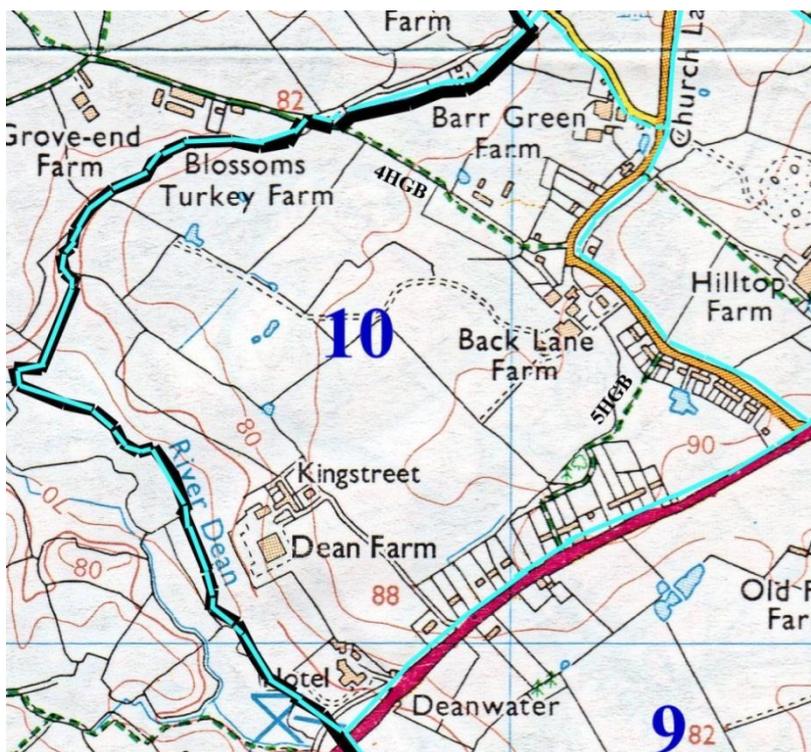


Woodford Habitat Survey

North West Woodford, Area 10 (surveyed September 2015 and spring 2016)

