

Non-statutory designations

- 3.6 Non-statutory designations identify areas of natural heritage importance to assist planning & management decisions but they do not have the legal basis of statutory designations. Non-statutory designations within & around the site are illustrated in [Map 3](#), and are described in the following sections.

Carbon & Peatland Map

- 3.7 The Carbon & Peatland Map² predicts that there is nationally-important, Class 1 & Class 2 peatland or Class 5 peat soils associated with the site.

Ancient Woodland Inventory

- 3.8 No Ancient Woodland³ is directly associated with the site but an area, known as Carse Wood, that is 'Long-Established (of plantation origin), is located 22 m to the south, across a minor road.

Habitats & vegetation

- 3.1 The conditions & results of the field survey are described in this section in relation to the ecology & floristics of the habitats & vegetation communities. Statistics on the absolute (ha) & relative (%) habitat & vegetation cover are provided in [Table 3](#). Habitat distribution is illustrated in [Map 4](#) & [Map 5](#). [Map 4](#) includes Target Notes and labels for the NVC communities within the habitats.

Survey

- 3.2 Survey was undertaken on the 28th of August, by Dr Andy McMullen, Principal Botanist at [Botanæco](#). Conditions on this day were ideal for survey: bright but overcast; with low wind speeds; and no precipitation. Accessibility across the site was complicated by dense gorse, but routes through most areas were available and facilitated by recently-mown corridors through the central & marginal areas of scrub.

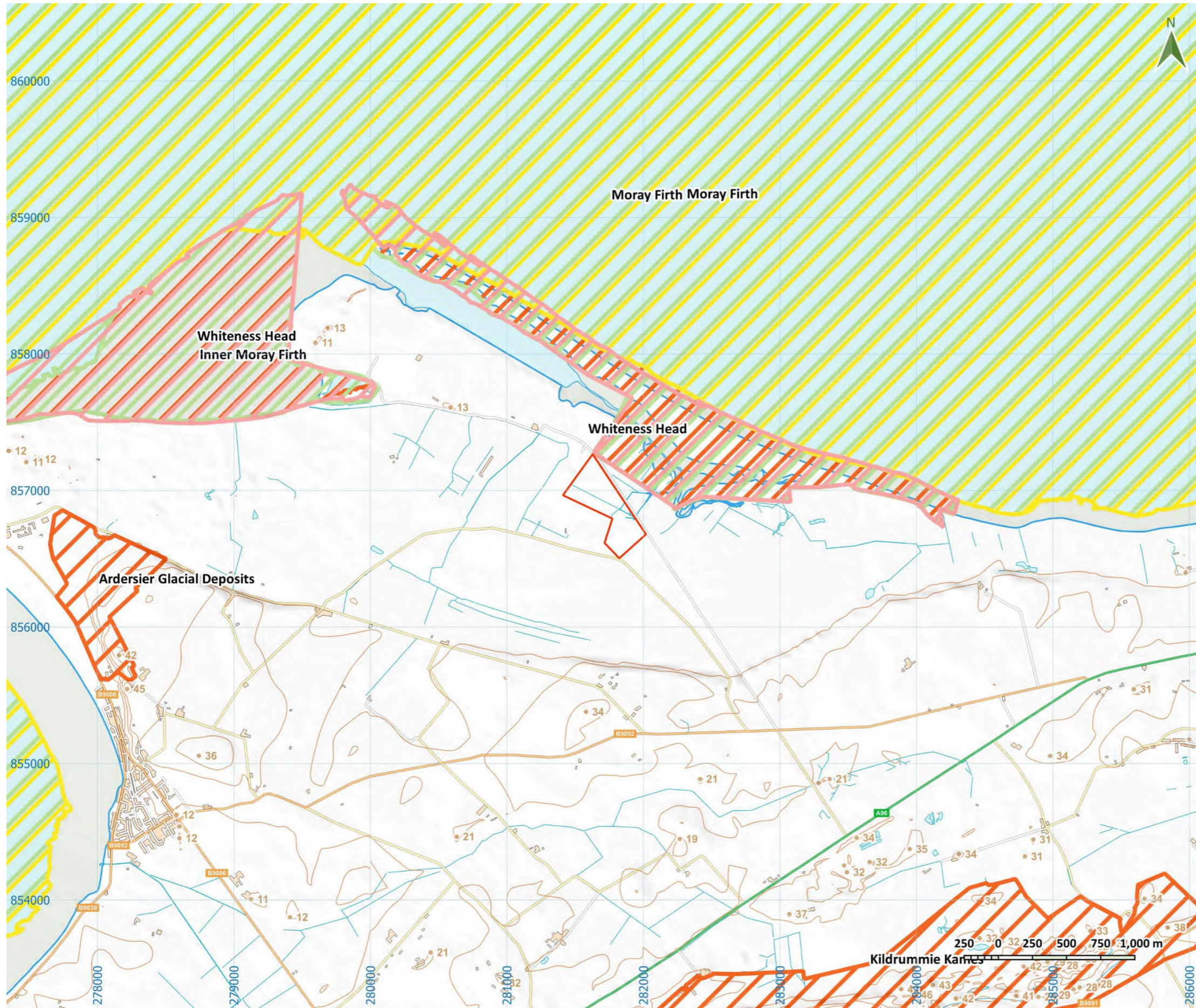
Habitat areas

- 3.3 Habitat areas are summarily described in this section; and there are more detailed, individual accounts in the following section ([Habitat & vegetation descriptions](#)).
- 3.4 Dense continuous scrub accounts for 11.6 ha (69 %) of the site and there is a moderate, 2.9 ha (17 %) extent of broadleaved (birch) woodland. The other habitats each account for less than 0.5 ha (3 %), including: unimproved, acid, dune & neutral grasslands; drain; dune heath; standing, oligotrophic water; & track.

Table 3: List of corresponding Phase 1 habitats & National Vegetation Classification plant communities, and mosaics; and their absolute & relative areas.

