Green Ecological Corridors

The current planning system already has due regard to the importance of biodiversity. The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023[1]) sets out in the environmental objective for achieving sustainable development that planning should protect and enhance our natural environment including improving biodiversity (NPPF Para. One way this can be done includes planning policies establishing coherent ecological networks for biodiversity net gain that are more resilient to current and future pressures (NPPF Para 180).

As set out in the NPPF Para 185a plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife rich habitats and wider ecological networks including international, national, and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping-stones that connect them and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration, and creation. NPPF Para 185b states that opportunities should be pursued for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity by enhancing ecological networks and priority habitats and species.

As set out in Norfolk Wildlife Trust guidance,[2] biodiversity should be considered at all levels of planning and plays an important component of the green infrastructure of a local area, along with footpaths, allotments, and open green space. Every public body including town and parish councils has a duty to conserve biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). Government Guidance on the NERC Act includes recommendations to identify local sites of importance for biodiversity and to protect and enhance biodiversity within the management of local authority land holdings.

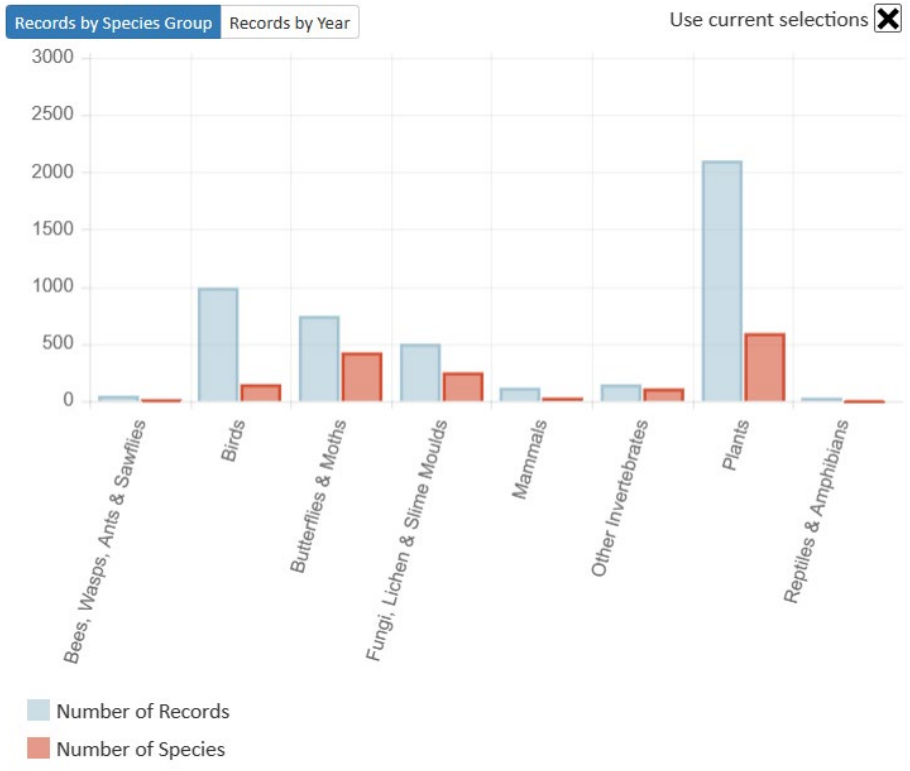
Actions should be taken for biodiversity in local areas to understand its importance and how it shapes the area. To create green wildlife corridors in the parish evidence has been gathered to find appropriate corridors to allow for habitat protection and enhancement when it comes to biodiversity net gain from new developments if this cannot be achieved on site as a last resort. Green corridors can also play a part in the importance of current habitat networks and through policy can set out how any development along these should be designed to avoid fragmentation or loss of current species present.