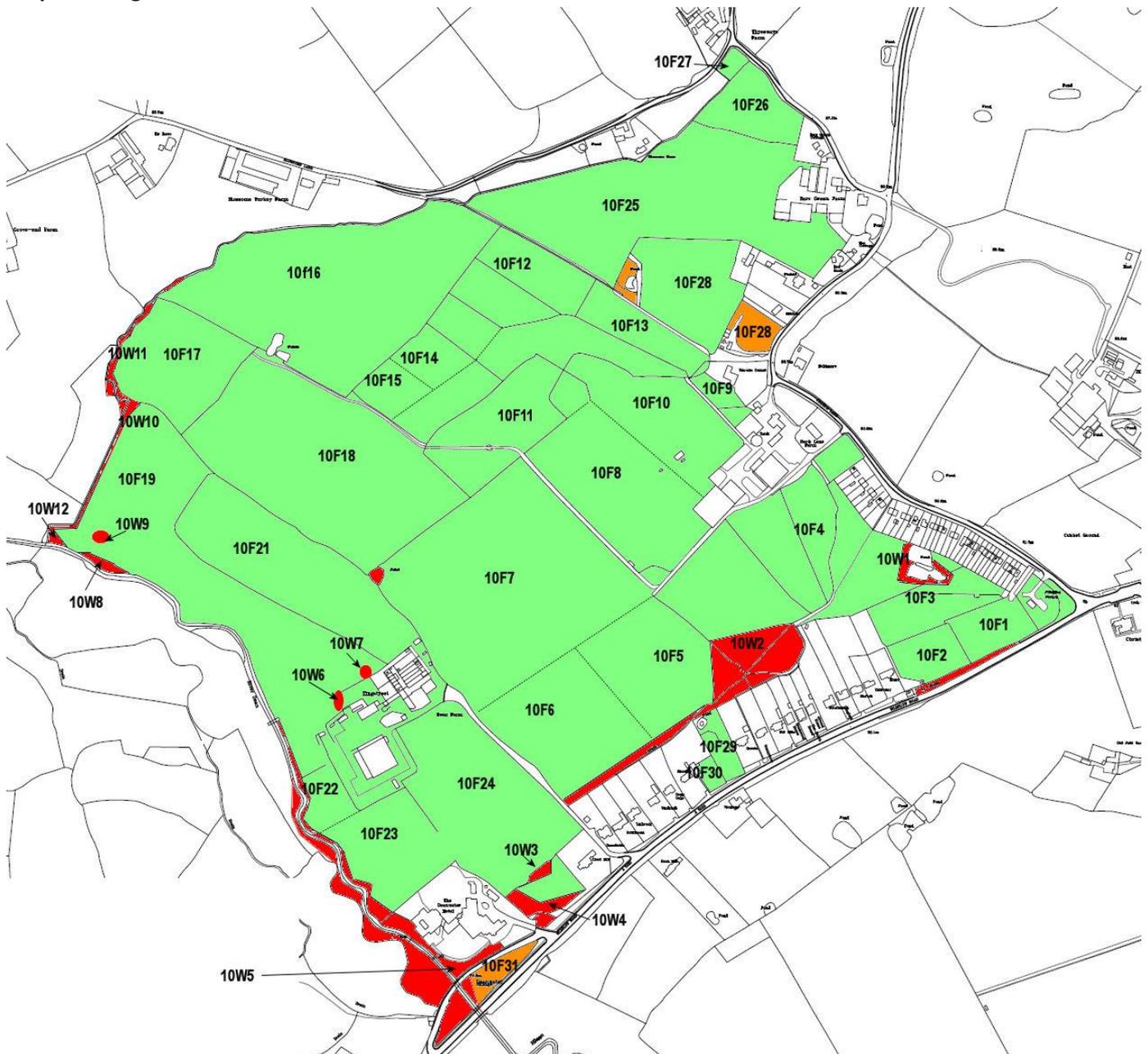
Area 10 forms the south west of the Neighbourhood Area, lying between Blossoms Lane, Church Lane, Wilmslow Road and the River Dean, as shown in OS and satellite images below, bounded by the turquoise line. The western boundary follows a tiny stream which meanders downhill to the River Dean and marks the border with Cheshire East. The road to Kingstreet and two footpaths, 4HGB and 5HGB, cross the area.



Land use

Area 10 is largely agricultural land belonging to local farms and landowners, including Dean Valley Farm, Dean Farm and Barr Green Farm. It is nearly all improved grassland, either used for grazing for horses, sheep or cattle and/or for hay, haylage or silage crops in the summer. There are a few small patches of unmown or infrequently mown grass.

Map showing land use in Area 10



-  Improved grassland
-  Unmown grassland
-  Woodland (deciduous)



10F25

Small areas of mixed deciduous woodland are to be found adjacent to the River Dean, around the Deanwater Hotel, behind the houses along Wilmslow Road and along the banks of a small stream which runs down to the River Dean.

Area 10 is characterised by large fields bounded by native hedgerows with mature trees, mostly oak with some ash and sycamore. Parts of Dean Valley Farm are used for horse grazing and have been subdivided into smaller fields with fences. Open views across fields and to the Pennines can be enjoyed from footpath 4HGB.

