
EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY & DAYTIME BAT SURVEY

ALBERTS RESTAURANT, EDENFIELD ROAD, NORDON, ROCHDALE

REV.C

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2022 by Elle R Leisure, via Cinns Limited, to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Daytime Bat Survey at a former restaurant, Edenfield Road, Norden, Rochdale (O.S. grid reference: SD 84819 15065). The proposed development site currently comprises a restaurant with parking, access, amenity grassland and trees. The site is bordered by farmland and associated improved pastures. In a wider context the site lies in a rural setting, just on the outskirts of Norden.

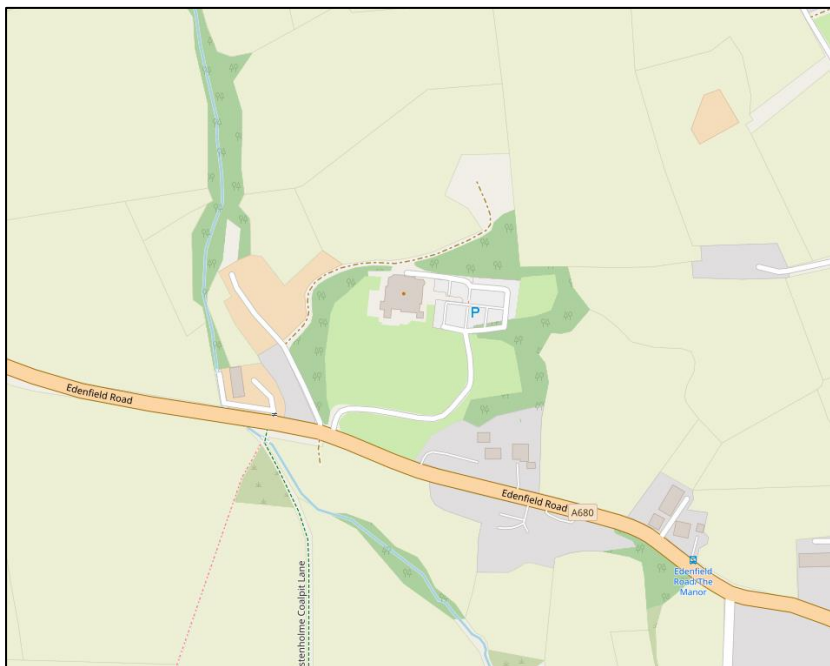


Figure 1 showing the location of the former restaurant © OpenStreetMap contributors

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site benefits from planning permission (subject to conditions) for the erection of extensions to side elevations, alterations to fenestration on existing front elevation at first floor, new raised terrace area to front, formation of overspill car park and other associated works following demolition of existing extensions (see planning reference 22/00597/FUL).

Biodiversity in Planning

- 1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) gives specific reference to minimising the impacts of development on biodiversity. Local and Neighbourhood plans also provide guidance towards protecting and enhancing biodiversity, including priority habitats and notable species.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.1 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required to provide an overview of the habitats present within the site and to assess any potential protected species issues on the site.
- 2.2 The Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2010). The site was walked, and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries.
- 2.3 During the Extended Phase 1 survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g., setts, paths, latrines, and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on and a ground level assessment of the trees on site for potential bat roost features.
- 2.4 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Daytime Bat Survey

- 2.5 A daytime bat survey of the site was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost.
- 2.6 An external assessment of the buildings on the site was undertaken, which included, for example, looking for gaps between any soffit boards and walls, gaps between window frames and the walls, and looking for bat droppings on the walls and window ledges. An internal assessment was also carried out, with particular focus on gaps in walls, cracks in roof beams, and any evidence of bat activity, such as bat droppings, in the internal spaces.
- 2.7 A ground-level assessment of any trees affected by the proposals was also undertaken. This involved a search for potential roosting features, including peeled bark, knot holes and branch splits.
- 2.8 A pair of close-focussing binoculars and a high-powered torch were used to search for evidence of bats.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

- 2.9 Joe Cooper (Ecologist) carried out the surveys on the 28th January 2022. Joe is an experienced ecologist and is fully trained in botanical surveys and protected species assessments. January is considered a sub-optimal month for botanical work but given the types of habitats present, a robust assessment could be made. Daytime bat surveys can be undertaken at any time of year. Protected species assessments can be undertaken at any time of the year. The weather at the time of the survey was overcast, damp and cold.

