

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

SITE LOCATION

Hollingworth Lake Glamping Pods

PREPARED FOR

Rochdale Borough Council

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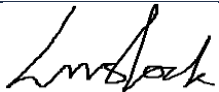
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Summary	
Site surveyed	Hollingworth Glamping Pod National Grid reference SD9379214691
Purpose and brief	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Commissioned by Rochdale Borough Council
Development proposals	The Proposed Development is construction of 10 glamping pods.
Methods	Desk study UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey of the Site Assessment of likely significant effects as far as can be reasonably known.
Confirmed ecological constraints	None Invasive Species
Potential ecological constraints	Habitats -Trees Bats Amphibians and Reptiles Nesting Birds Hedgehogs
Recommendations/ Further survey works required	Production of a wildlife sensitive lighting scheme Precautionary Method Statement for Amphibians and Reptiles
Opportunities for ecological enhancement	Hedgehog shelters Bat boxes Bird boxes Native species planting



1. Introduction/Background

1.1 Author

- 1.1.1 The Principal Author of this report is Laura Carter BSc (*Hons*), (Ecologist). The Principal Author has over three years of professional experience in ecological consultancy and has worked on projects ranging in scale including commercial and residential sites. The Principal Author currently holds a Class 1 survey licence from Natural England for bats (*Chiroptera* spp.) and is a Qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management ('CIEEM'), she is therefore subject to CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct.
- 1.1.2 The detail provided within this report is a true and accurate reflection of both the Site conditions at the time the survey was completed, as well as the professional opinion of the Principal Author.

1.2 Purpose and Brief

- 1.2.1 Rochdale Borough Council (the Client) commissioned Wharton Natural Infrastructure Consultants Ltd ('Wharton') to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal ('PEA') of an area of land known as Hollingworth Lake (see land within the red line boundary on Appendices 1 and 2), known herein as 'the Site'.
- 1.2.2 The purpose of the PEA (as per CIEEM guidance (CIEEM, 2018)) is to inform the design of the Proposed Development. The key objectives of a PEA are to:
- Identify the likely ecological constraints associated with the Proposed Development.
 - Identify any mitigation measures likely to be required, following the '*Mitigation Hierarchy*';
 - Identify any additional surveys that may be required to inform an Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA); and,
 - Identify the opportunities offered by the Proposed Development to deliver ecological enhancement.

1.3 Description of Site and Local Area

Site Context

- 1.3.1 The Site is located to the east of Hollingworth Lake and north of Skye Road in Littleborough. It is centred approximately at National Grid reference SD 94279 14887.
- 1.3.2 The Site comprised a residential building with an associated overgrown garden and gravel driveway, the rear of the property extended to a further field which was lined with trees along the western, eastern and northern boundary. The Site is set up a single-track hill road within the rural landscape with occasional residential buildings to the east, south and west, largely to the north of the Site were grassland fields and to the east was Hollingworth lake.
- 1.3.3 Land use in the immediate and wider area is largely rural with occasional residential areas. The Site is well connected from an ecological perspective due to grassland, tree lines and woodland pockets along with the absence of major roads in the local area and the location of Hollingworth Lake to the east with connecting brook lines throughout the wider landscape.
- 1.3.4 Wildlife corridors are present in the local area, such as Hollingworth Brook c.0.15km east, Brearley Brook c.0.45km northeast and the River Roch c.0.6km northwest of the Site. The Site is well ecologically connected, although the tree line on Site adds to the connectivity features within the area the Site does not contribute to the functionality of the wildlife corridors.



1.4 The Proposed Development

1.4.1 The Proposed Development is the construction of 10 glamping pods on an existing camping field.

1.4.2 The proposals detailed above will be referred to throughout this report as the 'Proposed Development'.

2. Relevant Planning Policy & Legislation

2.1 Relevant Legislation

2.1.1 National and international legislation relevant to the Proposed Development is summarised below in Table 1.

Table 1. Legislation Relevant to the Proposed Development

Legislation*	Relevance to the Proposed Development
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (HMSO, 2017) <i>Amended by¹</i> The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (HMSO, 2019)	Affords protection to species listed under Schedules 2 and 5 and gives provision for the allocation and protection of European protected sites.
The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (HMSO, 1981)	Affords protection to species listed under Schedule 5 of the Act and gives provision for the allocation of statutory wildlife sites.
The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (HMSO, 2006)	Places a duty on planning authorities to consider habitats and species of principal importance in planning applications.
The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (HMSO, 1992)	Offences under the Act include damaging, destroying or obstructing access to a badger sett, disturbing a badger when it is occupying a badger sett, and killing or injuring a badger.

*Full legislative text should be referred to as table text is a summary only.

1 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 provides safeguards for European Protected Sites and Species (as listed in the Habitats Directive). This has recently been amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 which continue the same provision for European protected species, licensing requirements, and protected areas now the UK has left the European Union.



