



ECOLOGYSOLUTIONS

Part of the ES Group

LAND AT BULLS BRIDGE
INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,
NORTH HYDE GARDENS,
HAYES,

**Ecological Enhancement
Strategy**

Pursuant to Condition 13
of 75111/APP/2022/1007

March 2023

7854.EES.1007.vf

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background & Proposals

- 1.1.1. Ecology Solutions was instructed by Ark Estates 2 Limited to provide an Ecological Enhancement Strategy for Land at Bulls Bridge Industrial Estate, North Hyde Gardens, Hayes (ref: 75111/APP/2022/1007). The site location is shown on Plan ECO1.
- 1.1.2. This site is referred to as the 'drop-in' application, forming part of the wider site under planning permission 75111/APP/2022/1955 (outlined on Plan ECO2). Condition 13 of the 'drop-in' application requires a detailed Ecological Enhancement Scheme be produced.
- 1.1.3. Condition 13 is as follows:

Prior to the commencement of any superstructure works, a detailed ecological enhancement scheme demonstrating net gains in biodiversity value shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Ministry of Defence and Heathrow Airport Ltd.

The scheme shall be made up of a plan (or plans) of the development annotated with ecological enhancement measures to be included within the fabric of the buildings and the landscaping and accompanied by a report detailing the justification for such measures and how they will be maintained in perpetuity. The development must proceed in accordance with the approved plans.

REASON To ensure the development contributes to a net gain in biodiversity in accordance with Policy DME1 7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 (2020), Policy EM7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 (2012), Policy G6 of the London Plan (2021) and Paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

- 1.1.4. The proposals for this site are for redevelopment to provide three energy centres, two visitor reception centres, a new footpath and cycleway link to the canal towpath, works to the highway, car parking, cycle parking, associated infrastructure, enclosures and necessary physical security systems, hard and soft landscaping, and ancillary uses, as well as associated external works.

1.2. Site Characteristics

- 1.2.1. The site comprises a parcel of land within a busy industrial estate southeast of the centre of Hayes.
- 1.2.2. The site consisted of the former Vodafone offices (which have now been demolished) and the adjacent Abellio Bus Garage site. The Vodafone office area surveyed in 2020 comprised a single office building, hardstanding, amenity planting, grassland and scrub. The Abellio Bus Garage site comprises a single office / warehouse building and associated hardstanding, with amenity grassland and young trees around the boundary. The River Crane runs along the eastern boundary of the site,

with the Grand Union Canal, towpath and associated scrub belt to the south.

2. BASELINE CONDITIONS

2.1. A habitat survey of the part of the site and land to the north was undertaken in May 2018. Owing to the intervening time and the addition of other areas of land including the former Vodafone office, River Crane and the Grand Union Canal, Ecology Solutions undertook an updated survey in March 2020 encapsulating the entirety of the site. The full details of which are contained within the Ecological Assessment¹.

2.2. **Habitats**

2.2.1. Three buildings (B1, B2 and B3) were present on site (see Plan ECO2). Buildings B1 and B2 have since been demolished. Building B3, in the south-west of the site, is used as a bus repair garage by Abellio West London Ltd. It is a three-storey brick building with a pitched corrugated metal roof. The upper section of the building is clad with corrugated metal sheets.

2.2.2. The majority of the site comprises hardstanding represented by former car parks and infrastructure including a length of North Hyde Garden Road and associated footpaths.

2.2.3. The site supports small areas of amenity grassland. A strip of short-mown amenity grassland is present around the Abellio Bus Garage site and along North Hyde Gardens Road. Species present include Cat's-ear, Common Storks-bill *Erodium cicutarium*, Cranesbill *Geranium* sp., Daffodil *Narcissus* sp., Daisy, Groundsel, Mouse-ear, Perforate St John's-wort *Hypericum perforatum*, Round-leaved Cranesbill *Geranium rotundifolium*, Selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, Scurvy-grass *Cochlearia* sp., Smooth Sow-thistle, Speedwell and Tufted Vetch *Vicia cracca*.