View of 10F25 and 10H40b from footpath 4HGB



Hay ready for baling in 10F25



Views to hills across Dean Valley Farm



Wooded stream forming western boundary



10F19 beside River Dean in Dean Farm



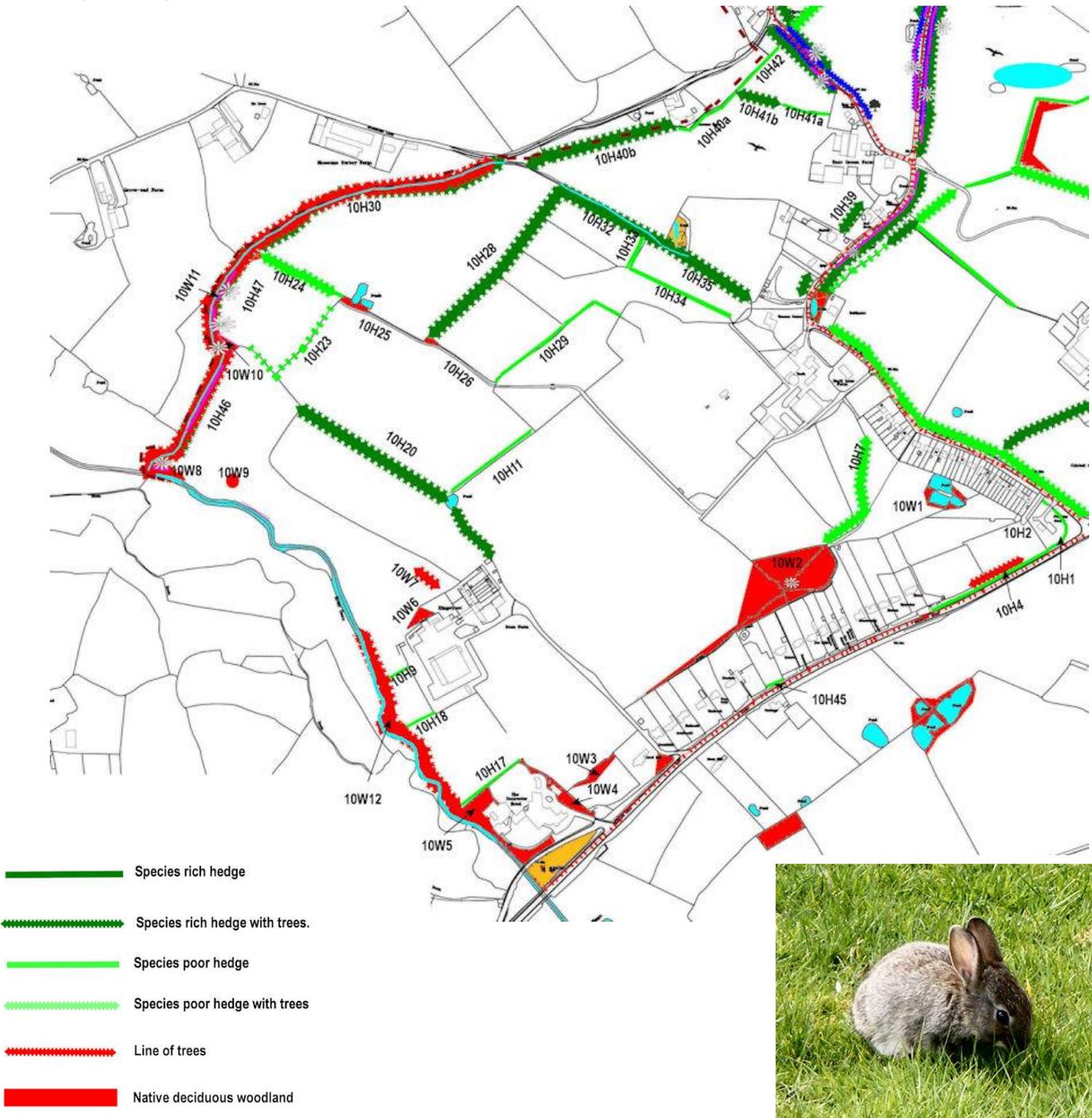
Trees around River Dean in Dean Farm land



Hedgerows

There are numerous native hedges in Area 10, particularly in the west of the area. Species rich hedges include 10H20, 10H28, 10H30, 10H32, 10H35, 10H41b and 10H40b. Two merit special mention, because they are likely to provide excellent habitats for wildlife with eight or more species per 30 metres and close proximity to small streams. One is the tall species-rich native hedgerow, 10H32, alongside footpath 4HGB which runs parallel to a ditch/stream at the boundary of 10F25 and 10F18. Species here included briar, elder, hazel, holly, ivy, oak, rowan, sycamore and willow. The other is the overgrown hedgerow/strip of woodland which follows the little stream at the western boundary, 10H30. Species found here included alder, ash, blackthorn, briar, elder, hawthorn, holly, oak, rowan, sycamore and willow.