[1] National Planning Policy Framework (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[2] biodiversity-factsheet-for-neighbourhood-plans-(re.aspx (norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Evidence gathered includes:

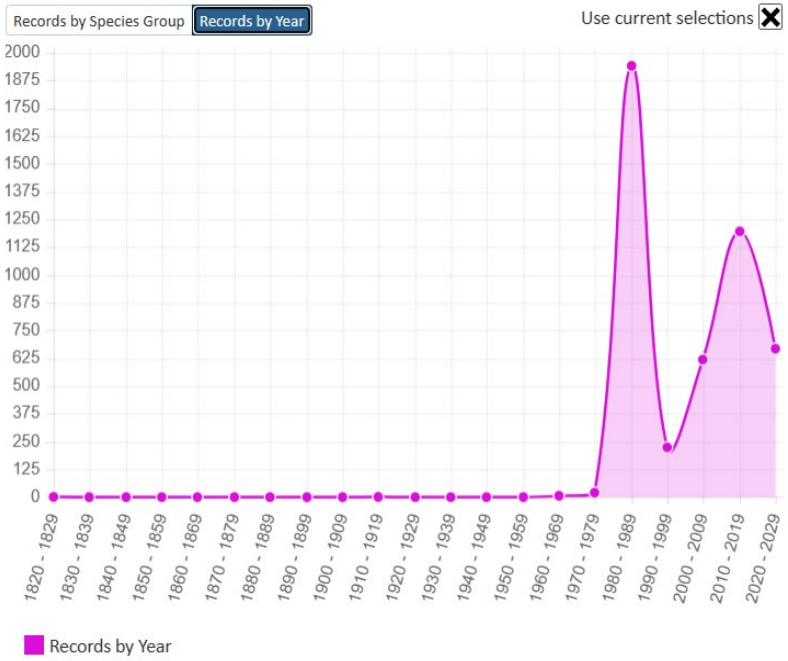
- Parish council contacted Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service (NBIS) in March 2024 for a variety of information with regards to Syderstone parish including the number of species recorded over the years (1820-2020) and types of species which have been recorded/are present.
- NBIS provided the parish council with an e-mapper link to see in the public domain the types of species recorded in the parish and the locations for these were marked. These include bees, wasps, ants &sawflies, birds, butterflies &moths, fungi, lichen &slime moulds, mammals, other invertebrates, plants, reptiles, and amphibians. NBIS also included details on the different trees and hedgerows present in the parish and a living map of the different types of habitat such as arable land or grassland.
- Explored if there were any international, national, or locally designated sites present in the parish, for example county wildlife sites. Shape files were downloaded from open-source data via Natural England and Norfolk County Council.
- Explored where public rights of way and permissive routes currently exist in the parish and if these link up to areas where national and locally important habitats and species are present. It isimportant to consider recreational pressure in these areas from walkers and animals.
- An initial community survey was conducted to find out resident's and business owners' viewpoints on the importance of the natural environment. The majority of people in the survey (Q14) said they would support the identification of wildlife corridors (96.6% or 84 people). Some people gave specific examples such as the established walks advertised in the village would be an ideal place for corridors including footpaths into the countryside and Syderstone Common.

Information from NBIS statistics has shown that there is an extensive range of species present within the parish including numerous species of plants, butterflies, moths, and fungi for example. The number of records of these different species varies in size but highlights that the most recorded in the area are plants and birds.



Syderstone	Bees, wasps, ants & sawflies	Birds	Butterflies &Moths	Fungi, Lichen & Slime Moulds	Mammals	Other invertebrates	Plants	Reptiles & Amphibians
Number of records	46	991	745	501	94	145	2013	29
Number of species	15	147	425	251	22	110	593	7

Looking at the NBIS statistics of recorded species over the years shows that from 1820-1970 only a handful of different species were logged formally by observers. However, from the 1980s onwards extensive records have been tracked of the species present in the area with the highest log being from 1980 and then 2010. In the last decade the records of species logged have nearly halved since 2010 suggesting that there has been a decline in the presence of different biodiversity features in the area.