Phase 1 habitat code & title	Area		National Vegetation Classification code & title	Area	
	Hectares	Percent		Hectares	Percent
A1.1.1 Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural	2.85	16.9	W17b <i>Quercus petraea</i> - <i>Betula pubescens</i> - <i>Dicranum majus</i> woodland, typical sub-community	2.85	16.9
A2.1 Scrub - dense/continuous	11.61	68.7	W23a <i>Ulex europaeus</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub, <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> sub-community	11.61	68.7
B1.1 Acid grassland - unimproved	0.53	3.1	U4a <i>Festuca ovina</i> - <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> - <i>Galium saxatile</i> grassland, typical sub-community	0.53	3.1
B2.1 Neutral grassland - unimproved	0.02	0.1	MG10a <i>Holcus lanatus</i> - <i>Juncus effusus</i> rush-pasture, typical sub-community	0.02	0.1
B5 Marsh/marshy grassland	0.26	1.5	M23b <i>Juncus effusus/acuteiflorus</i> - <i>Galium palustre</i> rush-pasture, <i>Juncus effusus</i> sub-community	0.26	1.5
G1.3 Standing water - oligotrophic	0.02	0.1	n.a.	0.02	0.1
H6.5 Dune grassland	0.6	3.6	MC9a <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Holcus lanatus</i> maritime grassland, <i>Plantago maritima</i> sub-community	0.6	3.6
H6.6 Dune heath	0.47	2.8	H11c <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> - <i>Carex arenaria</i> heath, species-poor sub-community	0.47	2.8
Drain	0.03	0.2	n.a.	0.03	0.2
Track	0.5	3	Track	0.5	3

Map 2:
Statutory designations.



Haventus Expansion Area

Statutory designations

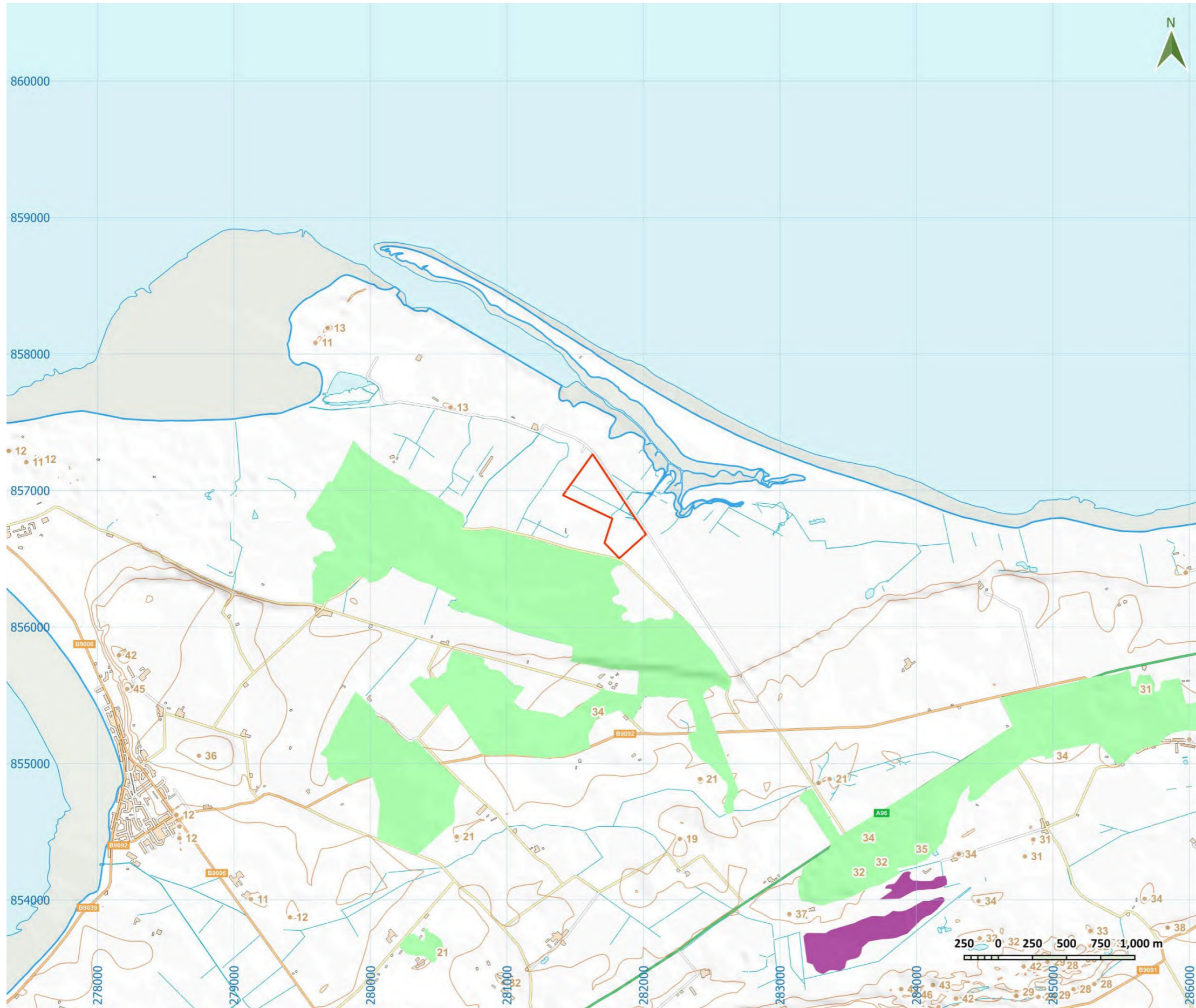
- Legend**
- Expansion Area
 - Statutory designations**
 - Ramsar
 - Special Area of Conservation
 - Special Protection Area
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest
 - Physical features**
 - Point height (m)
 - Contour (10 m)
 - Building
 - Foreshore
 - Primary Road
 - B Road
 - Minor Road
 - High Water Mark
 - Low Water Mark
 - Tidal water
 - Watercourse

Scale: 1:30,000 at A3

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Map 3:
Non-statutory designations.



Haventus Expansion Area

Non-statutory designations

- Legend**
- Expansion Area
 - Non-statutory designations**
 - Carbon & Peatland Map
 - Class 1
 - Ancient Woodland Inventory
 - Long-Established (of plantation origin)
 - Physical features**
 - Point height (m)
 - Contour (10 m)
 - Building
 - Foreshore
 - Primary Road
 - B Road
 - Minor Road
 - Waterbody
 - High Water Mark
 - Low Water Mark
 - Tidal water
 - Watercourse

Scale: 1:30,000 at A3

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Map 4:
Phase 1 habitats.



Haventus Expansion Area
Phase 1 habitats

Legend

- Expansion Area
- Target notes
- Phase 1 habitats**
- A1.1.1 - Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural
- A2.1 - Scrub - dense/continuous
- B1.1 - Acid grassland - unimproved
- B2.1 - Neutral grassland - unimproved
- B5-E2.1 mosaic
- G1.3 - Standing water - oligotrophic
- H6.6 - Dune heath
- H8.4 - Coastal grassland
- Track
- Scattered trees & major shrubs
- Physical features**
- Building
- Foreshore
- Minor Road
- Waterbody
- High Water Mark
- Low Water Mark
- Tidal water
- Watercourse

Scale: 1:3,500 at A3

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Map 5:
3D Phase 1 habitats.



