
Preliminary Ecological
Appraisal and Day Time
Building Inspection

Village Hotel, Bury, BL9 7BQ
Ref: P.2010.24

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ascerta has been instructed by **VUR Village Trading No.1 Ltd** to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Daytime Building Inspection for bats of the land and building at Village Hotel, Bury, BL9 7BQ (hereafter referred to as **the site**).

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Daytime Building Inspection for Bats comprised of a desk study and biological records search, as well as a site walkover survey in order to map habitat types. The survey was extended to assess the potential for protected species to use the site. The assessment provides baseline data regarding the current site conditions and where appropriate allows recommendations to be made in respect of further potential work in order to satisfy current UK wildlife legislation.

The site comprises an existing hotel with health and wellness facilities, a bar and grill.

Assessed against the '*Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*' 2nd edition (2018), the sites habitats range in ecological value from negligible to within the zone of influence.

The site provides habitat for nesting birds, hedgehog and bats. All habitats assessed are likely to be lost to the proposals. However, as the habitats to be lost to the proposals are small in area and not of high ecological value, it is considered that their loss can be mitigated for and the proposals will not adversely affect the ecological value of the wider area, provided the recommendations detailed below are followed. Bat surveys are conducted in accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines, published 2023 (the Guidelines). Strict adherence to these is not necessary, but where practice deviates from them, clear reasons and rationale are required.

The site was subject to an extended phase one habitat survey and a preliminary bat roost assessment of the building. During the survey and following review of historical species records, it is considered that an impact on birds, bats, and hedgehog are likely to occur in relation to the proposals for the site. The following recommendations have been made to avoid an impact on these species:

- If works have not begun by June 2026, an updated site visit will be required to assess the habitats within the site;
- The production and implementation of a Construction Environment Construction Plan (CEMP) is to ensure no harm is caused to the River Roch throughout the construction phase of the works;
- Implementation of a hedgehog RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Precautionary check for invasive prior to works commencing;
- Production of a Management Plan to ensure the long-term commitments to manage the planting, protection and enhancement of biodiversity in and around a new development site; and
- Vegetation clearance or pruning should be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (1st March to 31st August Inclusive) to avoid any impact on breeding birds. Or a nesting bird check undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist should be undertaken immediately prior to works commencing.

1.0 Introduction

Ascerta has been instructed by **VUR Village Trading No.1 Ltd** to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Daytime Building Inspection for bats of the land and building at the site. The site OS grid reference is SD 81817 10481 and the What3Words reference is jeep.terms.noises. The extent of the site is displayed in photograph 1.1 below.



Photograph 1.1: Extent of the site.

Our client seeks planning consent to construct an extension to an existing hotel structure.

The site was visited on 12th June 2024 by Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons) when a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, which includes an assessment of the potential for protected species to be using the site or surroundings, was carried out in accordance with the *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit* (JNCC, 2010). The report was prepared following methods detailed in the CIEEM 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland' (2018) and 'Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing' (2017).

This report presents the results of the survey including evaluation of habitats on site and potential for protected species to be using the site. The report includes recommendations for further actions where applicable, in order to satisfy current UK wildlife legislation and to achieve our client's objectives. Relevant legislation is detailed within Appendix 4.

Our client's objectives are to assess the potential ecological constraints of the proposed development site.

2.0 Objectives

Our client's objectives are to assess the potential ecological constraints of the proposed development site.

Our objectives are as follows:

- Identify and evaluate any features of ecological value and the potential of the site to support protected species based on the walkover survey and biological records search;
- Identify designated sites within 2km of the site;
- Review protected species records within 2km of the site;
- Map the habitats within the site using JNCC (2010) methods;
- Provide recommendations for further species-specific surveys and mitigation measures where current legislation requires;
- Provide recommendations that seek to enhance the ecological value of the site;
- Provide recommendations to assist our clients in achieving their objectives whilst satisfying current UK wildlife legislation.

3.0 Survey Methods

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal involved the collection and review of data from a desk study and field survey, along with assessment of the value of the habitats following CIEEM guidelines.

3.1 Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken on 27th June 2024 to identify protected and notable habitats and species, and nature conservation designations potentially relevant to the proposed development. The desk study was carried out using the sources detailed in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1. Desk Study Data Information

Source	Date Obtained	Data Obtained
Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)	27 th June 2024	• Statutory designated sites within 2km of the site • Protected and Notable habitats within 2km of the site • European Protected Species Licenses within 2km of the site
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)	27 th June 2024	• Non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site • Protected and notable species records within 2km of the site
Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan	27 th June 2024	• Additional protections afforded to species/habitat

3.2 Field Survey

A walkover survey of the site was conducted on 12th June 2024 by Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons). The habitat types and features of ecological interest were identified and mapped in compliance with *the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit* (JNCC, 2010). During the survey, weather conditions were recorded to ensure optimal surveying conditions according to guidelines. Any sub-optimal conditions will be discussed in the limitations.

This includes the identification of the main species present and examination of the potential for any protected species. Habitats were mapped within appendix 1.

The surveys particularly focused on the following species and habitat features:

- Mammals (badgers, bats, otter and water vole);
- Birds;
- Amphibians and reptiles;
- Invertebrates;
- Hedgerows and boundaries;
- Invasive plant species; and
- Plant communities and trees.

3.3 Bat Survey Methods

The survey methods followed the guidelines set out by the Bat Conservation Trust's *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 4th Edition* (2023). Habitats, buildings and trees were assessed for suitability for use by bats and categorised independently using table 4.1 page 44 within the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Bats

Habitats on site were assessed for their suitability for bats to use them for roosting, commuting and foraging both on the site and surrounding area. Commuting and foraging habitat suitability was categorised **low** to **high**. Any commuting and foraging habitat valued as **moderate** or above may need further survey effort if lost to the proposals.

