

TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION COMPOUND AT M62 JUNCTION 19

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND UK HABITATS CLASSIFICATION SURVEY REPORT

HE548642-JAC-EBD-SII_MLT-RP-LE-0029 | P02
16/10/25

Document Control

Project Manager:	Bernardo Begonha
Originator (Company):	Jacobs
Document Number:	HE548642-JAC-EBD-SII_MLT-RP-LE-0029
Rev Number:	P02
Date:	16/10/25
Document Status:	S4 - SUITABLE FOR STAGED APPROVAL
Client Ref Number (PIN):	HE548642

Document history and status

Revision	Date	Description	By	Check	Review	Approved
P02	16/10/25	SECOND DRAFT	TW	MW	MW	BB
P01	06/10/25	FIRST DRAFT	OH	AJ	TW	AP

The original format of this document is copyright to National Highways.

Contents

1.	Introduction	2
1.1	Project Introduction	2
1.2	Scope	2
2.	Legislation	3
3.	Methodology	5
3.1	Desktop Assessment of Designated Sites	5
3.2	Field Study	5
4.	Results	9
4.1	Desktop Assessment of Designated Sites	9
4.2	Field Survey	9
5.	Discussion and Recommendations	14
5.1	SAC / SPA / Ramsar Sites	14
5.2	LNR, SBI and Priority Habitats	15
5.3	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	15
6.	References	19

Executive Summary

This report presents the results of UK Habitat Classification and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal surveys undertaken as part of the planning application for the proposed temporary construction compound located at the M62 Junction 19.

The habitats identified within the Application Site comprised a mix of urban hardstanding and sparsely vegetated land, modified grassland, one ditch and other standing water (in the form of a previously constructed drainage basin).

The Application Site had limited potential for protected species but contained some suitable habitats for great crested newt, ground nesting and other breeding birds, reptiles, as well as some terrestrial mammals such as hedgehog and rabbit. Additionally, one native hedgerow was recorded (H1) on the southern boundary of the Application Site that qualifies as 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

No further surveys have been recommended and general recommendations made for the proposed establishment, operation and decommissioning works include a Construction and Environmental Management Plan which would include general ecological and specific species best practice measures.

A single European designated site, the Rochdale Special Area of Conservation, is within 5 kilometres of the Application Site. There are no Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or Ramsar sites which would trigger the need for an assessment of the effects of air quality based on Natural England and National Highways guidance due to the distance from the Application Site and average annual daily traffic flows. In addition, a Habitats Regulations Assessment was undertaken by National Highways for the M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange Scheme which concluded that there is no potential pathway to effect on the Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation from construction or operation of the M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange Scheme as the site is not sensitive to air quality changes. Existing drainage within the Application Site would ensure no risk of hydrological pollution to any designated site. No further assessment of impacts to any designated site is required.

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Introduction

- 1.1.1 National Highways is intending to submit a planning application to Rochdale Borough Council to establish a temporary construction compound at M62 Junction 19 (hereafter the 'J19 Temporary Compound') to support the construction works of the M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange Scheme (hereafter the 'M60 Simister Scheme'). A Development Consent Order (DCO) for the M60 Simister Scheme was granted by the Secretary of State for Transport on 9 September 2025.
- 1.1.2 Whilst related to construction works covered by the DCO for the M60 Simister Scheme, the temporary compound location is outside the boundary of the DCO and requires separate planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 1.1.3 The J19 Temporary Compound would operate for a temporary period of up to five years from the date of any planning permission and will accommodate:
- Site offices and welfare facilities.
 - Car parking for staff and visitors.
 - A security hut and access control point.
 - Materials storage areas (structures, lighting, traffic management, drainage materials etc). Note that there will be no storage of earthworks materials or aggregates at the J19 Temporary Compound.
 - Secure compounds for traffic management equipment.
 - Fuel storage.
 - Material testing laboratory and stores buildings.
- 1.1.4 The Application Site already includes access onto the J19 Heywood Interchange via an existing bell mouth onto the section of the A6046 Middleton Road which forms part of the interchange circulatory. The Application site has previously been used temporarily as a site compound so already comprises of existing hardstanding, car parking and utility infrastructure. Prior to this, the Application Site was agricultural land.

1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 The contents of this report are informed by the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management [CIEEM], 2017). The objectives of the report are as follows:
- To identify ecological constraints;
 - To identify the requirement for further protected species surveys which may be required to inform the assessment including mitigation and legal compliance measures; and,
 - To identify opportunities for ecological enhancement.

2. Legislation

- 2.1.1 Specific habitats receive legal protection in the UK under various pieces of legislation, including:

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

- 2.1.2 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (hereafter the 'Act') allows for the designation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to features of conservation interest related to flora, fauna, physiology or geology. The Act makes it an offence to kill, injure, take, possess or trade in many wild animal species and to pick, uproot, possess or trade in a number of wild plants. Measures are also outlined to outlaw the spread of invasive non-native species (INNS) that could adversely affect native wildlife. This Act also implements certain provisions of the Wild Birds Directive (2009/147/EC).

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997

- 2.1.3 The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (hereafter the 'Hedgerow Regulations') were provided for under Section 97 of the Environment Act 1995 and came into force on 1st June 1997. They introduced new arrangements for local planning authorities in England and Wales to protect important hedgerows in the countryside, by controlling their removal through a system of notification. The Hedgerows Regulations prohibit the removal of some hedgerows without prior submission of a hedgerow removal notice to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The LPA must then decide whether a hedgerow meets the criteria for an "important" hedgerow, which the LPA can then order to be retained. The removal of hedgerows for which the Hedgerows Regulations apply is also permitted in specific circumstances including "for carrying out development for which planning permission has been granted..." (as per Section 6 (1) (e) of the Hedgerows Regulations).

