

MIDDLETON CLUB, MANCHESTER

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL (PEA)

May 2025

	Name	Date
Lead Author	Christopher Braine BA (Hons.) MLA CMLI MCIHort, Director	08/05/2025
Check	John Harvey ACIEEM MA (Hons.), Senior Ecologist, NE Bat and GCN Class 1 Licence Holder. Badger CL35 Licence Holder	14/05/2025
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1 SUMMARY

This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) included a desk study of designated sites and ecological data, and a detailed walkover survey of the site considering habitats and species.

The only material ecological constraint is potential impact Badgers (*Meles meles*), therefore additional phase 2 survey has been recommended (Appendix F). Once completed this may function as a standalone report or need to be incorporated into an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) which can then be used to support the planning application.

Reasonable avoidance methods (RAMs) should be in place to protect against any residual impacts to protected species including foraging and commuting bats, breeding birds, and other terrestrial mammals. Invasive Non-native species management should be considered further to minimize risk of spreading.

This report is considered to be sufficient to draw robust and reliable conclusions to give the local authority confidence that all other ecological constraints are to be avoided, mitigated and compensated for, and ecological enhancements are proposed. (See section 5.3).

This PEA should be submitted alongside a Biodiversity Net Gain Biodiversity (BNG) Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) Report to ensure an adequate habitat compensation strategy is produced which allows for 10% net gain as per the Environmental Act 2021.

An executive summary of recommendations is provided overleaf within Table 1.

Ecological Receptor / Constraint	Timescales
Biodiversity Net Gain Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment report should be submitted to support the planning application	Submitted prior to planning approval.
Breeding Birds Reasonable Avoidance Methods (RAMs) to be undertaken. Enclosed within CEMP. Mitigation and enhancements to be secured within LEMP.	Prior to and during construction Secured through appropriately worded condition of planning.
Badgers Further Badger Survey to determine badger activity within the site. (Appendix F) Mitigation likely to be enclosed within CEMP.	Submitted prior to planning approval.
Invasive Species A management plan for the complete removal/eradication of the Japanese Knotweed should be put in place as part of the development.	Prior to and during construction
Trees Existing mature trees should be protected in line with BS5837:2012.	Prior to and during construction
Foraging and Commuting Bats Soft-lighting strategy to be implemented during the construction phase and post-development use.	Prior to and during construction
Other Terrestrial Mammals Reasonable Avoidance Methods (RAMs) to be undertaken. Enclosed within CEMP. Enhancements to be secured within LEMP.	Prior to construction Secured through appropriately worded condition of planning.

Table 1: Executive Summary of Ecological recommendations

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Weddles were commissioned by Architecture Unknown Ltd. to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for the site at Middleton Club, Manchester.

This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal aims to:

- Identify any likely ecological constraints
- Propose any necessary design changes
- Identify any further ecological surveys required to enable an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) to be carried out
- Propose any ecological enhancements

This report has been prepared in line with BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity: Code of practice for planning and development and the CIEEM Guidance for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017), Ecological Report Writing (2017) and Ecological Impact Assessment (2022).

2.2 Site Description

The redline application site is approximately 0.4ha in extent. The site is located within the Manchester suburb of Middleton, close to the commercial centre and high street. The site is centred at Ordnance Survey grid reference SD 87011 06124.

The application site comprises of the former Middleton Conservative Club building, which is currently vacant and boarded up; a carparking tarmac area above some under croft retail units which front onto Long Street in the south-east; a vehicle ramp and tarmac area in the north-east and an elevated levelled former bowling green grass area to the central west; which is fringed with a northern woodland tree belt. The rear of the site levelled at 1st story level, so that this area is approx. 10m higher than the road level on Long Street in the southern corner of the site and at least 3m higher then all surrounding land and separated by retaining walls.

The site is in a urban location, surrounded by >500m of residential, commercial areas with small pockets of green space. Larger local green spaces are Middleton Cemetery extending to 35m east of site on the far side of Long Street and Middleton Gold Club, 650m west of site, which connects onto the wider agricultural land.

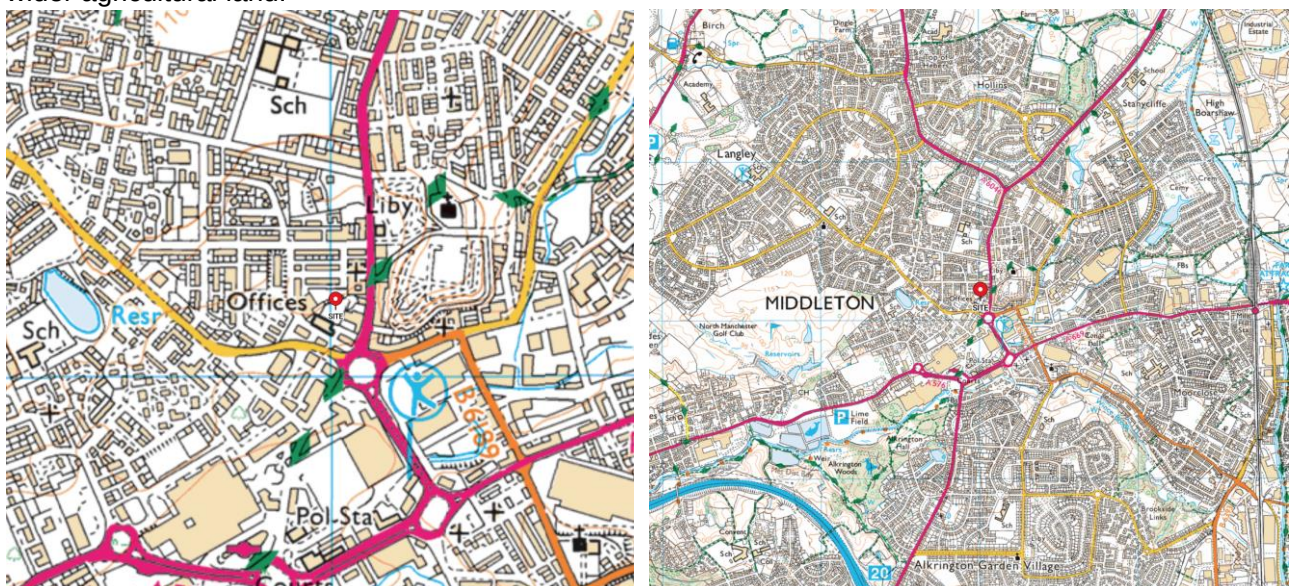


Figure 1: OS Map showing site location (Bing Maps)



Figure 2: Redline - development site boundary.

2.3 The Proposals

A full planning application is being prepared for “double storey side extension to existing Middleton Conservative Club, additional car park on existing bowling green, carpark ramp to access new carpark level and alterations to facade on side elevation”.

