



TECHNICAL NOTE

DATE:	21 October 2024	CONFIDENTIALITY:	Public
SUBJECT:	Himalayan balsam - Invasive Species Report		
PROJECT:	South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)	AUTHOR:	David Blahout
CHECKED:	Charlotte Hewitt	APPROVED:	Kate Taylor

INTRODUCTION

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) secured planning permission in 2021 (planning ref. 192928) to construct the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) on land between Easthampstead Road and Finchampstead Road, hereafter referred to as the ‘Site’ (Figure 1). The SWDR is to facilitate access for strategic housing allocations and to reduce the impact of increased traffic on local roads. The SWDR development is hereafter referred to as the ‘Scheme’. The Scheme is currently progressing through detailed design and discharge of planning conditions.

An Ecology Gap Analysis (WSP, 2024) was undertaken by WSP for the Scheme in January 2024, consisting of a detailed, desk-based review of existing survey information, planning conditions and associated documents to determine detailed further survey and pre-construction support requirements. The Ecological gap analysis determined that further ecological surveys were required for the Scheme. During these additional surveys, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, which is an invasive non-native species (INNS) listed on Schedule 2 of The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019, was incidentally recorded on the Site.

WBC commissioned WSP to complete a Himalayan balsam survey of the Site to determine the extent of this species, and to provide precautions necessary to mitigate the impact of works in areas with Himalayan balsam.

This report includes the methods, results and recommendation related to the INNS presence/absence survey of Himalayan balsam at the Site completed by WSP on 13 September 2024.

METHODS

The INNS survey of the Site was undertaken by two suitably experienced WSP ecologists on 13 September 2024 to identify presence/absence of Himalayan balsam within the Site. Both surveyors are Associate members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and have over five years of experience in ecological habitat surveys, including INNS surveys. The survey was completed during sunny weather with an air temperature of 18°C and a light northerly wind.

Ecological survey data is typically valid for up to 18 months unless otherwise specified, for example if conditions are likely to change more quickly due to ecological processes or anticipated changes in management (CIEEM, 2019).

RESULTS

The INNS presence/absence survey identified two distinct areas with Himalayan balsam growth within the Site, mostly located along the bank of the Emm Brook in the western and southeastern part of the Site (Figure 2).

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Himalayan balsam is listed on Schedule 2 of The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 (as amended) with respect to England and Wales, making it an offence to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild'. Furthermore, under the Environmental Protection Act (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991, any Himalayan balsam plant material, and any soil contaminated with such material, is classed as 'controlled waste'. This means that it must be disposed of safely at a licensed landfill site. It is not a legal requirement to report or remove Himalayan balsam unless failing to do so may facilitate its further growth and spread.

It is understood that under current design and planning, the Scheme may contravene relevant legislation through the Scheme's works potentially causing Himalayan balsam growth in the wild. Any intrusive Scheme works in the areas flagged as having Himalayan balsam present (i.e. along the riverbank of the Emm Brook) (Figure 2) must be subject to a prior professional removal of the INNS. The INNS removal should be completed by a suitably experienced and qualified professional who is authorised to remove and dispose of Himalayan balsam plant material at a licensed landfill site (NNSS, 2018; PCA, 2023). It is recommended that all relevant controls are incorporated within a construction environmental management plan (CEMP).

In order to ensure future effective management of the Himalayan balsam, it is recommended that a control programme is undertaken during the whole removal period followed by a five-year monitoring programme (NNSS, 2018).

REFERENCES

- CIEEM (2019) Advice note on the lifespan of ecological reports and surveys.
- Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO)(2019). The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 (as amended)
- HMSO (1991). Environmental Protection Act (Duty of Care) Regulations.
- Non-native Species Secretariat (NNSS) (2018). RAPID Good practice management: Himalayan balsam. Available online at: https://www.nonnativespecies.org/assets/Good_Practice_Management_-_Himalayan_balsam.pdf. [Accessed on 07/10/2024]
- Property Care Association (PCA) (2023). PCA Guidance Note: Management of Himalayan Balsam. Available online at: <https://www.propertycare.org/write/MediaUploads/Technical%20Documents/ManagementofHimalayanBalsam-Nov2023-TechnicalDoc.pdf>. [Accessed on 07/10/2024]
- WSP (2024) South Wokingham Distributor Road – Ecological Gap Analysis