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

- 2.1.4 Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. There are 56 habitats and 943 species of principal importance which were initially identified as requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 1994) and which continue to be regarded as priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (Joint Nature Conservation Committee and Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs [DEFRA], 2012). The Section 41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 "to have regard" to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

- 2.1.5 These regulations implement the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Council Directive 2009/147/EC of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds. They provide for the designation and protection of European designated sites and species, and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European designated sites. Although

these regulations originate from the Council Directive, these are now stand-alone since the UK's departure from the European Union (EU).

The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019

- 2.1.6 The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 (hereafter the 'Order') introduces permitting and licensing provisions needed to comply with the requirements of EU Regulation No 1143/2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. Article 3 contains offences around the importing, keeping, breeding, purchasing, and releasing or allowing to escape into the wild of species of special concern. The Order amends Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to omit those species from Schedule 9 which are also species of special concern, preventing duplication.

3. Methodology

3.1 Desktop Assessment of Designated Sites

3.1.1 Shapefiles obtained from Natural England (including information of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar sites, SSSIs, National Nature Reserves (NNR), Local Wildlife Reserves (LWR) were used; in conjunction with Local Wildlife Site (LWS) data from the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) provided for the M60 Simister Scheme to identify any SSSI, NNR, LWR, Sites of Biological Interest (SBI)/priority habitats within 1 kilometre (km) of the J19 Temporary Compound red line boundary (hereafter the 'Application site') as well as any SAC, SPA, and Ramsar within 5km.

3.2 Field Study

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

3.2.1 A PEA was conducted on 4 August 2025 by suitably qualified and experienced ecologists.

3.2.2 A PEA is a term used to describe a rapid assessment of the ecological features present or potentially present, within a site and its surrounding area (i.e., the zone of influence) (CIEEM, 2017). Due to the scale and nature of the works to be carried out the survey area for the PEA was defined as the Application Site plus a 30 metre (m) buffer. The area of land surveyed was walked systematically to identify features and habitats with potential to support protected or notable species. Invasive species were also recorded if identified. The locations of features or observations of particular ecological interest were mapped as target notes, using ArcGIS software.

Ground Level Tree Assessment

3.2.3 A ground-level tree assessment for bats was carried out for trees within the Application Site and associated buffer where possible. Trees were visually inspected from the ground using close-focusing binoculars and a high-powered torch.

3.2.4 Potential roosting features (PRFs) which offered access or roosting opportunities for bats were noted, as per good practice (Collins, 2023).

3.2.5 Each PRF was assigned a suitability category related to its potential to support roosting bats. The trees with PRFs were assigned an overall suitability category according to the highest category of PRF noted on it. A description of these suitability categories is presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1. Suitability Categories for Bat Roosts

Bat Roost Suitability Category	Description of Roosting Habitats
None	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small number of bats due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.

Bat Roost Suitability Category	Description of Roosting Habitats
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*

Habitat Suitability Index (HSI)

- 3.2.6 All identified waterbodies within 50m of the Application Site were to be surveyed for great crested newts (GCN) using HSI.
- 3.2.7 The HSI assessment is a means of evaluating habitat quality and quantity. It is a numerical index between 0 and 1, where 0 indicates unsuitable habitat and 1 represents optimal habitat. Surveys were conducted following standard methodology for HSI assessments (Oldham et al., 2000). The HSI incorporates ten indices, all of which are factors that can affect GCN. A scale has been published for score categorisation of pond suitability for GCN which is reproduced in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: HSI scores and their GCN suitability categories (Based on Amphibian and Reptile Groups UK, 2010)

HSI score	GCN suitability
<0.5	Poor
0.5 – 0.59	Below Average
0.6 – 0.69	Average
0.7 – 0.79	Good
>0.8	Excellent

- 3.2.8 The HSI assessments were undertaken in August 2025.

Hedgerow Survey

- 3.2.9 All hedgerows within the survey area were surveyed in accordance with the Hedgerow Survey Handbook (DEFRA, 2007) and assessed in accordance with the Hedgerows Regulations.
- 3.2.10 The hedgerows were mapped using the UK Habitat (UKHab) Classification Version 2 (UKHAB Ltd, 2023). Surveyors collected data in the field using Arc Field Maps software on Global Positioning Software enabled tablets to assist with locating and mapping habitats.
- 3.2.11 The following features were recorded during the hedgerow survey:
- Type of hedgerow;
 - Adjacent land use;

- Length of the hedgerow;
- Number of sections surveyed;
- Hedgerow shape and dimensions, including the presence of any gaps along the length of the hedgerow;
- The number and species of trees present along the full length of the hedgerow;
- All woodland species listed in Schedule 2 of the Hedgerow Regulations occurring with 30m survey sections;
- All woody species listed on Schedule 3 of the Hedgerow Regulations occurring with 30m survey sections;
- Presence of any rare species listed on Schedule 1 (birds), Schedule 5 (animals) or Schedule 8 (plants) of the Act;
- The presence of features including walls, banks and ditches along the hedgerow's length; and
- The presence of connections hedgerows, ponds or woodland, and the presence of parallel hedges.