Haventus Expansion Area
3D Phase 1 habitats

- Legend**
- Expansion Area
 - Phase 1 habitats**
 - A1.1.1 - Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural
 - A2.1 - Scrub - dense/continuous
 - B1.1 - Acid grassland - unimproved
 - B2.1 - Neutral grassland - unimproved
 - B5-E2.1 mosaic
 - G1.3 - Standing water - oligotrophic
 - H6.6 - Dune heath
 - H8.4 - Coastal grassland
 - Track
 - Scattered trees & major shrubs
 - Physical features**
 - Building
 - Foreshore
 - Minor Road
 - Waterbody
 - High Water Mark
 - Low Water Mark
 - Tidal water
 - Watercourse

Not to scale.

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Habitat & vegetation descriptions

3.5 Habitats & their constituent vegetation communities are described in this section in relation to their distribution, floristic composition, ecology, condition & management. Target Notes in [Appendix 1](#) are referenced where applicable.

A1.1.1 Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural

3.6 Broadleaved woodland has a canopy cover greater than 30% of deciduous trees more than 5 m high when mature. Semi-natural woodland includes areas that do not obviously originate from planting. The canopy can include non-natives (such as sycamore). A single NVC community is present as well as scattered trees & major shrubs.

W17b *Quercus petraea*-*Betula pubescens*-*Dicranum majus* woodland, typical sub-community

3.7 A single, moderately extensive (2.9 ha) area of W17b oak-birch-moss woodland is located in the south. Its densely-packed, even-aged/sized canopy of birches includes rare goat willow & rowan; and overlies an understory of gorse. The gorse is senescent in the shade of the birch canopy and this shade also impacts the field layer.

3.8 In the variable field layer, there is abundant *Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus* & wavy hair-grass; with frequent to occasional: broad buckler-fern, common bent, common sedge, common soft-brome, heath bedstraw, *Hylocomium splendens*, *Polytrichum commune/formosum*, *Scleropodium purum* & tufted hair-grass. Stumps & dead wood on the ground have a cover of abundant *Isoetes myosuroides* and more occasional *Dicranum majus*.

3.9 The low species richness, evenness & distinctiveness; mix of common, generalist species; even age & size of the birches; and the senescent gorse understory collectively relate the recent, secondary origins of this area of woodland, within what was formerly an area of open scrub. See also, Target Note 24 in [Appendix 1](#)

Scattered trees & major shrubs

3.10 Away from the area of W17b birch woodland, there is a scatter of birches and more rarely, grey or goat willow, & Scots pine. These scattered singletons & small groups of trees & 'major shrubs' (to distinguish the willows from broom & gorse) are represented by points, in [Map 4](#) & [Map 5](#). All of these trees are recent colonists into acid grassland, heath or gorse scrub, so their field layer is very variable, ranging from the 'U4a grasses' & broad buckler-fern; to persistent heather & heath; or senescent gorse (see also, Target Note 16 in [Appendix 1](#)).

3.11 A small group of scattered birch, gorse & Scots pine saplings is senescent and possibly indicative of recent hydrological or other change(s) - see Target Note 17 in [Appendix 1](#).

A2.1 Scrub - dense/continuous

3.12 Scrub is vegetation dominated by native shrubs, usually less than 5 m tall, and occasionally with a few scattered trees. It can be continuous or scattered.

W23a *Ulex europaeus*-*Rubus fruticosus* scrub, *Anthoxanthum odoratum* sub-community

3.13 W23a gorse-bramble scrub, sweet vernal grass sub-community vegetation is widespread, across 12 ha (69 %). It is co-dominated by broom & gorse; and there are numerous birch saplings establishing, as well as more rare Scots pine & willow. The field layer is generally comparable to the U4a acid grassland described below, but can also include elements of the other grassland & heath habitats into which the shrubs have recently colonised. At its extreme, the field layer is completely displaced by the shade & litter accumulations of mature shrubs (see Target Note 4 in [Appendix 1](#), for example).

3.14 Although the gorse scrub is species-poor, uneven & indistinctive, it does provide a range of resources, such as flowers for insects or nest sites for birds. However, its medium-term persistence is unlikely, due to the ongoing spread of birches especially. These will eventually shade & suppress the light-demanding gorse & broom and create a woodland habitat.

B1.1 Acid grassland - unimproved

3.15 Unimproved acid grassland is usually associated with unenclosed hill-grazing on acid soils. It is generally species-poor and frequently grades into wet or dry dwarf shrub heath.

U4a *Festuca ovina*-*Agrostis capillaris*-*Galium saxatile* grassland, typical sub-community

3.16 Away from the most coastal parts of the site, across slightly elevated, better-draining surfaces, there is a U4a fescue-bent-bedstraw grassland that extends below the extensive scrub & persists in occasional openings. Within the species-poor, moderately even & indistinctive sward, common bent is abundant; with frequent Yorkshire fog; and occasional: bramble, broad buckler-fern, common sedge, heath bedstraw, *Hylocomium splendens*, *Pleurozium schreberi*, sand sedge, soft-rush, tormentil & wavy hair-grass. There are also patchy areas of heath; frequent broom & gorse saplings; and occasional birch saplings. See also, Target Notes 2 & 21 in [Appendix 1](#).

B2.1 Neutral grassland - unimproved

3.17 Neutral grassland encompasses a wide range of grass-dominated communities occurring on mesic, neutral soils. Unimproved areas are not associated with management (such as fertiliser).

MG10a *Holcus lanatus*-*Juncus effusus* rush-pasture, typical sub-community

3.18 A single minor area of rush dominance within the MC9a coastal grassland is mapped as the MG10a Yorkshire fog - rush, typical sub-community. Within it, dense tussocks of soft-rush are dominant over a species-poor, uneven & indistinctive field layer of occasional broad-leaved dock, sorrel & Yorkshire fog.

B5 Marsh/marshy grassland - E2.1 acid/neutral flush mosaic

- 3.19 The B5 marshy grassland - E2.1 acid/neutral flush mosaic is used to map an area of soft-rush dominance over an unproductive field layer of herbs (B5 marshy grassland) or mosses (E2.1 acid/neutral flush).

M6c - M23b mosaic

- 3.20 Within the M6c star sedge - bog-moss - M23b rush-bedstraw, soft-rush sub-community mosaic there is a dominant, tall, rank sward of soft-rush within the M23b areas; and a more open, diffuse sward across the M6c vegetation. The moss *Polytrichum commune* is dominant in the M6c field layer. Its presence usually relates physical disruption of the more typical bog-mosses within this community, such as though trampling by grazing animals. Otherwise, within the M23b vegetation, there is frequent to occasional: common bent, common sedge, heather, heath wood-rush, marsh pennywort, *Pleurozium schreberi*, sand sedge, sorrel, sweet vernal grass, velvet bent & Yorkshire fog. There are also rare grey willow saplings; and patches of *Sphagnum fallax* & *Sphagnum fimbriatum* in the obscured drain that parallels the adjacent track.
- 3.21 This moderately species-rich, even & distinctive vegetation is located in a mesic to waterlogged, shallow depression linked to a drain. Its persistence into the medium term, is unlikely due to the spread of willow scrub. This is currently at an early stage of succession. See also, Target Note 7 in [Appendix 1](#).