Preliminary Roost Assessment Trees

All trees were inspected for Potential Roost Features (PRFs). Features searched for included: Natural or woodpecker holes, cracks/splits in major limbs, loose bark, hollows/cavities, dense epicormic growth, bird and bat boxes. Where such features were found they were investigated for scratches or staining, bat droppings and smoothing of surfaces around entry points. Trees assigned a suitability of **moderate** or above may require further inspection if they are to be lost to the development.

External Inspection of the Building

A daytime internal and external inspection of the building was carried out during the survey by a suitably experienced ecologist. The building was searched externally looking for signs of bats, including staining on barge boards, soffits and more commonly droppings on flat surfaces i.e., window ledges that would indicate potential roosting sites. Possible bat access points such as loose tiles, cracks and crevices or crawl spaces beneath and/or behind roofing materials such as roofing felt, panelling, soffits and tiles were identified and were also checked for signs of use by bats.

Internally, all areas of the building were accessed where possible and inspected for signs of use by bats. Signs of use by bats include droppings, scratching, staining, dead bats (particularly in uncovered water tanks) and actual bats. Any features noted, for example, in loft spaces, such as light gaps (indicating potential access points), loft dimensions, presence of roofing felt and loft conditions such as ventilation, temperature and cobweb coverage; were also identified and checked.

Table 3.2: Guidelines for assessing potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement. Guidelines taken from table 4.1 page 44 of the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 4th Edition (2023).

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting Habitats in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
None	<i>No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).</i>	<i>No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).</i>
Negligible^a	<i>No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.</i>	<i>No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.</i>
Low	<i>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions^b and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats^c).</i>	<i>Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.</i>
Moderate	<i>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity or hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).</i>	<i>Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.</i>
High	<i>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.</i>	<i>Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.</i>

^a Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

^b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

^c Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten et al., 2016 and Jansen et al., 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

3.4 Badger Survey Methods

The site was searched for setts and badger field signs including foraging areas, latrines and tracks. Attention was paid to the presence of the following field signs:

- Setts: single holes or a series of holes likely to be interconnected underground;
- Latrines: badgers usually deposit faeces in excavated pits;
- Paths and footprints;
- Scratching posts: at the base of trees;
- Snuffle holes: areas where badgers have searched for insects;
- Day nest: bundles of vegetation where badgers may sleep above ground; and
- Traces of hair.

3.5 Evaluation

Habitats and species on the site were evaluated following the '*Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*' (2018). A geographical frame of reference is assigned to each habitat and species, with **International Value** being most important, then **National, Regional, County, District, Local** and lastly, within the immediate **Zone of Influence** (Zoi) of the proposals only.

Value judgements are based on characteristics that can be used to identify ecological resources or features likely to be important in terms of biodiversity. These include site designations such as SSSIs. For undesignated features, the size, conservation status (locally, nationally or internationally), and the quality of the ecological resource are considered. Ecological resource quality can refer to habitats (for instance if they are particularly diverse, or a good example of a specific habitat type), other features (such as wildlife corridors or mosaics of habitats) or species populations or assemblages.

The recommendations detailed within this report aim to meet requirements of the Environment Act and Statutory Biodiversity Metric as far as possible at this stage.

3.6 Limitations

The site visit was undertaken in June, which is within the optimal time of year for phase 1 habitat surveys, sufficient vegetation was present to enable habitat identification.

Due to the use of the building internal access was not available at the time of the visit. This access restriction is not considered a limit to the conclusions of the report.

The absence of biological records does not necessarily mean the absence of species. This has been considered within the report conclusions.

The site was visited on only one occasion. This produces a snapshot of habitats and species on the site and others may be present at different times of the day or year. This limitation has been considered within this report.

4.0 Survey Results

4.1 Desk Study

Statutory sites

Two statutory designated sites were identified within a 2km radius of the proposed development site. These are listed in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Statutory Designated Sites

Statutory Designated Site	Reason for Designation	Distance to Proposed Development
Chesham Woods Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Designated for its semi-natural broadleaved woodland, semi-natural plantation woodland, scrub, improved grassland, amenity grassland, neutral grassland and orchard.	1.2km north
Hollins Vale (LNR)	Designated for its woodland and wetland habitat. Also, for its bird and butterfly assemblages.	1.8km south

Non-statutory sites

Five non-statutory designated sites were identified within a 2km radius of the proposed development site. These are listed in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

Non-Statutory Designated Site	Distance to Proposed Development
Railway Cutting at Heywood Site of Biological Interest (SBI)	890m southeast
Townside (SBI)	1.2km west
Chesham Woods (SBI)	1.5km north
Hollins Vale (SBI)	1.8km south
Smethurst & Elbut Wood (West) (SBI)	1.9km northeast

The full designations for each site are listed within Appendix 5.

The site does not lie within a relevant Natural England SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

Priority Habitats

Grassland

Two areas of Priority Habitat Lowland Dry Acid Grassland were returned within 2km of the site, the closest being located 1.2km south.

One area of Priority Habitat Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture was returned within 2km of the site, located 2km south.

Heathland

One area of Priority Habitat Lowland Heathland was returned within 2km of the site, located 880m southeast.

Wetland

One area of Priority Habitat Lowland Fen was returned within 2km of the site, located 1.8km south.

Woodland

Numerous areas of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland were returned within 2km of the site, the closest being located 70m northwest.

One area of Priority Habitat Traditional Orchard was returned within 2km of the site, located 1.8km northwest.