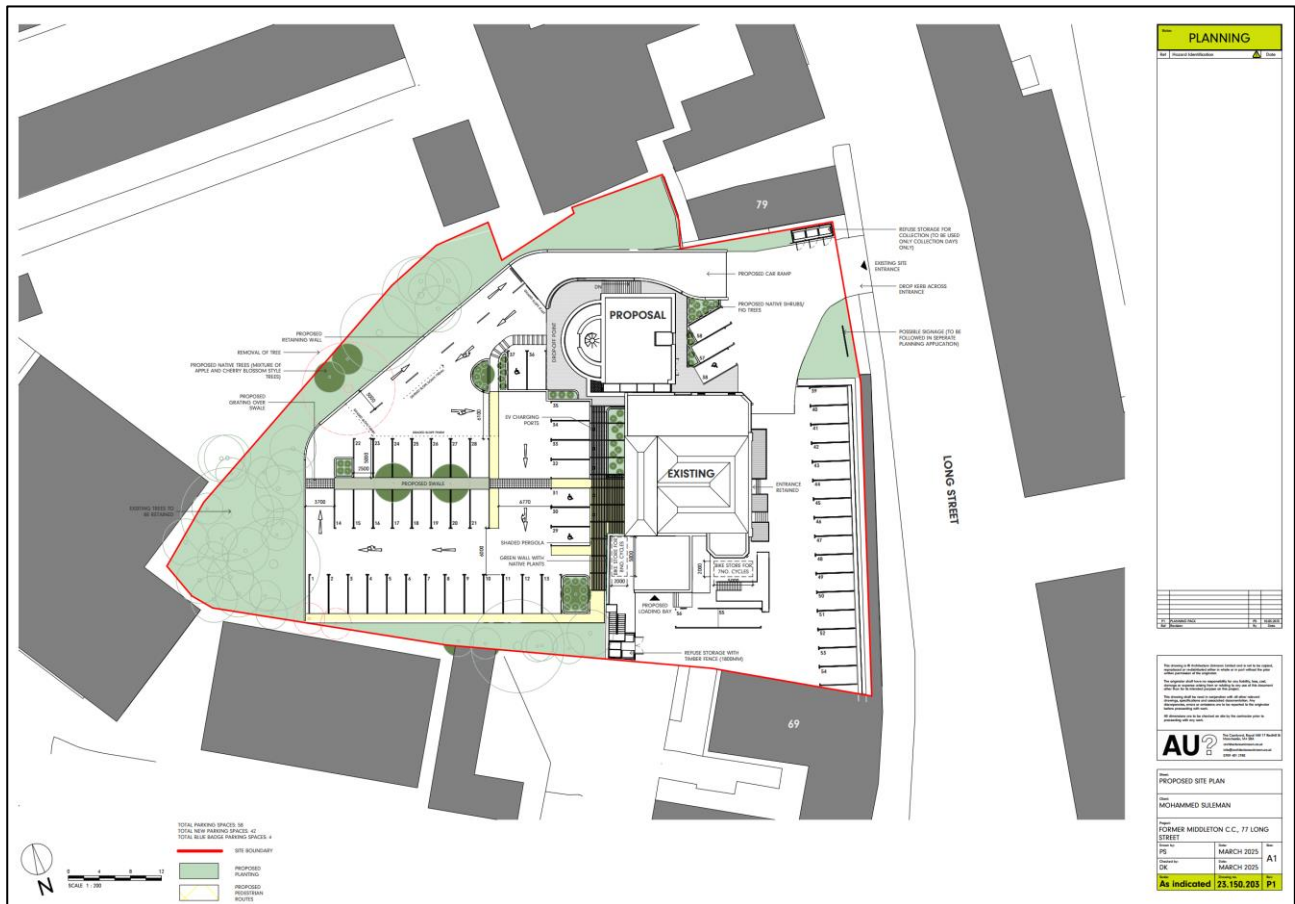


Figure 3: BHB Architects – DRAFT Proposed Site Plan

2.4 Planning Status

The site is in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester under the development control of Rochdale Borough Council.

There are no previous ecological surveys on previous planning applications for the site.

2.5 Report Validity

The information provided within this PEA report is considered to be valid for a period of 24 months from the date the survey was undertaken.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken to collate any existing ecological data for the site and its surroundings. As part of the desk study process, the following sources of record have been considered:

- Natural England Magic website for geographic information on key environmental schemes and designations. www.magic.gov.uk, April 2025 (see Appendix C).
- Greater Manchester Ecology Unit Ecological Search data at OS grid reference SD 87016 06126, Received 15th April 2025 (see Appendix D – full data set available on request).

3.2 Field Surveys

3.2.1 Habitat Survey

Habitat surveys were carried out in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification¹ (Professional Edition) at a minimum of Level 4 and at a Minimum Mapping Unit of 25m²/5 linear m. The survey was undertaken within the optimum period for Habitat Field Surveys, between March and October.

Information regarding the assessment is provided in the table below:

Survey date / time	Surveyors present	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%RH)	Windspeed (Beaufort)	Cloud cover (Okta)
17th April 2025 / 10:00am	Chris Braine, Director	16.5	75	1	5

Table 2: Survey Details

This appraisal includes a:

- Description of each habitat including a general list of species and assessment of general management. The relative abundance of each plant species in the total species composition is notated using the **DAFOR** scale: Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional or Rare².
- Condition assessment for each habitat, carried out following the condition criteria of The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Sheets³.
- Identification of UK BAP Priority Habitats under S41 of NERC Act and Habitats Directive Annex I habitat types.

A UK Habitats Plan of the site showing the various identified habitats is provided in Appendix E.

3.2.2 Biodiversity Net Gain – Baseline Assessment

A study of the baseline BNG score was carried out using the Statutory DEFRA Biodiversity Metric providing a summary of the onsite habitat types their relevant Distinctiveness, Condition and Strategic Significance. These are multiplied along with other factors to produce an Ecological Baseline Score, presented in Biodiversity Units (BU). The Baseline Score can then be used by the applicant to inform an

¹ UKHabs (2023) The UK Habitat Classification User Manual, Version 2.01

² Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (2011). BSBI Recording the British and Irish flora 2010-2020 Annex 1: Guidance on sampling approaches.
https://bsbi.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/Sampling_Guidance_-_Annex_1_v4_April_2011.pdf

³ DEFRA (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric– Metric Condition Assessments.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65c60f00cc433b000ca90b33/Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_Condition_Assessments_-_Feb24.xlsx

appropriate mitigation strategy to reach 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with the Environment Act, 2021.

3.2.3 Badger Surveys

The site and immediate surroundings (where access was possible), was searched for any evidence of Badger (*Meles meles*) in accordance with Surveying Badgers⁴ as part of the walkover survey. During the walkover the site was searched for evidence of badger including setts, paths and prints, latrines, dung pits, snuffle holes, foraging signs, and hairs caught on wire fencing.

3.2.4 Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)

Trees within the site were inspected from ground level using binoculars and elevated survey by ladder if safe to search for any field signs of bats or potential roost features (PRF's). The survey was undertaken as part of the walkover survey for all accessible trees.

Each tree was searched for features including; hollows, woodpecker holes, occlusions. 'Damage' features including; lightning strikes, hazard beams, subsidence cracks, shearing cracks, transverse snaps and splits, welds, lifting bark, desiccation features and frost cracks. 'Association' bat roosting features including fluting and ivy.

Each tree was then assigned a suitability, as detailed in the table below:

Suitability	Description
None	No PRFs identified and no further action required.
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats due to size of lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

Table 3: Categorisation of trees with PRFs for bats

3.2.5 Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment of Buildings

A thorough external inspection of the building to look for evidence of bats and assess bat roosting potential was undertaken as part of the walkover survey. Evidence of bats may take the form of droppings, urine stains, feeding remains, live bats, dead bats, grease mark stains, fur and claw marks made by bats regularly roosting in the same location.

During the external survey any roof and walls were inspected from ground level (using binoculars to aid visibility where required) and elevated survey by ladder if safe to search for gaps and voids that would allow bats access to suitable roost sites.

Each building was assigned a roost suitability as defined BCT Good Practice Guidelines, as detailed in the table below:

⁴ Cresswell, Harris & Jefferies (1989) Surveying Badgers, The Mammal Society.

Potential Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
High suitability	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 and surrounding habitat.
Moderate suitability	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
Low suitability	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions 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 or hibernation).
Negligible suitability	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
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels

Table 4: Classification of building suitability for bats

3.2.6 Day Bat Walking (DBW)

Habitat features on site are assessed for their suitability to support foraging and commuting bat activity. This assessment is independent from the suitability of the site to support roosting bats and provides information on the likeliness of bat foraging activity within the local environment, and the dependence of individuals on these features for commuting to alternative roosting sites, foraging and migration.

The site was assigned a habitat suitability as defined BCT Good Practice Guidelines, as detailed in the table below:

Potential Suitability	Description of Habitat
High suitability	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats 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 foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site that is close to and connected to known roosts.
Moderate suitability	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as treelines 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.
Low suitability	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats 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.
Negligible suitability	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

None	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 provoke continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate /shelter insect populations)
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Table 5: Suitability Assessment Criteria for foraging and commuting bats

3.2.7 Breeding Birds

Assessment of the sites overall suitability to support breeding and nesting birds was undertaken. The sites habitat composition, geographic locality and association with designated sites are all relevant considerations. Where habitats are suitable to support locally or nationally protected species, breeding individuals or populations of birds further breeding or wintering bird surveys may be required to understand the impact from a proposed scheme.