UK Habitat Classification Survey

- 3.2.12 On 4 August 2025, a UK Habitat Classification (UK Hab) survey was conducted for all land within the Application Site and a 30m buffer (see Figure 1). A UK Hab survey is a technique for rapidly obtaining baseline ecological information over a large area of land. It classifies areas of land based on the vegetation present in a hierarchical manner with five levels from broad ecosystem level down to specific habitat type. All habitats on the Application Site were identified to Level 3 at a minimum on the habitat hierarchy.
- 3.2.13 Plant species identified from each habitat type within the survey area were recorded and their abundance was assessed on the DAFOR scale:
- D Dominant
 - A Abundant
 - F Frequent
 - O Occasional
 - R Rare
- 3.2.14 Plant species nomenclature follows Stace (2019).
- 3.2.15 A habitat condition assessment was undertaken for all habitat features mapped following the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric (DEFRA, 2024). Conditions were recorded as 'Good', 'Moderate', 'Poor' or 'N/A', in accordance with the criteria on the condition assessment form appropriate to the habitat.
- 3.2.16 Target notes were made for any features which were too small to map or were of particular ecological interest. Incidental records of fauna were also made during the survey and the habitats identified were evaluated for their potential to support protected and notable species.

Survey Limitations

- 3.2.17 The weather conditions during the Application Site survey were very poor due to heavy rain but due to the low distinctiveness of habitat types present on Application Site, this was not considered a major constraint for the UK Hab Classification results. Additionally, there was one area of Application Site that could not be accessed due to the presence of asbestos. However, surveyors had a clear vantage point of the area through a fence and as such it is not considered a major constraint on the survey.
- 3.2.18 The findings of this report represent the professional opinion of qualified ecologists and do not constitute professional legal advice. This report is considered valid for 18 months due to the low ecological value of the site. Should the establishment of the J19 Temporary Compound be delayed beyond January 2027, it is considered prudent that the survey findings be reviewed and updated as required so that the assessment of ecological impacts is undertaken against an accurate baseline.
- 3.2.19 It should be considered that the behaviour of animals can be unpredictable and may not conform to standard patterns recorded in scientific literature. Therefore, this report cannot predict with absolute certainty that animal species will occur in apparently suitable locations or habitats, or that they will not occur in locations or habitats that appear unsuitable.

4. Results

4.1 Desktop Assessment of Designated Sites

- 4.1.1 Hopwood Woodlands Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located 70m south of the Application Site. Glade & Oaken Bank Woods SBI partially overlaps the boundary of the LNR, and is located 220m from the Application Site at its closest point. Part of Hopwood LNR and Glade & Oaken Bank Woods SBI is ancient woodland.
- 4.1.2 Hopwood Clough SBI is located 915m to the south-east of the Application Site. It also overlaps the boundary of Hopwood Woodlands LNR.
- 4.1.3 There are no other LNR or SBI within 1km of the Application Site.
- 4.1.4 There are no SSSI within 1km of the Application Site. Rochdale Canal SAC (and SSSI) is located 1.45km to the east of the Application Site. Rochdale Canal SAC is designated for its population of floating water plantain *Luronium natans*. There are no other SAC / SPA / Ramsar sites within 5km of the Application Site.
- 4.1.5 There are no priority habitats within the Application Site. The closest priority habitats are 70m to the south-west (deciduous woodland within Hopwood Woodlands LNR) and 150m to the east (deciduous woodland within Manchester Golf Club).

4.2 Field Survey

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- 4.2.1 The Application Site was previously used as a compound and is largely hard standing (see UK Habitats Classification Results for further detail) with very limited potential to support protected species. Any potential ecological features and associated protected species have been summarised below.

Bats

- 4.2.2 The Ground Level Tree Assessment did not identify any features with potential to support roosting bats within hedgerows and trees present on the boundary of the Application Site. Additionally, there were no buildings on the Application Site or within a 20m buffer that had the potential for roosting bats.
- 4.2.3 The Application Site was recorded as having moderate value for foraging bats as the surrounding hedgerow and ditch offer a small number of linear features for foraging and commuting bats in the area. However, most of the survey area consists of urbanised ground cover which is unsuitable for foraging bats.

Badgers Meles meles

- 4.2.4 No evidence of badgers or badger setts was recorded during field surveys. No suitable sett building habitat was identified on the Application Site due to the majority of the survey area consisting of hardstanding materials. However, the surrounding habitats are suitable for commuting and foraging badgers with agricultural fields, hedgerows and nearby scrub offering opportunities.

Breeding birds

- 4.2.5 Grassland on the bunds within the northern part of the Application Site has potential to support ground nesting birds. Breeding birds may also utilise surrounding trees and the adjacent hedgerow on the southern boundary of the Application Site.

Great Crested Newt and Common Amphibians

- 4.2.6 No evidence of GCN or other amphibians were observed as part of the field survey. The drainage ditch on the southern boundary, drainage basin, rubble piles and bunds to the north and east of the Application Site (see Figure 1) do have potential to support GCN which are known to be present in surrounding habitats. It is noted that the drainage basin holds any water which overflows the ditch and is unlikely to ever hold enough water for a sustained period that would then allow GCN breeding. The ditch fills more frequently and is not flowing and therefore has greater potential for GCN usage. However, the majority of the survey area was assessed to be sub-optimal terrestrial habitat for amphibians, comprising modified grassland, hardstanding and unsealed urbanised land. A HSI of the ditch was conducted and results are shown in Table 4.1 below. The ditch scored 0.56 (below average suitability for GCN). The drainage basin was dry at the time of survey and no HSI was possible, however as discussed above the feature would not support breeding GCN.