G1.3 Standing water - oligotrophic

- 3.22 Standing water includes lakes, reservoirs, pools, flooded gravel pits, ponds, water-filled ditches, canals and brackish lagoons. Oligotrophic water is low in nutrients.
- 3.23 An oligotrophic pond, with some peat-staining, is located on the eastern boundary. Along its margins, there is overhanging gorse, except to the south, where there is abundant creeping bent; a minor area of common spike-rush; & rare marsh pennywort. On the water surface, there are abundant common pond skaters & frequent whirligig beetles. A male common darter was active nearby, during the survey. See also, Target Note 15 in [Appendix 1](#).

H6.5 Dune grassland

- 3.24 Dune grassland occurs on consolidated & flattened dunes. Marram grass is rare.

MC9a *Festuca rubra*-*Holcus lanatus* maritime grassland, *Plantago maritima* sub-community

- 3.25 The MC9a red fescue - Yorkshire fog maritime grassland, sea plantain sub-community is species-poor, uneven & indistinctive because of the dominance of red fescue; or *Pleurozium schreberi*, where the fescue sward is more open. There is also occasional autumn hawkbit, common bent, common sedge, compressed meadow-grass, *Peltigera* sp. (a lichen), rosebay willowherb, sand sedge, silverweed & white clover; and rare crowberry, marsh arrow-grass & sneezewort. See also, Target Notes 11 & 14 in [Appendix 1](#).

H6.6 Dune heath

- 3.26 Dune heath occurs on consolidated & flattened dunes. Heather is usually dominant with bell heather &/or cross-leafed heath; sand sedge &/or lichens. Juniper may also be present.

H11c *Calluna vulgaris*-*Carex arenaria* heath, species-poor sub-community

- 3.27 An indistinctive form of the H11c heather - sand sedge heath, species-poor sub-community is present. Its reduction to minor, scattered extents, shaded by spreading, shrubs & trees; and potentially, historical impacts too, such as grazing; have presumably resulted in its current, low levels of species-richness, evenness & distinction.
- 3.28 Within the H11c canopy, there is dominant to frequent heather; and frequent to occasional broad buckler-fern, common sedge, crowberry, *Hylocomium splendens*, *Pleurozium schreberi*, soft-rush, tormentil &/or wavy hair-grass. Broom, birch, gorse &/or Scots pine seedlings & saplings are also frequent to occasional, and indicative of the fate of the dune heath, in the short to medium term, as scrub continues to expand. See also, Target Notes 8, 22 & 23, in [Appendix 1](#).
- 3.29 A minor, isolated area of wet-heath like H11c is recorded by Target Note 6 (in [Appendix 1](#)), across c. 10 m². Within it, there is abundant cross-leafed heath, crowberry & heather; and frequent: common sedge, *Pleurozium schreberi*, *Polytrichum commune* & tormentil.

Drain

- 3.30 Minor areas of drain located around the pond are associated with dense creeping bent or soft-rush; or bare mud where water levels are presumably variable, and stressful to plant-growth. See also, Target Notes 13, 18 & 19, in [Appendix 1](#).

Track

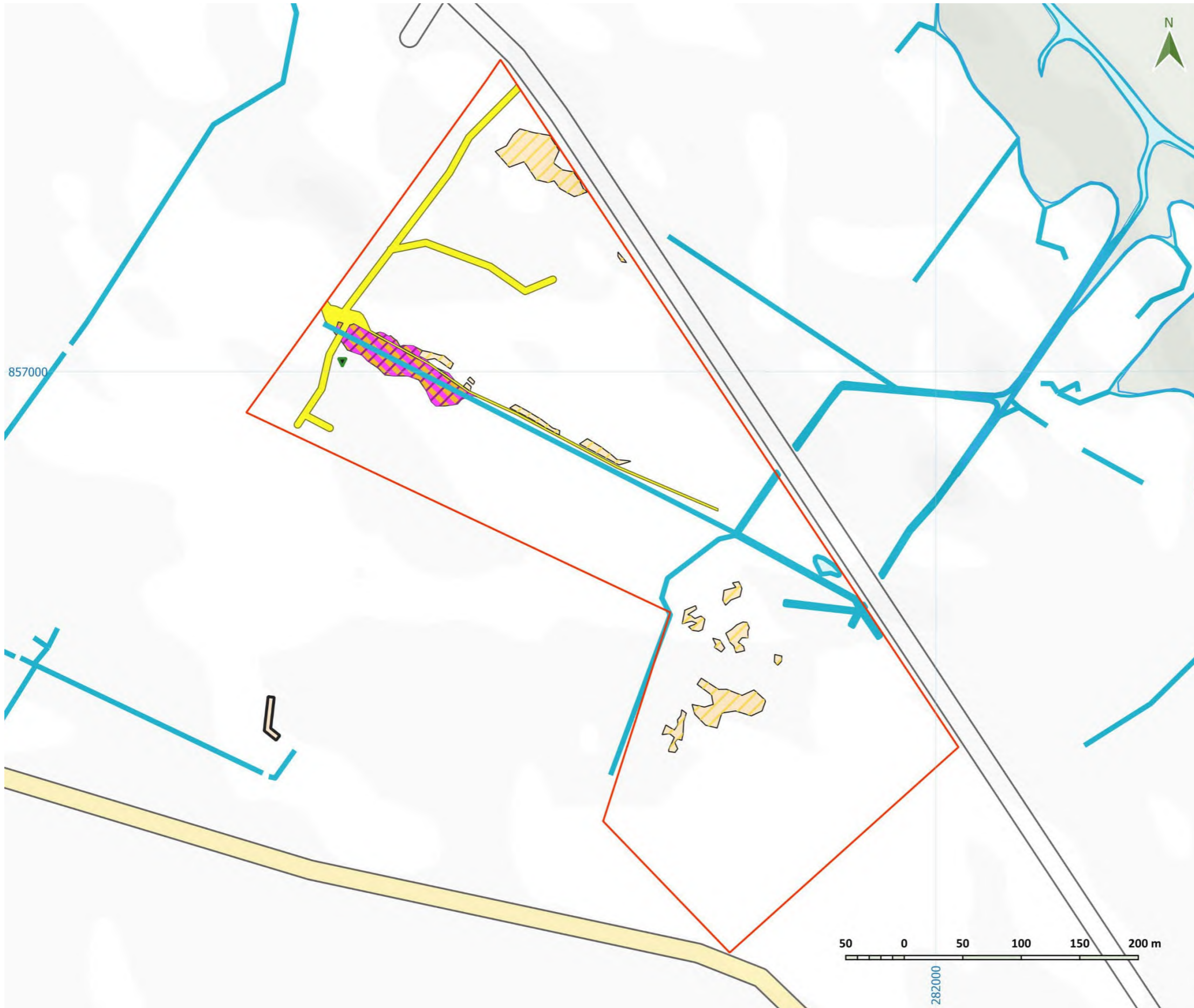
- 3.31 Narrow sections of track (2 m wide) have been maintained by irregular vehicle passes and light foot-traffic. Wider sections, around 6 m wide, have been cut recently, into broom & gorse scrub. See also, Target Notes 1, 4 & 9, in [Appendix 1](#).