Survey Constraints

- 2.10 The site was fully accessible. There were no constraints to the survey.

3.0 RESULTS

HABITATS

- 3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map can be found at the back of the report. The habitats on the proposed development site are described below.

On Site

Bare Ground

- 3.2 The majority of the proposed development site comprises bare ground, including the access driveway to the property, car parking areas, paths and paving areas (see Photograph 1). The location of the proposed new car park is exposed earth which is also mapped as bare ground (see Photograph 2).



Photograph 1 showing the car park



Photograph 2 showing the bare ground

Introduced Shrub

- 3.3 Introduced shrub is located at the front and rear of the property in enclosed shrub bed (see Photograph 3). Species assemblage includes Hedge Veronica *Veronica x franciscana*, Rose, Pendulous Sedge *Carex pendula*, Broom *Cytisus scoparius*, Cotoneaster sp., Bay *Laurus nobilis*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, Spotted Laurel *Aucuba japonica*, Cypress *Cupressocyparis* sp., Norway Spruce *Picea abies*, Hydrangea *Hydrangea macrophylla*, Pampas Grass *Cortaderia selloana*, Oregon-grape *Mahonia aquifolium*, Butterfly Bush *Buddleja davidii*, Viburnum, Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*, Garden Privet *Ligustrum ovalifolium*, Snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*, Snowdrop *Galanthus nivalis* and Daffodil *Narcissus* var.



Photograph 3 showing the introduced shrub

Amenity Grassland

- 3.4 Small pockets of amenity grassland occur on the proposed development site and across the wider estate (see Photograph 4). This is species-poor and includes grasses such as Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Annual Meadow-grass *Poa Annua*, Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and Common Bent *Agrostis capillaris*. Frequently occurring herbaceous species include Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Common mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum*, Daisy *Bellis perennis*, Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense* and White Clover *Trifolium repens*.



Photograph 4 showing the amenity grassland

Vegetable Garden

- 3.5 In the north of the site is a small patch of cultivated land that comprises a herb and vegetable garden (see Photograph 5). Varieties include Garden Thyme, Mint, Tarragon, Basil, Pumpkin, Rosemary, Garden Peas, Onions, Chives, Parsley and Sage.



Photograph 5 showing the vegetable garden

Off-site

Tall Ruderal Herb and Bracken

- 3.6 Tall ruderal herb is present in scattered patches on the peripheries of the site (see Photograph 6). Species assemblage includes Rosebay Willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, Ground-ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, Soft-rush *Juncus effusus*, Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense*, Selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, Herb-

Robert *Geranium robertianum*, Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* and Cleavers *Galium aparine*.



Photograph 6 showing the tall ruderal herb

Mixed Plantation Woodland

- 3.7 Located to the east and west of the site lie belts of mixed plantation woodland (see Photograph 7). Species assemblage includes Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*, Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Scot's Pine *Pinus sylvestris*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*, Eucalyptus *Eucalyptus* var., Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and Field Maple *Acer campestre*. The ground flora includes tall ruderal herb, Bracken and Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*.



Photograph 7 showing the plantation woodland

Scattered Trees

- 3.8 Scattered trees are located within the introduced shrub beds and garden area (see Photograph 8). Species include Cypress *Cupressus x leylandii*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica*,

Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Wild Cherry *Prunus avium* and Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*.



Photograph 8 showing scattered trees

Spoil

- 3.9 Piles of spoil consisting of brash, felled logs and earth mounds are located within the grassland of the site and on the recently cleared bare ground (see Photograph 9).



Photograph 9 showing an earth pile

Species-poor Intact Hedgerows

- 3.10 Hedgerows occur on the perimeters of the restaurant building and car park (see Photograph 10 and 11). Species assemblage includes Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, Cypress species *Cupressocyparis* sp. and Beech *Fagus sylvatica*.



Photograph 10 showing one of the coniferous hedgerows



Photograph 11 showing a Beech hedgerow

Wall

- 3.11 The perimeter of the wider estate site consists mainly of drystone walls (see Photograph 12). Stone embankments also exist (see Photograph 13).



Photograph 12 showing a drystone wall



Photograph 13 showing a drystone embankment

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.12 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.13 No ponds exist on site. No ponds could be located within 500m of the site. The proposed development site offers very limited suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat. Bare ground, mown grassland and isolated shrub beds are hostile habitats for amphibians.

