

Statutory Planning Document for the South Hams Special Area of Conservation

- A landscape approach to greater horseshoe bat
conservation

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Credit: Mike Symes DGHBP



South Hams SAC

Designated Roosts:

Chudleigh Caves and Woods SSSI -
Maternity/Hibernation

**Haytor and Smallacombe Iron Mines
SSSI-**

Hibernation

Buckfastleigh Caves SSSI-

Maternity/Hibernation (largest known
maternity roost in the UK - possibly in
W Europe c2,000 breeding)

Bulkamore Iron Mine SSSI –

Hibernation

**Berry Head to Sharkham Point SSSI and
NNR –** Maternity/Hibernation

High Marks Barn SSSI – Maternity SSSI
only – 2nd largest maternity roost in
England)



How does this relate to planning?

- **Habs Regs requirements**
 - **Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening for LSE**
 - **Appropriate Assessment**
-
- **R**



South Hams SAC

Greater horseshoe bat consultation zone planning guidance

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2010 SAC Guidance - NE

4km Sustenance Zones around
Designated Roosts to protect key
foraging habitats

Strategic Flyways= flight lines drawn
up based on radiotracking data, links
between all known roosts, features
(river valleys etc) likely to be used by
GHBs. Best available information –
NOT known commuting routes.

In SZ and SF - extra GHB survey
required + HRA screening.



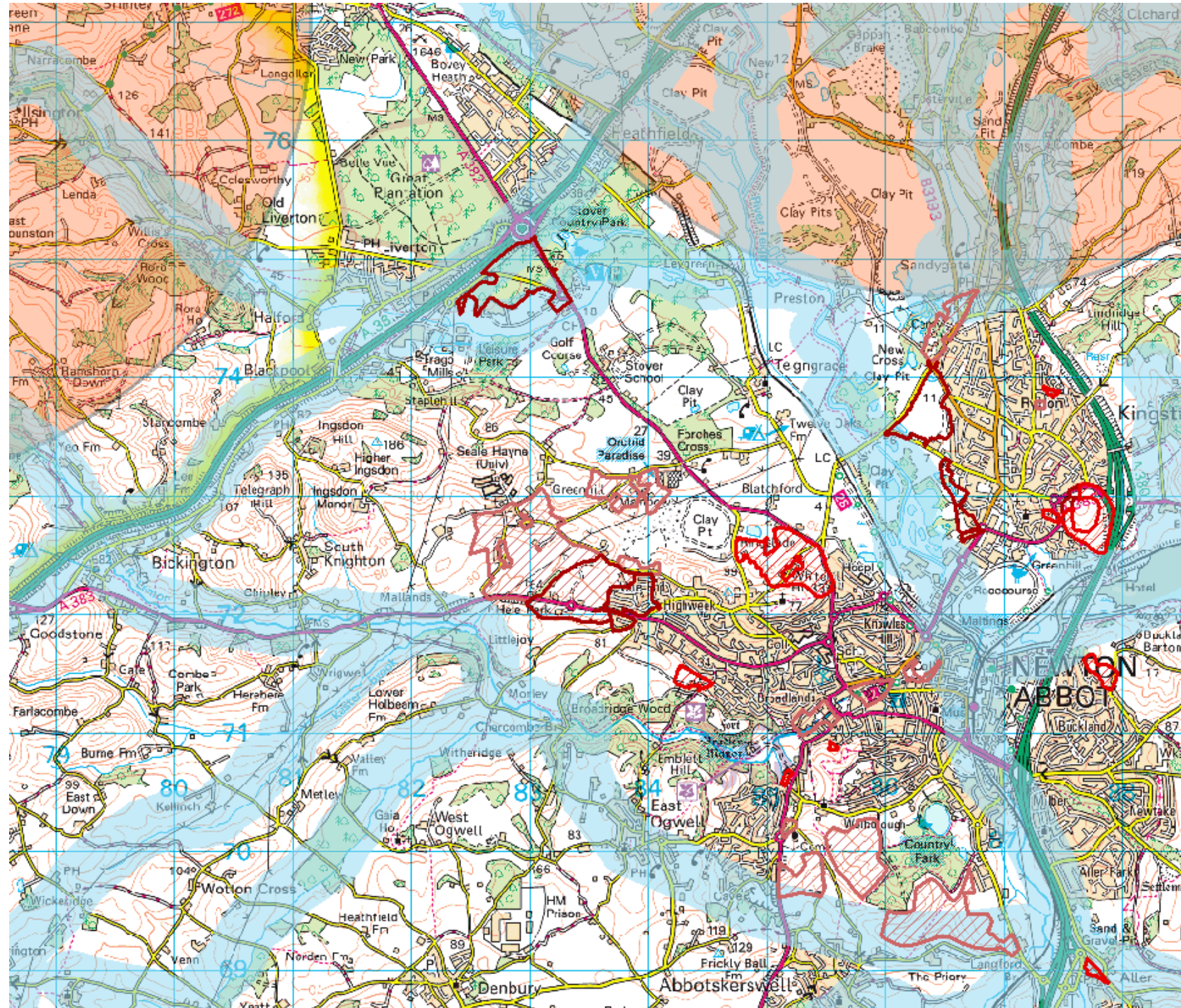
2015 – SAC GHB Steering Group review of guidance