3.2.8 Pond Scoping Assessment

A pond scoping exercise was undertaken to identify any ponds or watercourses located within 250m of the site using ordnance survey maps and aerial photography. The zone of influence may be amended based upon the scale of impact at the discretion of the ecologist.

3.2.9 Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index Assessment

Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment was carried out on accessible ponds. The survey was undertaken on as part of the walkover survey. The survey was undertaken in accordance with the methodology described in ARG UK Advice Note 5⁵.

The Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) was developed by Oldham et al (2000) in order to provide an index allowing a direct comparison to be made between different water bodies. This index assesses ponds against different criteria, each of which have a bearing on the likelihood of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) being present in the pond under consideration.

The criterion are Geographic Location; Pond Area; Permanence; Water Quality; Perimeter Shading; Wildfowl presence; Fish Presence; Pond Count (within a 1.0 km radius); Terrestrial Habitat (within 250 m); and Macrophyte Cover.

The HSI score is used to demonstrate whether a pond is suitable for breeding GCN and therefore, if it requires detailed survey. Generally, ponds with a high HSI score are more likely to support GCN than those with lower scores. Pond suitability is categorised using the following scale as shown in the table below:

HSI Score	Pond Suitability
<0.5	Poor
0.5-0.59	Below Average
0.6-0.69	Average
0.7-0.79	Good
>0.8	Excellent

Table 6: HSI Suitability

Dr L Brady⁶ provides further advice on interpreting HSI suitability scores:

- GCN tend to avoid ponds with low HSI scores. Ponds with relatively low HSI scores (poor to below average) typically only support GCN when they are located close to

⁵ ARG UK (2010), ARG UK Advice Note 5: Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index, Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom.

⁶ Brady, L Habitat Suitability Index; Interpreting HSI Scores, Calluma Ecological Services. Available: <https://www.calumma.co.uk/services/15-information/40-habitat-suitability-index>

another occupied pond. Low scoring ponds are therefore only likely to support GCN in areas of high pond density.

- GCN do not necessarily avoid ponds with average suitability, but nor do they actively seek them out. The presence of GCN in ponds with an 'average' HSI score appears to be simply down to chance.
- GCN appear to prefer ponds with high HSI scores. Ponds with relatively high HSI scores (good to excellent) frequently support GCN. Survey work undertaken in SE England indicates that great crested newt are present in more than 90% of ponds with an 'excellent' HSI score.

Therefore, any ponds that have an 'average' habitat suitability score or higher, or any low scoring ponds in areas of high pond density are likely to require further surveys to determine whether GCN are present, and if so, to establish population size.

3.2.10 Reptiles

An assessment of the onsite habitats was undertaken in order to evaluate the suitability of the habitats to support either episodically occurring or resident populations of reptiles. Habitats such as grasslands, heathland, dunes, brownfields, golf courses are all considered suitable, as are sites featuring a mosaic of habitats with south facing slopes or decreased levels of disturbance. Reptiles can be highly dispersive, so an assessment is also made of the suitability of the connective habitat to additional optimal habitats.

3.2.11 Invasive Species

As part of the walkover survey the site and immediate surroundings were searched for any evidence of invasive non-native plant species (INNS) listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The species which are often encountered are Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), *Cotoneaster sp.*, *Rhododendron sp.*, and Variegated Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon subsp. argentatum*).

3.3 Limitations

No limitations were identified during the assessment and the results of this survey are considered suitable to reflect the existing ecological baseline of the development.

BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITION

3.4 Designations

Within the 2km search area, there are three statutory ecological designations, including two Local Nature Reserves (LNR) designations and one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are also eight Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) with the nearest being Alkington woods and Rhodes Lodges located 0.43km to the south-west of the application area.

Name	Distance	Description	Designation
Alkington Woods and Rhodes Lodges	0.43km SW	A series of semi-natural and plantation woodland, lowland broadleaved woodland and ponds. Main canopy species include oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>), birch (<i>Betula sp.</i>), beech (<i>Fagus sp.</i>), and sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>).	LNR/SBI
Higher Boarshaw Clough	0.87km NE	N/A	SBI
Scowcroft Reservoir	1km NE	N/A	SBI
Hopwood Clough	1.27km NE	N/A	SBI
Hopwood Woods	1.3km NE	Hopwood Woodlands LNR is a series of small woodlands around the grounds of Hopwood Hall which support bird and common toad (<i>Bufo bufo</i>) populations.	LNR
Rochdale Canal	1.6km E	The Rochdale Canal contains important habitats for submerged aquatic plants and emergent vegetation, including extensive colonies of the nationally scarce SAC species floating water plantain <i>Luronium natans</i> . The site also supports a diverse assemblage of aquatic flora, notably its assemblage of pondweeds, <i>Potamogeton</i> spp; the nine species of which found in the canal represent a balanced community which reflects the quality of water.	SSSI / SBI
River Irk Marsh	1.7km E	N/A	SBI
Boardman Brook	1.6km SW	N/A	SBI
Bowlee Meadows	2km NW	N/A	SBI

Table 7: Summary of designated sites within 2km of the site boundary

Natural England Magic website indicates that within a 1km radius there are two types of Priority Habitat Inventory (PHI) allocations, comprising several areas allocated as Deciduous Woodland PHI, including 30m east of site within the Cemetery; and one area allocated as Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land PHI 550m north-east of site.

3.5 Habitats and Flora

3.5.1 Flora Records

Greater Manchester Records Centre (GMRC) have provided no flora records for any notable plant species for the site. Within the 2km search area there was a singular species identified, Floating Water plantain (*Luronium natans*).

All higher plant species present were recorded during the site walkover and are provided within the description of each habitat.

No rare or notable plants were recorded during the site walkover.

3.5.2 Invasive Non-Native Species

GMRC provided no invasive non-native species records for the site and no individual records were provided within the 2km search area.

During the site walk over three extensive stands of Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) were identified within the scrub / grass edge areas on the southern boundary and in the central northern boundary, noted as Target Note 1(TN1) on the UKHabs Baseline Plan.

3.6 Field Survey

The table below summarises the habitats present within and immediately adjacent to the site, and their relevant inclusion as a National Habitat of Principal Importance and / or within the Local Biodiversity Action Plan⁷.

Primary Habitat Code	Secondary Code (Where required)	UKHab	NHPI	LBAP	N/A
g4	10 (Scattered scrub) 518 (neglected); 524 (invasive non-native species)	Modified Grassland			✓
h3d	518 (neglected)	Bramble Scrub			✓
h3h	518 (neglected) 524 (invasive non-native species)	Mixed Scrub			✓
u1b	804 (car park)	Developed land – sealed surface			✓
u1b5	n/a	Buildings			✓
w1g	n/a	Broadleaved and Mixed Woodland	✓		
-	522(Native); 523 (Non-native)	Individual Trees – Urban			✓
h2b	518 (neglected)	Other Hedgerow			✓

Table 8: UKHabs Habitat Types and their relevant inclusion in NHPI or LBAP

3.6.1 g4 - Modified Grassland (0.1423ha)

The rear of the building is a levelled former bowling green. It has not been managed for approximately 1-2 years and has become rank. There is also a small area of grassland to the south of the main access track, which contains a higher percentage of Bramble.

Species diversity is 4-5 per m². The grassland is dominated by Perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*). Other forbs identified include Cow Bitter (*Tanacetum vulgare*), Hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and Clover (*Trifolium repens*). Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is present at some of the fringes and within the eastern parcel.

Grassland Condition Assessment	Pass / Fail
A. There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	Fail
B. Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Pass

⁷ Rotherham Biodiversity Forum (2012), Rotherham Biodiversity Action Plan (RBAP).
Accessed at: <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/650/biodiversity-action-plan-bap-2012-introduction>

C. Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Pass
D. Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Pass
E. Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)2.	Pass
F. Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Pass
G. There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA4).	Pass
Condition Score	Poor

Table 9: Low Distinctiveness Grassland Condition Assessment



Figure 4: An example of the rank modified grassland at the rear (west) of the site

3.6.2 w1g – Other Woodland, Broadleaved (0.0637ha)

There are two sections of woodland on the site. The western section (W1) is on a raised earth mound, likely created in levelling the bowls ground. This extends along the north-western boundary behind the northern edge retaining wall. Species here include Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Hybrid Black-poplar (*Populus nigra x deltoides*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). The majority of the understorey is dense Ivy (*Hedera helix*) with occasional Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Dog violet (*Viola riviniana*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and young Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). Extensive litter is present throughout.