2.2.4. Areas of amenity planting are present along the boundaries of the site as well as within the car park areas. Species present include Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Berberis sp., Bindweed *Calystegia* sp., Cleavers, *Clematis* sp., Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense*, English Elm *Ulmus minor*, European Gorse *Ulex europaeus*, Garlic Mustard *Alliaria petiolata*, Goat's-rue *Galega officinalis*, Hairy Sedge *Carex hirta*, Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Ivy *Hedera helix*, Mexican Orange Blossom *Choisya ternata*, Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*, Spanish Bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*, Rose *Rosa* sp., Portuguese Laurel *Prunus lusitanica*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Valerian *Valeriana officinalis*, Wild Privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, Willowherb, Wood Avens *Geum urbanum* and Yew *Taxus baccata*.

2.2.5. There is a dense area of scrub along the south-eastern boundary of the site associated with the River Crane that falls partly within the site boundary. Species present include Dogwood, Osier *Salix viminalis*, Goat Willow *Salix caprea*, White Willow *Salix alba*, Plum *Prunus* sp., Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Field Maple *Acer campestre* and Hazel. The ground flora is dominated by a layer of Ivy.

¹ Ecology Solutions (2020) *North Hyde Gardens, Hayes, London – Ecological Assessment*. Ref: 7854.EcoAs.vf7 [complete]

- 2.2.6. The River Crane runs along the eastern boundary of the site. The riverbanks are dominated by large Willow trees, which in summer will shade the majority of the river. Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Hawthorn, Bramble, Butterfly Bush and Ivy were also present. No emergent aquatic vegetation was noted in this section of the watercourse. There are large areas of fly-tipping along the banks as well as within the river itself.
- 2.2.7. Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* and Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica* were both recorded to be present along both sides of the riverbank, albeit outside of the red line boundary of the site.

2.3. Species

Bats

- 2.3.1. The buildings on site do not offer any suitable opportunities for roosting bats as they lack suitable opportunities owing to the modern construction materials and design.
- 2.3.2. The main areas of the site are of very little interest to any locally present bat species, with only limited foraging habitat provided by the small areas of scrub and amenity planting.
- 2.3.3. The River Crane and Grand Union Canal offer far greater potential for foraging and dispersing bats.

Badgers

- 2.3.4. No Badger setts or field signs that could be attributed to this species were recorded within or immediately adjacent to the site. The site offers negligible opportunities for this species.

Otter

- 2.3.5. The River Crane and the Grand Union Canal do provide some potential for dispersing Otter *Lutra lutra*. However, the river and canal are subject to frequent light and noise disturbance. No evidence of Otter was recorded on site, and no records were returned for this species from the desk study. It is therefore considered highly likely that this species is not present in the locale and will therefore not be utilising the river or canal.

Water Vole

- 2.3.6. The River Crane and the Grand Union Canal do not provide any opportunities for Water Vole. The fast-flowing nature of the River Crane and the modified nature of the canal are not the favoured habitat of Water Vole. The high level of disturbance on both the river and the canal will also act as a deterrent for this species.

Hedgehog

- 2.3.7. No evidence of Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* was recorded on site. The scrub, amenity planting and grassland areas do provide some opportunities for foraging, dispersing and hibernating Hedgehogs.

Birds

2.3.8. The amenity planting, scrub, trees and the vegetation associated with the river corridor provide good nesting and foraging opportunities for birds. An active Magpie nest was recorded in the vegetation associated with North Hyde Gardens Road during the March 2020 survey.

2.3.9. Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*, Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*, Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameria*, Magpie *Pica pica*, Dunnock *Prunella modularis*, Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*, Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*, Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*, Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*, Robin *Erithacus rubecula*, Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*, Blackbird *Turdus merula* and Black-backed Gull *Larus sp.* were noted during the course of the survey. Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*, Coot *Fulica atra* and Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* were recorded on the Grand Union Canal.

Reptiles

2.3.10. The site is not considered to offer any opportunities for reptile species given the current management regime of the grassland habitats.