Year	Species records
1820	1
1910	1
1960	6
1970	18
1980	1940
1990	224
2000	616
2010	1181
2020	667

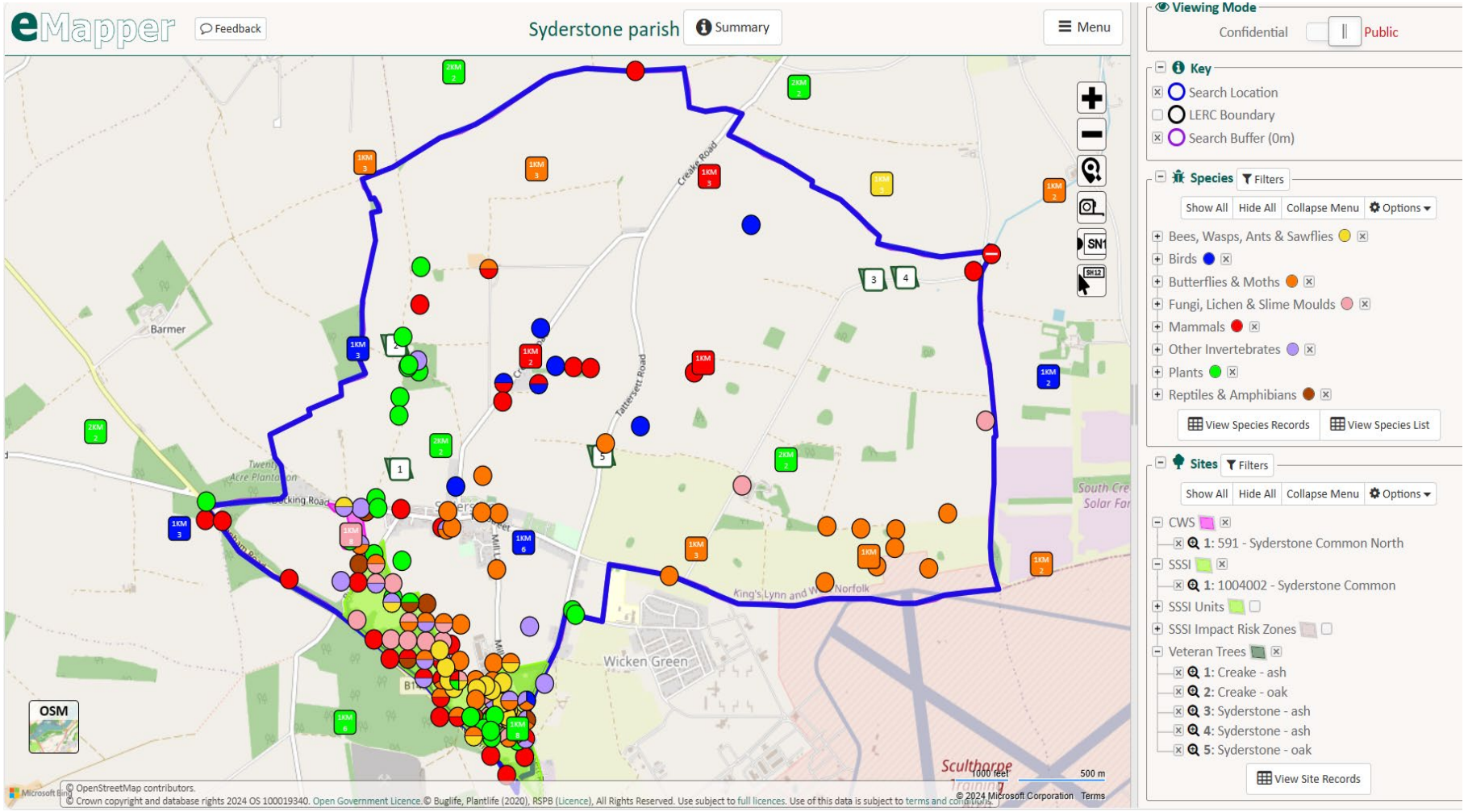
It is known that two residents have moth traps in their gardens within Syderstone helping with the count of different moth species. The moth trap in one garden has averaged 377 species per annum during the period 2019 – 2023. The other trap in a resident's garden which attracts different moths as its location is nearer The Common. This information is fed to the Rothamstead Research Centre which perhaps is where the information in the NBIS data comes from. The number of species of "Butterflies and Moths" in the NBIS report above is 425. Which may be correct as the traps in the village are moths only suggesting 48 species of butterflies.

Looking at data available via Natural England and Norfolk County Council there is one national designated site in Syderstone and one County Wildlife Site. These are listed below and are situated to the south of the parish.