The central northern section (W2) is predominantly dense sapling to young Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*) and occasional Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), with little understory.

Woodland Condition Assessment	W1 (western)	W2 (eastern)
A. Age distribution of trees	2	1
B. Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	3	3
C. Invasive plant species	1	1
D. Number of native species	3	2
E. Cover of native tree and shrub species	3	3
F. Open space within woodland	2	2
G. Woodland regeneration	2	2
H. Tree health	1	2
I. Vegetation and ground flora	1	1
J. Woodland vertical structure	1	1
K. Veteran trees	1	1
L. Amount of deadwood	3	2
M. Woodland disturbance	1	1
Total	24 (Poor)	22 (Poor)

Table 10: Woodland Condition Assessment



Figure 5: Within the woodland block looking east

3.6.3 h2b – Other Hedgerows (38m)

There is an overgrown early-mature privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*) hedge on top of the earth bank on the northern edge of the site, above a two tier retaining wall.



Figure 6: Overgrown privet hedge on top of the earth bank on the northern edge of the site

3.6.4 h3d – Bramble scrub (0.005ha)

There is an area of Bramble dominant scrub in the north-eastern corner of the site on an isolated patch of ground adjacent to the road access, carparking and adjacent building. Perennial ryegrass is frequent underneath the sward.



Figure 7: Bramble scrub in the north-eastern corner of the site

3.6.5 h3h – Mixed scrub (0.0352ha)

There are two area of mixed scrub within the site. These are dominated by Bramble with other species including Nettle, Buddleia (*Buddleja* sp), Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), and Japanese Knotweed. The latter comprises around 20% of the total area.



Figure 8 and 9: Bramble and Japanese knotweed scrub on the northern part of the site / grassland edge; and on the southern site boundary

Scrub Condition Assessment	1 (Southern)	2 (Northern)
A. The scrub is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description (where in its natural range). The appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific scrub type. At least 80% of scrub is native, and there are at least three native woody species with no single species comprising more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus</i>	Fail	Pass
B. Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran) shrubs are all present.	Fail	Pass
C. There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA4) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Fail	Fail
D. The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	Fail	Pass
E. There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	Fail	Fail
Condition Score	Poor	Moderate

Table 11: Scrub Condition Assessment

3.6.6 u1b – Developed land; sealed surface (0.1601ha – combined with building)

The eastern part of the site is typically sealed tarmac, part of this has retail units below.

There is no condition assessment for this habitat type.



Figure 10: Tarmac hardstanding above undercroft retail units

3.6.7 u1b5 – Buildings (0.1601ha – combined with sealed surface)

The main disused Middleton Club building is located in the central / eastern part of the site. The far eastern part of the site has undercroft retail units fronting onto Long Street and with rear stair access from steps near the Middleton Club building.

Their descriptions and suitability to support protected species are found within section 4.3.3.

3.6.8 Individual Urban Trees (14no.)

Fourteen urban trees were recorded within the application site boundary (those not included within w1g area), which were assessed individually. Species within the site assessment area included Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*). The trees displayed varying qualities and conditions: 1no. Medium sized individual urban tree of a Good condition; 3no. Small sized individual urban trees of a Good condition; 10no. Small sized individual urban trees of a Moderate condition. Some of the trees were dead.

Condition	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9-T11	T12-T14
A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
B	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C										
D	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
E						✓			✓	
F	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Condition Score	Good	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Good	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod

Table 12: Individual Tree Schedule

3.7 Biodiversity Net Gain – Baseline Assessment

The habitats recorded within the application site were calculated to provide a total of **1.49 Habitat Units** and **0.04 Hedgerow Units**.

Ref	Existing area habitats				Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Required Action to Meet Trading Rules	Ecological baseline
	Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Irreplaceable habitat	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance		Total habitat units
1	Urban	Developed land, sealed surface	No	0.1601	V.Low	N/A - Other	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Compensation Not Required	0.00
2	Heathland and shrub	Bramble scrub	No	0.005	Medium	Condition Assessment N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (2)	0.02
3	Heathland and shrub	Mixed scrub	No	0.0053	Medium	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (2)	0.02
4	Heathland and shrub	Mixed scrub	No	0.0299	Medium	Moderate	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (2)	0.24
5	Grassland	Modified grassland	No	0.0081	Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required ≥	0.02
6	Grassland	Modified grassland	No	0.1342	Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required ≥	0.27
7	Woodland and forest	Other woodland, broadleaved	No	0.0427	Medium	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (2)	0.17
8	Woodland and forest	Other woodland, broadleaved	No	0.021	Medium	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (2)	0.08
9	Individual trees	Urban tree	No	0.0163	Medium	Good	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (2)	0.20
10	Individual trees	Urban tree	No	0.0122	Medium	Good	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (2)	0.15
11	Individual trees	Urban tree	No	0.0407	Medium	Moderate	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (2)	0.33
12									
13									
				Total habitat area	0.48				1.49
				Site Area (Excluding area of individual trees, green walls, intertidal hard structures)	0.41				

Figure 11: Habitat Baseline Scores

Ref	Existing hedgerow habitats			Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Required Action to Meet Trading Rules	Ecological baseline
	Hedge number	Habitat type	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance		Total hedgerow units
1	H1	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.038	V.Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness band or better	0.04
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
			0.04					0.04

Figure 12: Hedge Baseline Scores

3.8 Fauna

Species legislation is provided in Appendix B.

3.8.1 Amphibians

GMRC provided a single record of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) within the 2km radius from the application area.

MAGIC returned no approved EPS licences within the 2km search area, with the nearest record being 2.5km north of the site for the presence of a GCN in 2014.

The pond scoping exercise found no ponds in a 250m zone of impact for this species within the urban context. The closest pond is 400m west on the far side of significant residential and commercial units.

The western part of the site is considered to have habitats suitable to support the terrestrial phase of common amphibians, however due to the disconnect from nearby ponds and the isolating nature of the tall boundary retaining walls, these species are very unlikely to be present onsite.

3.8.2 Badger

Badger information is contained in Appendix F (Confidential).

3.8.3 Bats

MAGIC Maps provided two granted EPS development licence within the 2km radius. A licence allowing for the destruction of a Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) located approximately 0.7km north-east of the site was issued in April 2015.

GMRC provided 350 records of bats within the 2km search area, 75 of which were day roosts and two as maternity roosting locations. The nearest, from 2021, being approximately 220m to the south east for 7 common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) within a building in Storage World on two separate nights. The remaining records were of bat species including Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Natterers (*Myotis nattereri*), Noctules (*Nyctalus noctula*), Whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*) and Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*).

GLTA

All trees within the application site and located along the site's boundaries were assessed from ground level for their suitability to support roosting bats. Features were identified such as splits, cracks, hollows, woodpecker holes, occlusions etc. There were no mature trees and all trees onsite were considered to support '**Negligible**' suitability to support roosting bats.

Roosting Bats – Buildings

All buildings within the application site were externally assessed for PRFs.

The undercroft retail units at the eastern edge of the site are considered to have **Negligible** suitability to support roosting bats.

The Middleton Club building is a large redbrick building with clay tiles to the pitches roofs. There are a number of flat roof extensions to the northern and southern elevations, where roof it a combination of corrugated steel and bitumen. An internal inspection was not carried out. There are a number of small gaps around soffits and between roof panels, and on the eastern elevation part of the PVC soffit has fallen away. Overall the building has a '**Low**' suitability to support roosting bats, however the proposal is

not going to affect any of the roof spaces and will only effect part of the lower northern elevation. This elevation has no gaps to brickwork or windows and considered to have '**Negligible**' suitability to support roosting bats.