2.2 Relevant Planning Policy

2.2.1 Planning policies which are relevant to the Proposed Development are summarised below in Table 2.

Table 2. Planning Policy Relevant to the Proposed Development

Planning Policy	Relevance to the Proposed Development
National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2021)	National Planning Policy Framework section 174 states that "planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressure". Section 179 of the NPPF states that to protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should "identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity." Plans should also promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. Section 180a and 180c (respectively) of the NPPF state: <i>"if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts) adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused".</i> <i>"Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists."</i>

*Full policy text should be referred to as table text is a summary only.

2.2.2 The Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (Rochdale Borough Council, 2016) has been reviewed and an excerpt of the relevant ecological policies is provided in Appendix 4.

3. Methods & Methodology

3.1 Desk Study & Consultation

3.1.1 A desk study was carried out to gather background ecological data, and the following resources were used for the data search:

- Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Interactive (DEFRA, 2021) map was used to determine the presence of granted European Protected Species licences at and within 500m of the Site.



- Google Earth Pro (Google Earth Pro, 2021) aerial and historic imagery were used to assess the ecological connectivity at the Site as well as its historic use to assess suitability of habitats locally for foraging and commuting wildlife.
- Biological records have been obtained from Greater Manchester Record Centre (GMRC, 2021) from a 1km radius of the central grid reference provided in paragraph **Error! Reference source not found.**, for statutory wildlife sites, non-statutory wildlife sites and legally protected and notable species.

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 A UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey (comprising the methods detailed below) was carried out on 22nd September 2021 by the Principal Author.

3.2.2 Weather conditions at the time of survey were clear and dry.

3.3 UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Survey

3.3.1 A UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Survey (Butcher, Carey, Edmonds, Norton, & Treweek, 2020) was carried out at the Site and provides a comprehensive habitat classification system for the UK. UKHab enables details in relation to the presence of notable (such as Habitats of Principal Importance) or protected habitats (such as Annex I habitats) to be obtained.

3.3.2 The UK Habitat Classification Version 1.1 was used for assessment of the Site, using the *Professional Edition Hierarchy*. Habitats were classified to Level 5 unless otherwise stated.

3.3.3 In addition to the UKHab survey, an assessment of the Site for evidence of/suitability for protected/notable species was undertaken. Please note that these surveys are not comprehensive or targeted, and are simply intended to allow an informed decision to be made on whether further more detailed surveys for a particular species or species group are required.

3.3.4 Species of specific interest that were surveyed for include but are not limited to:

- Badger (*Meles Meles*),
- Bats (*Chiroptera* spp.),
- Great crested newt GCN (*Triturus cristatus*) and other amphibians,
- Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*),
- Invertebrates,
- Hazel dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*),
- Reptiles,
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*),
- Water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*),
- White-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*),
- Wild birds, and
- Protected plants.

3.3.5 Habitats at the Site were identified and mapped; they are illustrated on the UK Habitat Classification Plan in Appendix 2. Where appropriate, target notes have been used to identify areas on the plan that require further detail, and this has been included in the report.



3.3.6 Plant names (common and scientific) within this report follow 'New Flora of the British Isles' (Stace, 2010).

3.4 Preliminary Roost Assessment ('PRA')

- 3.4.1 The PRA and subsequent assessment of suitability of the buildings and trees at the Site for roosting bats followed current best practice guidance (Collins, 2016).
- 3.4.2 The buildings and trees were inspected by the Principal Author (who holds a Natural England Class 1 bat licence) for field evidence of bats including: droppings, individual bats (live or dead), feeding remains, scratch marks, urine staining, grease marks and clean cobweb-free gaps around potential entrance points and crevice roost sites.
- 3.4.3 The buildings and trees were classified according to the criteria set out in Table 3 below in accordance with standard guidance (Collins, 2016). With respect to roost type, the assessments in this report are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed.

Table 3. Bat Roost Suitability Descriptions (taken from Collins, 2016)

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
Confirmed Presence	Presence of roosting bats within the building or tree confirmed by the survey
High	A building or tree 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	A building or tree 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.
Low	A building or tree 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 a larger number of bats (i.e., unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).
Negligible	Trees or buildings that appear unsuitable for roosting bats due to a clear lack of roosting spaces and/or absence of suitable access points, such as voids, small crevices etc, cracked limbs, rot holes, woodpecker holes, limb tear outs etc.

3.5 Limitations and Caveats

3.5.1 This report is based solely on the Site conditions on the 22nd September 2021 and provides a 'snapshot' of Site conditions at this time only.

3.6 Evaluation of Ecological Features

3.6.1 The potential of the Site to support legally protected or notable species was determined through



a review of field observations and desk study information.