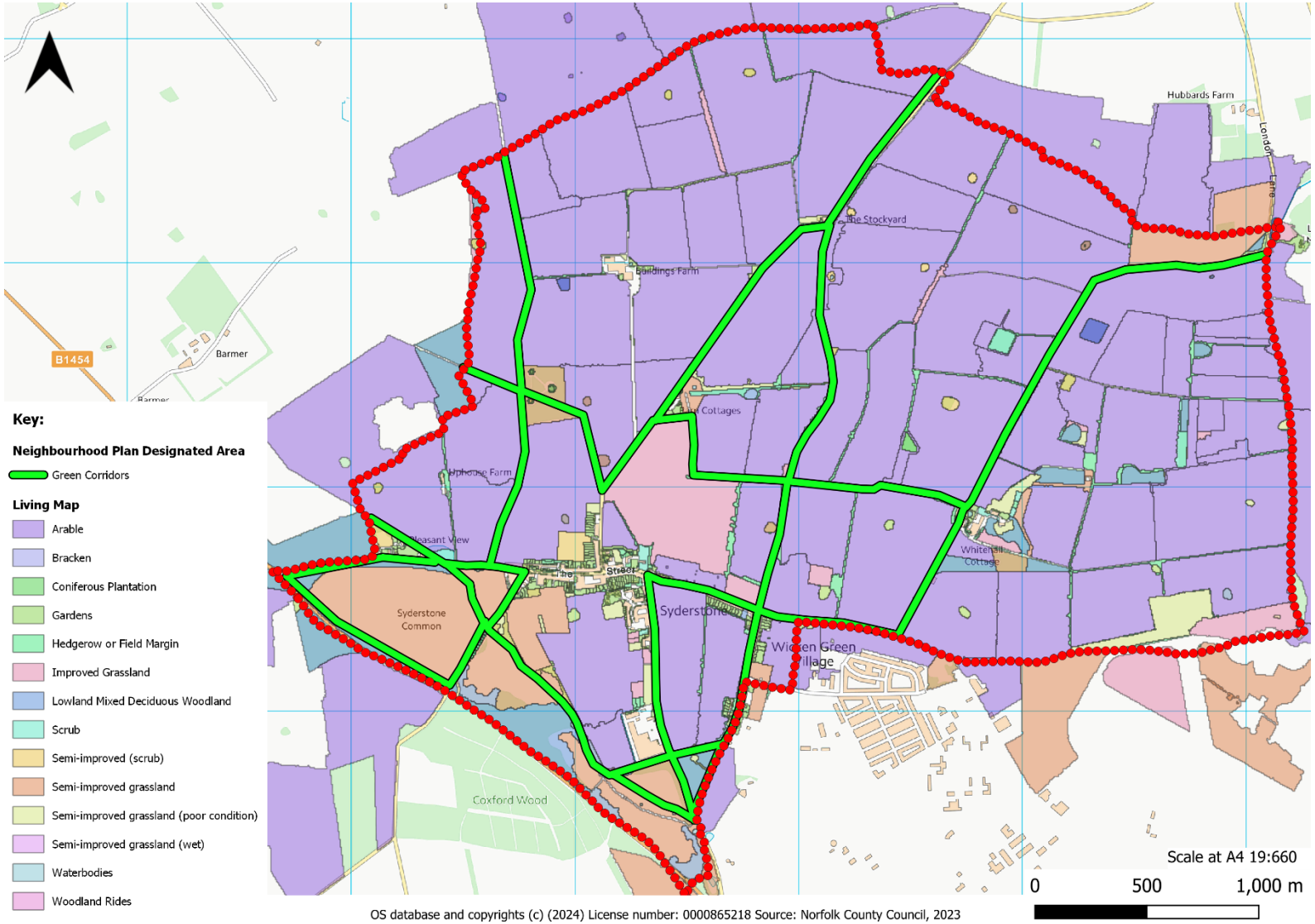
Parish	International Important Sites	National Important Sites	Locally Important Sites
Syderstone	None	Syderstone Common	Syderstone Common North

There are a few public rights of way and permissive paths which pass through areas of national and local importance as well as areas of arable/grassland which have species recorded. The maps below show a breakdown of the different datasets which have been accessed via Natural England, Norfolk County Council and NBIS to create the green corridors in the parish.