Map of hedgerows in Area 10



Examples of hedgerows and field boundaries

10H32 along ditch/stream by footpath 4HGB



10H30 by stream along boundary with Cheshire East



10H20 in Dean Farm



Ditch by 6H4a (Area 6) bordering 10F26



Hollows in base of hedgerow tree in 10H40b



Hedges bordering footpath 4HGB



10H46 (boundary at stream) and 10F19



10H30 with mature trees



The banks of the River Dean



Woodland

Area 10 includes small areas of mixed deciduous woodland. 10W2 is mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland with tall mature trees lying behind the houses on Wilmslow Road and adjacent to footpath 5HGB, which is part of the Fred Perry Way. Species found here included ash, elder, hazel, holly, possibly hornbeam, sycamore, scots pine and rowan. 10W1 is an area of woodland around pond 10P1 in field 10F3 behind the houses at the southern end of Church Lane. There are narrow areas of woodland bordering the River Dean near the Deanwater Hotel and at the boundary with Cheshire East. 10W3 and 10W4 are areas of woodland around the Deanwater Hotel. 10W5 lies between the hotel and the River Dean. All contain tall deciduous trees.

A small copse of large alders, 10W9, is to be found in field 10F19.

10W2 in April



10W5 by River Dean by the Deanwater Hotel



Satellite image showing 10W1 and 10W2 behind properties on Wilmslow Road and Church Lane



Satellite image showing 10W4 and 10W5 around the Deanwater Hotel



Mature trees

Area 10, like much of the farmland in Woodford, is characterised by hedgerows dotted with numerous mature trees. Oak, sycamore and ash are predominant. There are a few stand-alone mature trees in the fields, which can be seen clearly in the satellite image on the next page. The majority of the trees numbered are oaks, except 10S2, which is an ash. Two very tall black poplar trees in the field adjacent to Quinta on Wilmslow Road were lopped in 2017, to remove the canopy. There are several mature oak trees in the pavement alongside Wilmslow Road and Church Lane.

Oak tree in pavement on Wilmslow Road



Oak tree in grass verge on Church Lane



Satellite image showing some of the mature trees in hedgerows and fields



The white arrow in the satellite image above marks an oak tree in neighbouring Cheshire East, which was home to nesting Little Owls in 2015 and 2016. They relocated to an oak tree adjacent to Church Lane in Area 7 to produce offspring in 2017.

Trees along Wilmslow Road in autumn



Hollow tree trunk in 10F2



There is a line of mature black poplar trees in narrow field adjacent to Wilmslow Road, shown in the satellite image below.