Bats

- 3.14 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Existing Building

- 3.15 The former restaurant is a large three-storey converted church with a loft space and basement level. The property is constructed from sandstone brickwork and mortar, with a tiled pitched roof. Single-storey extensions exist on all elevations. This was the subject of a daytime bat survey, and the results are detailed below.

External Survey

- 3.16 The sandstone brickwork is in good condition with all the masonry and mortar intact (see Photograph 14). The windows are uPVC and are set into the surrounding brickwork. Some small gaps are present between the decorative trim and the windows (see Photograph 15). There is wooden cladding on the front elevations of the single-storey extension (see Photograph 16). The restaurant supports extensions on all elevations which include conservatory style buildings and flat roof extensions (see Photograph 17).



Photograph 14 showing the restaurant



Photograph 15 showing the windows



Photograph 16 showing the wooden cladding



Photograph 17 showing one of the extensions

- 3.17 The roof is pitched with slate roof and ridge tiles as well as hipped sections creating valleys (see Photographs 18 and 19). The tiles are in good condition lying flush to one another, however some of them have become loose, have slipped, or are missing, allowing potential internal access for bats (see Photograph 20). The ridge tiles feature ventilation tiles which appear sealed, however some of the mortar has fallen away again creating potential crevices for bats to exploit.



Photograph 18 showing the roof



Photograph 19 showing the roof valleys



Photograph 20 showing the ridge tiles

- 3.18 At the roof edges decorative sandstone bricks are present meaning the roof appears sealed at the edges (see Photograph 21). No bargeboards or fascia are present on any of the elevations of the main restaurant. The single-storey extensions support soffit boards on all elevations which are sealed as a majority, however gaps are present in places (see Photographs 22 and 23).



Photograph 21 showing the roof edges



Photograph 22 showing the fascia and soffits



Photograph 23 showing the gaps in the soffits

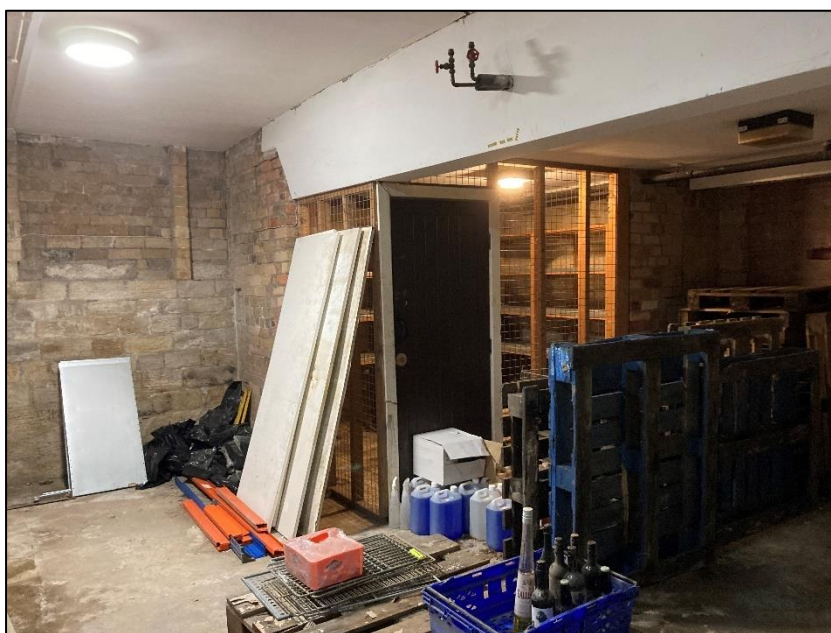
Internal Survey

- 3.19 Internally, the restaurant is in good condition, with no roosting opportunities for bats on the ground and first floors (see Photograph 24). The rooms are in good condition, sealed and well-lit.



Photograph 24 showing an internal space

- 3.20 The basement of the restaurant contains many rooms which have been converted (see Photograph 25). The basement space is cold with no access from the outside. Some cavities exist within the walls where wires and pipes run underneath the property (see Photograph 26). No evidence of bat activity was found within the basement.