Table 4.1: HSI assessment results for the ditch

HSI Parameter	Result
Map location	A
Surface area (square metre (m ²))	250m ²
Desiccation rate	Sometimes dries
Water quality	Poor
Shade cover (%)	10%
Waterfowl	Absent
Fish population	Absent
Pond density	36
Terrestrial habitat	Poor
Macrophyte cover (%)	<5%
HSI Score	0.56
Suitability	Below Average

Reptiles

- 4.2.7 No evidence of reptiles was recorded within the survey area. Some suitable terrestrial habitat and refugia was present on Application Site in the form of the ditch on the southern boundary, drainage basin, rubble piles and bunds to the north and east of the Application Site. These features have potential to support common reptiles (common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and grass snake *Natrix helvetica*).

Other protected and notable species

- 4.2.8 Roe deer *Capreolus capreolus* were observed moving across the middle of the Application Site during the August 2025 field survey. No signs or evidence of other fauna including protected species were identified during the survey. However, suitable habitat for terrestrial mammals, such as hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*, rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* and small mammals was present in the adjacent hedgerow, ditch and grassland habitats within and outside of the Application Site.

Hedgerows

- 4.2.9 One hedgerow (H1) was identified on the southern boundary of Application Site; however, H1 falls outside the Application Site. H1 is a native hedgerow which contained hawthorn (dominant) with alder *Alnus glutinosa* (rare) and cherry trees *Prunus avium* (rare). H1 is a priority habitat given its native status but does not qualify as 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations in relation to wildlife and landscape criteria. Further input would be needed from a cultural heritage specialist to confirm if H1 qualified for 'important' status under the archaeology and history criteria listed in the Hedgerow Regulations.

Invasive non-native species

- 4.2.10 No invasive non-native species were identified during the August 2025 field survey.

UK Habitat Classification Survey

- 4.2.11 The habitats recorded are detailed below with their respective alphanumeric codes (UKHab, 2023). The condition assessments of each habitat are also provided where relevant (DEFRA, 2024). Please refer to Figure 1 to see a visual representation of results.

Modified grassland (g4)

- 4.2.12 Modified grassland was present to the north, east, and southern boundaries of the Application Site. No regular mowing regime was evident. Species comprised of red fescue *Festuca rubra* (a), Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* (a), creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* (o), creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* (o), broad leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* (o), common bent *Agrostis capillaris* (f), annual meadow grass *Poa annua* (f), white clover *Trifolium repens* (a), perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* (a), colts foot *Tussilago farfara* (o), cats ear *Hypochaeris radicata* (r), common mouse ear *Cerastium fontanum* (o), curled dock *Rumex crispus* (o), common ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris* (o), red clover *Trifolium pratense* (r), spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare* (r), bush vetch *Vicia sepium* (r), and common rush *Schoenoplectus lacustris* (r).

- 4.2.13 All modified grassland on Application Site was recorded to be in **poor condition** at the time of survey, failing the first criteria (lack of species diversity per square meter) and therefore could not achieve greater than poor condition.

Other neutral grassland (g3c) Essential secondary codes- seasonally wet (502) and sustainable drainage system (848)

- 4.2.14 The drainage basin is located at central OSGR SD 86496 08791 and is fed by the drainage ditch with the purpose of managing excess water; therefore, it does not hold water continuously and would not classify as 'other standing water' as a habitat type. The southern part of the drainage basin (nearest the pipe) appears to hold shallow water as there is an area of bulrush *Typha latifolia* present, the northern section of the drainage basin is bare earth with sparse patches of soft rush *Juncus effusus*. Curled-leaved dock (o) and common ragwort (o) are present on the outer edges of the drainage basin with smaller patches of grass species within containing species such as red fescue (f), Yorkshire fog (f), and possible false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* (f). Some of the drainage basin was waterlogged at the time of survey with small sections of grass covered by water.
- 4.2.15 The grassland area containing the drainage basin was assessed to be in **poor condition** at the time of survey, with a lack of suitable indicator species for it to be a good example of its habitat type. Therefore, moderate or good condition could not be achieved. It passed the criteria of having a varied sward height and lack of bracken but failed criteria relating to bare ground cover and sub-optimal species presence.

Other rivers and streams (r2b)

- 4.2.16 There was ditch present on the southern edge of the Application Site boundary which was created during previous construction works to assist with catching run-off from the hard standing and draining into the nearby drainage basin. The banks have a V-shaped profile which varies in steepness. Banks were dominated by grasses (primarily red fescue (d)). The channel width is between 30 centimetres (cm) and 1.5m and is shallow (15cm), with some deeper sections (up to 30cm) where the banks are eroded due to excessive run-off and narrow channel shape. The most easterly sections are dry; a hedgerow (H1) is present on the top of the bank (hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* dominant with elder *Sambucus nigra* (r)). During construction of the ditch when the compound was originally built, a buffer was left between the hedgerow and any works (including the ditch) to protect hedgehog.
- 4.2.17 The ditch was assessed to be in **poor condition** at the time of survey, and failed criterion in relation to water turbidity, presence of emergent aquatic vegetation, had a degree of bank slippage, and had unstable water levels. It passed three criteria- with no invasive species present, was partially shaded and has <10% algae/duckweed present.

Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)

- 4.2.18 Developed land; sealed surface is widespread throughout the survey area in the form of roads, pathways, car parks and hardstanding. Due to the low distinctiveness of all urban habitat types, condition assessments are not required for this habitat type.

Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)

- 4.2.19 A small central parcel of the Application Site comprised of compressed hardcore mixed with stabilizing concrete that had a permeable surface. Some vegetation was present on this land consisting of species such as bristly ox-tounge *Helminthotheca echinoides* (f), black medic *Medicago lupulina* (o), creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera* (f), tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* (r), St. John's wort *Hypericum perforatum* (r), white clover (a), curled dock (a), common ragwort (f), chamomile *Matricaria chamomilla* (r), Yorkshire fog (a), colts foot (a), wild carrot *Daucus carota* (r), bush vetch (o), mug wort *Artemisia vulgaris*, oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, red campion *Silene dioica*, common hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, creeping buttercup, common nettle *Urtica dioica* and red valerian *Valeriana rubra*, which were all occasional or rare. Due to the low distinctiveness of all urban habitat types, condition assessments are not required for this habitat type.

Sparsely vegetated urban land (u1f)

- 4.2.20 There was a very small strip of sparsely vegetated land in the center of the survey area with a slight slope of hardcore mix and ephemeral and perennial vegetation including willowherb (a), colt's foot (o), and common ragwort (o). Due to the low distinctiveness of all urban habitat types, condition assessments are not required for this habitat type.

5. Discussion and Recommendations

5.1 SAC / SPA / Ramsar Sites

Air quality

- 5.1.1 Natural England's guidance (Natural England's Approach to Advising Competent Authorities on the Assessment of Road Traffic Emission under the Habitats Regulations, Natural England 2018) states that 'with regard to potential risks from road traffic emissions, Natural England and Highways England [now National Highways] are in agreement that protected sites falling within 200 metres of the edge of a road affected by a plan or project need to be considered further....However, where (unusually) there is a credible risk that air quality impacts might extend beyond 200m from a road, Natural England may advise that additional sites should be scoped into the HRA'.
- 5.1.2 For the Application Site, the change in vehicles to/from the compound is below the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) thresholds (National Highways, 2024) and Natural England's HRA screening criteria (Natural England, 2018) i.e. predicted change average annual daily traffic flows (AADT) of 1000 AADT or more, or changes in heavy duty vehicle (HDV) flows of 200 AADT or more. It is therefore assessed there is no credible risk of air quality impacts to SAC / SPA / Ramsar sites as the distance of the nearest designated site (Rochdale Canal SAC) far exceeds a distance of 200m from the site, and screening thresholds for traffic volumes are not exceeded.
- 5.1.3 Additionally, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was undertaken by National Highways for the M60 Simister Scheme (National Highways, 2024a). That HRA was submitted to Natural England as part of ongoing consultation for the M60 Simister Island Scheme. Natural England concluded they were '*satisfied with the approach (methodology and assumptions used to inform the assessment) set out in the HRA to assess for impacts and agrees with the conclusions of the Stage 1 Screening and appropriate assessment stage, and justification for reaching them. Natural England are satisfied the Scheme will have no adverse effects on Rochdale Canal SAC.*' This position is reflected in Matter 3.1 of the Statement of Common Ground with Natural England for the M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange Scheme (National Highways, 2024b).
- 5.1.4 The outcome of the assessment is applicable to the J19 Temporary Compound.
- 5.1.5 The HRA identified that even though site relevant critical levels and loads have been assigned to the Rochdale Canal SAC on the Air Pollution Information System (APIS) website (Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, 2019), the critical levels and loads are considered to only be relevant to an oligotrophic (nutrient poor) water body. The citation for the underlying Rochdale Canal SSSI (Natural England, 2000) clearly describes the Rochdale Canal as having mesotrophic water quality and being moderately nutrient rich, and therefore the critical levels and loads applied by APIS are not considered to be relevant to the SAC.
- 5.1.6 Furthermore, the detailed literature review presented in the HRA of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2022) found that *Luronium natans* appears to have a wide tolerance of nutrient levels, which further supports the lack of relevance of the critical level and load given within APIS for this SAC.

- 5.1.7 National Highways has also received specific feedback from Natural England supporting the stance that the APIS critical load is not appropriate for the Rochdale Canal given that it is a mesotrophic waterbody. Natural England identified that the specific caveat provided on the APIS website relating to the use of the critical load for nitrogen on the Rochdale Canal SAC applies i.e. the APIS webpage for standing open water and canals explains that a critical load cannot be given for nitrogen.
- 5.1.8 Therefore, the J19 Temporary Compound would not trigger thresholds for an air quality assessment for any SAC / SPA / Ramsar site and there is recently published evidence to indicate that the qualifying species of the nearest SAC (Rochdale Canal SAC) is tolerant of a wide range of nutrient conditions. The Rochdale Canal, as a mesotrophic water body, is not sensitive to changes in air quality. Therefore, it is appropriate to conclude that there is no potential pathway to effect on any SAC / SPA / Ramsar site due to air quality changes, from establishment, operation or decommissioning of the J19 Temporary Compound.

Hydrology

- 5.1.9 The existing drainage within the Application Site would ensure water generated on site is collected and discharged via an interceptor to the existing highways drainage at J19, therefore ensuring no impacts on any designated site.

Conclusion

- 5.1.10 No further assessment of the effects of establishment, operation or decommissioning of J19 Temporary Compound on any SAC / SPA / Ramsar site, including Rochdale Canal SAC is proposed. This conclusion has been confirmed by GMEU on behalf of Rochdale District Council, which is presented in Appendix B.

5.2 LNR, SBI and Priority Habitats

- 5.2.1 Due to the distance between the Application Site and the nearest LNR, SBI and priority habitats, there is no potential for direct impacts to these features.
- 5.2.2 As detailed above, existing drainage within the Application Site would ensure water generated on Application Site is collected and discharged via an interceptor to the existing highways drainage at J19, therefore ensuring no impacts on any designated site, and changes in traffic volumes are below thresholds which would trigger the need for assessment of air quality impacts, and therefore indirect impacts to the LNR, SBI and priority habitats can also be discounted.