Notable flora

- 3.32 It should be noted that this report is of a habitat & vegetation survey, not a floristic survey focused upon the detection of notable species. Floristic survey requires different search methods, patterns & timings; as well as an appropriate expert for each targeted group (e.g. vascular plants, bryophytes, lichens &/or fungi). However, in the course of habitat & vegetation survey, notable species are detected incidentally. These non-comprehensive records are provided & described in this section and their distribution illustrated in [Map 6](#).
- 3.33 Only one notable plant species has been recorded by the survey: **juniper**. This shrub is listed in the Scottish Biodiversity List¹³; as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species; and as a species of Least Concern in the IUCN Red List¹⁷. It is located in [Map 6](#) and by Target Note 10 in [Appendix 1](#).
- 3.34 In addition, the following two species are highlighted for their interest:
- **Oxford ragwort** is not a widespread species in Highland but is surprisingly frequent along the tracks. This observation suggests that it may have been inadvertently introduced to these areas. See also [Map 6](#) for the relevant track sections & Target Note 12 in [Appendix 1](#).
 - **Stinkhorn** fungus is present along one of the recently-cut tracks through the scrub. It is located by Target Note 3 in [Appendix 1](#).
- 3.35 The species-poor, **H11c dune heath assemblage** is also of some note for its rarity in the wider area, especially for the presence & local abundance of crowberry & sand sedge. These species retain some of the original, coastal distinction of the wider area. Although it is a distinctive habitat, the MC9a dune grassland does not include any notable species.

¹⁷ IUCN Red List details are available at <https://www.iucnredlist.org/about/background-history>. Accessed 29/08/2025.

Map 6:
Notable species.



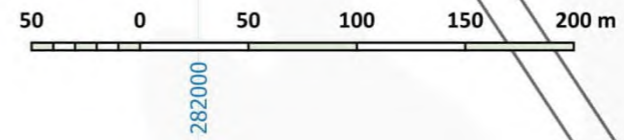
Haventus Expansion Area

Notable species

Legend

- Expansion Area
- Notable species**
- ▼ Juniper
- Oxford ragwort
- H11c dune heath assemblage
- M6c-M23b wetland assemblage
- Physical features**
- Building
- Foreshore
- Minor Road
- Waterbody
- High Water Mark
- Low Water Mark
- Tidal water
- Watercourse

Scale: 1:3,500 at A3



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4 Assessment

4.1 In this section, the baseline is assessed against legislation, listings &/or initiatives to identify:

- Peatland condition
- Deep peat
- Ecological importance
- Groundwater dependency
- Notable species
- Constraints & mitigation
- Biodiversity enhancements.

Peatland Condition Assessment

4.2 No Peatland Condition Assessment has been undertaken because there is no peatland.

Deep peat

4.3 No deep peat is present, or related habitat or conditions that would result in its formation. Otherwise, a superficial, peaty soil (to around 0.15 m depth) underlies the M23b marshy grassland that is located in a shallow, waterlogged depression. The sandy soil underlying the rest of the site evidently promotes better drainage.

Ecological importance

4.4 The ecological importance of the habitats and their constituent NVC communities is assessed in [Table 6](#) and illustrated in [Map 8](#).

4.5 The recently-established, W17b broadleaved woodland; and the persistent, MC9a dune grassland & H11c dune heath; M6c-M23b acid/neutral flush - marshy grassland mosaic; & open water; are assessed to be of Local importance, because of the presence/persistence of semi-natural characteristics (such as sub-shrub or tree canopy &/or species assemblages); and inclusion in various listings &/or legislation. Low levels of distinction, and the minor extents of habitat, limit valuation at a higher level.

4.6 Low levels of species-richness, evenness & distinction limit the valuation of the U4a acid grassland; MG10a neutral grassland & W23a scrub to Site importance. Furthermore, although it does provide a range of resources to wildlife, the W23a gorse scrub is behaving invasively, to the detriment of the open, grassland & heath habitats. However, it is, in turn, displaced by the

spreading birch woodland, so the gorse scrub can be seen as an intermediate successional stage, if management is not undertaken to maintain the open, dune grassland & heath habitats.

Groundwater dependency

4.7 British Geological Society hydrogeological mapping identifies that the geology underlying the site is Upper Old Red Sandstone that has the character of a “low productivity aquifer” where “flow is virtually all through fractures and other discontinuities”¹⁸. However, it remains a “regionally important multi-layered aquifer, with moderate yields of up to 5 L/s and, to the south of Moray Firth, up to 15 L/s”. There is therefore potential for the presence of Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). GWDTE are assessed in [Table 5](#) and their guidance & site-specific, groundwater-dependency distribution is illustrated in [Map 9](#) & [Map 10](#).

4.8 Although the M6c-M23b acid/neutral flush - marshy grassland mosaic & MG10a neutral grassland are identified in the guidance as being of respectively High or Moderate groundwater-dependency, they are not assessed to be groundwater-dependent within the context of the site. This conclusion is based on the following observations:

- Only a limited, aquifer is potentially present in the vicinity, due to the low topographic rise, landward, away from the site (that limits groundwater storage & pressure).
- Location of the potential GWDTE in shallow depressions (and the M6c-M23a alongside a drain) is strongly suggestive of surface water (rather than groundwater).
- There is no obvious groundwater discharge or chemical-modification (e.g. base-enrichment).