Amphibians

2.3.11. No amphibians were recorded within the site during the survey work. The site does not support any suitable aquatic or terrestrial habitat for this group.

2.3.12. There are no off-site ponds within 250m of the site boundary. The Grand Union Canal and the River Crane do not support any suitable breeding opportunities for amphibians.

Invertebrates

2.3.13. Given the habitats present it is likely a limited number of common invertebrate species would be present within the site. However, there is no evidence to suggest that any rare or notable species would be present.

3. CREATED HABITATS

3.1. Extra Heavy Standard Trees and Specimen Shrubs

3.1.1. The provision of new extra heavy standard trees will offer increased future nesting opportunities for birds and foraging opportunities for bats. Species will include Field Maple *Acer campestre* 'Elegant', Alder *Alnus glutinosa*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and Small-leaved Lime *Tilia cordata*.

3.2. Thicket Mix Planting

3.2.1. Native thicket mix planting will be located throughout the site. A large area of this will be located in the south of the site to act as a screen from the canal. Planting will comprise of Dogwood, Hazel, Hawthorn, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, Osier *Salix viminalis* and Guelder Rose *Viburnum opulus*. This habitat will provide increased foraging potential for locally present bat and bird species.

3.3. Mixed Species Native Hedgerow

3.3.1. The hedgerows will be planted at 450mm centres in a double staggered row. Rows to be spaced 500mm apart and species present will include Hawthorn, Hazel, Holly, Privet, Blackthorn, Dog Rose *Rosa canina* and Guelder Rose. This habitat will provide similar benefits to faunal groups as the native thicket mix in addition to providing further improvements in connectivity around the site.

3.4. Tall Ornamental Shrub Planting

3.4.1. Tall ornamental shrub planting in the north-west of the site will aim to form a shrub height of above 1m and provide additional foraging and potentially low nesting habitat.

3.5. Low Ornamental Ground Cover Shrub Planting

3.5.1. Areas of below 1m high ornamental and herbaceous planting will be present throughout the site.

3.5.2. Although this planting is primarily for ornamental purposes it will provide additional green infrastructure within the development. The inclusion of some nectar rich species will offer further opportunities for invertebrates subsequently improving the availability of food resource for bats.

3.6. Wildflower Grass Seed Areas

3.6.1. Areas of wildflower grass will be located throughout the site. This will be a species rich mix to elevate the overall floristic diversity across the site.

3.7. Proposed Brown Roof and Green Roof Planting

3.7.1. To provide additional green space *Sedum* sp. and species rich planting of green and brown roof offering similar benefits to the abovementioned habitats including providing additional habitat for bats, birds and invertebrate species. These roofs will offer new habitat opportunities for

early-colonising and open habitat specialist invertebrates throughout the lifetime of the development. They will also offer connectivity across an otherwise urban landscape through the greening of the roofs of the development in combination with the additional planting.

4. SPECIES ENHANCEMENTS

4.1. To provide ecological enhancements for wildlife within Land at Bulls Bridge Industrial Estate, a number of bat and bird boxes will be installed throughout the site and onto the newly constructed buildings.

4.2. Bats

4.2.1. To offer net gains in roosting opportunities, five Schwegler 1FF bat boxes or similar, will be installed on larger trees throughout the site. These boxes will be positioned 3-5m high on southern or eastern aspects.

4.2.2. The bat boxes will not be subject to direct lighting. Where lighting is required, the effects will be minimised by including use of appropriate low UV emitting luminaries. Lighting of green space, particularly to the south of the site will also be kept to a minimum during the construction phase.

4.3. Birds

4.3.1. A total of four Schwegler 1B bird boxes, or similar, will be installed on larger trees along the southern boundary of the site. These bird boxes will have 26mm entrance holes which will allow small birds such as Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*, Coal Tit *Periparus ater*, Crested Tit *Lophophanes cristatus* and Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* to nest inside.

4.3.2. Larger species and flocks of birds will not be encouraged within the site owing to the proximity of Heathrow Airport and RAF Northolt and the subsequent risk of bird strike, as detailed within the submitted Bird Hazard Management Plan.