The site lies within a Conservation Target area for the following Priority Species:

- Curlew
- Lapwing
- Snipe

The site also falls within a breeding area for the following Grassland Assemblage Farmland Birds:

- Curlew
- Grey partridge
- Lapwing
- Redshank
- Snipe
- Tree sparrow
- Yellow wagtail

Priority Species

Following a review of records held by GMEU, several priority species that have the potential to occur within the vicinity of the proposed development have been identified. These include birds, bats, badger, brown hare, hedgehog and amphibians. The species records are summarised below, and the detailed records held by GMEU within 2km of the site are displayed within Appendix 5. Protected species legislation can be found within Appendix 4.

No species records were returned by GMEU within the site boundary.

Birds

One hundred and thirty-six records were returned for bird species within 2km of the site. Species returned include barn owl, kingfisher, skylark, song thrush and hobby. The closest of which was a 2021 record of bullfinch located 50m east of the site. The most recent was a February 2023 record of kingfisher located 1.4km away from the site. All species recorded within 2km are displayed within Appendix 5.

Bats

GMEU returned four hundred and thirty-five records for bats within the search area. Bat species include common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, Daubenton's bat, brown long-eared bat, whiskered/Brandt's bat, natterer's bat, unknown myotis species, unknown pipistrelle species and unknown bat species. The most recent of which was a September 2023 record of common pipistrelle located 250m west of the site at St Thomas' Primary School. This is also the closest record to the site.

Amphibians

Eight records for great crested newt were returned within 2km of the site. The closest of which was a 2006 record located 780m south of the site. The most recent was a 2008 record located 1.2km northeast of the site.

A further one amphibian was returned within 2km of the site. Species present include common toad. This was a 2014 record located 1.8km north of the site.

Badger

Records for badger were returned within 2km of the site. The details are shown in confidential Appendix 6.

Other mammals

Thirteen records for other mammals were returned within 2km of the site. Species include brown hare and hedgehog. The most recent of which was a 2021 record of hedgehog located 1.4km northwest of the site.

European Protected Species Licences

There were no European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) applications within 2km of the site since 2018. Two Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licenses were returned within 2km of the site, the closest being located 1.7km north.

4.2 Habitat Survey

A habitat survey was conducted on 12th June 2024 by Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons) for the site. The habitat types and features of ecological interest were identified and mapped in compliance with *The Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit* (JNCC, 2010). A list and a summary description of key habitats identified within the site is tabled below (see Table 4.3). Notes on the presence or potential presence of protected species are provided in Section 4.6. The Phase 1 Habitat map can be found in P.2010.24.E01 *Phase One Habitat Survey*, Appendix 1 and photographs within Appendix 3. The Target Notes (TN) and lists of species recorded during survey are presented in Appendix 2.

Weather conditions during the survey were mild (14°C), dry and overcast (1/8 cloud cover) with a F1 (Beaufort Scale) calm air, therefore appropriate for this type of survey.

The site lies to the east of Bury and comprises a hotel, with gym facilities and public house with restaurant. The M66 motorway lies to the east and Rochdale Road (A58) to the north with industrial premises adjacent. The River Roch flows approximately 70m for the area of development within the site with pockets of open space and residential dwellings in the wider environment.

The onsite habitats comprise a hardstanding carpark with small areas of amenity grassland and introduced scrub as formal landscaping planting with a species poor hedge lining the southern site boundary.

Table 4.3. Habitats present on site including habitat alphanumeric code references from JNCC (2010).

Habitat Description and JNCC Codes	Site Description
<i>Hard standing (J4)</i>	The site is dominated by hardstanding (tarmac). The tarmacked areas are used for carparking throughout the site, with hardstanding footpaths. This habitat is displayed in photograph 1 within Appendix 3.
<i>Building (J3.6)</i>	One building (B1) is present within the site and comprises hotel and gym facilities with a public house/restaurant. The building is detailed within section 4.3 below. The building is displayed within photograph 1 within Appendix 3. Two small substations are located to the western of the boundary. The substation buildings will be retained within the proposals and do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.
<i>Amenity grassland (J1.2)</i>	Small areas of amenity grassland are present throughout the site between the footpaths and carparking areas. The grassland is intensively managed by mowing regularly. The grass sward height is approximately 1-2cm. Species present include red fescue, bent sp., annual meadow grass with daisy and white clover. This habitat is displayed in photograph 2 within Appendix 3. Full species lists are detailed within Appendix 2. This habitat is shown in photograph 4 within Appendix 3.

<i>Introduced shrub (J1.4)</i>	Areas of introduced shrubs (ornamental planting) are present throughout the site within the formal landscaping adjacent to the carparking and building. This habitat is displayed in photograph 3 within Appendix 3.
<i>Scattered trees (A3.1)</i>	Scattered trees partially line the eastern and southern site boundary with occasional scattered trees throughout the site, species present include London plane, silver birch and sycamore.
<i>Species Rich Hedge (J2.4)</i>	Species rich hedgerows line the northern and western site boundary, species present include ash, field maple, laurel, hawthorn and London plane.

4.3 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of Building B1

Table 4.4. Preliminary bat roost assessment of the building within the site

Building B1	Building Description
	Building B1 comprises the main hotel, gym, spa and restaurant/public house. The building is of brickwork construction, that is a good state of repair with no missing or broken bricks noted and only very small gaps within the mortar.
	The roof is of varying sloped, pitched and flat construction and was noted to be in very good condition with no slipped or missing roof tiles and no gaps within the ridgelines or flashing. A glass conservatory extension is present on the southern elevation of the building.
	The building will be retained within the proposals with the extension area created from the southern elevation.
	Assessment of B1
	The building was assessed to have no hibernation potential for crevice and void dwelling bats and no potential for day and maternity roosts for crevice dwelling bats and no potential for void dwelling bats. Overall, the building is classified as having no bat roosting potential.

4.4 Protected and Notable Species

Table 4.5: Habitat suitability for protected and notable species, including evidence, further survey information and reference to photographs/drawings where applicable.