Figure 13: Northern elevation – extensions with flat roofs



Figure 14: Southern elevation – extension with flat roof



Figure 15: Eastern elevation seen from overcroft car park



Figure 16: Western elevation seen from upper grass area

Day Bat Walk

The small woodland and grass area in the west of the site provides some low value foraging potential, however this is isolated within a predominantly urban environment with little connectivity to wider habitats. The Middleton Club building has extensive floodlights on all elevations which is likely to reduce bat suitability. That said, the site could form part of a very disparate commuting stepping stone feature between the cemetery in the east and the more open vegetated / agricultural land >500m west of site.

Overall, the application site is considered to have '**Low**' suitability to support foraging and commuting bats.

3.8.4 Birds

GMRC provided 624 individual records of 19 different species of birds within the 2km search area. The majority of vast majority of these are outside of the urban areas and over 500m from the site, often near the River Irk to the south, or around Stanycliffe, approx.1.5km north-east.

The site provides some foraging, cover and nesting opportunities for birds, within the scrub, woodland and trees located in the western part of the site.

Limited bird activity was observed during the site walkover with Magpie (*Pica pica*), Thrush (*Turdus philomenus*) and Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) identified on site, and Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) heard onsite or nearby.

3.8.5 Invertebrates

GMRC provided 71 record for 11 different invertebrate species, typically months.

The closest two records are of White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrrium w-album*), one located at Church Brow Cemetery ~100m north-east, and a second record is Assheton Way/Long Street Roundabout.

The onsite habitats are likely to support a range of common invertebrate species within the scrub, woodland and trees located in the western part of the site. However the lack of diverse habitat mosaic means it is unlikely to support a rare or notable invertebrate population.

3.8.6 Other Terrestrial Mammals

GMRC provided 105 record for 2 different other terrestrial mammal species, 104 records of Hedgehog and 1 Brown Hare within the site or the 2km search area.

No incidental sightings were made and no specific field signs of small mammals were noted during the site walkover. The tall boundary retaining walls reduce likelihood of small mammals being present onsite, however access may be possible and the western part of the site is considered suitable habitat to support hedgehog.

3.8.7 Riparian Mammals

GMRC provided two records of Otter (*Lutra lutra*), located at Wince Brook 500m south of site and River Irk 1.5km south-west of site.

The site is disconnected from any suitable riparian mammal habitat.

3.8.8 Reptiles

GMRC provided no reptile records for the site or the 2km search area.

The majority of the site was assessed as providing little or no value to reptiles due to the lack of suitable mosaic habitats, opportunities for basking or hibernacula and its isolated location within a suburban environment. No reptiles were identified during the walkover survey and are considered unlikely to be present on the site.

4 ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 Ecological Constraints

Avoidance, mitigation and/or compensation measures are required for the following constraints:

4.1.1 Badger

The application site has the potential to directly impact a badgers / potential badger sett. A further badger survey is required to determine badger activity within the site, sett classification and assess the impact of the proposed development on this species

4.1.2 Bat Activity

The application site was considered to support 'Low' suitability to support foraging and commuting bats due to the onsite woodland block and surrounding environmental context. The development will see the retention of woodland vegetation to the west and therefore retaining the long-term suitability for the site to support foraging and commuting bats.

However, artificial lighting during the construction phase of the development and in-use may result in short-term impacts to foraging and commuting individuals.

A sensitive low-level lighting scheme will be prepared by a lighting engineer to ensure no mature vegetation is impacted by the development. The lighting strategy should follow best practice as dictated by the Bat Conservation Trust⁸:

- Consider employing a competent lighting designer who will apply the principals of providing the right light, in the right place, at the right time and controlled by the right system.
- Minimise the spread of light to at, or near horizontal and ensure that only the task area is lit. Flat cut-off lanterns or accessories should be used to shield or direct light to where it is required.
- Consider the height of lighting columns. It should be noted that a lower mounting height is not always better. A lower mounting height can create more light spill or require more columns.
- Column height should be carefully considered to balance task and mitigation measures.
- Limit the times that lights are on to provide some dark periods. The task being lit often varies, for example roads are less used after 23.00hrs and car parks are empty. A lighting designer can vary the lighting levels as the use of the area changes reducing lighting levels or perhaps even switching installations off after certain times. This use of adaptive lighting can tailor the installation to suit human health and safety as well as wildlife needs.

In addition, apply technical specifications:

- Use narrow spectrum light sources to lower the range of species affected by lighting.
- Use light sources that emit minimal ultra-violet light
- Lights should peak higher than 550 nm

⁸ Buglife (2011) A review of the impact of artificial light on invertebrates. Buglife.
Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (2009) Artificial light in the environment. London, HMSO
CPRE (2014) Shedding Light: A survey of local authority approaches to lighting in England.

- Avoid white and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum to reduce insect attraction and where white light sources are required in order to manage the blue short wavelength content they should be of a warm / neutral colour temperature <4,200 kelvin.

4.1.3 Breeding Birds

No active or historic nests were recorded within the application area during the preliminary walkover assessment. However, the vegetation on site was considered to provide suitable nesting habitat for common bird species and has the potential to support populations of birds of local and national interest such as Tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*) or House sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) which may be directly injured or disturbed during the breeding season via nest abandonment.

Onsite Reasonable Avoidance Methods (RAMs) should be followed by all onsite staff during the construction phase of the development and enclosed within a CEMP. The RAMs will include, but not limited to, the following safe working guidance, in order for the works to proceed in a legal and ecologically sensitive manner:

- Vegetation clearance / Ground preparation should only be undertaken outside of the recognised breeding birds' season, which runs between March – September inclusive.
- If this is unachievable a Breeding Birds Check should be carried out by a qualified ecologist within 24hrs prior to the onset of works. If nesting birds are recorded within any vegetation due for removal, the area and surrounding 5m radius of the nest will be protected until the birds have fledged.
- If it is not possible to fully observe or inspect all the vegetation to be cleared, the ecologist will be required to supervise the clearance.

Foraging and nesting opportunities should be designed into the development through suitable shrub and tree planting.

4.1.4 Invasive Species

A management plan for the complete removal/eradication of the Japanese Knotweed should be put in place as part of the development.

4.1.5 Trees

Retained trees should be protected in line with BS5837:2012 '*Trees in relation to Design, Construction and Demolition -recommendations*'.

4.1.6 Other Terrestrial Mammals / Hedgehog

To minimise the risk of killing or injury Terrestrial Mammals / hedgehog a precautionary site clearance method will be implemented.

- Any suitable habitat such as brash or log piles will be carefully searched by hand. Any hedgehogs found during the search will be relocated to an area of retained habitat.
- Trenches or excavations left uncovered overnight will have a suitable means of escape (such as wooden plank).
- Opportunities for hedgehogs should be included in the development design, including holes at least 13cm in size retained in the boundary walls or fencing allowing hedgehogs continued passage around the site and suitable planting to provide foraging and shelter for the species.

4.1.7 Biodiversity Net Gain

The site application site was assessed as having **1.49 Habitat Units and 0.04 Hedgerow Units**. The development proposals will partial clearance to allow for the development of the extension and vehicle areas, and has the potential to result in a biodiversity loss, or less than a 10% gain.

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report should be prepared to support the planning application.

4.2 Summary of Recommendations

The below information will be required, either to support the planning application or form part of a planning condition:

Ecological Receptor / Constraint	Timescales
Biodiversity Net Gain Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment report should be submitted to support the planning application	Submitted prior to planning approval.
Breeding Birds Reasonable Avoidance Methods (RAMs) to be undertaken. Enclosed within CEMP. Mitigation and enhancements to be secured within LEMP.	Prior to and during construction Secured through appropriately worded condition of planning.
Badgers Further Badger Survey to determine badger activity within the site. (Appendix F) Mitigation likely to be enclosed within CEMP.	Submitted prior to planning approval.
Invasive Species A management plan for the complete removal/eradication of the Japanese Knotweed should be put in place as part of the development.	Prior to and during construction
Trees Existing mature trees should be protected in line with BS5837:2012.	Prior to and during construction
Foraging and Commuting Bats Soft-lighting strategy to be implemented during the construction phase and post-development use.	Prior to and during construction
Other Terrestrial Mammals Reasonable Avoidance Methods (RAMs) to be undertaken. Enclosed within CEMP. Enhancements to be secured within LEMP.	Prior to construction Secured through appropriately worded condition of planning.