4.4. Maintenance

4.4.1. All features described in this section will be subject to an annual visual inspection of their condition and fixings, where access allows. Where these are found to be in poor condition the unit will be replaced with the same model, or a similar item where the original model is no longer available. Bird boxes will be inspected outside the bird nesting season (approximately March to July / August inclusive). Bat boxes will similarly be inspected by a licensed ecologist outside the main activity period for bats i.e., outside the period April to October inclusive.

4.4.2. Owing to the design of the selected boxes, no further maintenance is considered necessary.

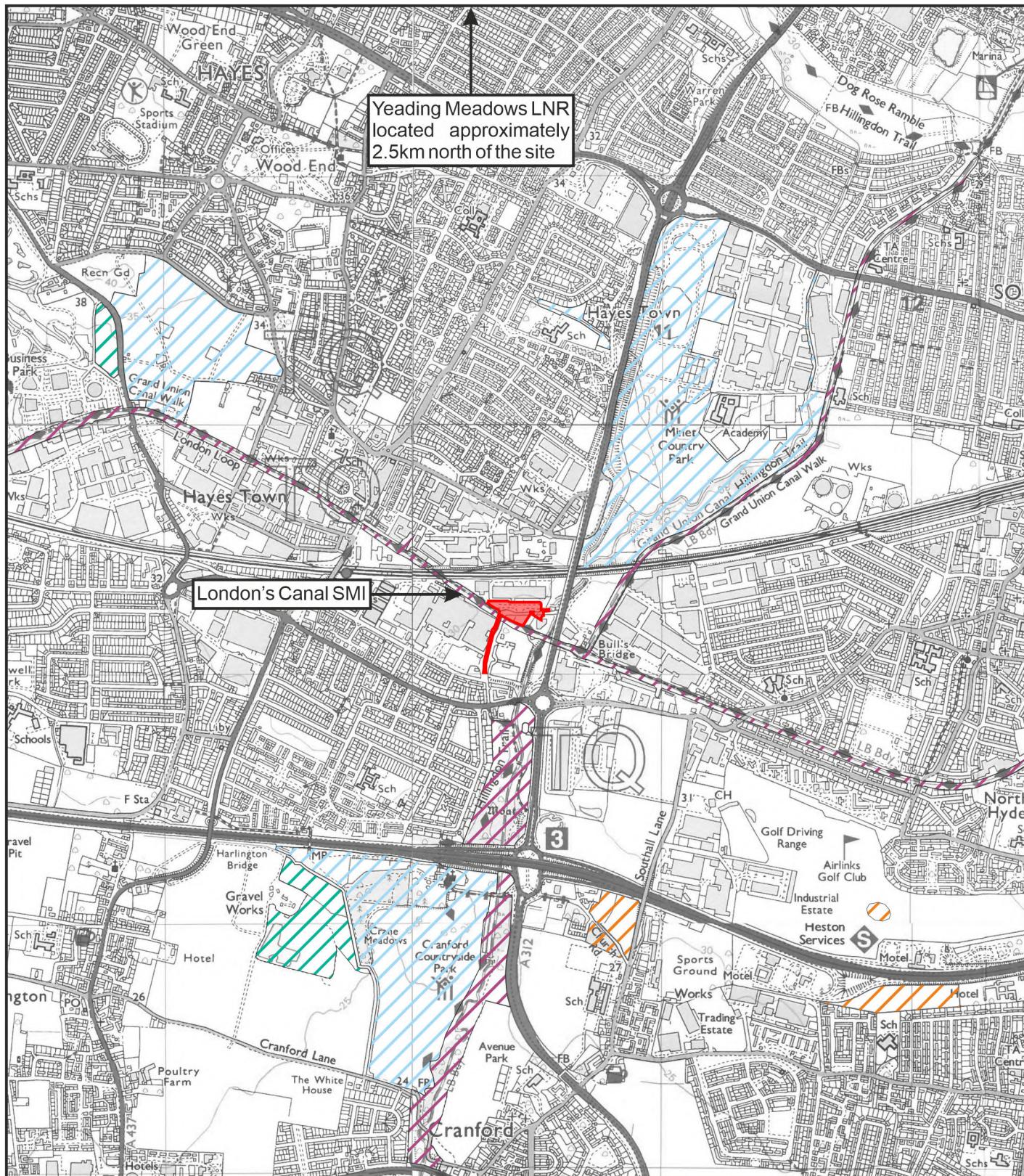
5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. Ecology Solutions was instructed by Ark Estates 2 Limited to provide ecological advice regarding Land at Bulls Bridge Industrial Estate, North Hyde Gardens, Hayes.
- 5.2. The site consists primarily of buildings and their associated hardstanding, amenity planting, amenity grassland, young trees and scrub. The River Crane runs along the eastern boundary of the site, with the Grand Union Canal, towpath and associated scrub belt to the south.
- 5.3. Proposed planting will include: Extra Heavy Standard Trees, Thicket Mix Planting, Mixed Species Native Hedgerow, Tall Ornamental Shrub Planting, Low Ornamental Ground Cover Shrub Planting, Wildflower Grass Seeded Areas, Proposed Grasscrete Areas, Proposed Sedum Green Roof Planting and Proposed Brown Roof and Green Roof Planting.
- 5.4. **Bats.** Five Schwegler 1FF bat boxes (or similar) will be installed on larger trees throughout the site. These boxes will be positioned 3-5m high on southern or eastern aspects. Bat boxes will not be subject to direct lighting.
- 5.5. **Birds.** Four Schwegler 1B bird boxes (or similar) with 26mm entrance holes will be installed on larger trees along the southern boundary. Larger species and flocks of birds will not be encouraged within the site owing to the proximity of Heathrow Airport and RAF Northolt and the subsequent risk of bird strike, as detailed in the submitted Bird Hazard Management Plan.
- 5.6. In conclusion, the ecological enhancements included within Land at Bulls Bridge Industrial Estate, North Hyde Gardens, Hayes will ensure opportunities for wildlife are secured post-redevelopment.