Birds	Habitat suitability
	The amenity grassland, species rich hedgerow, scattered trees, introduced shrub and building provide suitable foraging and nesting opportunities for bird species. The site provides no suitability for Grassland Assemblage Farmland Birds as the habitat areas are small in size and prone to human disturbance.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	During the survey, magpie and wood pigeon were identified within the site.

	Further survey required
	For any vegetation removal or building works to be undertaken, a nesting bird survey will be required (section 5.2).
Bats	Habitat suitability
	The building (B1) on site offers no potential to support bat roosts as detailed above in section 4.3.
	The trees within the site were subject to a ground level inspection for features that may support roosting bats. No features, such as cracked & broken limbs or tear outs were identified. The trees were assessed to provide no potential for roosting bats.
	The species rich hedgerow and scattered trees within the site provide good suitability for commuting and foraging bats, with good connectivity to the surrounding land use.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	Evidence of bats was not identified within the site during the survey.
Badger	Further survey required
	No further Nocturnal surveys for Bats are required, as the works will focus to the section of the building that is currently a glass conservatory, however due to the presence of brickwork within the main building structure, all construction workers should however be briefed for of the presence of bats within the local area see (section 5.2).
	Habitat suitability
	The amenity grassland and introduced shrub (ornamental planting) habitats within the site provides very limited foraging and shelter habitat for badger. The site is also prone to a high level of human disturbance due to the usage of the site.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence of badger or hedgehog was identified within the site during the survey.
Water vole	Further survey required
	Badger will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, badger do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.
	Habitat suitability
	The site provides no suitable habitats for water vole. The River Roch flows approximately 70m from the western site boundary at its closest point. The river provides suitable habitat for water vole. However, the works are set within a existing area of hardstanding that with no surrounding habitat suitable for water vole.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence of water vole was identified during the site visit
	Further survey required
	Due to the distance of the proposed works from the river, water vole will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, water vole do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.

Otter	Habitat suitability
	The site provides no suitable habitats for otter. The River Roch flows approximately 70m from the western site boundary of the site. The proposed works are set within an existing area of hardstanding that provides no habitat for otter holts and no connectivity to the more suitable habitats adjacent to the River Roch.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence otter were identified during the site visit.
	Further survey required
	Otter will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, otter do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.
Amphibians	Habitat suitability
	No water bodies are present within 500m of the site as mapped on Magic Maps. The amenity grassland, species rich hedgerow, scattered trees, introduced shrub provide terrestrial habitats for amphibians, however the site is dominated by hardstanding that is prone to a high level of human disturbance.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence of amphibians was identified within the site during the survey.
	Further survey required
	Amphibians will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, amphibians do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.
Reptiles	Habitat suitability
	The habitats within the site do not offer suitability to support reptiles. Ecotones are not present within the site and the habitats are scattered across the site with no suitable connectivity. The habitats within the site are prone to high human disturbance.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence of reptiles was identified within the site during the survey
	Further survey required
	No further survey for reptile will be required. Reptiles do not require consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further.
Invertebrates	Habitat suitability
	The amenity grassland provides some limited habitat for invertebrates, however the area is prone to human disturbance.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence of invertebrates was identified within the site during the survey.
	Further survey required
	No further survey for invertebrates will be required. Invertebrates do not require consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further.
	Habitat suitability
	The amenity grassland, species poor hedgerow and introduced shrub (ornamental planting) habitats within the site provide limited foraging and shelter habitat for small mammal species such as hedgehog.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence of hedgehog was identified within the site during the survey.

Small mammals	Further survey required
	No further survey effort of other small mammals will be required; however, Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) should be implemented (see section 5.2).

Invasive species

No non-native invasive species were identified within the site during the walkover survey.

5.0 Evaluation and Recommendations

5.1 Designated Sites and Habitats

All statutory or non-statutory protected sites are over 500m from the proposed works and are unlikely to be influenced by the proposals as they are to extend the existing facilities. It is considered that there will be no impact on any statutory or non-statutory sites in the vicinity as a result of the proposals. The site does not lie within a Natural England SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

The River Roch flows approximately 70m from the western site boundary and it is recommended that a Construction Environment Construction Plan (CEMP) is produced and implemented to ensure no harm is caused to the water course throughout the construction phase of the works.

Mitigation

The habitats on site comprise hardstanding, amenity grassland, species rich hedgerow, scattered trees, introduced shrub and building. These habitats are considered to have an ecological value of **within the zone of influence** of the site or lower. The site contains no designated or priority habitats. Overall, the proposals are unlikely to adversely affect the ecological value of the area.

The production of the Defra Metric Biodiversity Net Gain Calculations is recommended to minimise impacts of biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity and the production of a Management Plan to ensure the long-term commitments to manage the planting, protection and enhancement of biodiversity in and around the new development site.

5.2 Protected and Notable Species Recommendations

Birds

The amenity grassland, species rich hedgerow, scattered trees, introduced shrub and building provide suitable habitat for nesting and foraging bird species. It is recommended that vegetation clearance or building works should be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (**1st March to 31st August Inclusive**) to avoid any impact on breeding birds. If vegetation clearance cannot be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season, a nesting bird check undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist should be undertaken immediately prior to works commencing. If an active birds' nest is identified a suitable buffer zone should be implemented where no works are to occur within until the young have fledged the nest.

Bats

The building, B1 on site provides **no suitability** for bats. The building will be retained and extended to the southern elevation within the proposals and will require no further survey bats. All construction workers should however be briefed for the presence of bats within the local area and if a bat is found opportunistically roosting during the works, all works must stop immediately as Ascerta (0845 463 4404) or the Bat Conservation Trust (0345 1300 228) contacted.