Table 13: Summary of Ecological recommendations

4.3 Ecological Enhancement Opportunities

The following ecological enhancements should be incorporated into the proposed development:

- Suitable bird nesting habitat should be incorporated into the design plans. All nesting provision placed onto buildings will be positioned, generally, at least 3m from the ground level, ideally on the western or eastern elevations, and be free of climbing vegetation and out of reach of domestic animals:

Nest box type and specification	Species supported	Recommendation details
Starling box (45mm entrance hole) https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-starling-nest-box	Starlings (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>)	As above. Must be more than 1 box grouped together to encourage occupancy.
Non-specific boxes; Small nest box(es) with hole (28mm and 32mm). https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-seville-28mm-woodstone-nest-box https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-seville-32mm-oval-woodstone-nest-box	Small passerines such as tree sparrows (<i>Passer montanus</i>), house sparrows (<i>Passer domesticus</i>), great tits (<i>Parus major</i>), nuthatches (<i>Sitta europaea</i>), coal tits (<i>Periparus ater</i>) and pied flycatchers (<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>).	Can be installed on trees or buildings. Height from the ground should be about 3 metres — avoid sites where foliage obscures the entrance hole - a clear flight path is important. Shelter your box from the weather — the front of the nest box should be angled vertically or slightly downwards to prevent rain from entering the nest box. It should be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight.
Swift box(es) or swift brick(s). https://www.vivaraapro.co.uk/product-category/swifts/	Swifts (<i>Apus apus</i>)	Swifts nest at height, normally at least two stories, inside cavities in eaves or roof spaces. Must be more than 1 box grouped together to encourage occupancy.

- Wood pile habitats should be provided for overwintering amphibians and reptiles, ideally located within existing retained areas of vegetation
- 'Bug hotels' – provision for insects can be provided onsite within boundaries or garden areas⁹.

4.4 Mechanism to secure Mitigation and Enhancement

The mitigation measures and enhancement opportunities set out above can be secured through appropriately worded planning conditions as part of any planning consents granted.

⁹ Advice is available from:

Bug Life: <<https://cdn.buglife.org.uk/2019/07/Build-a-bug-hotel.pdf>>

The Woodland Trust: <<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/09/how-to-build-a-bug-hotel>>

Building for bees: <<https://www.buglife.org.uk/get-involved/gardening-for-bugs/building-for-bees/>>.

5 CONCLUSION

This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has identified a number of ecological constraints as defined within section 5 and specific avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures have been provided.

It is anticipated that planning conditions would be used to secure:

- A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) covering species and habitat reasonable avoidance measures, to be submitted and approved prior to construction commencing;
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)
- Invasive Species Management Plan
- Soft Lighting Strategy
- Ecological Enhancements Plan.

A further species-specific surveys is required for Badgers. Once completed this may function as a standalone report or need to be incorporated into an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) which can then be used to support the planning application.

APPENDIX A – SPECIES LIST

Common Name	Scientific Name
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Chestnut, Horse	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja sp.</i>
Bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>
Hawkbait	<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>
Perennial Ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Plantain, Ribwort	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Hybrid Black-poplar	<i>Populus nigra</i> × <i>P. deltoides</i>
Bird Cherry	<i>Prunus padus</i>
Japanese Knotweed	<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>
Common Name	Scientific Name
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Cow Bitter	<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Dog Violet	<i>Viola riviniana</i>

APPENDIX B – KEY SPECIES LEGISLATION

Bats

Bats are European Protected Species (EPS) listed on Annex IV of the Habitats Directive 1992 which is transposed into UK law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 or “Habitats Regulations” and consolidated within The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Bats are also protected through Schedules 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended). Certain species are also listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, as species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. A number of Bat species are listed as a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species on the UK BAP.

European Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

Otters are an EPS listed on Annex IV of the Habitats Directive 1992 which is transposed into UK law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 or “Habitats Regulations” and consolidated within The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Otters are also a UK BAP priority species and listed as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. Otters are also protected through Schedules 5 and 6 of the WCA 1981 (as amended).

European Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibious*)

Water Vole is protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) and is listed as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. Water Voles are also listed as a UK BAP priority species.

Eurasian Badger (*Meles meles*)

Badgers are protected in the UK under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 which protects both the individual animals and their setts. However, habitats used for any other purpose are not afforded any form of protection under this or other legislation. This species is also listed on Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which outlaws certain methods of taking and killing when this is necessary.

Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*)

Hazel Dormouse is an EPS included on schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations, and on Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). Dormouse is listed as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and is also listed as a UK BAP priority species.

Polecat (*Mustela putorius*)

Polecats are protected under Schedule 4 of the Habitats Regulations and Schedule 6 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). Polecat are also listed as a UK BAP priority species.

Harvest Mouse (*Micromys minutus*)

Harvest mouse is listed as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and is also listed as a UK BAP priority species.

European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

Hedgehog are listed as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and is also listed as a UK BAP priority species.

Birds

All bird species including their eggs and nests, are protected from harm during the breeding season under the WCA 1981 to varying degrees. Some bird species are also included on Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) and inclusion on this schedule makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb these birds at, on or near an ‘active’ nest. A number of birds are listed as species of

principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Reptiles

Widespread reptiles; Adder (*Vipera berus*), Grass snake (*Natrix natrix*), Common lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*) and Slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*) are protected against killing, injuring and sale under UK legislation through their inclusion in Appendix III of the Bern Convention (1979), Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended).

Sand Lizard (*Lacerta agilis*) and Smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*) are also EPS listed on Annex IV of the Habitats Directive 1992 which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats Regulations, and on Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended).

All reptiles are listed as UK BAP Priority species and are also listed as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Amphibians

Widespread amphibians; Smooth newt (*Triturus vulgaris*), Palmate newt (*Triturus helveticus*), Common frog (*Rana temporaria*) and Common toad (*Bufo bufo*) are only protected from sale under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). Common toad is also listed as a UK BAP Priority species.

Great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) and Natterjack toad (*Bufo calamita*) are also EPS listed on Annex II and IV and Annex IV respectively of the Habitats Directive 1992 which is transposed into U.K law by the Habitats Regulations, and on Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). Both are also listed as a UK BAP Priority species and GCN are also listed as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