5.3 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

General

- 5.3.1 There is limited potential for impacts to protected species from the J19 Temporary Compound. Establishment, operation and decommissioning works would be managed through a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which would include general ecological and invasive species best practice measures.

Bats

- 5.3.2 There were no trees or structures within the survey area that had potential for roosting bats, and no further surveys are recommended. The Application Site and its immediate surrounding habitat offered moderate value for local foraging and commuting bat populations with the presence of a hedgerow and ditch.
- 5.3.3 There is potential for disturbance impacts associated with artificial lighting and night-time works. As detailed in the CEMP, the Principal Contractor will implement the following measures for lighting during construction:
- Avoidance of light spill using directional and or baffled lighting.
 - Positioning of lighting columns away from habitats of value to foraging and commuting bats (hedgerows, trees, woodland).
 - Reducing the height of lighting columns to reduce light spill onto adjacent habitats.
 - Avoidance use of blue white short wavelength lights and high UV content.
 - The use of construction lighting will be in accordance with industry standards and follow best available guidance on lighting with regards to protected species (e.g. Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals (2023)). The construction lighting design will consider the need to avoid illuminating hedgerow habitats.

Badger

- 5.3.4 No evidence of badgers was recorded on the Application Site, but the surrounding habitats provide potential foraging and commuting opportunities.
- 5.3.5 However, badgers are a transient and mobile species and there is potential for construction of setts prior to the establishment of the Application Site. As detailed in the CEMP prior to the establishment stage of the Application Site, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will check habitats such as the grass bunds to the north and east of Application Site and associated 30m buffer for evidence of badgers. If any active badger setts are identified, and it is considered those setts are at risk of disturbance or damage, then a licence will be sought from Natural England to allow works to continue.

Breeding Birds

- 5.3.6 Opportunities for ground nesting birds exist within grassland on the bunds within the Application Site, and for other breeding birds within the hedgerow present on the Application Site. The hedgerow would not be impacted during any phase of works, however the bunds would be disturbed during decommissioning of the J19 Temporary Compound. It is therefore recommended that this phase of works is undertaken outside of the main bird nesting season i.e. is undertaken between September and February (inclusive). If this is not possible, habitats that could support breeding birds (such as the grass bunds to the north of site) that need to be removed or altered as part of the decommissioning works, should be checked by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 24 hours prior to works taking place.
- 5.3.7 If a nest is discovered a suitable buffer zone would need to be established around the nest in which no work could take place until it has been confirmed by an ecologist that the young have fledged naturally.

5.3.8 No other habitats that could support breeding will be impacted by works.

Great Crested Newt

- 5.3.9 No evidence of GCN was observed during the August 2025 field survey. However, GCN presence was previously confirmed in relation to construction of the compound for which a District Level Licence (DLL) was obtained from Natural England. The onsite ditch, drainage basin, and rubble piles have the potential to support GCN.
- 5.3.10 There is potential for impacts to GCN during site establishment due to maintenance works to the drainage basin and ditch, and the decommissioning phase of the J19 Temporary Compound. Works to, and subsequent removal of, the drainage basin and ditch could lead to killing/injury of GCN and would lead to a small loss of habitat for GCN. However, due to the limited areas of natural habitat impacted, and the resource of other available habitat in the surrounding area (for example numerous ponds with the adjacent golf course) even in the absence of any mitigation, the scale of impact of the loss of habitat would be observed at a local level only and would therefore not be significant.
- 5.3.11 Whilst no mitigation is required to avoid significant effects, as detailed within the CEMP, National Highways would implement mitigation to ensure no breach of wildlife legislation, and this would further reduce the likelihood of an impacts to fauna. Such measures would include obtaining a DLL for the J19 Temporary Compound. The licence would cover the duration of establishment and operation of the site. A further licence would be sought for decommissioning of the site. In addition, an ECoW would be present during site establishment, maintenance of the ditches to complete pre-works checks of suitable habitat. In the event a GCN was encountered the ECoW would move the GCN to suitable retained habitat, for example boundary hedgerows.

Reptiles

- 5.3.12 Suitable habitat is present to support common reptiles within the ditch on the southern boundary, drainage basin, rubble piles and bunds to the north and east of the Application Site.
- 5.3.13 As decommissioning works will include removal of suitable habitat i.e. bunds and rubble piles, there is potential for negative impacts to reptiles. As detailed in the CEMP, works to features with potential to support hibernating reptiles would be timed to avoid sensitive periods (generally November to February inclusive depending on seasonal variations). Works to habitat with potential to support reptiles outside for the hibernation period would be supervised by an ECoW.

Other protected and notable species

- 5.3.14 Suitable habitat is present within grassland, hedgerow, and ditch on the Application Site to support common mammal species such as rabbits, hedgehog and fox. As detailed in the CEMP, an ECoW would complete checks of suitable habitats prior to decommissioning works and would provide advice on additional relevant mitigation measures if appropriate.

Hedgerows

- 5.3.15 H1 was identified is considered a 'priority habitat' as it is a native hedgerow. Boundary features such as hedgerows would be retained and would be unaffected by operation of the J19 Temporary Compound or decommissioning.

Habitats

- 5.3.16 The J19 Temporary Compound comprises mainly or urban and low distinctiveness habitats. The J19 Temporary Compound does not require any further loss of habitats as part of the establishment or operational phase and no further surveys are recommended.

6. References

Amphibian and Reptile Groups UK, 2010. Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index. ARG UK Advice Note 5. Amphibian and Reptile Groups UK.

Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2023. Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night, Guidance Note GN08/23.

Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, 2019. Air Pollution Information System Site Relevant Critical Loads and Source Attribution. [Online] Available at: <http://www.apis.ac.uk/CIEEM> (2017).
Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. Winchester.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2017. Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisals. Second Addition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Collins, J. (ed.), 2023. Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. (4th Edition). London, Bat Conservation Trust.

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Defra, 2007. Hedgerow Survey Handbook. A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK. Defra, London

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Defra, 2024. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology

Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2022. Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (Examination). [Online] Available at:
<https://www.hwa.uk.com/site/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/PfE-Revised-HRA-Nov-2022.pdf>

Joint Nature Conservation Committee and Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (on behalf of the Four Countries' Biodiversity Group), 2012. UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. July 2012. Available from: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6189>

Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 1994. Biodiversity. The UK Action Plan. [online] Available at: <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-bap/> Accessed October 2021.

National Highways (2014) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. DMRB LA 105 – Air Quality. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/search/html/af7f4cda-08f7-4f16-a89f-e30da703f3f4?standard=DMRB>

National Highways, 2024a. M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange. Environmental Statement Appendices. Appendix 8.13 Habitats Regulations Assessment Report. Available at:
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR010064/TR010064-000212-6.3%20Environmental%20Statement%20Appendices%20-%20Appendix%208.13%20Habitats%20Regulations%20Assessment%20Report.pdf>

National Highways, 2024b. M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange. 7.10 Statement of Common Ground with Natural England. Available at:
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR010064/TR010064-000449-7.10%20Statement%20of%20Common%20Ground%20with%20Natural%20England.pdf>

National Library of Scotland, 2025. [View map: Ordnance Survey, Lancashire LXXXVIII \(includes: Bury; Heywood.\) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952](#) [Accessed 01/09/2025]

Natural England, 2000. Rochdale Canal SSSI citation. [Online] Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/2000430.pdf> [Accessed 27 Feb 2024].

Natural England, 2018. Natural England's approach to advising competent authorities on the assessment of road traffic emissions under the Habitats Regulations (NEA001), s.l.: Natural England. Available at: <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4720542048845824>

Natural England, n.d. Natural England Designated Sites Viewer. [Online] Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

Oldham, R.S., Keeble, J., Swan, M.J.S. and Jeffcote, M., (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*). Herpetological Journal 10 (4), 143-155.

Stace, C. (2019) New Flora of the British Isles (4th Edition), Cambridge University Press.

UKHAB Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.. Available online: <https://www.ukhab.org/>