- 3.6.2 The likelihood of the occurrence of any protected and/or invasive species is ranked as follows and relies on habitat suitability for the species at the Site as well as an evaluation, in parallel, of desk study data and published guidance/literature which is referenced accordingly:
- **Negligible** – while presence cannot be absolutely discounted, the Site supports very limited or poor-quality habitat for a species or species group. There may be no local records of the species/species group from the data search, and the surrounding habitats are considered unlikely to support wider populations of a species/species group. The Site may also be outside or peripheral to the known natural range of a species/species group.
 - **Low** – habitats within the Site are of poor to moderate quality for a given species/species group. There are few or no returns from the data search, but presence cannot be discounted based on the national distribution of the species/species group, the nature of surrounding habitats, habitat fragmentation or recent on-Site disturbance, etc.
 - **Medium** – habitats within the Site are of moderate quality providing some opportunities for a given species/species group. The desk study reveals historic local occurrence of the species/species group, and the Site is within the national distribution and with suitable surrounding habitat. Factors limiting the likelihood of occurrence may include small habitat area, habitat isolation, and/or disturbance.
 - **High** – habitats within the Site are of high quality for a given species/species group. The desk study provides evidence of local occurrence. The Site may be within/peripheral to a national or regional stronghold and/or has good quality surrounding habitat and good connectivity.
 - **Confirmed Presence** - presence confirmed from the most recent Site survey or by recent, confirmed records.
- 3.6.3 The CIEEM EcIA guidelines (CIEEM, 2018) state that *"the importance of an ecological feature should be considered within a defined geographical context"*. The suggested frames of reference within the CIEEM EcIA guidelines have been appropriately adapted, appropriate to the Site and Proposed Development. These frames of reference are:
- International and European
 - National (England)
 - Regional (Northwest)
 - County (Greater Manchester)
 - Borough (Rochdale)
 - Parish (Littleborough)



4. Ecological Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

4.1 Zone of Influence

- 4.1.1 The Zone of Influence (Zol) for the Proposed Development is the area within which significant ecological impacts could occur to ecological features.
- 4.1.2 The Zol differs for each ecological feature, and the Zol has been clearly stated in the baseline assessment of each ecological feature below.
- 4.1.3 The Zol has been stated for every ecological feature except those where there is clearly a lack of suitable habitat at or adjacent to the Site, and therefore no pathways by which impacts could occur to the feature.
- 4.1.4 Where a Zol has been provided for a species that has subsequently been scoped out of further assessment, the Zol relates to the area considered as part of the initial scoping assessment for that ecological feature (i.e., the area within which potential impacts to the feature have been considered).

4.2 Statutory Wildlife Sites

Zol

- 4.2.1 The Zol for statutory wildlife sites is considered to be 500m from the Site boundary. This is due to the ecological connectivity of the Site to the wider area and impacts from the occupational phase of the Site to the local area (such as for recreational purposes).

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.2.2 There are two statutory wildlife sites within 2km of the Site which are both Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

South Pennine Moors SSSI

- 4.2.3 A 20,938ha moor c.350m of the Site comprised of blanket bog, mire, flush, wet and dry heath and acid grassland. The blanket bog is dominated by cotton-grass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) and heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), with some crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) and bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*). Areas of wet heath have cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*) and cranberry (*Vaccinium subg. Oxycoccus*). The acid grasslands are dominated by mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*) and wavy hair-grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*) with purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*) dominating on the wet slopes, along with the heath rush (*Juncus squarrosus*) in the wetter areas. Chickweed (*Stellaria media*), wintergreen (*Pyrola minor*) and bog pondweed (*Potamogeton polygonifolius*) occur at the Site but are rare in the region. The most species-rich and biodiverse communities are found at wet flushes. The Site is extremely important for a variety of bird species such as curlew (*Numenius arquata*) and skylark (*Alauda arvensis*).
- 4.2.4 The Site lies within the impact zone for South Pennine Moors SSSI and is not a qualifying development under the assessment criteria.
- 4.2.5 Due to the absence of similar habitat on Site, no direct connection to the Site and no additional increase in existing recreational pressure to the local area due to the Proposed Development formalising the existing use of the Site as a camping facility, it is considered that no anticipated significant, direct or indirect impacts would arise from the Proposed Development.

Rochdale Canal SSSI

- 4.2.6 The Site lies within the impact zone for Rochdale Canal SSSI located c.1.4km north of the Site. It is designated as a SSSI for the presence of a significant population floating water plantain (*Luronium natans*) within a diverse community of aquatic plants. It also acts as an important wildlife corridor



through the area.

- 4.2.7 The Proposed Development is not a qualifying development within this impact zone and is not a qualifying development under the assessment criteria.
- 4.2.8 Due to the absence of similar habitat on Site, no direct connection to the Site and no additional increase in existing recreational pressure to the local area due to the Proposed Development formalising the existing use of the Site as a camping facility. Therefore, it is considered that no anticipated significant, direct or indirect impacts would arise from the Proposed Development.