- Clear that large housing schemes / road schemes outside the SZ and SF that could have a LSE on the GHB pop.
- NE unable to update guidance – LPAs took on the review
- Updated the GHB evidence

Updated evidence base / research shows.....

- As you move away from the main roosts GHBs are increasingly dispersed throughout the landscape in low numbers using a complex network of flight lines (data + unpublished research, Prof Fiona Mathews).
- We now have records of LOTS of GHB roosts in the area – if we join them up with Strategic Flyways then colour in most of the landscape....
- We can't justify greater survey effort in Flyways than white areas – survey effort should be based on habitat / potential impacts.
- Therefore agreed to replace the SFs with a Landscape Connectivity Zone covering the landscape around the designated roosts.....

**White areas and
development
pressure in the
A382 corridor**





where should we draw the boundary of the Landscape Connectivity Zone ? - options discussed:

Option 1: Include the whole of South Devon in the LCZ - where we have GHB records / they are likely to occur.

Issue – No evidence that GHBs a large distance from the SACs (e.g. Plymouth area) are sufficiently connected to the SAC for impacts to have a LSE on the population as a whole.

Option 2: Draw the LCZ boundary at the average distance that GHBs will travel from the Designated Roosts.

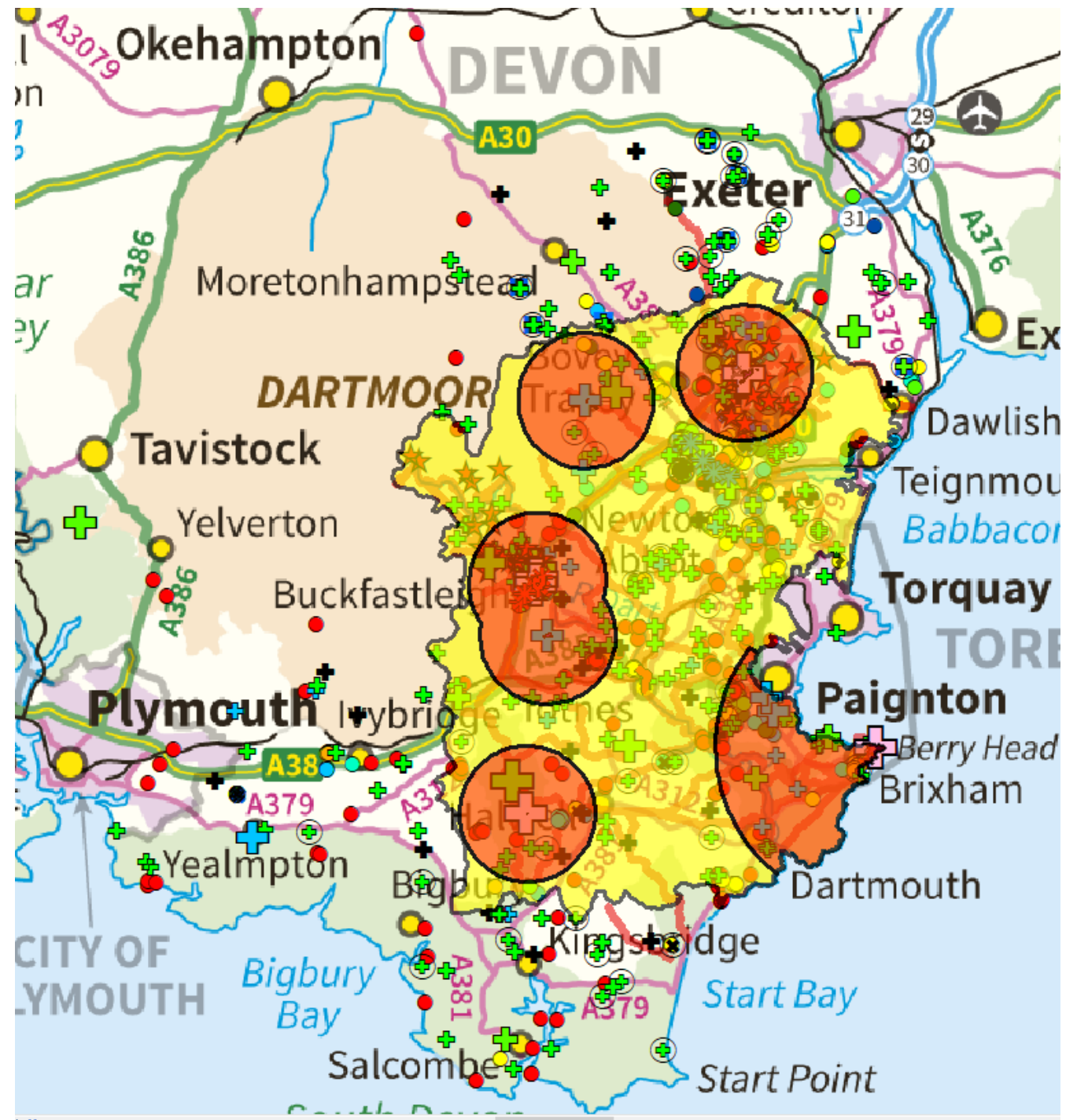
Issue - Prof Fiona Mathews advised that there is not currently sufficient evidence to come up with a justifiable definitive distance.

