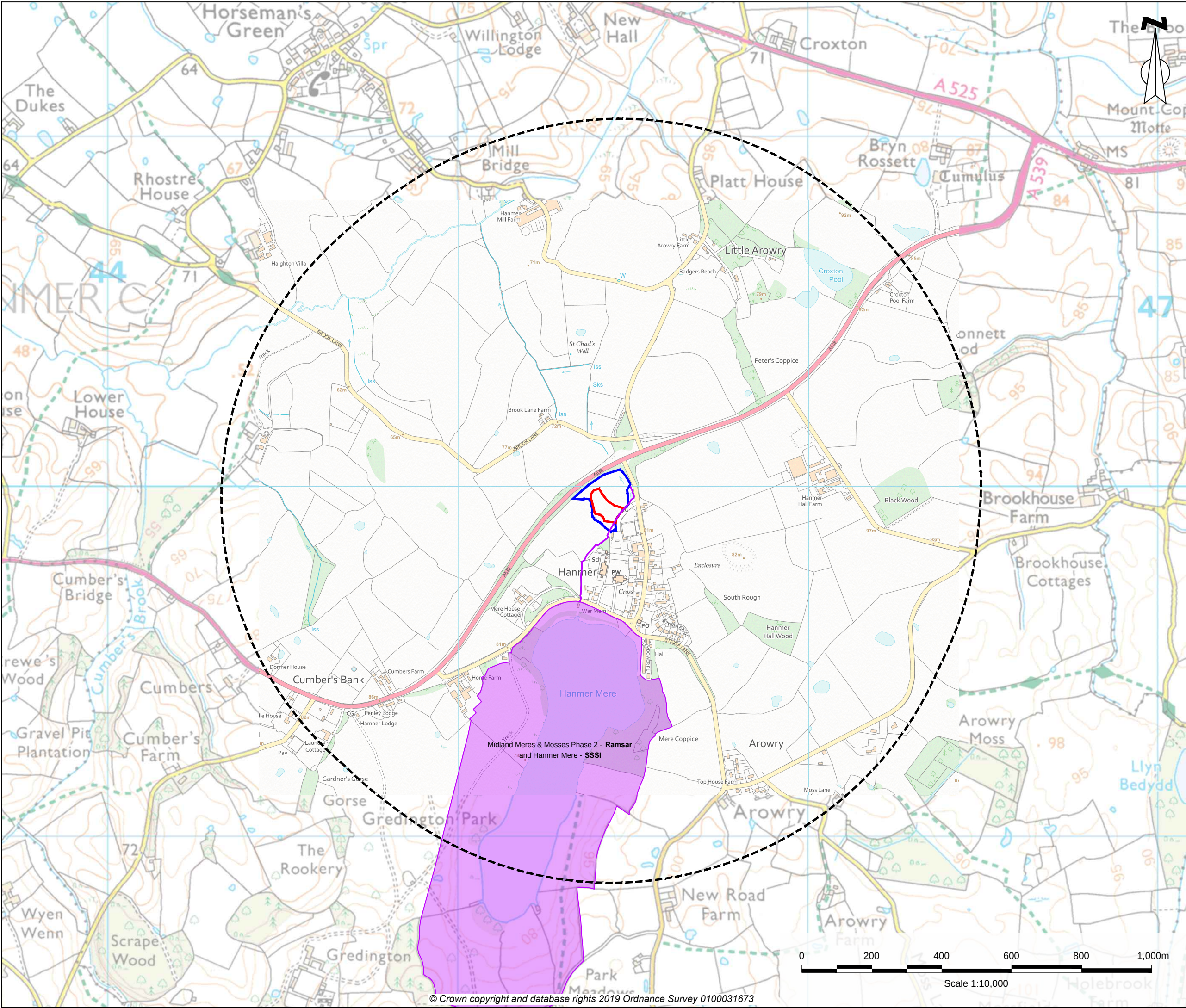
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Appendix A – Site Proposals Plan



 JLDrawing Templates Templates for your AutoCAD drawings	KEY:		PROJECT		
		Existing Road	PROJECT NO. SHF.244.001		
		Proposed Graveled Road Surface	DRAWING TITLE		
		Proposed Footpath	DRAWING NO. SHF.244.001.L.D.00.003.B		
			CLIENT		
		DRAWN NP		CHECKED GB	Carlton Holdings Ltd.

Appendix B – Location of Designated Sites



Key

- Application Boundary
- Site Boundary
- 1km Buffer Zone from site boundary
- Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2 - Ramsar and Hanmer Mere - SSSI



Samuel House, 5 Fox Valley Way, Stocksbridge, Sheffield, S36 2AA

CLIENT:
Carlton Holdings Partnership

SCALE:
1:10,000@A3

PROJECT REF:
MAN.244.002

DRAWN:
MG

CHECKED:
CS

DATE:
Jan 2020

PROJECT:
Hanmer Arms, Hanmer

TITLE:
Desk Study Plan

DRAWING NO:
MAN.244.002.EC.D.001



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