Recommendations

- 4.2.9 No further survey or assessment regarding statutory wildlife sites is required and no significant effects to statutory wildlife sites are likely to arise as a result of the Proposed Development.

4.3 Non-Statutory Wildlife Sites

ZoI

- 4.3.1 The ZoI for non-statutory wildlife sites is considered to be 500m from the Site boundary. This is due to the ecological connectivity of the Site to the wider area and impacts from the occupational phase of the Site to the local area (such as for recreational purposes).

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.3.2 There is one non-statutory site within 1km of the Site which is a Site of Biological Importance (SBI), known as Hollingworth Lake and surrounding SBI. This site is a 54ha area c.100m west of the Site comprised of a lake, broad-leaved woodland, scrub, flush, and fen. The waterbody is important for a variety of birds such as reed bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) and Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*). Wintering species include goosander (*Mergus merganser*), teal (*Anas crecca*), goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*), whooper swan (*Cygnus cygnus*), mute swan (*Cygnus olor*), siskin (*Carduelis spinus*), lesser redpoll (*Acanthis cabaret*), fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) and redwing (*Turdus iliacus*).

Recommendation

- 4.3.3 Due to the separation of the Site from the SBI via no direct ecological pathways and a low-density residential area around the Site situated uphill from the SBI, it is unlikely direct or indirect adverse effects are likely to arise from the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

4.4 Habitats

- 4.4.1 A plan of the habitats detailed below is provided at Appendix 2.
- 4.4.2 The assessment of importance within section 4.4 relates solely to the botanical importance of habitats at the Site. It does not take use or possible use by protected species into account as this is addressed within section 4.5.

ZoI

- 4.4.3 The ZoI for habitats in relation to the Proposed Development is the habitats within the Site boundary only. This is because adjacent habitats are of limited ecological importance and impacts to adjacent habitats as a result of the Proposed Development are unlikely to occur.

Modified Grassland

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.4.4 Modified grassland was the dominant habitat at the Site. The habitat had clearly been subject to historic nutrient input, and the botanical species present reflected this modification with vigorous/competitive species being dominant at the Site.



- 4.4.5 Ruderal species were present within the sward and had colonised large areas of the grassland, though these were not sufficiently dominant to qualify as a habitat in their own right.
- 4.4.6 Perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*) were the dominant grass species present at the Site with occasional cock's foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Forb species included common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum* agg.), teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*).
- 4.4.7 The modified grassland is not considered to be ecologically important due to the small extent of the habitat at the Site, the limited botanical diversity and the nutrient enrichment of the soils.
- 4.4.8 Large areas of the modified grassland are likely to be lost as a result of the Proposed Development for the installation of the glamping pods, this loss will not result in a significant ecological effect.

Scrub - Bramble

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.4.9 An area of scrub was present along the southern and eastern boundary of the Site. Where vegetation had colonised in this area, it was dominated by bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). There were large areas of common nettle throughout these areas.
- 4.4.10 The scrub is not considered to be ecologically important due to its relatively low botanical diversity (which is not considered likely to be significantly different in the spring/summer months).
- 4.4.11 The scrub will be removed as part of the Proposed Development. The removal of the scrub will not result in a significant ecological effect.

Trees

- 4.4.12 Along the northern and eastern boundary was a line of trees comprising sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), small-leaved lime, horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), common alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and Norway spruce (*Picea abies*).
- 4.4.13 Along the western boundary was a group of trees comprising horse chestnut, common alder, silver birch, common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), English holly, Norway spruce, pedunculate oak, rowan, Swedish whitebeam (*Sorbus intermedia*), small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*) and smooth-leaved elm (*Ulmus carpinifolia*).
- 4.4.14 These trees were a mixture of early to semi mature specimens in good condition providing structural diversity and maturity to the onsite vegetation and were considered to be ecologically important at the Parish level due to their age, future contribution, and local connectivity.

Recommendations

- 4.4.15 All trees should be retained and protected throughout the development as the trees on Site were considered to be ecologically important at the Parish level and cannot be replaced in the short to medium term. They provide an element of structural diversity and maturity and connectivity to the surrounding area to/from the Site which would not be readily replaced with planting of smaller/younger trees.
- 4.4.16 The retained trees should be protected appropriately throughout the construction phase in accordance with BS5837 (BSI, 2012). An Arboricultural consultant should be consulted regarding the protection of the trees to be retained on Site, during the construction phase of the development to ensure they remain in good health post-development.



- 4.4.17 Any trees that must be removed as part of the Proposed Development should be replaced like-for-like with appropriate species as part of a landscaping scheme with consultation from an Arboriculturist and Ecologist where impacts are unavoidable.