PLANS

PLAN ECO1

Site Location and Ecological Designations



KEY:

- SITE LOCATION
- SITE OF METROPOLITAN IMPORTANCE (SMI)
- SITE OF BOROUGH IMPORTANCE GRADE 1 (SBII)
- SITE OF BOROUGH IMPORTANCE GRADE 2 (SBIII)
- SITE OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE (SLI)



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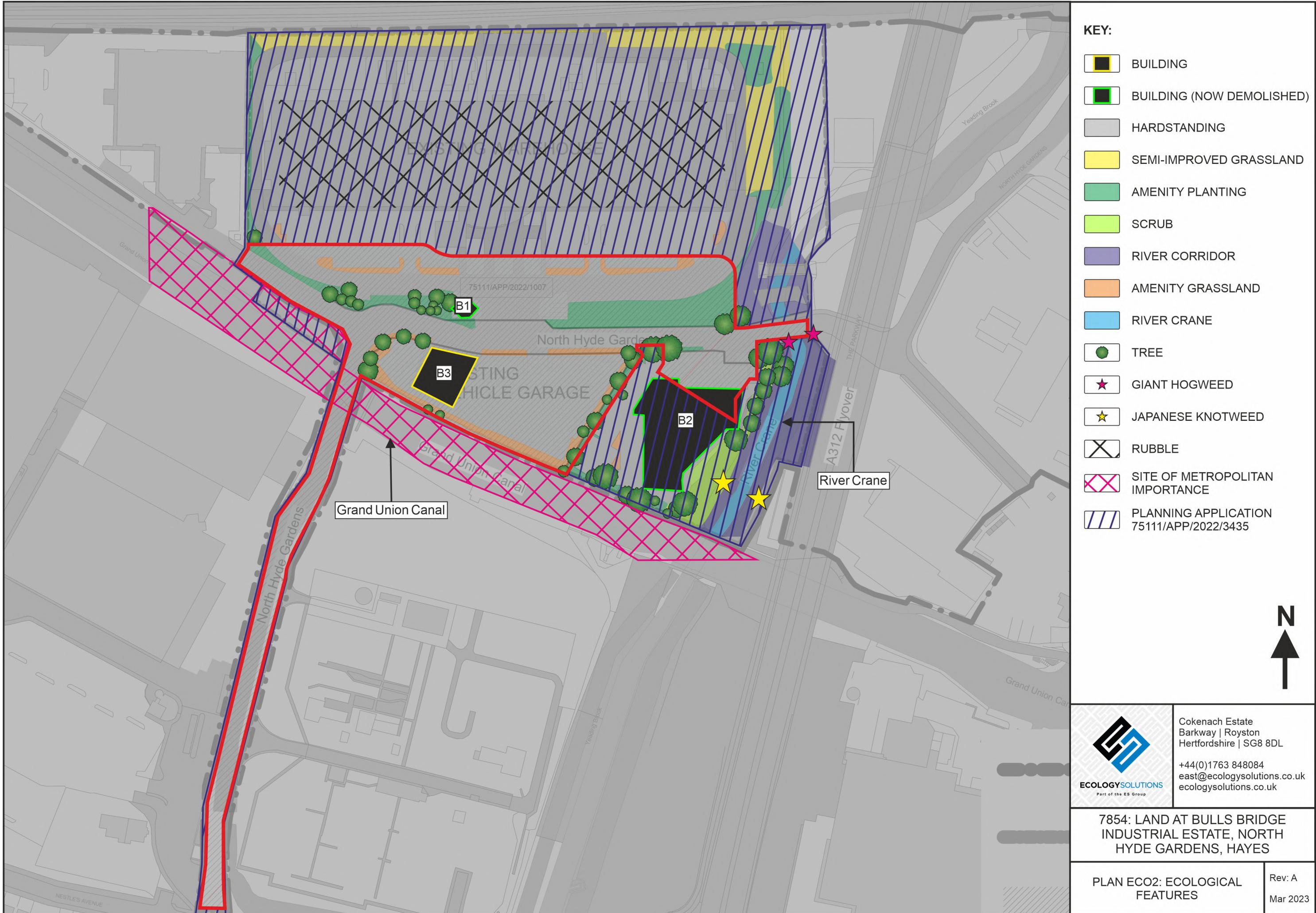
7854: LAND AT BULLS BRIDGE
INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, NORTH
HYDE GARDENS, HAYES

PLAN ECO1: SITE LOCATION
AND ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS

Rev: A
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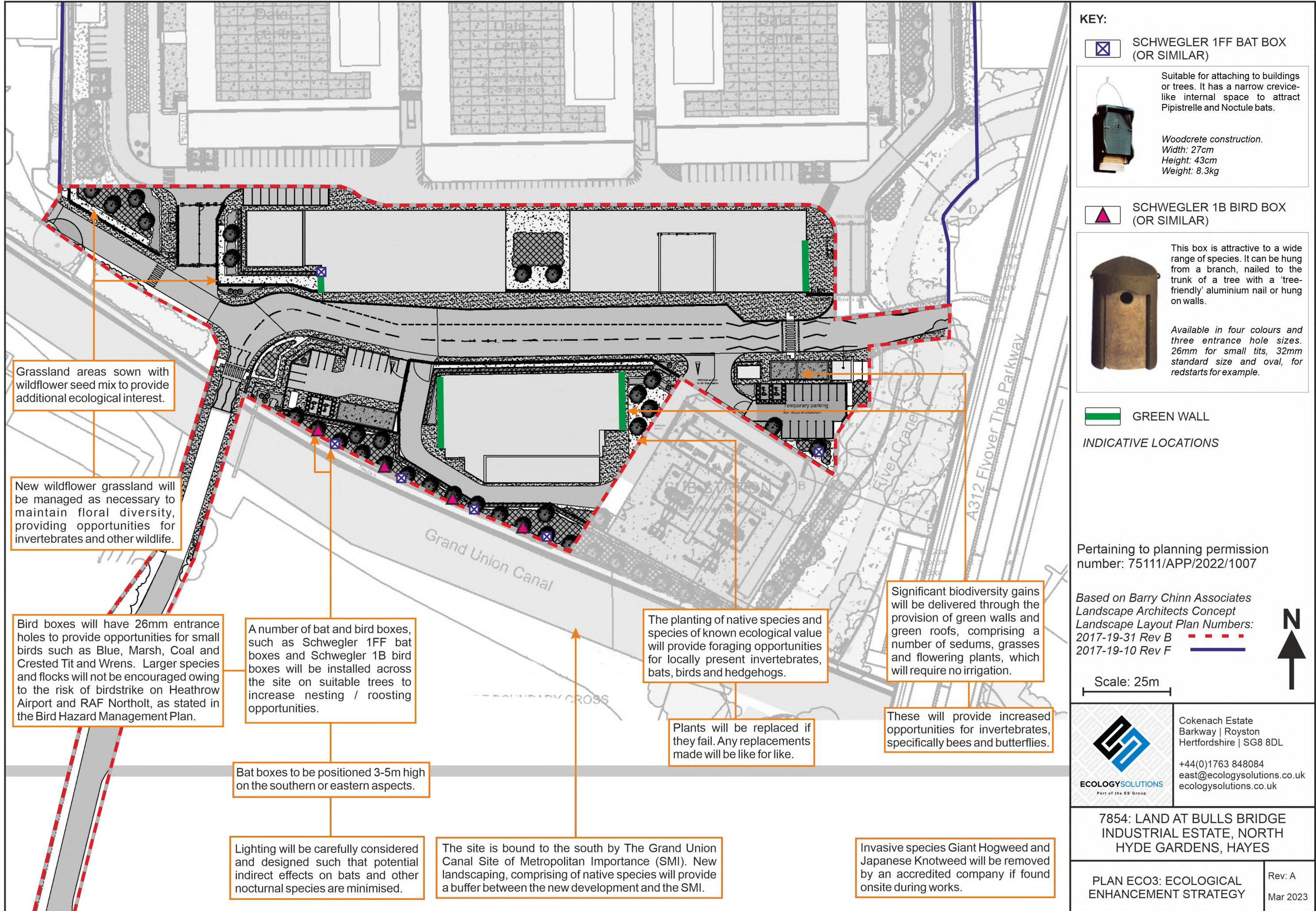
PLAN ECO2

Ecological Features



PLAN ECO3

Ecological Enhancement Strategy



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Schwegler 1FF Bat Boxes

Bat Boxes

Schwegler bat boxes are made from woodcrete and have the highest rates of occupation of all types of box.

The 75% wood sawdust, clay and concrete mixture is ideal, being durable whilst allowing natural respiration and temperature stability. These boxes are rot- and predator-proof and extremely long lasting.



1FF Bat Box

The rectangular shape makes the 1FF suitable for attaching to the sides of buildings or on sites such as bridges, though it may also be used on trees. It has a narrow crevice-like internal space to attract Pipistrelle and Noctule bats.

Woodcrete construction.

Width: 27cm

Height: 43cm

Weight: 8.3kg

APPENDIX 2

Schwegler 1B Bird Boxes

Bird Boxes

Schwegler bird boxes have the highest rates of occupation of all types of box. They are designed to mimic natural nest sites and provide a stable environment with the right thermal properties for chick rearing and winter roosting. Boxes are made from 'Woodcrete'. This 75% wood sawdust, clay and concrete mixture is breathable and very durable making these bird boxes extremely long lasting.



1B Bird Box

This is the most popular box for garden birds and appeals to a wide range of species. The box can be hung from a branch or nailed to the trunk of a tree with a 'tree-friendly' aluminium nail.

Available in four colours and three entrance hole sizes. 26mm for small tits, 32mm standard size and oval, for redstarts.



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