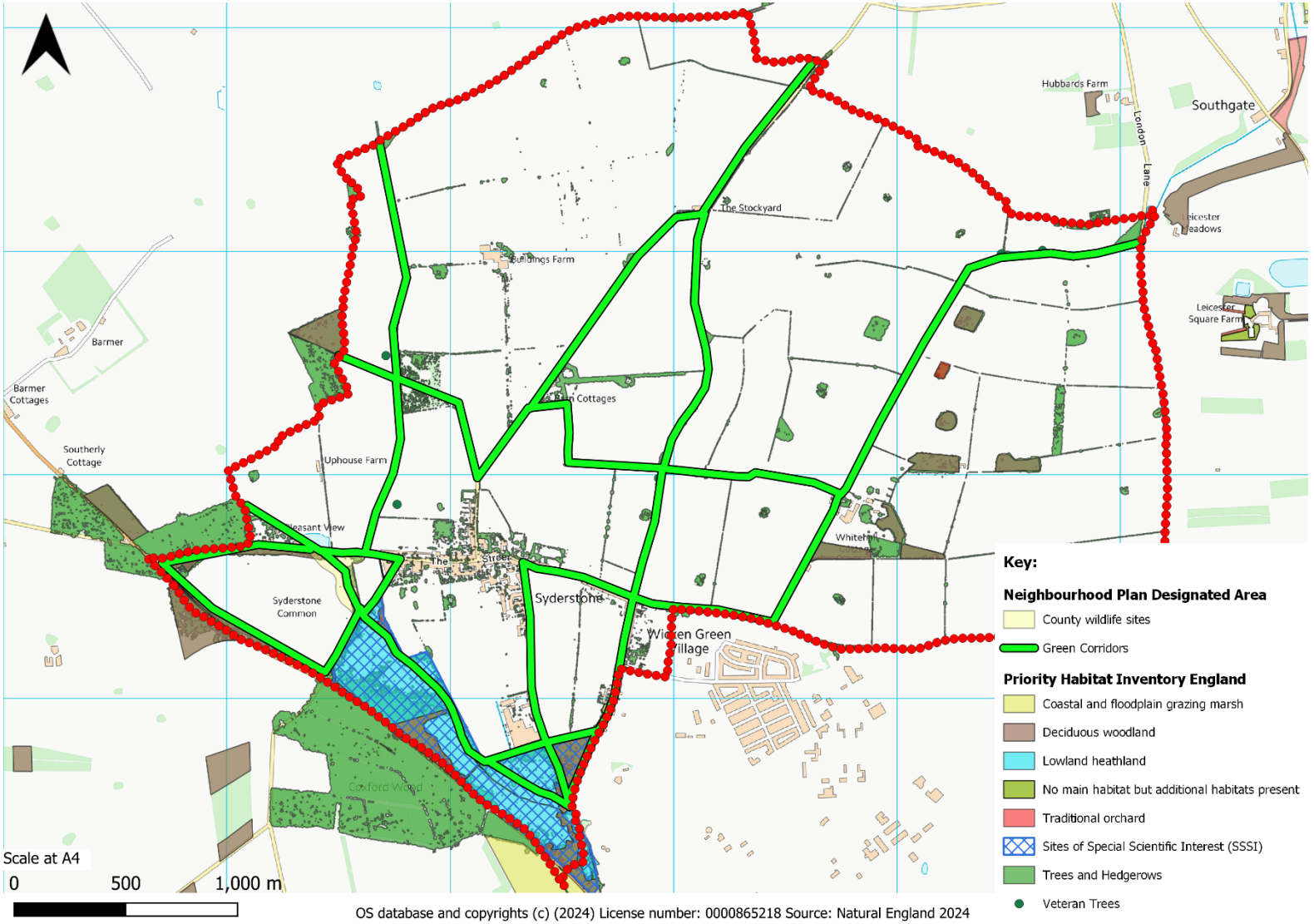
NBIS- Species and Sites Present in the Parish