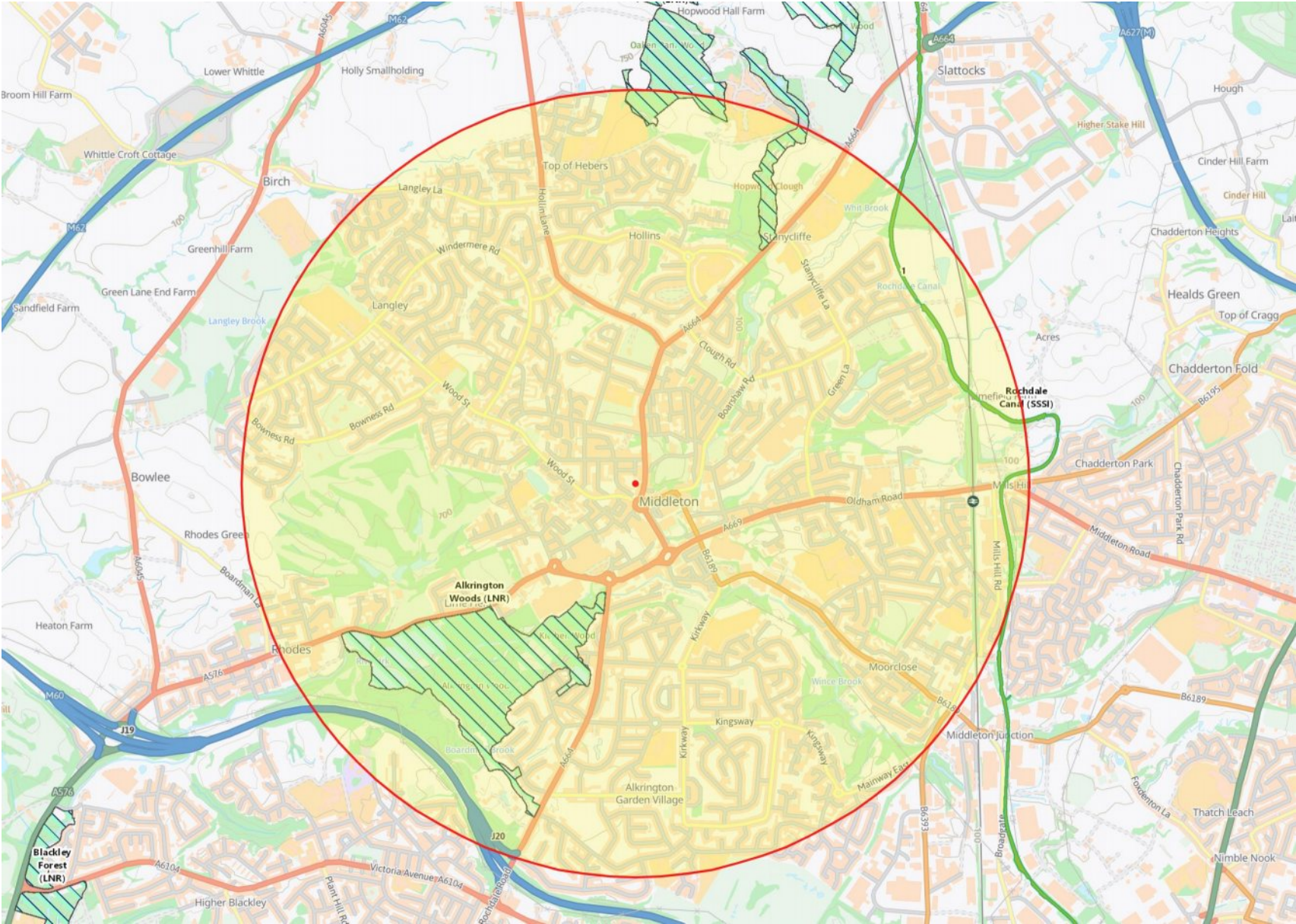
Invertebrates

A large number of British invertebrates are protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). Different species are protected under one, some or all of the parts of Section 9. Hundreds of invertebrate species are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. Similarly, several hundred are also listed as a UK BAP priority species.

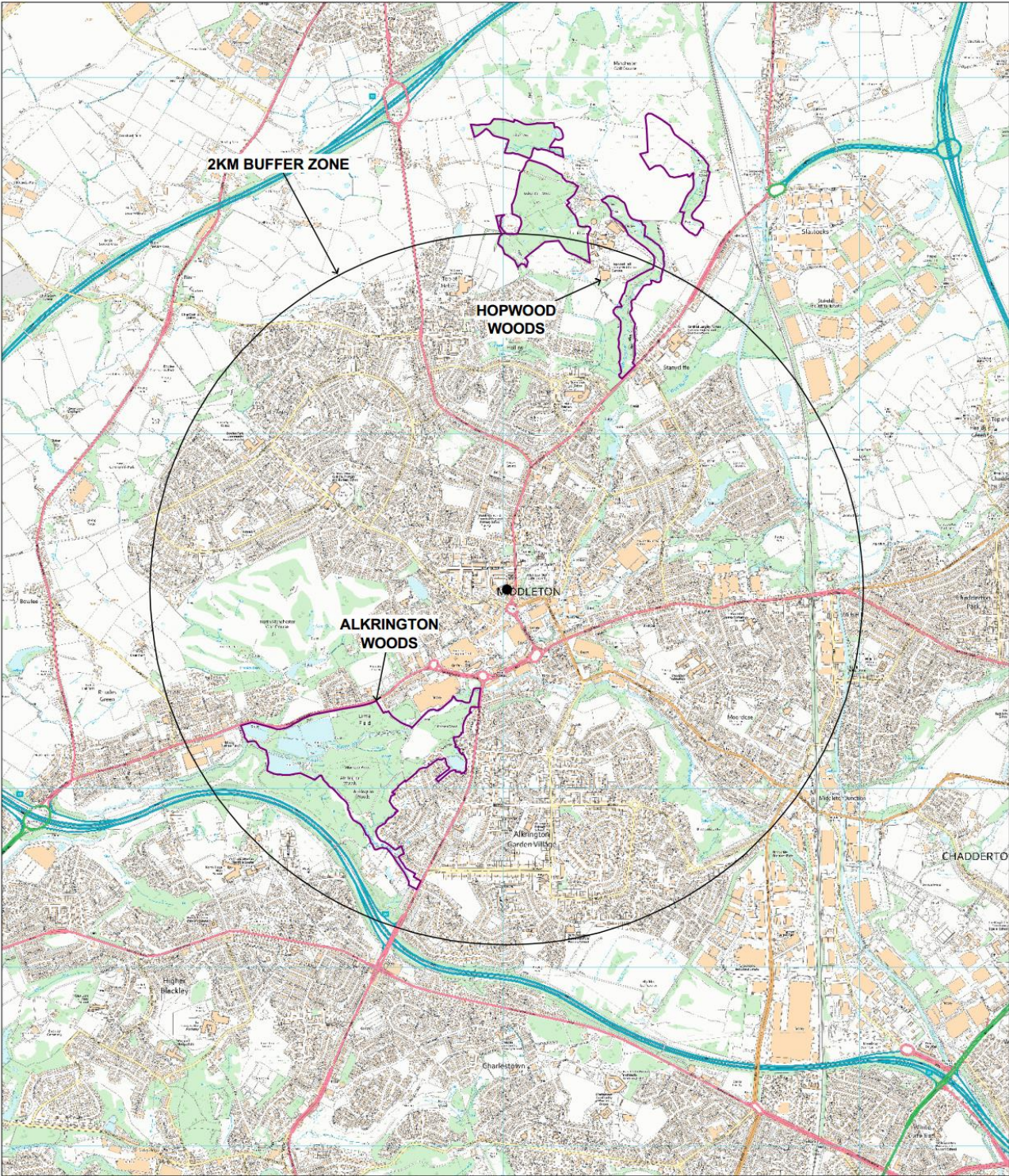
White-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)

White-clawed crayfish is listed in Appendix III of the Bern Convention, and Annexes II and IV of the EC Habitats Directive, and is protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) in respect of taking from the wild and sale. White-clawed crayfish is a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and is also listed as a UK BAP priority species.

APPENDIX C – MAGIC MAP – STATUTORY HABITATS WITH 2KM RADIUS



APPENDIX D – LNR AND SBI SITES



KEY
SITES

 **LOCAL NATURE RESERVES**

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SD 87016 06126
MIDDLETON CONSERVATIVE CLUB - MAP 2