4.5 Species Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.5.1 Biological records have been provided by Greater Manchester Record Centre (GMRC, 2021). The data will be licensed for use by Wharton and the Client for a 12-month period, it is not owned by Wharton, or the Client and ownership of the data remains with the data provider.
- 4.5.2 Please note that all data from pre-1996 (25+ years) has been filtered from the data search as data of this age and older is unlikely to be significant to the Proposed Development.
- 4.5.3 Where a species/species group has been scoped out of further assessment below, no significant effects (adverse or otherwise) to this species are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development, and no legislative breach in respect of the species legal protection is anticipated.

Badger

ZoI

- 4.5.4 The ZoI for badgers is considered to be the Site only. No important habitats for badgers are considered to be affected outside of the Site boundary by the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.5.5 There are ten records for badger setts and 23 records of other signs within 2km of the Site. The closest record of a sett was c.1.3km north of the Site in 1996.
- 4.5.6 No evidence of badger was identified at the Site, and it is unlikely on the basis of the current use of the Site, the boundary fence and wall and surrounding adjacent habitat that badger will migrate into the Site.
- 4.5.7 The risk of a breach of legislation in respect of badger from the Proposed Development is considered to be negligible.

Bats

ZoI

- 4.5.8 The ZoI for bats is considered to be the Site only. No important habitats for bats are considered to be affected outside of the Site boundary by the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects - Commuting and Foraging Habitat

- 4.5.9 There are 196 records for commuting and foraging bats within 2km of the Site between 1996 and 2019. Species include:
- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
 - Soprano pipistrelle (*P. pygmaeus*)
 - Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)
 - *Myotis* sp
 - Nathusius pipistrelle (*P. nathusii*)
 - Noctule (*Nyctalus noctule*)
- 4.5.10 The closest record was for common pipistrelle c.0.5km south of the Site.
- 4.5.11 The habitats at the Site have low suitability for foraging bats. Connectivity to/from the Site is good but the botanical species diversity (which would suggest an abundance of invertebrate



prey) is very low throughout the Site.

- 4.5.12 Suitable foraging habitat is present at Hollingworth lake and the surrounding grassland and woodland areas, and the Site has good connectivity to these habitats adjacent to the Site. The Proposed Development will not adversely affect this tree line or the suitable foraging habitat, therefore no fragmentation effect is considered likely to arise as a result of the Proposed Development.
- 4.5.13 The Site is likely to be ecologically important for foraging or commuting bats, and some significant effects (adverse or otherwise) to commuting or foraging bats are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects - Roosting Habitat

- 4.5.14 There are 37 records for bat roosts within 2km of the Site between 1996 and 2019. Species include:
- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
 - Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)
 - Soprano pipistrelle (*P. pygmaeus*)
 - Whiskered/ Brandt's bat (*M. mystacinus*/ *M. brandti*),

The closest record was for a pipistrelle species c.1km east of the Site.

- 4.5.15 Three buildings were present at the Site. The Main Cottage (Building 1), The toilet block (Building 2) and the wooden shed (Building 3).

The Main Cottage – Building 1

- 4.5.16 Building 1 was an existing occupied stone cottage with a slate roof. The building provided multiple roosting opportunities for bat via missing mortar, lifted tiles and gaps around the chimney stack.
- 4.5.17 Building 1 was only assessed externally, however due to the presence of multiple potential roosting features this building was determined to have high suitability for roosting bats.

The Toilet Block – Building 2

- 4.5.18 Building 2 was a single storey brick-built toilet and shower block used by the camping ground occupants during their stay. This building was well sealed and in good condition with no deterioration or potential roosting features.
- 4.5.19 Building 2 has negligible suitability for roosting bats, no suitability for or evidence of roosting bats was identified during the PRA.

Wooden Shed – Building 3

- 4.5.20 Building 3 was a small wooden shed. This structure was assessed externally and was a well-sealed structure in good condition with no deterioration or potential roosting features noted.
- 4.5.21 Building 3 has negligible suitability for roosting bats, no suitability for or evidence of roosting bats was identified during the PRA.

Trees

- 4.5.22 The trees at the Site have negligible suitability for roosting bats, no suitability for or evidence of roosting bats was identified during the PRA of trees at the Site.



GCN and other Amphibians

ZoI

- 4.5.23 The ZoI for GCN is the Site and ponds within 250m of the Site, due to the nature of the Proposed Development it is unlikely that GCN will be impacted.
- 4.5.24 The ZoI for other amphibians is the Site only.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.5.25 There are two records for GCN within 2km of the Site. Both records were c.1.8km southwest of the Site in 2017.
- 4.5.26 No records of European Protected Species with regards to GCN were provided on MAGIC map (DEFRA, 2021) within 500m of the Site, The closest was located over 2.5km northwest of the Site
- 4.5.27 A single waterbody has been identified within 250m of the Site (DEFRA, 2021) (Google Earth Pro, 2021) known as Hollingworth Lake, this waterbody is known for its waterfowl and large open expanse of water also used for recreational uses. It is therefore unlikely that amphibians, including GCN are present within the lake.
- 4.5.28 Whilst the Site supports suitable habitat for amphibians via the grassland and scrub habitat along with the dry-stone wall along the northern boundary, large areas of the grassland will be affected by the Proposed Development for the installation of the glamping pods.
- 4.5.29 Although the grassland on Site will be adversely affected by the Proposed Development, due to the factors mentioned above it is unlikely the Site will be ecologically important for amphibians. Precautionary good practise measures have been described below.