Invasive species

No non-native invasive species were identified during the walkover survey. As invasive species can colonise very quickly it is recommended that an **updated invasive species check** is undertaken prior to the start of works.

Small mammals

The site provides habitat for hedgehog within the amenity grassland, species poor hedge and introduced shrub (ornamental planting). These habitats are likely to be impacted by the proposals and therefore, it is recommended that a Hedgehog Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) Method Statement is implemented during the works to avoid harm to this species. The RAMS should include:

- Vegetation clearance applies to all habitats cleared in daytime air temperatures above 5°C. Works must be avoided in cold temperatures or if prior overnight temperatures have been less than 1°C;
- The cut material is to be chipped and placed in discrete piles outside the working areas or removed from the site;
- Existing tracks should be utilised for vehicle movements where possible;
- Throughout the works all trenches must be covered at night or ramps provided to prevent small mammals from getting stuck; and
- Construction material will be stored on pallets to avoid creating habitat for small mammals.

To enable hedgehog continued use of the site it is advised that gaps of at least 13cm by 13cm are left under any new fences to enable hedgehog to roam freely within the area following development.

5.3 Enhancements

In order to meet requirements for biodiversity protection and enhancement outlined within the NPPF, it is recommended that ecological enhancements are included. These could include:

- Provision of two bird boxes (25mm and 32mm entrance hole box, house sparrow terrace, swift box), attached to or integrated within retained or the new section of building on site; and
- Provision of two bat features (e.g. Vivara Pro WoodStone Bat box or similar) attached to a retained tree on site or provision of a bat box (e.g. Vivara bat bricks or '*bird brick houses*' bat boxes) integrated within the new or retained section of the building.

6.0 Conclusions

The site was subject to an extended phase one habitat survey and a preliminary bat roost assessment of the building. During the survey and following review of historical species records, it is considered that an impact on birds, bats, and hedgehog are likely to occur in relation to the proposals for the site. The following recommendations have been made to avoid an impact on these species:

- If works have not begun by June 2026, an updated site visit will be required to assess the habitats within the site;
- The production and implementation of a Construction Environment Construction Plan (CEMP) is to ensure no harm is caused to the River Roch throughout the construction phase of the works;
- Implementation of a hedgehog RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Precautionary check for invasive prior to works commencing;
- Production of a Management Plan to ensure the long-term commitments to manage the planting, protection and enhancement of biodiversity in and around a new development site; and
- Vegetation clearance or pruning should be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (1st March to 31st August Inclusive) to avoid any impact on breeding birds. Or a nesting bird check undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist should be undertaken immediately prior to works commencing.

It is considered that there would be very limited impacts on the local ecology as a result of the proposals, provided the recommendations detailed within section 5.0 above are followed.

7.0 References

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Appendix 1



- Survey area
- Building (J3.6)
- Hard standing (J4)
- Introduced shrub (J1.4)
- Amenity grassland (J1.2)
- Species Rich Hedge (J2.4)
- Scattered trees (A3.1)

DO NOT SCALE.
ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID.
LOCATED TO NG BY BEST FIT TO DETAIL.
EXTRACTED FROM OS DIGITAL DATA.

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CLIENT:
VUR Village Trading No.1 Ltd

PROJECT:
Village Hotel Bury

DRAWING TITLE:
Phase One Habitat Survey

SCALE:	DRAWN BY:	DRAWING No:
NTS@A3	LK	P.2010.24.E01
DATE:	CHKD BY:	REV:
14/10/2024	AR	-

Appendix 2

Appendix 2: Species Lists and Target Notes

Table 1: Flora Species

English Name	Scientific Name
Annual meadow grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>
Clover	<i>Trifolium sp.</i>
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Common daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Common hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Creeping bent-grass	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum agg.</i>
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Laurel	<i>Laurus sp.</i>
London Plane	<i>Platanus × acerifolia</i>
Pedunculate Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Perennial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus</i>
Silver Birch	<i>Betula</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Whitebeam	<i>Sorbus aria</i>

Appendix 3

Appendix 3: Photographs

Table 3: Photographs of the site



Photograph 1: Elevation of B1 where the proposed extension will be built.



Photograph 2: Tree Group G5 (drawing P.2010.24.T01, Tree Survey, appendix 1) and amenity grassland



Photograph 3: Introduced shrub adjacent to B1

Appendix 4

Appendix 4: Relevant Legislation

European Legislation

The following Directives have been adopted by the European Union and provide protection for fauna and flora species of European importance and the habitats which support them:

- Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive);
- Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive).

UK Legislation

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into national legislation through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (The Habitats Regulations). This provides for the designation and protection of 'European Sites' (SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites, including proposed or potential European Sites) and the protection of 'European Protected Species'.

The key UK legislation relating to nature conservation is the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (W&C Act). This Act is supplemented, *inter alia*, by provision in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act). Additional species and habitat specific UK legislation includes the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

The Environment Act sets out how the UK will maintain environmental standards following leaving of the EU. The Bill builds on the vision of the 25 Year Environment Plan, with the ambition from the government to leave the environment in a better state than it was when inherited.

The Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric has implemented to work alongside the Environment Act. This tool calculates potential biodiversity impacts as a result of development and identifies mitigation and compensation requirements to ensure no net loss of biodiversity. In addition, it identifies measures that can be implemented in order to meet Biodiversity gain as a result of development.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 has been published to provide further planning guidance. Wildlife, biodiversity and ecological networks are referred to in Section 15 '*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*'. The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and sites of biodiversity value, recognise the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services and minimising impacts on and provided net gains for biodiversity. Further guidance is provided within Government Circular *06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System*.

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance are listed under section 41 of the NERC Act and are a material consideration in planning decisions. Planners require relevant, up to date information from ecological surveys in order to assess the effects of a proposed development on biodiversity as Councils have a statutory obligation under section 40 of the NERC Act to consider biodiversity conservation in the determination of planning applications.