SCALE 1:20,000

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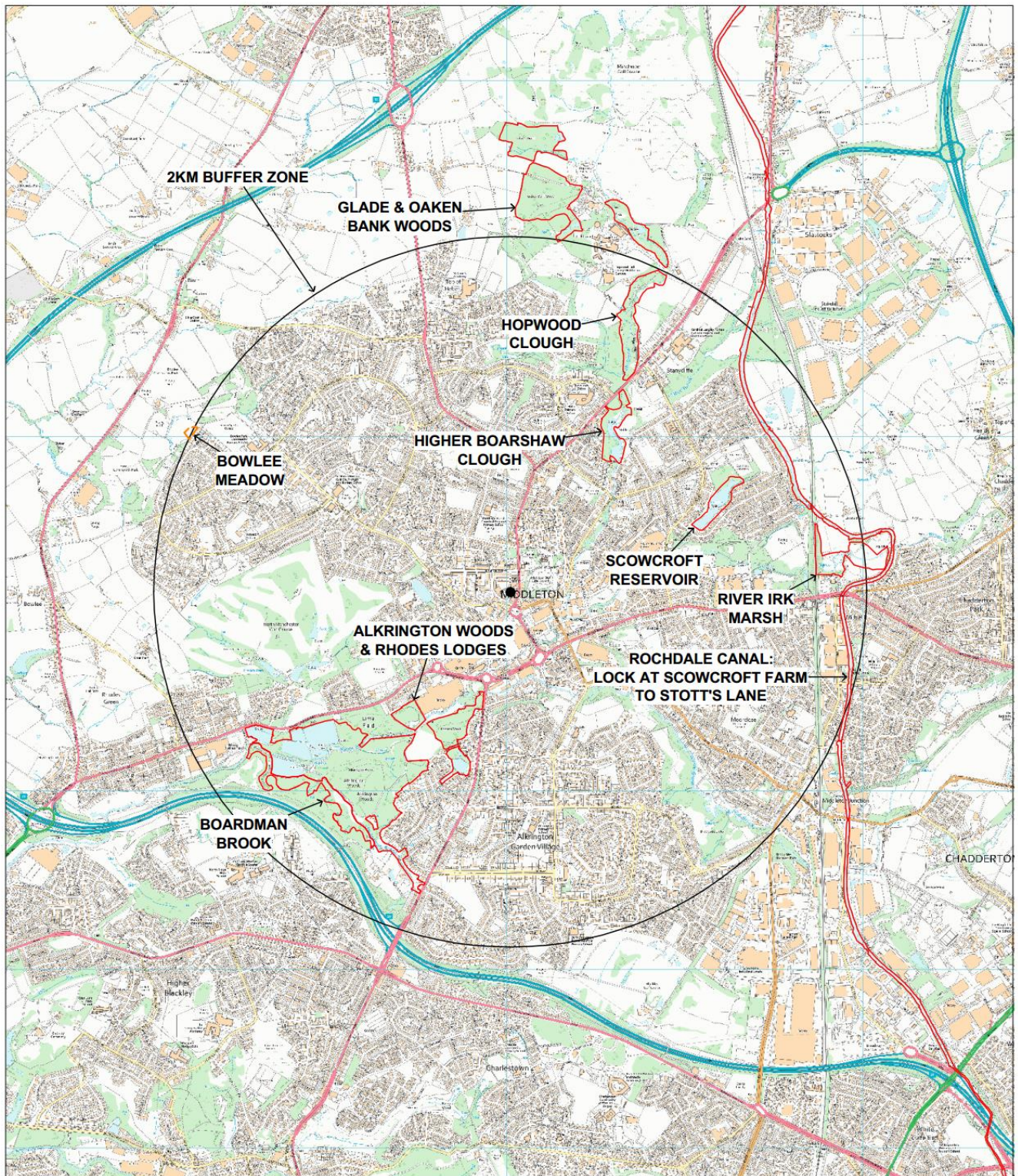
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Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

Telephone 0161 342 4409
Email: gmeu@tameside.gov.uk

Date Produced: 14/04/2025



**GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SD 87016 06126
MIDDLETON CONSERVATIVE CLUB - MAP 1**

SCALE 1:20,000

KEY

SITE OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

SBI BOUNDARY

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**Greater Manchester
Ecology Unit**

Telephone 0161 342 4409
Email: gmeu@tameside.gov.uk

Date Produced: 14/04/2025

WEDDLES

Middleton Club, Manchester
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report– May 2025

APPENDIX E - UKHABS MAP



Key

- Red Line Boundary
- Small - Negligible Bat Roosting Suitability
- Medium - Negligible Bat Roosting Suitability
- h2b - Other Hedgerow
- g4 - modified grassland
- w1g - other woodland-broadleaved
- h3d - bramble scrub
- h3h - mixed scrub
- u1b - developed land; sealed surface
- JK TN1 - Japanese Knotweed



Job: MIDDLETON CLUB, MANCHESTER			
Title: UKHABS BASELINE PLAN			
Scale@A3: 1:500	Drawn: GW	Date: 30/04/25	Drawing no. 1977-004

APPENDIX F – CONFIDENTIAL BADGER APPENDIX

Results

GMRC provided 13 records for Badger (*Meles meles*) within the 2km search area. All are over 1km and typically located in Middleton Golf Course to the west, and Hopwood Clough to the north-east and Alkington Wood to the south-west.

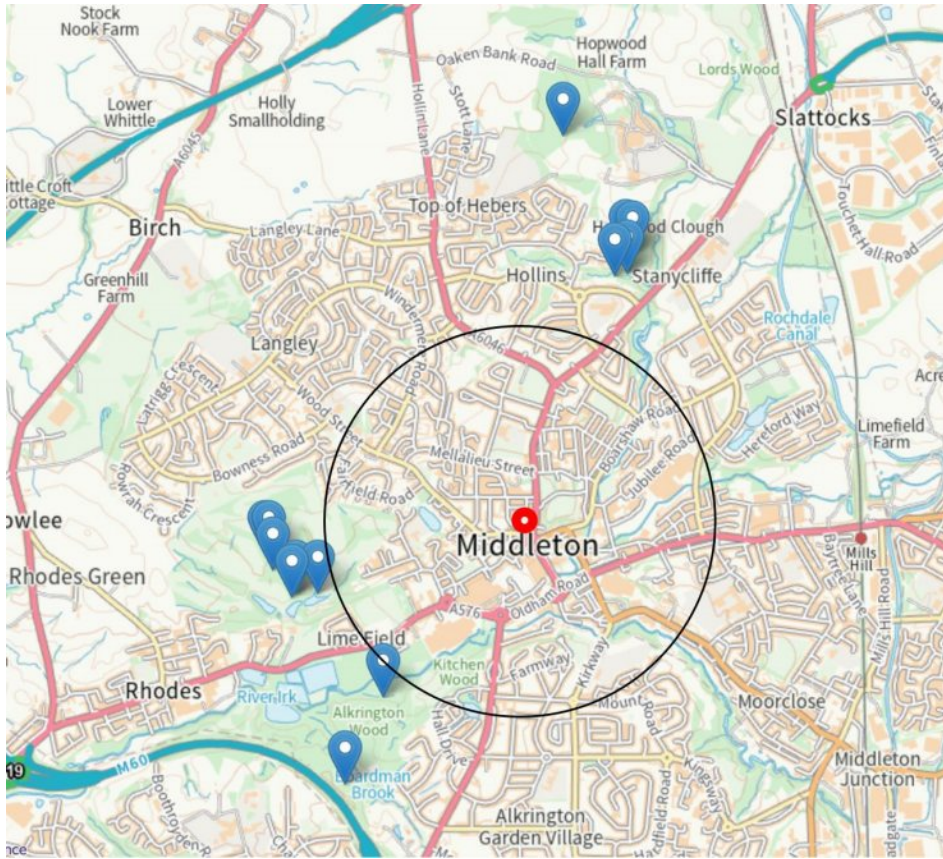


Figure 17: Badger sett records within 2km of the application site boundary. 1km radii shown

The site is relatively isolated from these records by >500m of urban / suburban land. Most of the site boundary would be considered a barrier to badger movement as they are typically >3m retaining walls with fencing.

Despite this, three entrance holes were present in the earth bank tree belt in the northern part of the site which has the potential to be a badger main / annexe / subsidiary or outlying sett. If used by Badger the holes are likely to be a subsidiary or outlying sett due to lack of associate well-worm paths connecting to adjacent holes. However its classification as a main sett cannot be discounted if young are being raised.



Figure 18: Potential badger sett holes

One hole facing east is located on the southern side of the Privet hedge / bank top at the northern extent of the retaining wall at the northern edge of the levelled grassland area. Two further holes are located on the far side of the hedge / bank top facing north. All holes have a small amount of recent spoil. It's likely the holes connect under the hedge and do not lead under the levelled grass area.



Figure 19: Eastern-most hole at the end of the retaining wall; and western-most hole facing north



Figure 20: Central hole facing north; and context of the two eastern-most holes

There are no clear runways leading from these holes. No additional evidence of badger activity was recorded within the site or adjacent habitats such as latrines, scratching, footprints, hairs or additional holes.

Constraints and Recommendations

The application site has the potential to directly impact a potential badger sett. A further badger survey is required to determine badger activity within the site, and sett classification, and how badger would access and use the site.