Hedgehog

ZoI

- 4.5.30 The ZoI for hedgehog is considered to be the Site only as this is the only likely area where impacts to hedgehog may occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.5.31 There are 13 records for hedgehog within 2km of the Site between 2009 and 2020. The closest record was c.0.3km southwest of the Site.
- 4.5.32 The Site supports suitable foraging and shelter habitat for hedgehog. It is unlikely that important populations of hedgehog are present at the Site due to the relative isolation of the Site from the wider area by residential gardens (including close board fences), sealed dry stone walls and access roads. The Site is therefore unlikely to be ecologically important for hedgehog.
- 4.5.33 The Proposed Development has the potential to adversely affect individual hedgehog that may use the Site via direct impacts from machinery or becoming trapped in excavations. This effect is unlikely to be significant, however precautionary measures have been recommended to reduce the likelihood of potential impacts occurring to a negligible level.

Invertebrates

ZoI

- 4.5.34 The ZoI for invertebrates is considered to be the Site only as this is the only likely area where impacts to invertebrates may occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.5.35 There are 180 records for invertebrates within 2km of the Site. Species include:



- Autumnal rustic (*Eugnorisma glareosa*)
- Blood vein (*Timandra comae*)
- Buff ermine (*Spilarctia luteum*)
- Cinnabar (*Tyria jacobaeae*)
- Common carpet (*Epirrhoe alternata*)
- Dot moth (*Melanchra persicariae*)
- Grey dagger (*Acronicta psi*)
- Knot grass (*Acronicta rumicis*)
- Rosy minor (*Litoligia literosa*)
- Sallow (*Xanthia icteritia*)
- Shoulder striped wainscot (*Leucania comma*)
- Small heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*)
- Small phoenix (*Ecliptopera silaceata*)
- Small square spot (*Diarsia rubi*)
- Wall (*Lasiommata megera*)
- White ermine (*Spilosoma lubricipeda*)

4.5.36 The closest record was for small heath c.1.1km southwest of the Site.

4.5.37 The Site supports very low botanical species diversity, and whilst common invertebrate species likely use the plant species present at the Site as food, larval and egg-laying plants, the likelihood of red data book species or other notable species being present at the Site is negligible.

4.5.38 The Site is therefore unlikely to be important for invertebrates.

Hazel dormouse

ZoI

4.5.39 The ZoI for hazel dormice is considered to be the Site only as this is the only likely area where impacts to hazel dormice may occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

4.5.40 There are no records for hazel dormouse within 2km of the Site.

4.5.41 The Site lies outside of the geographic range of this species; this combined with the limited habitat on Site means that the Site is highly unlikely to be ecologically important for hazel dormouse, and the species is highly unlikely to be present at the Site.

Reptiles

ZoI

4.5.42 The ZoI for reptiles is considered to be the Site only as this is the only likely area where impacts to reptiles may occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

4.5.43 There are no records for reptiles within 2km of the Site.

4.5.44 The Site supports limited suitable habitat for reptiles, its regular disturbance by the existing use of



the site as a camping facility suggests that the presence of reptiles at the Site is unlikely although possible. It is therefore highly unlikely that the Site is ecologically important for reptiles, however a precautionary method statement for reptiles has been recommended below.

Otter, Water vole and White-clawed crayfish

- 4.5.45 There are 13 records for otter within 2km of the Site between 2018 and 2020. The closest record was c.0.85km northwest of the Site.
- 4.5.46 There are three records for water vole within 2km of the Site. The closest record was c.0.13km northwest of the Site in 2007 associated with the canal.
- 4.5.47 There are no records for white-clawed crayfish within 2km of the Site.
- 4.5.48 Otter, water vole and white clawed crayfish are heavily associated with, and fundamentally reliant upon watercourses. Hollingworth Lake is present to the west of the Site at the base of the hill, however, is separated from the Site via access roads and the hillside residential area. No watercourses are likely to be adversely affected by the Proposed Development.
- 4.5.49 No adverse effect to otter, water vole or white clawed crayfish are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development.