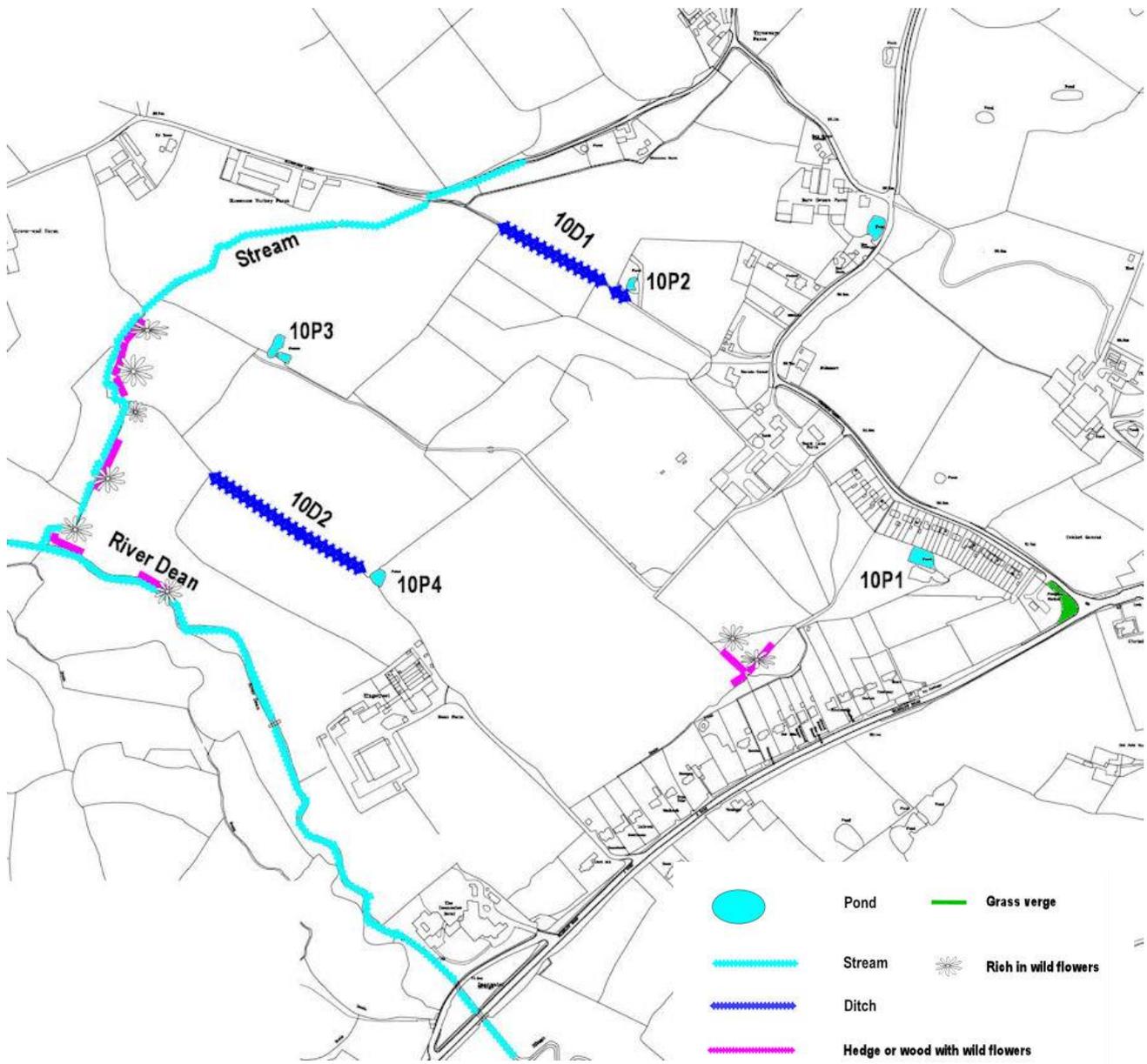


Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

The map below is taken from the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council website and shows TPOs as green dots and Tree Preservation Area Orders as green blocks in the area around the Deanwater Hotel and the entrance to the road leading to Kingstreet.



Ponds and ditches



There are several ponds in the area. 10P1 is close to the back gardens of properties on Church Lane and is partially surrounded by native trees and scrub (10W1). 10P2 is within an area used for hay production, but is immediately surrounded by unmown grassland with willow scrub and bulrushes. Dragon flies have been observed in summer around 10P2. 10P3 and 10P4 are in open agricultural land. 10P3 is used occasionally by anglers. 10P5 is within a domestic garden. Dragon flies and mallard are regularly seen close by and coots have been observed crossing Church Lane. Heron are frequently observed flying over the area.

Area 10 is bounded by the River Dean to the south and a small stream to the west, running down to the river. A stream/ditch runs across Barr Green Farm land from west to east, running adjacent to footpath 4HGB. Another ditch crosses part of the area lower down in Dean Farm land from west to east. All these waterways are partially bordered by species rich native woodland or hedgerows and will provide good habitats for wildlife.

Dragon fly on pond 10P2



Pond 10P1 in field behind Church Lane



Grass verges and field boundaries

Areas around the farm fields, streams, ditches are the river, which are inaccessible for mowing, support herbaceous growth and wildflowers. A separate section on wildflowers is included later.

Wilmslow Road and Church Lane have mown grass verges in the pavement between access drives.

Bluebells, red campion and stitchwort by stream



Grass verges with trees bordering Wilmslow Road



Wildflowers

Wildflowers are worthy of note in this area. Bluebells, red campion, celandine and stitchwort were observed in spring, growing prolifically in the wooded borders of the stream (10W10) and by the River Dean (10W8). Nettle, willowherb, vetch, dandelion, foxglove, angelica, ragwort, thistle, clover, buttercup, dandelion and hedge parsley are common too. A variety of herbaceous species were also observed along footpath 5HGB and in wood 10W2. Yellow flag irises are found in the ditch by hedge 6H4a along Blossoms Lane at the boundary of Area 6 and Area 10.