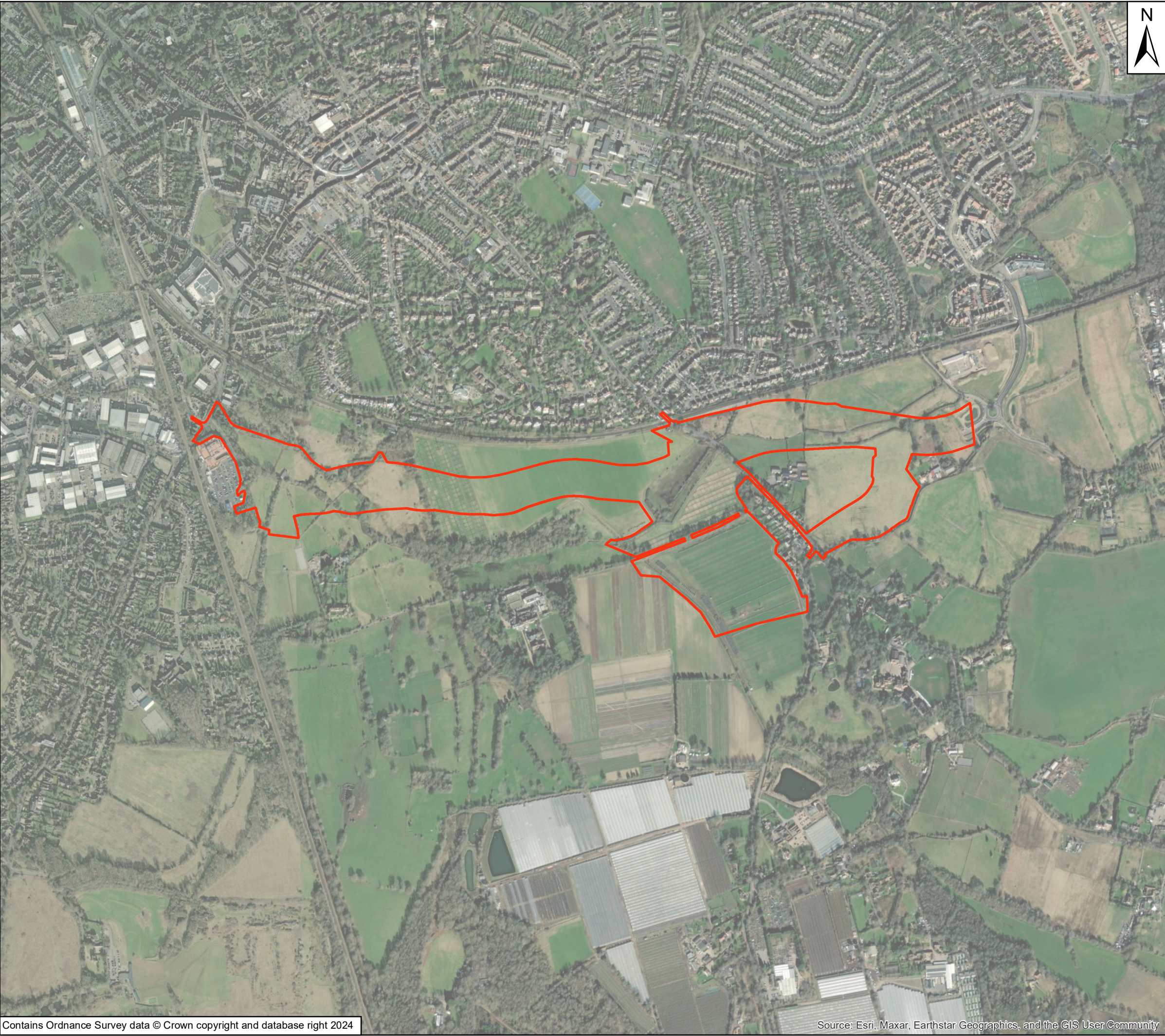
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FIGURES