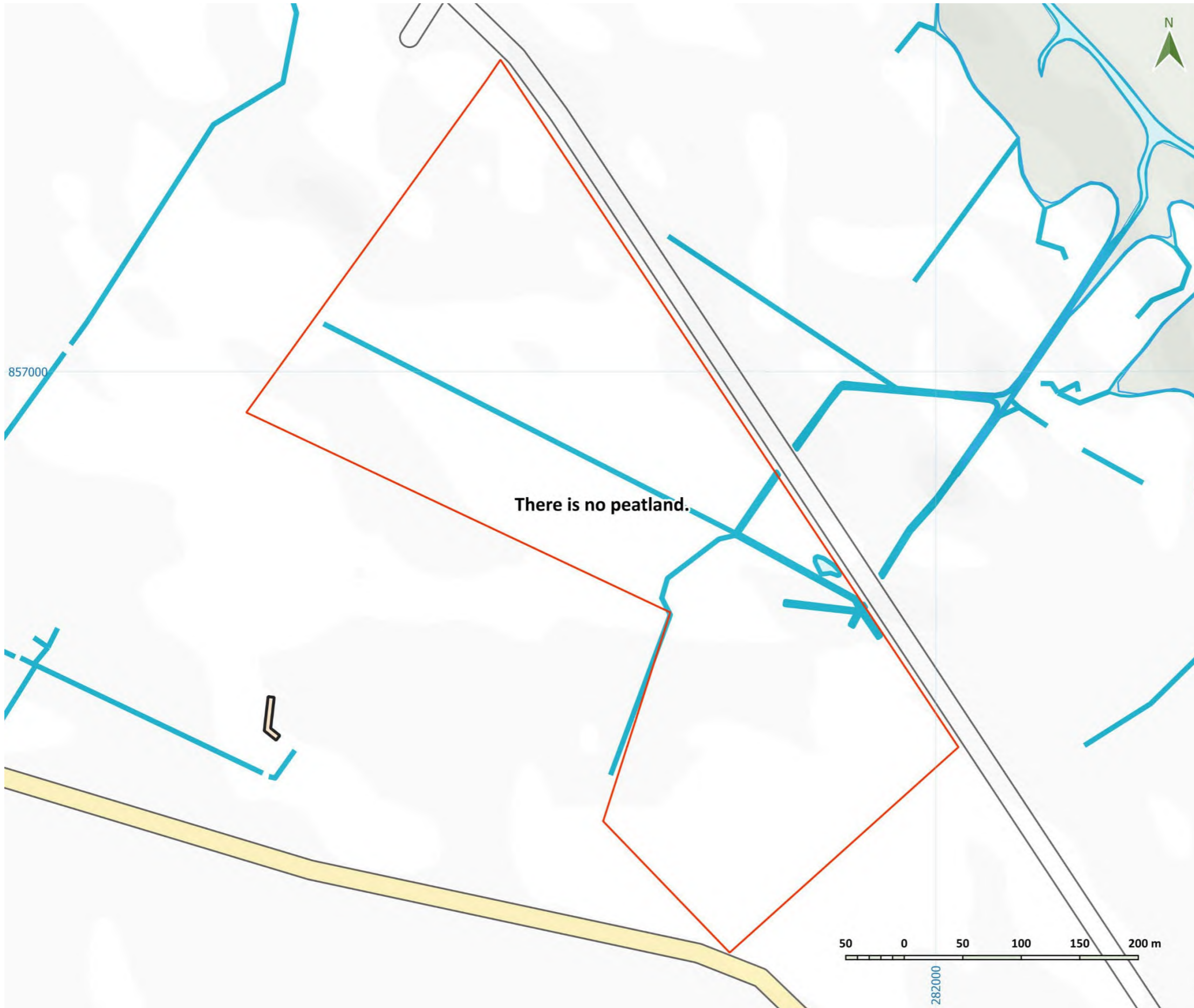
4.9 Consequently, the potential GWDTE are assessed to be surface water dependent, although groundwater *may* assist maintenance of a relatively high water table, as revealed by the pond & M6c-M23a mosaic; and to a lesser extent: the MG10a neutral grassland.

Notable species

4.10 The only notable species, in terms of conservation initiatives or legislation, is a single area with around six juniper shrubs (located in [Map 6](#) and see Target Note 10 in [Appendix 1](#)). Otherwise, there is some interest in the frequency of Oxford ragwort, in an area where it is uncommon; the presence of stinkhorn fungus; and the species-poor, H11c & M6-M23b mosaic assemblages. Cross-leafed heath is isolated to the area of H11c dune heath identified by Target Note 6 in [Appendix 1](#).

¹⁸ British Geological Survey 1:625 000 hydrogeology mapping is at <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/datasets/hydrogeology-625k/>. Accessed 29/08/2025.

**Map 7:
Peatland Condition Assessment.**

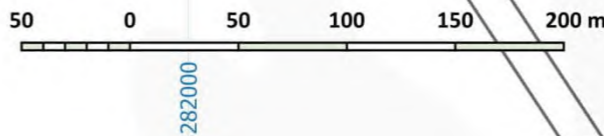


Haventus Expansion Area
Peatland Condition Assessment

- Legend**
- Expansion Area
 - Physical features**
 - Building
 - Foreshore
 - Minor Road
 - Waterbody
 - High Water Mark
 - Low Water Mark
 - Tidal water
 - Watercourse

There is no peatland.

Scale: 1:3,500 at A3



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Map 8:
Ecological importance.



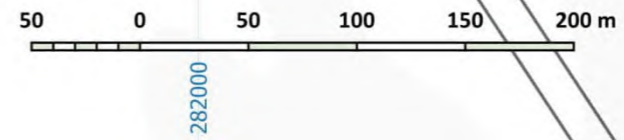
Haventus Expansion Area

Ecological importance

Legend

- Expansion Area
- Conservation importance**
- Local
- Site
- Physical features**
- Building
- Foreshore
- Minor Road
- Waterbody
- High Water Mark
- Low Water Mark
- Tidal water
- Watercourse

Scale: 1:3,500 at A3



Map contains:
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Constraint

- 4.11 The key habitat constraints identified by the survey & assessment are the following:
- Juniper shrubs included within the Scottish Biodiversity List and as a Priority Species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

Mitigation

- 4.12 Habitat-related mitigation requires:
- Avoidance/conservation, translocation or off-setting for any impacts on juniper.

Biodiversity enhancement options

- 4.13 Additional biodiversity-related options include:
- Avoidance/conservation, translocation or off-setting of impacts upon distinctive:
 - H11c dry heath (including the area identified by Target Note 6 in [Appendix 1](#)).
 - M6c-M23b mosaic
 - MC9a dune grassland
 - W17b birch woodland.