See areas marked with a pink line and flower symbol on the ponds and ditches map shown earlier.

Celandine in 10W10



Red campion in 10W11



Wildlife

Area 10 supports a diverse range of wildlife. Moths, butterflies and bees are frequently seen in the summer, no doubt supported by flowering herbaceous species in the field margins and gardens. The mixture of open fields with native hedgerows, large mature trees and wooded areas and streams provides excellent habitats and probably account for the diverse range of birds which are reported. Buzzards frequently circle overhead in groups of two to five. Black-headed gulls and lapwings are commonly seen in the open fields. Curlews have been heard but not seen during the survey. Ducks, geese and coots can be observed on the ponds. Rodents sighted here include a large population of rabbits, squirrels, stoat (rare) and there is abundant evidence of mice and rats. There is evidence that mammals with homes here include bats, fox and badger.

One of the residents on Wilmslow Road has a garden, which backs on to native deciduous and coniferous woodland (10W2), and which he has set up to encourage wildlife. His list of bird sightings encompassed Area 9 and Area 10 and is included in the table below.

Bird sightings

Barn Owl	Garden Warbler	Mallard
Blackbird	Goldcrest	Mistle Thrush
Blackcap	Goldfinch	Nuthatch
Black-headed Gull	Greater Spotted Woodpecker	Pied Wagtail
Blue Tit	Grey Wagtail	Robin
Bullfinch	Hedge Sparrow	Siskin
Buzzard	Heron	Song Thrush
Canada Goose	House Martin	Starling
Chiffchaff	Kestrel	Swallow
Coal Tit	Kingfisher	Swift
Coot	Lapwing	Tawny Owl
Crow	Little Owl	Treecreeper
Curlew	Long-tailed Tit	Tufted Duck
	Magpie	Wren

Photographic evidence of bird life in Area 10

Fledgling thrush, Barr Green Cottage garden



Young kestrel in 10F26



Black-headed gulls in 10F10



Lapwing in 10F10



Goldfinches bathing, Barr Green Cottage garden



Little owl in tree just over the border in Cheshire East



Note that the family of little owls relocated in 2017 to Area 7.

Mallard in Barr Green Cottage garden



Woodpecker in oak tree 6S1in Area 6 (adjacent)



Robin in Barr Green Cottage garden



Buzzard over 10F10



Insects in Area 10

Observed in Barr Green Cottage garden.

Bee on vetch



Honey bee on wall



Peacock butterfly on cherry blossom



White Ermine moth on wall



Invasive or undesirable species

Himalayan Balsam is prevalent adjacent to the River Dean.

Proximity to other areas rich in habitats for wildlife



Area 10 is adjacent to land in Cheshire East which has been noted for richness in wildlife habitats. These include the River Dean, Hall Wood and part of the area known as Handforth East, which has been ear-

marked for development in the Cheshire East Local Plan. Kingfishers have been observed along the banks of the River Dean adjacent to Dean Farm land in Area 10. Hall Wood is a remnant of an extensive beech wood, which remains after the construction of the A34 bypass. It contains very tall mature trees and provides a likely habitat for fox and badger.

Hall Wood near the border in Cheshire East in spring and winter



River Dean in Cheshire East



One of many ponds in Handforth East (Cheshire East)



The ponds in Handforth East support crested newt and dragonfly populations. The number of dragonfly species counted amounts to 11, including the four spotted chaser picture below, which exceeds the Local Wildlife Site criteria and would be considered a possible Priority/Key site by the British Dragonfly Society. The site has been designated as a Local Wildlife Site by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust. Kingfisher, barn owl and bats have been observed around these ponds too.

Four spotted chaser dragonfly on pond in Cheshire East in loose proximity to Area 10



Landscape and character

[To be completed later]

Dean Farm, Kihgstreet



Deanwater Hotel entrance



Kingstreet viewed from the river



Field at the back of Church Lane in winter



View over fields to Blossoms Farm in winter



Hunters viewed from fields at the back



Hay making at Barr Green Farm



Barr Green Cottage viewed from fields at the back



Deanvalley Livery Stables



Pinfold viewed from fields at the back



Oak trees in grass verges at Church Lane entrance



Trees along Wilmslow Road