Background information about the lists of priority habitats and species (Species and Habitats of Principal Importance) can be found within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). Although this has been succeeded by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework', many of UK BAP tools are still relevant. BAPs identify habitats and species of nature conservation priority on a UK (UK BAP) and Local (LBAP) scale. Most BAP priority habitats and species have Habitat Action Plans (HAP) and Species Action Plans (SAP) and there are also "grouped action plans" for groups of related species with similar conservation requirements. The LBAP relating to this Site is the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.

Badgers

The legislation protecting badgers in England and Wales is the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 it is an offence *inter alia* to:

- Wilfully kill, injure or take a badger, or to attempt to do so;
- Cruelly ill-treat a badger; or
- Intentionally or recklessly interfere with a badger sett by (a) damaging a sett or any part of one; (b) destroying a sett; (c) obstructing access to or any entrance of a sett; (d) causing a dog to enter a sett; or (e) disturbing a badger when it is occupying a sett.

The Badger Act 1992 defines a badger's sett as "*any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger*"

Natural England can issue licences to enable works to continue that may affect a protected species. In relation to disturbance of badgers, Natural England (2009) gives guidelines on disturbance which will require a licence. These includes: "*using very heavy machinery (generally tracked vehicles) within 30 metres of any entrance to an active sett; using lighter machinery (generally wheeled vehicles), particularly for any digging operation, within 20 metres; light work such as hand digging or scrub clearance within 10 metres. There are some activities which may cause disturbance at greater distances (such as using explosives or pile driving) and these should be given individual consideration.*"

Bats

In England, all bats and their roosts are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Several species of bat are also highlighted as Priority Species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and within the Local BAP.

Under the current legislation as summarised on pages 9 and 10 of the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 4th Edition (2023) it is a criminal offence to:

"To kill, capture, injure or take a wild bat;

- *To damage or destroy a place used by a bat for breeding or resting. All offences of this nature are identified within the Habitats Regulations. This offence is unique in that it can be committed accidentally. No element of intentional, reckless or deliberate action needs to be evidenced;*
- *To disturb bats anywhere (roosts, flight lines or foraging areas) if levels of disturbance can be shown to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, to rear or nurture their young, to hibernate or migrate or to affect significantly local distribution or abundance;*
- *To intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat, whilst it is occupying a place of shelter or protection;*
- *To intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by a bat for shelter or protection; and*
- *To be in possession or control of a bat alive or dead (or any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat, although bat droppings are generally considered to be acceptable), or to transport a bat, to sell or exchange a bat or to offer to sell or exchange a bat taken from the wild."*

Breeding Birds

Breeding Birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act which make it an offence to:

- *intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built;*
- *intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird;*
- *have in one's possession or control any wild bird, dead or alive, or any part of a wild bird (including eggs), which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954;*
- *intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.*

Invasive Species

It is an offence under Section 14(2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow' in the wild any plant in Schedule 9 Part II.

Water Vole

Water vole are a Species of Principal Importance and also fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to:

- *intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection;*
- *intentionally or recklessly disturb water voles whilst occupying a structure or place used for that purpose;*
- *intentionally kill, injure or take water voles;*
- *possess or control live or dead water voles or derivatives;*
- *sell water voles or offer or expose for sale or transport for sale; and*
- *publish or cause to be published any advertisement which conveys the buying or selling of water voles.*

Otter

Otter and their resting places protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and under EC Directive (92/43/EEC), listed under Annexes II and IVa.

Under European Legislation implemented in Britain under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2019 (as amended) it is an offence to *damage or destroy an otter's place of shelter, whether intentionally or accidentally*. Under this legislation it is also an offence to *deliberately disturb an otter*.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is an offence to:

- *'Intentionally' kill, injure or take an otter without a licence;*
- *Damage, destroy or obstruct access to a place used by an otter for shelter*