Wild birds

ZoI

- 4.5.50 The ZoI for wild birds is the Site only, as this is the only area where impacts to wild birds may occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.5.51 There are 400 records for birds within 2km of the Site. Species include:
- Barn owl (*Tyto alba*)
 - Common scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)
 - Scaup (*Aythya marila*)
 - Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)
 - Song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)
 - Spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*)
 - Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)
 - Tree pipit (*Anthus trivialis*)
 - Twite (*Linaria flavirostris*)
 - White fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*)
 - Willow tit (*Poecile montanus*)
 - Yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)
- 4.5.52 The closest record was for tree pipit c.0.1km east from the Site.
- 4.5.53 The Site supports limited suitable nesting habitat for wild birds via the grassland, trees and scrub. The grassland at the Site has low suitability for nesting birds owing to the exposed nature, short sward height and regular disturbance by the current use of the Site as a camping facility.
- 4.5.54 The Site is unlikely to support important populations of wintering, breeding or migratory bird species due to the type of habitats present, their location in a highly disturbed urban



environment, and the relatively small size of the Site.

- 4.5.55 There is a risk of a breach of Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (HMSO, 1981) in relation to damage to/destruction of bird nests and their eggs if mixed scrub vegetation removal is undertaken during the nesting bird season. Mitigation measures have been proposed to reduce the risk of a breach of legislation to a negligible level.
- 4.5.56 It is unlikely that the Proposed Development will result in significant adverse ecological effects to wild birds, however the potential for a breach in legislation will require mitigation which is detailed within this report.

Protected plants

Zol

- 4.5.57 The Zol for protected plants is the Site only, as this is the only area where impacts to protected plants may occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Baseline and Assessment of Impacts and Effects

- 4.5.58 There are 11 records for plants within 2km of the Site which are all for floating water plantain (*Luronium natans*) between 2002 and 2013. The closest record was c.0.8km northwest of the Site.
- 4.5.59 Due to the nutrient enriched nature of the Site, its management, and regular disturbance by its existing use as a camping facility, the Site is not likely to support protected or notable plant species. No protected or notable plant species were observed at the Site during the field survey, though the limitation on botanical survey season must be noted.

4.6 Invasive Species

- 4.6.1 There are no records for invasive species within 2km of the Site.
- 4.6.2 Areas of the Site were dominated by Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) expanding around Building 1 and along the southern boundary.
- 4.6.3 The Proposed Development is likely to involve the clearance of some areas of the Himalayan balsam and therefore appropriate measures are detailed below to ensure the correct control measures and spoil disposal is implemented via an appropriate invasive species management scheme.

4.7 Species for Further Consideration

- 4.7.1 Six species/species groups have been given further consideration within this assessment, these are trees, bats, amphibians and reptiles, hedgehog, nesting birds and invasive species.

5. Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

5.1 Trees

- 5.1.1 All trees should be retained and protected throughout the Proposed Development as the trees on Site were considered to be ecologically important at the Parish level and could not be replaced in the short to medium term. These trees provide an element of structural diversity and maturity and connectivity to the surrounding area to/from the Site which would not be readily replaced with planting of smaller/younger trees.
- 5.1.2 The retained trees should be protected appropriately throughout the construction phase in accordance with BS5837 (BSI, 2012). An Arboricultural consultant should be consulted regarding the protection of the trees to be retained on Site, during the construction phase of the development to ensure they remain in good health post-development.
- 5.1.3 Any trees that must be removed as part of the Proposed Development should be replaced like-



for-like with appropriate species as part of a landscaping scheme with consultation from an Arboriculturist and Ecologist where impacts are unavoidable.

5.2 Bats

- 5.2.1 Building 1 on Site has high suitability for roosting bats. This Building is outlined to be retained throughout the Proposed Development with no change. However, should Building 1 form part of the application, a minimum of three further surveys needs to be undertaken to determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats.

5.3 Amphibians and Reptiles

- 5.3.1 Any clearance works of the grassland should be completed under an appropriate Reptile and Amphibian Method Statement which should detail the working methods to avoid potential harm to these species during the construction period including timing of works and directional clearance of the grassland.

5.4 Hedgehog

- 5.4.1 It is possible that individual hedgehog may be impacted by Site clearance and excavation works (injury/death and trapping respectively). As a precautionary measure, should mixed scrub be required to be cleared at the Site, this must be checked for hedgehog immediately prior to removal to reduce the likelihood of adverse effects to this species.
- 5.4.2 Any open excavations which cannot feasibly be infilled overnight must also be covered with a solid sheet material (i.e., plywood) to prevent fauna from falling into excavations and becoming trapped. Should this not be possible, a shallow slope must be dug into the excavation prior to it being left overnight to allow an escape route for any fauna that may fall in. All excavations should be checked for fauna in the morning prior to works commencing.

5.5 Invasive Species

- 5.5.1 The removal of the Himalayan Balsam to facilitate the Proposed Development will need to be undertaken under an invasive species management plan to ensure the entire plant, root system and the surrounding soils are treated and disposed of appropriately.