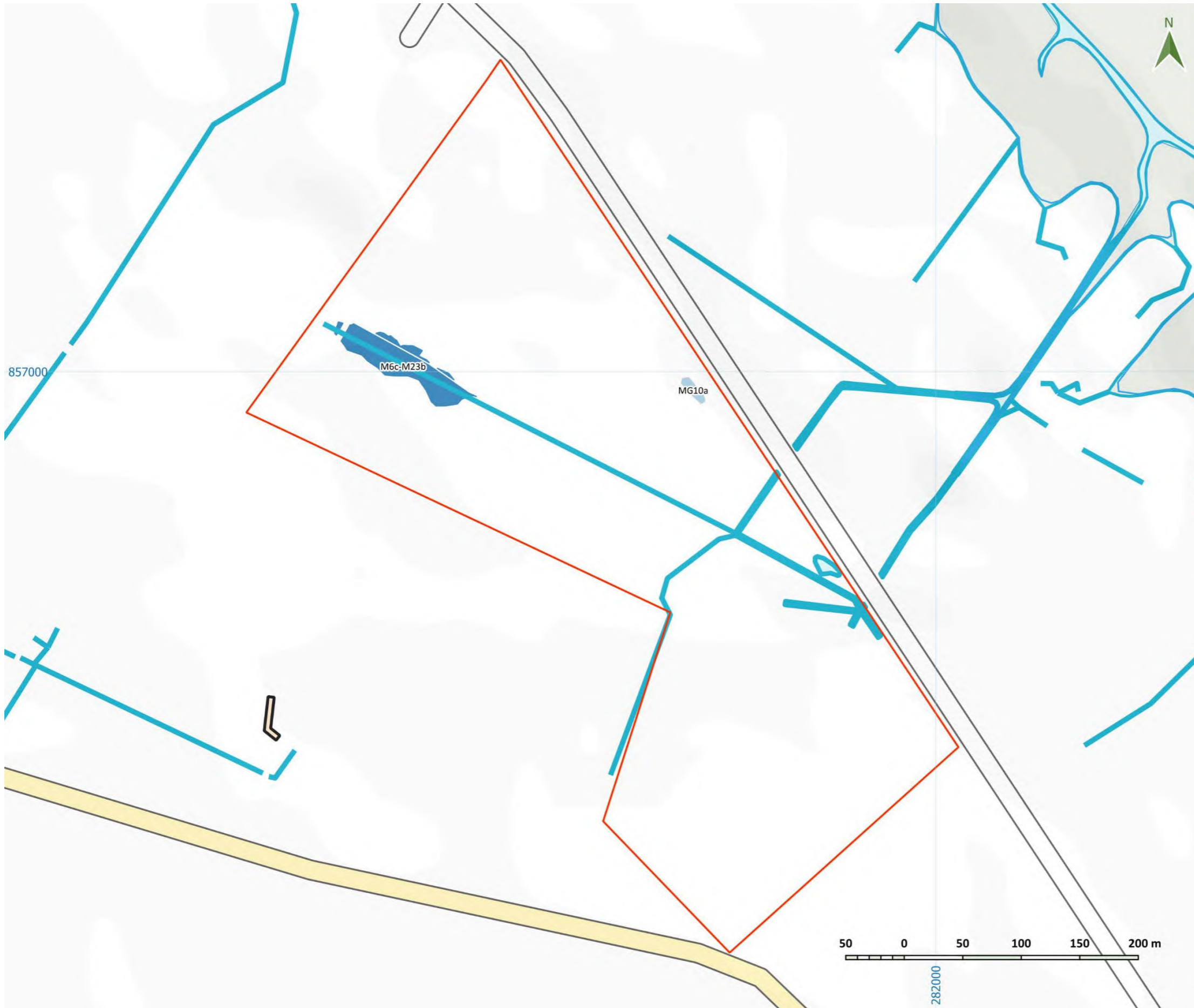
Table 4: Assessment of ecological importance.

Phase 1 habitat code & title	National Vegetation Classification code & title	Notes	Importance	
			Guidance	Site-specific
A1.1.1 Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural	W17b <i>Quercus petraea-Betula pubescens-Dicranum majus</i> woodland, typical sub-community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderately extensive, species-poor, uneven & indistinctive habitat dominated by a small number of species. Included within the Highland Local Biodiversity Action Plan & Scottish Biodiversity List. Habitat area not known in Highland. 		Local
A2.1 Scrub - dense/continuous	W23 <i>Ulex europaeus-Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species-poor, uneven & indistinctive vegetation, that is behaving invasively to the detriment of other habitats. Not included within the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan, Scottish Biodiversity List or Habitats Directive. Habitat area not known in Highland. 		Site
B1.1 Acid grassland - unimproved	U4a <i>Festuca ovina-Agrostis capillaris-Galium saxatile</i> grassland, typical sub-community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species-poor, uneven, and generally indistinctive vegetation. Secondary habitat derived from heath & other habitats through pastoral management. Included within the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan as a target for biodiversity enhancement. Extent in Highland not known. 		Site
B2.2 Neutral grassland - semi-improved	MG10a <i>Holcus lanatus-Juncus effusus</i> rush-pasture, typical sub-community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single, minor area of very low species-richness, evenness & distinctiveness. Rather rank, secondary habitat dominated by a rank growth of rushes. Not included in the Highland Local Biodiversity Action Plan or Scottish Biodiversity List. Extent in Highland not known. 		Site
B5 Marsh/marshy grassland	M23b <i>Juncus effusus/acutiflorus-Galium palustre</i> rush-pasture, <i>Juncus effusus</i> sub-community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single, minor area of moderate species-richness, evenness & distinctiveness. Semi-natural characteristics evident. Included within the Scottish Biodiversity & Highland Biodiversity Action Plan. Extent in Highland not known. 		Local
G1.3 Standing water - oligotrophic	n.a.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single, minor area associated with distinctive, aquatic invertebrates, Included within the Scottish Biodiversity List & Highland Biodiversity Action Plan. 		Local
H6.5 Dune grassland	MC9a <i>Festuca rubra-Holcus lanatus</i> maritime grassland, <i>Plantago maritima</i> sub-community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species-poor, uneven & moderately distinctive vegetation dominated by red fescue &/or moss (<i>Pleurozium schreberi</i>). Appears to be resistant to scrub encroachment and is likely to persist into the medium to long-term. Included within the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan, Scottish Biodiversity List & Habitats Directive. Extent in Highland not known. 		Local
H6.6 Dune heath	H11c <i>Calluna vulgaris-Carex arenaria</i> heath, species-poor sub-community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor, isolated areas of low to moderate species-richness, evenness & distinctiveness. Medium to long-term persistence threatened by scrub encroachment. Included within the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan, Scottish Biodiversity List & Habitats Directive. Extent in Highland not known. 		Local

Table 5: Assessment of groundwater dependency.