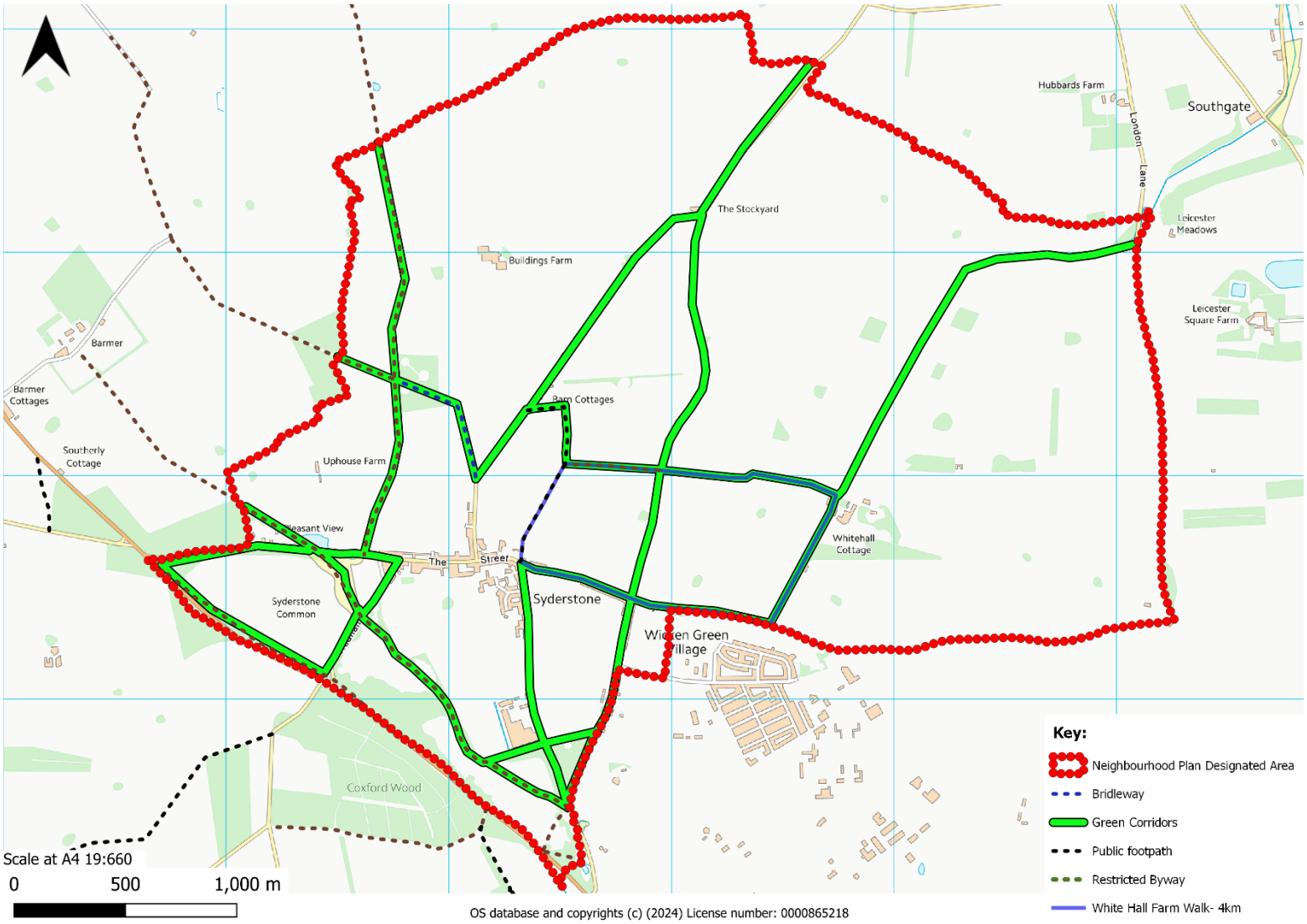
Green corridors and NBIS Living Map (Habitats)



Green Corridors- Location of the County Wildlife Site, Priority Habitats. Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI), Trees and Hedgerows



Green Corridors- Public rights of way and permissive paths within the parish



Considering the above data and choosing appropriate routes the green corridors mapped out below will be drafted into the neighbourhood plan.

Green Corridors Map