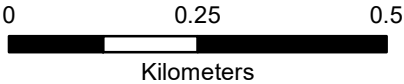
Figure 1 – Site location plan

Figure 2 – Himalayan balsam survey results

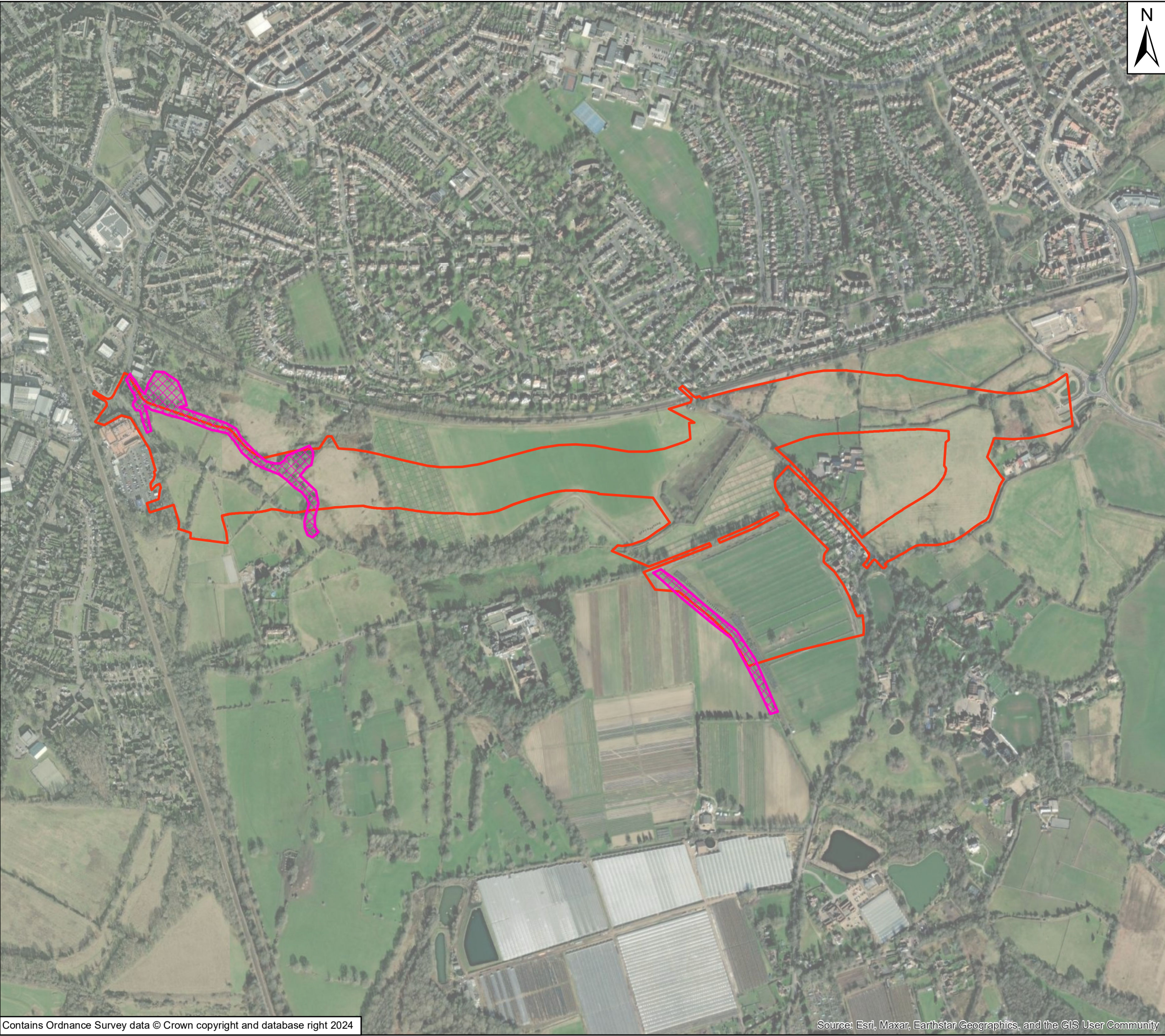


Key

— Site Boundary

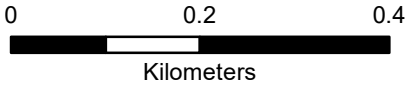


Client:	Wokingham Borough Council (WBC)		
Project:	South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)		
Title	Site Location Plan		
Drawing No:	Figure 1	Drawn:	DB
Date:	October 2024	Checked:	CH
Scale:	10,000 @ A3	Approved:	KT



Key

- Site Boundary
- Himalayan balsam



Client:	Wokingham Borough Council (WBC)		
Project:	South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)		
Title	Himalayan balsam survey results		
Drawing No:	Figure 2	Drawn:	DB
Date:	October 2024	Checked:	CH
Scale:	8,000 @ A3	Approved:	KT