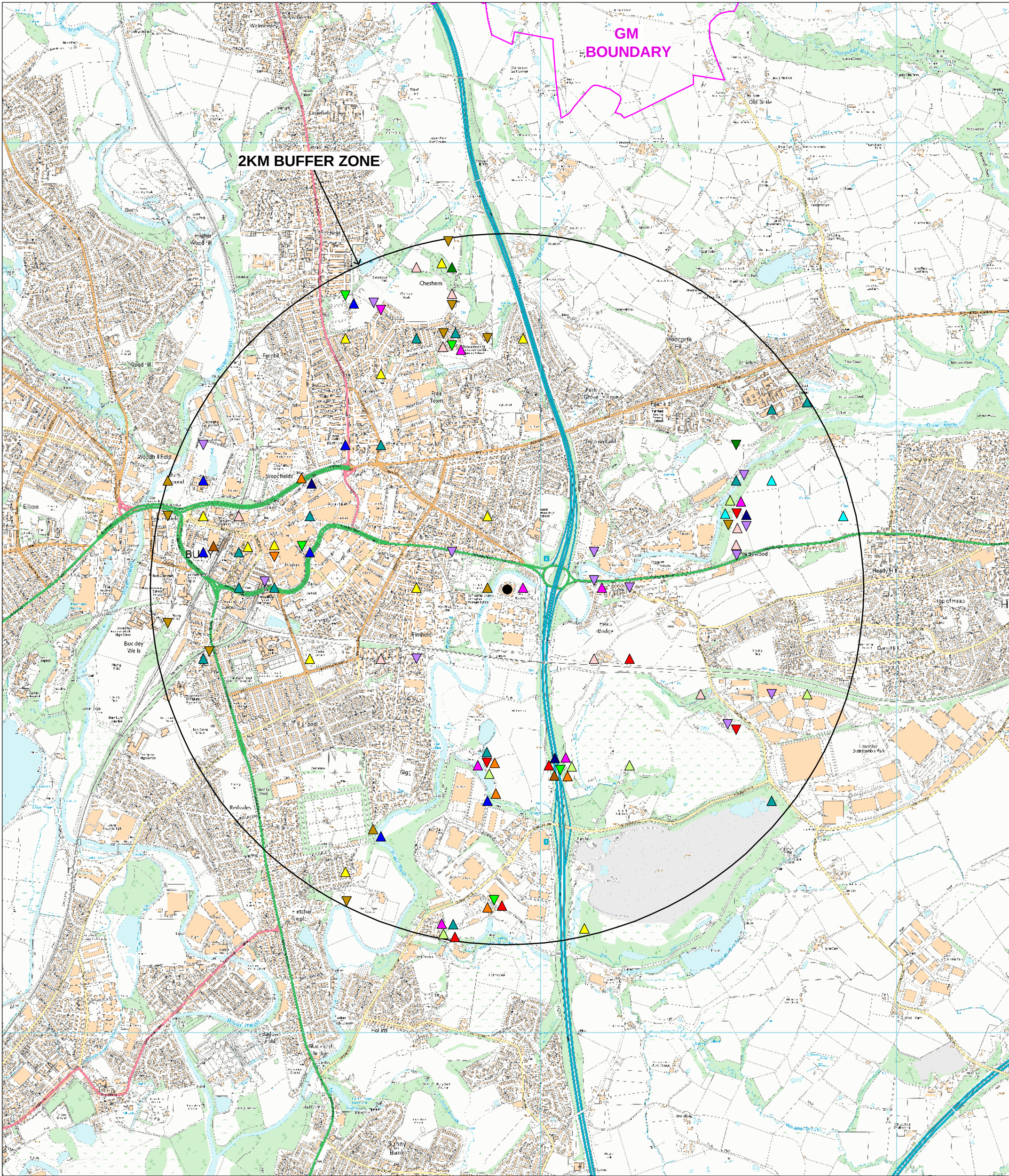
It is a criminal offence to intentionally, wilfully kill, injure or take any of the aforementioned protected species or to destroy or disturb its habitat.

Local Policy

The site lies within Bury and is covered by the Bury Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (adopted August 1997). Policy EN6 deals with Conservation and the Natural Environment and is the policy of relevance here. This policy has been taken into account when preparing this report.

The site is also covered by the covered by the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 to 2039 (adopted March 2024). The policy of relevance is JP-G8 regarding Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

Appendix 5



KEY
SECTION 41 SPECIES

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| ▲ BROWN TROUT | ▲ LINNET |
| ▲ BULLFINCH | ▲ REED BUNTING |
| ▲ COMMON TOAD | ▲ S41 MOTH |
| ▲ CURLEW | ▲ SKYLARK |
| ▲ DUNNOCK | ▲ SMALL HEATH |
| ▲ HEDGEHOG | ▲ SONG THRUSH |
| ▲ HERRING GULL | ▲ SP. FLYCATCHER |
| ▲ HOUSE SPARROW | ▲ STARLING |
| ▲ LAPWING | ▲ WALL |
| ▲ LESSER REDPOLL | ▲ WL HAIRSTREAK |

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SD 8181 1049
VILLAGE HOTEL - MAP 5

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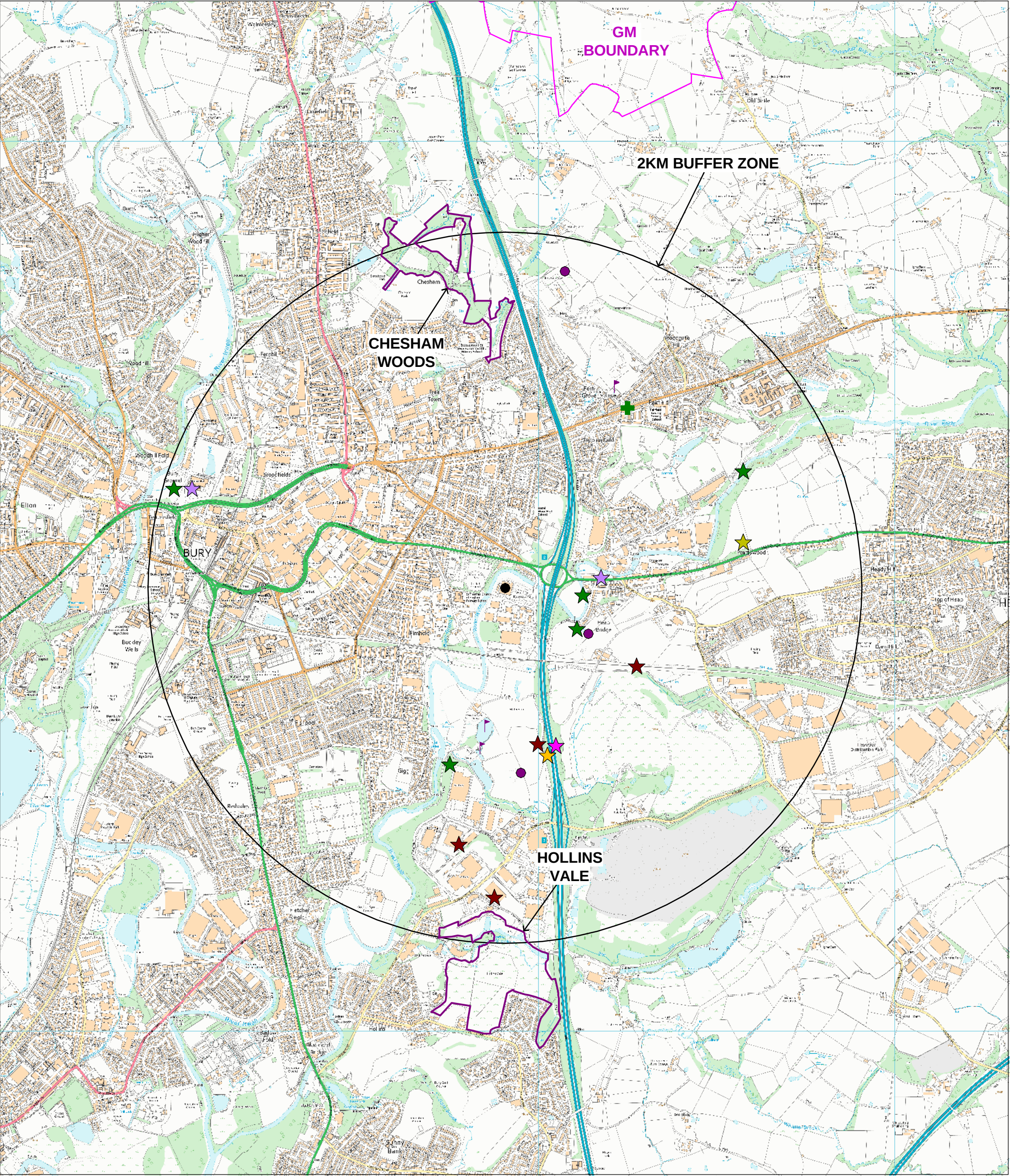
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Date Produced: 24/06/2024