Appendix A. Figures

Figure 1. UK Habitat Classification and PEA Results

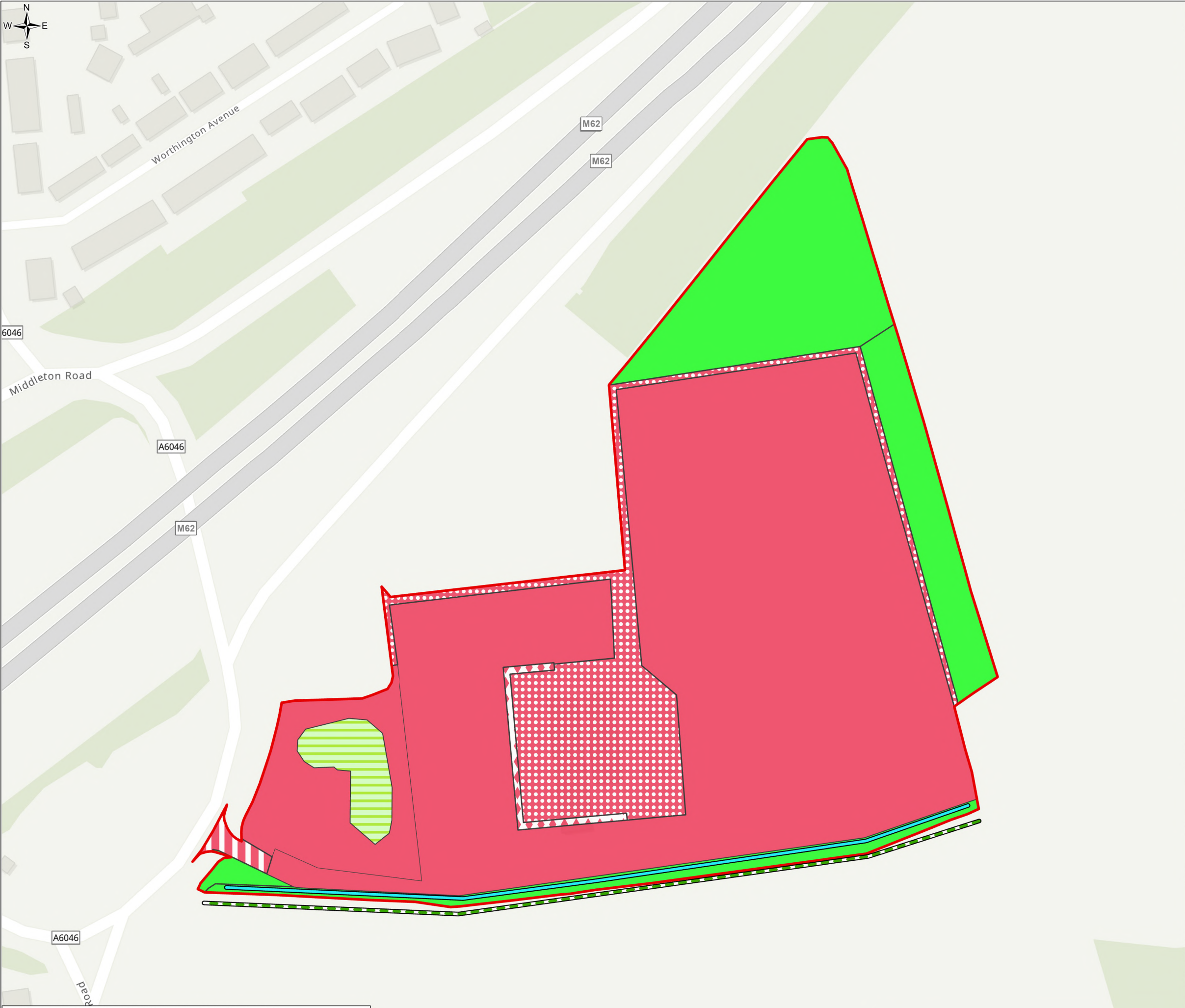


FIGURE 1

- Legend**
- Red Line Boundary
 - Habitat type (UK Habitat)**
 - g3c - Other neutral grassland
 - g4 - Modified grassland
 - u - Urban
 - u1b - Developed land; sealed surface
 - u1c - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
 - u1f - Sparsely vegetated urban land
 - Hedgerow
 - R1 ditches



PO1	SEP 25	For Review	LB	OH	AJ	TW
Rev.	Rev. Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Check'd	Rev'd	Appr'd

Client

Project

TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION COMPOUND
AT M62 JUNCTION 19

Drawing Title

UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP

Drawing Status

S3 - FOR REVIEW

Scale @ A3	1:2,500	DO NOT SCALE
Jacobs No.	B36601F0	
Client No.	HE548642	Rev P01

Drawing Number

HE548642-JAC-EBD-SII_MLT-DR-LE-0001

Ordnance Survey Licence Number 100030649. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.
© Environment Agency copyright and/or database right 2025. All rights reserved. © Crown copyright and database rights 2025 licensed under the Public Sector Mapping Agreement with Ordnance Survey (licence No. 100022861). © Historic England 2023.
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2023. Contains British Geological Survey materials NERC © (2023).
Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2020. Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



© Copyright 2025 Jacobs U.K. Limited. The concepts and information contained in this document are the property of Jacobs. Use or copying of this document in whole or in part without the written permission of Jacobs constitutes an infringement of copyright.
Limitation: This drawing has been prepared on behalf of, and for the exclusive use of Jacobs' Client, and is subject to, and issued in accordance with, the provisions of the contract between Jacobs and the Client. Jacobs accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever for, or in respect of, any use of, or reliance upon, this drawing by any third party.

Appendix B. Habitats Regulations Assessment Conclusion Confirmation

From: [REDACTED]@tameside.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 October 2025 11:30
To: [REDACTED]@costain.com>; [REDACTED]@rochdale.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: M60/M62/M66 Simister Scheme: M62 J19 Temporary Compound. Request for feedback on BNG and HRA

⚠ STOP: This email originated from outside of **COSTAIN**.
THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK: DO NOT click links or open attachments, unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe. **ALWAYS** verify with the source if unsure.
DO NOT enter your ID and password.

Hi

I have no issues with the BNG statement or screening out of the Rochdale Canal SAC with regards the habitat regulations.

[REDACTED]
Ecologist

Planning and Transportation
Planning and Transportation
Place

[Tameside MBC](#) | [X](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

Dukinfield Town Hall | King Street | Dukinfield | Tameside | SK16 4LA

Tel. [REDACTED]

Mobile. [REDACTED]

This email was sent at a time & date convenient to the sender; please do not feel under any pressure to respond immediately if this is outside your normal working hours.

Email Disclaimer <https://www.tameside.gov.uk/disclaimer>

From: [REDACTED]@costain.com>
Sent: 26 September 2025 17:07
To: [REDACTED]@rochdale.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@tameside.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: M60/M62/M66 Simister Scheme: M62 J19 Temporary Compound. Request for feedback on BNG and HRA

Caution: This email originated from outside of the Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender ([REDACTED]@costain.com) or know the content is safe. If in doubt, click 'Report Message' at the top of your inbox and select 'Phishing'

Hi Both,

Sorry, this time with your previous email attached.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] **Town Planning Manager** MRTPI MSc

Regional Delivery Partnership

Mobile: [REDACTED]

I work 3 flexible hours on a Monday. Tuesday to Friday are full working days.

Working on behalf of National Highways

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 26 September 2025 16:24

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@rochdale.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@tameside.gov.uk>

Subject: M60/M62/M66 Simister Scheme: M62 J19 Temporary Compound. Request for feedback on BNG and HRA

Hi [REDACTED]

Thank you for your pre-application engagement to date in relation to the M60/M62/M66 Simister Scheme M62 J19 Temporary Compound.

We have further developed the application document submissions for the planning application scheduled for submission on the 17/10, including the proposed submission relating to BNG and HRA.

I have attached our previous correspondence on the BNG and HRA, including the positions that [REDACTED] previously provided on behalf of Rochdale Council.

Please find attached our BNG Exemption Statement that we intend to submit with the planning application document. Are you able to confirm your previous advice provided on the BNG remains and that this exemption would be accepted on application?

Also please find attached an extract from our Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which relates to the consideration of designated sites. I would be grateful if you could confirm that no Habitats Regulations Assessment is required for the M62 J19 Temporary Compound.

Let me know if you have any questions or wish to discuss anything.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED] **Town Planning Manager** MRTPI MSc

Regional Delivery Partnership

Mobile: [REDACTED]

I work 3 flexible hours on a Monday. Tuesday to Friday are full working days.

Working on behalf of National Highways