Option 3: Draw the boundary to encompass the area between, and immediately around, the Sustenance Zones to ensure that the network of flight lines between the Designated Roosts is protected. Favoured option – can be re-assessed with new evidence / we discover roosts that should become Designated Roosts such as High Marks Barn.

Sustenance Zones – stay the same

- Research (Billington, Jones and Duverge) shows that the distances GHBs travel from maternity roosts to forage varies but the majority of GHBs forage within 4kms of the roosts. No change.
- **SZs around hibernation roosts?**. We have little information on distances bats forage from hibernation roosts. The St Grp agreed that a **precautionary approach** should be taken and all SZs boundaries should be drawn **4km from the roost**. However it is thought that GHBs *may* forage closer to roosts than in the summer (depending on habitat availability) and this should be considered when assessing impacts.

Proposed
Landscape
Connectivity Zone
(yellow) – see DCC
Environment
Viewer for detail



Also mapped on the DCC Public environment viewer

Pinch points

- Known or potential GHB commuting routes which are significantly restricted e.g. due to urban encroachment or proximity to the sea/estuaries. Further restriction would significantly impact on the movement of GHBs and potentially have a LSE on the SAC.

Existing mitigation features

- Includes habitat created, enhanced or protected to meet HRA requirements. We need to ensure that developers / planners are aware of these features.

Allocated sites / planning applications

- To help with in-combination impact assessment

HRA triggers

Sustenance Zones

- Any impact on potential GHB habitat

LCZ

- 'Large' scale impacts on a network of flight lines, impacts on pinch points, impacts on existing mitigation features + 'exceptional' circumstances e.g. roosts which meet SSSI criteria, non-designated roosts which support the SAC, in-combination impacts.

Next steps

- The St Grp is producing a number of **GHB Technical Notes** to provide technical details which it is not appropriate to include in the SPD and which may need to be regularly updated. They are likely to include:
 - GHB ecology
 - GHB mitigation (best practice)
 - Strategic approach to mitigation (e.g. potential for a number of developers to contribute to a new roost)
 - Lighting
 - HRA (potentially)
 - Survey
- Finalise the SPD (consultation just ended)
- Working with others (incl Devon GHB Project) to survey potentially interesting roosts / SAC roosts

South Hams Special Area of Conservation:
Greater Horseshoe Bats Supplementary Planning Document

South Hams Special Area of Conservation

Greater Horseshoe Bats



Supplementary Planning Document



South Hams SAC - A Greater Landscape....Thank you



GHB Credit: Mike Symes

Statutory Planning Document for the South Hams Special Area of Conservation

Greater Landscapes - A landscape approach to greater horseshoe bat conservation

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