Photograph 25 showing the basement

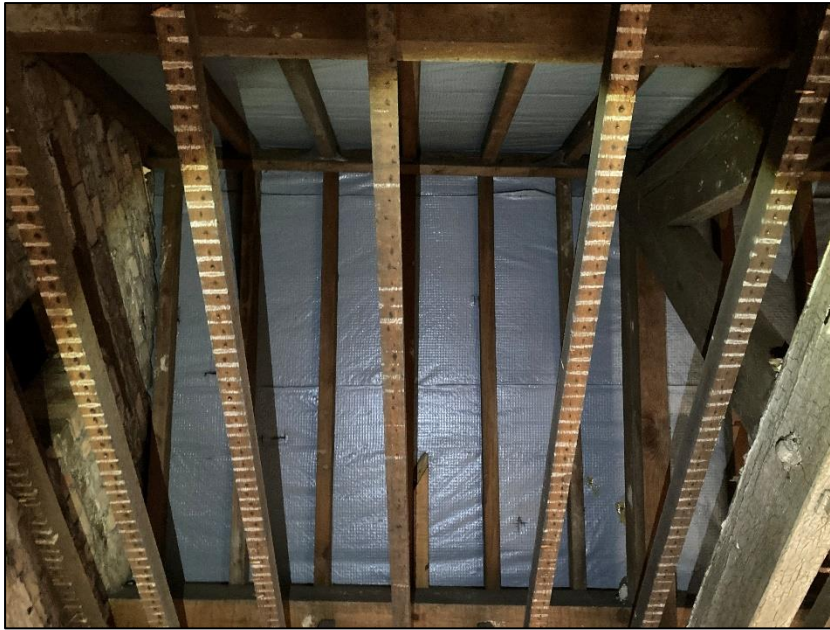


Photograph 26 showing the cavities within the walls

- 3.21 The restaurant features a second floor and voids above that cover the extent of the property (see Photograph 27). The plaster and ceiling panels has been removed meaning the entire second floor is open to the roof. The void is pitched and supported by wooden beams and joists which are in good condition with only minor cavities or cracks for bats to exploit (see Photograph 28).



Photograph 27 showing the internal void



Photograph 28 showing the wooden beams and roof lining

- 3.22 The internal brickwork is in good condition with no cracks or crevices for bats to exploit and previous fireplaces have been bricked up (see Photograph 29). Visible light can be seen from the roof edges, suggesting that the roof is not sealed (see Photograph 30).



Photograph 29 showing the internal brickwork



Photograph 30 showing a gap

- 3.23 The roof is lined with bitumen and plastic membrane which is largely intact, although there are areas with small tears where light can be seen coming through (see Photograph 31). A small number of bat droppings and feeding remains were located at two separate points in the void (see Photographs 32 and 33).



Photograph 32 showing the lining



Photograph 33 showing the feeding remains



Photograph 34 showing the bat droppings

Trees

- 3.24 No mature trees exist within the proposed development site. The scattered trees and the trees within the woodland within the wider estate were assessed and some were found to support Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) in the form of holes, folded bark from previous injuries, and large cavities that extend up into the trunk.

Badger

- 3.25 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.

- 3.26 No Badger sett was located on the proposed development site or within 30 metres of the site. Evidence of Badger activity was located on the wider estate. A number of mammal tracks and snuffle marks were found within the grassland (see Photograph 35).



Photograph 35 showing a mammal track

Nesting Birds

- 3.27 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 3.28 The isolated shrub beds on the proposed development site offer sub-optimal nesting bird habitat. The wider estate offers good quality bird nesting habitat.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.29 *Rhododendron ponticum* and various *Cotoneaster* bushes are present on site, within the shrub beds (see Photographs 36 and 37). These are invasive, non-native species and are listed on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it an offence to allow these species to spread into the wild.



Photograph 36 showing the Rhododendron



Photograph 37 showing some Cotoneaster

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.30 No statutory protected sites are present within 2km of the site.
- 3.31 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may have a deleterious impact on protected sites nearby. The type of development proposed is not listed as a concern at this location.
- 3.32 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or adjacent to the site. Rochdale Council have highlighted the importance of nearby wildlife corridors which include Fordoe Wood and Naden Wood, Holt wood and Fester Clough Wood, which all lie within 1km of the site, the nearest being Fester Clough Wood which lies 400m to the south.