KEY

PROTECTED SPECIES

- Great Crested Newt
- Great Crested Newt Absence
- Brown Hare
- Barn Owl
- Bee Orchid
- Hobby
- Kingfisher
- Little Ringed Plover
- Peregrine

SITES

- Local Nature Reserves

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VILLAGE HOTEL - MAP 2

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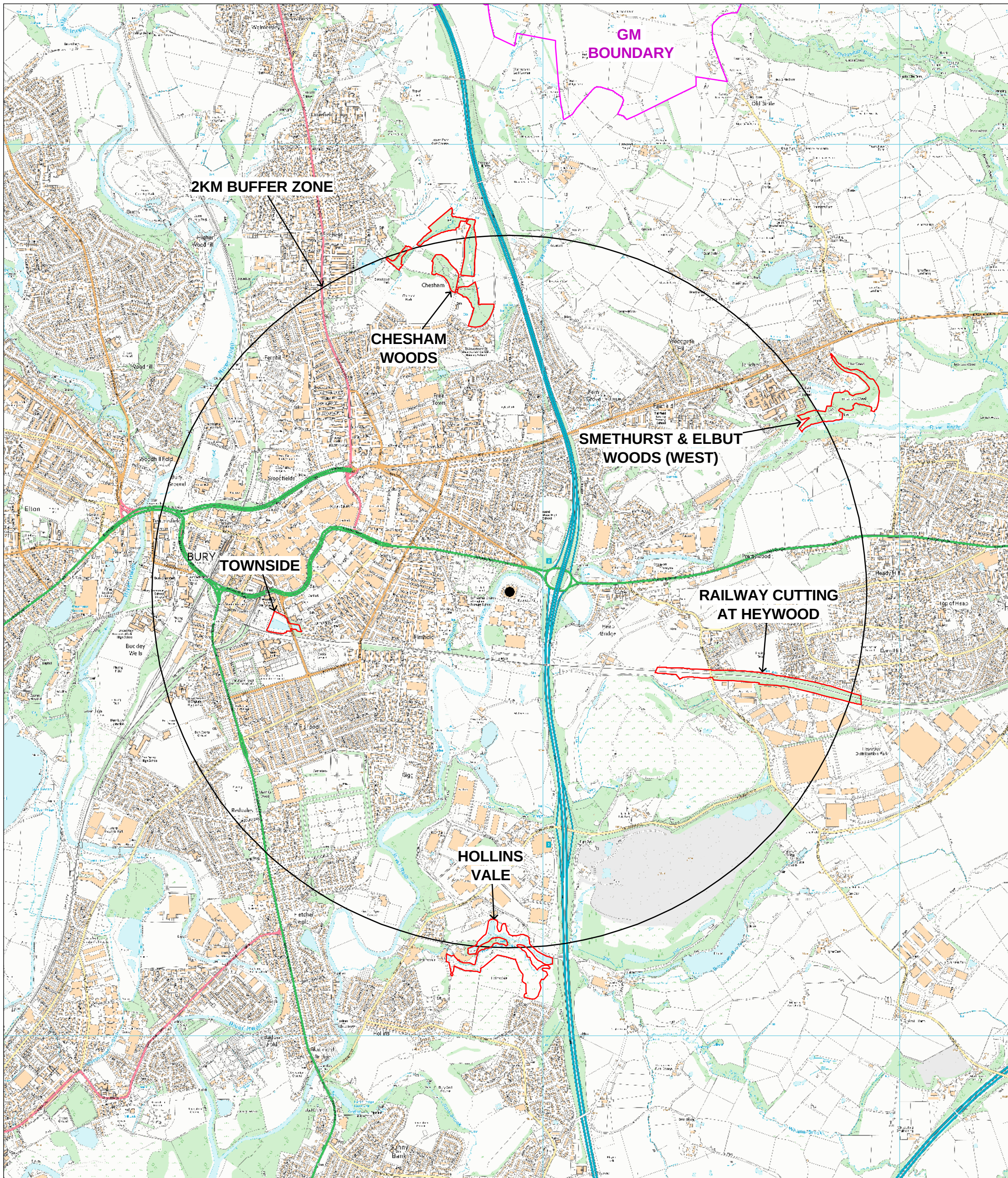
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**GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
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VILLAGE HOTEL - MAP 1**

KEY
SITE OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE
 **SBI BOUNDARY**

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