Phase 1 habitat code & title	National Vegetation Classification code & title	Notes	Groundwater dependency	
			Guidance	Site-specific
B2.2 Neutral grassland - semi-improved	MG10a <i>Holcus lanatus-Juncus effusus</i> rush-pasture, typical sub-community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only a limited, aquifer is potentially present in the vicinity, due to the low topographic rise, landward, away from the site (that limits groundwater storage & pressure). 	Moderate	Low
B5-E2.1 mosaic	M6c-M23b mosaic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of the potential GWDTE in shallow depressions (and the M6c-M23a alongside a drain) is strongly suggestive of surface water (rather than groundwater). There is no obvious groundwater discharge or chemical-modification (e.g. base-enrichment). 	High	Low

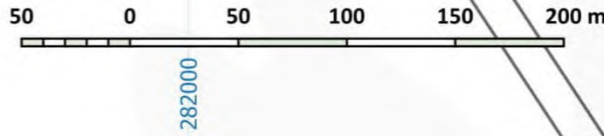
Map 9:
Guidance groundwater dependency.



Haventus Expansion Area
GWDTE I: Guidance

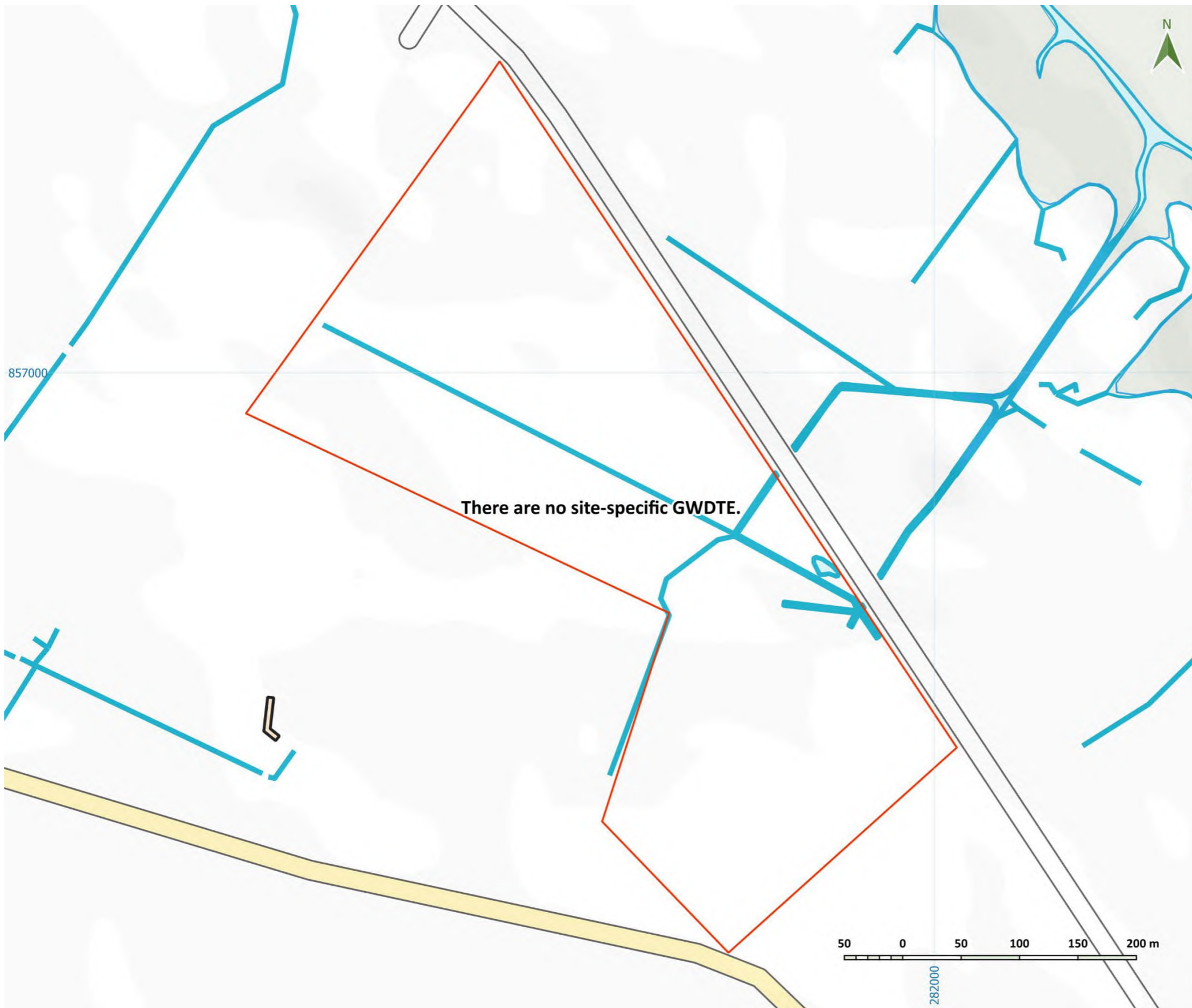
- Legend**
- Expansion Area
 - Groundwater dependency**
 - High
 - Moderate
 - Physical features**
 - Building
 - Foreshore
 - Waterbody
 - Minor Road
 - High Water Mark
 - Low Water Mark
 - Tidal water
 - Watercourse

Scale: 1:3,500 at A3



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Map 10:
Site-specific groundwater dependency.



Haventus Expansion Area
GWDTE II: Site-specific

- Legend**
- Expansion Area
 - Physical features**
 - Building
 - Foreshore
 - Minor Road
 - Waterbody
 - High Water Mark
 - Low Water Mark
 - Tidal water
 - Watercourse

Scale: 1:3,500 at A3

Map contains:
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5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Several **statutory designations** are located in proximity to the site, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and a Ramsar site.
- 5.2 The **Carbon & Peatland Map** identifies no Class 1, Class 2 or Class 5 peatland or peat soils.
- 5.3 **Ancient Woodland Inventory** sites are located at 22 m distance.
- 5.4 **Habitat areas:** Dense continuous scrub accounts for 11.6 ha (69 %) of the site and there is a moderate, 2.9 ha (17 %) extent of broadleaved (birch) woodland. The other habitats each account for less than 0.5 ha (3 %), including: unimproved, acid, dune & neutral grasslands; drain; dune heath; standing, oligotrophic water; & track.
- 5.5 Only one **notable plant species** has been recorded by the survey: juniper. Additional species & assemblages are of local interest.
- 5.6 No **peatland** is present.
- 5.7 No **deep peat** is present.
- 5.8 **Ecological importance** of the habitats ranges from Local to Site.
- 5.9 **GWDTE** are not identified in a site-specific context.
- 5.10 The key habitat **constraints** identified by the survey & assessment are juniper shrubs included within the Scottish Biodiversity List and as a Priority Species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 5.11 Habitat-related **mitigation** requires avoidance/conservation, translocation or off-setting for any impacts on juniper.
- 5.12 Additional **biodiversity enhancement**-related options include avoidance/conservation, translocation or off-setting of impacts upon distinctive:
- H11c dry heath (including the area identified by Target Note 6 in Appendix 1).
 - M6c-M23b mosaic
 - MC9a dune grassland
 - W17b birch woodland.