4.0 ASSESSMENT

HABITATS

- 4.1 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- 4.2 The proposed development site offers limited ecological value, supporting mown amenity grassland, isolated shrub beds and bare ground. The wider estate offers higher value habitats such as woodland and scattered mature trees.

Development Context

- 4.3 The following assessment assumes that the development proposals will involve the loss of all of the habitats on site. It is recommended a suitable landscaping scheme is created to help mitigate the loss of the habitats on site. A landscape scheme should include the creation of a variety of species-rich habitats, including replacement grassland, introduced shrub and hedgerows which involve the planting of native pollinator friendly shrub planting, as well as a high ecological value mixture of ornamental planting where appropriate. Bird, bat boxes and invertebrate bricks will also be incorporated into the façades and roof of the buildings proposed on site as well as insect hotels and brash piles to enhance the biodiversity.

Impacts on Habitats

- 4.4 All habitats located within the site boundaries are common throughout the UK. The habitats affected by the proposals are amenity grassland as well as the building and its immediate footprint.
- 4.5 The loss of these habitats is not significant beyond the site level and new habitats can be created to replace those lost.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 4.6 No ponds exist on site. No ponds could be found within 500m of the site. The proposed development site offers limited suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat. Given the lack of suitable breeding habitat in the locality and lack of suitable habitat on site, Great Crested Newt is not considered to be a constraint on development at this time and no further survey work is necessary.

Bats

- 4.7 The proposed works could result in individual bats being disturbed, injured or killed, should they be present. Works may also result in the obstruction, damage or destruction of a bat roost.

- 4.8 No mature trees exist on the proposed development site. A number of trees on the wider site were found to support Potential Roosting Features. No impact is envisaged to these trees as part of the proposals but if any future work is planned to the trees, further bat survey work, such as an aerial climb, will be necessary. No additional lighting is proposed.

Badger

- 4.9 No Badger sett was located on the proposed development site or within 30 metres of the site. There is a low risk that Badgers could be accidentally harmed during construction if materials are stored inappropriately, or excavations are left open overnight.

Nesting Birds

- 4.10 Removal of woody vegetation could result in impacts to nesting birds, should these be present.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 4.11 Rhododendron and Cotoneaster are present within the shrub beds on the site. These are invasive, non-native species. There is a low risk that these species could be spread during construction through the movement of soil.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.12 No impacts to statutory or non-statutory protected sites are predicted due to the distance between the site and any protected sites and the absence of any impact pathways.
- 4.13 Several woodlands outlined as important areas for wildlife and wildlife corridors are located within 1km of the site. Construction on the site has the potential to result in damage to habitats downhill, and any species using this wildlife corridor through pollution from dust, run off, silt, fuel or other chemicals to enter Mill Croft Brook to the west of the site. However, the footprint of the construction zone is small and not immediately connected to any of the aforementioned habitats.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Further Survey

- 5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. The presence of protected species, the effect of the proposed development and suitable mitigation, if required, must be established before planning permission can be granted. Depending on the timings of vegetation removal, the following survey may be required:
- **Bats** - Two dusk emergence surveys should be carried out between May and August in accordance with current guidelines. The survey will inform the requirement for mitigation. If evidence of a roost is identified a licence will be required to avoid the risk of an offence. A licence can be applied for only once planning permission is obtained.
 - **Nesting Birds** - If any work to the introduced shrub, or other suitable nesting habitat, needs to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally 1st March to 31st August), then a nesting bird survey will be required by a suitable experienced ecologist immediately prior to work commencing.

Habitat Protection

- 5.2 Protection of ecological features (habitats and species) during the construction phase will be described in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Management Plans will contain Operational Aims and Objectives, Rationale for management, Prescriptions and schedules detailing the timing and responsibility for delivering the prescriptions. It is anticipated that the CEMP will be provided as a planning condition in advance of the commencement of the proposed development.
- 5.3 A sensitive lighting scheme should also be adopted to avoid the risk of impacts to foraging and commuting bats.

Invasive Species

- 5.4 Measures to avoid the spread of Rhododendron and Cotoneaster should be included within a CEMP.

Habitat Enhancement

- 5.5 General recommendations to bring biodiversity gain to the site are:
- Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.
 - Bird boxes and/or bat boxes should be erected onto retained trees.
 - Tree planting of native species should be carried out where practically possible.

6.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