5.6 Wild Birds

- 5.6.1 No further surveys for breeding, migratory or wintering birds are required at the Site.
- 5.6.2 Birds and their nests are legally protected (HMSO, 1981), and many species are listed as Species of Principal Importance (HMSO, 2006). Priority bird species are also afforded protection in planning through national (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2019) and local planning policy.
- 5.6.3 If the removal of the scrub and trees is required on Site to facilitate the Proposed Development, it must avoid the main nesting bird season (March to August inclusive), or be checked by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately prior to clearance to check for nesting birds if undertaken during the nesting season.
- 5.6.4 The netting of any suitable bird nesting habitat should be prohibited (CIEEM & RSPB, 2019).

6. Ecological Enhancement Opportunities

- 6.1.1 The Proposed Development should include bat boxes. The bat boxes should be installed a minimum of 4m above ground level, preferably on south-facing elevations on retained trees.
- 6.1.2 The Proposed Development should also include bird boxes. All of which must be positioned on north-facing aspects, out of direct sunlight (to avoid overheating eggs and



chicks) and at a height of c.4m (to avoid predation by domestic cats). The provision of the specific bird boxes listed below will deliver additional nesting opportunities. These should include:

- Three general nesting boxes; two bird boxes with a 25mm entrance hole and one bird box with a 32mm entrance hole, to be placed on suitable trees around the Site.
- Two open-fronted nest boxes which must be placed in well concealed locations within the existing scrub (if retained) to prevent egg and chick predation.

6.1.3 Two hedgehog shelters should be provided at the Site as part of the Proposed Development, to enhance the Site for sheltering hedgehogs. These should be placed within vegetation and away from roads.

6.1.4 Any landscaping design for the Proposed Development should include the planting of a wide-range of native species, including nectar and pollen-rich species, to attract invertebrate prey for a variety of animals in the local area, which will enhance the Site's biodiversity. These can be chosen from the RHS: Perfect for Pollinators List (RHS, 2019).

7. Conclusion

7.1.1 **No further surveys for protected species are considered to be necessary in respect of the current Proposed Development (with the retention of Building 1 on Site) and subsequent planning application.**

7.1.2 Should, at any point, Building 1 form part of the application, further surveys will be required. These will comprise a minimum of three further surveys to determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats.

7.1.3 An Amphibian and Reptile Method Statement should be compiled for the Site.

7.1.4 Himalayan Balsam was identified on Site, this species should be removed from Site under an invasive species management plan.

7.1.5 Precautionary measures for nesting birds and terrestrial mammals should be implemented to avoid breaches of legislation.

7.1.6 Other enhancement recommendations include the installation of bird and bat boxes.

7.1.7 The landscaping scheme should include the planting of a wide-range of native species, including nectar and pollen-rich species, to be chosen from the RHS: Perfect for Pollinators list (RHS, 2019).

7.1.8 In the highly unlikely event that protected species be unexpectedly found during construction, works should cease immediately, and an ecologist/Natural England should be contacted for advice on how to proceed.



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Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan (Google Earth Pro, 2021)





Appendix 2 – UK Habitat in Classification Plan



Scale: 1:500

Site Boundary

g4 - modified grassland

w1g6 - line of trees

h3 - dense scrub

u1b5 - buildings

u1b6 - other developed land

u1e - dry stone wall

Tree

Target Note - himalayan balsam areas

Date: 02/11/2021	
Client: Rochdale Borough Council	
Project: Hollingworth Glamping Pod Site	
Title: Habitat Plan	
Map file reference	Plan No.
211102 1340b ECO V1	E001

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Appendix 3 – 250m buffer from the Site showing waterbodies





Appendix 4 - Local Planning Policy Excerpts (Rochdale Borough Council, 2016)

G7 - Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

We will ensure that sites and features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are given full and appropriate recognition and protection. Opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity, creating new sites and features of interest and improving opportunities for public enjoyment will be supported. No development should result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity interest in the borough and overall development in the borough should result in a net gain.

Particular priorities for biodiversity and geodiversity are:

1. **The South Pennine Moors** - our focus is to maintain and enhance the peatland habitats of the moorland and to support development, land and water management activities which provide an opportunity to conserve and enhance the value of moorland for upland breeding birds of conservation significance and the habitats on which they depend and which do not harm biodiversity value. Our focus is the designated Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation but also the wider moorland where such interest is present or could be supported through appropriate development or land management. We will also protect and support enhancement measures for areas of geodiversity value.
2. **The Rochdale Canal** - our focus is to ensure that the Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation and the wider biodiversity interest of the canal is given full and appropriate protection and ensure that development which delivers the economic and recreational value of the Rochdale Canal and its wider corridor supports and does not harm its biodiversity value.
3. **Upland farmland** - our focus is to ensure that the biodiversity interest of upland farmland including its value for birds, woodland and grassland is protected and opportunities for enhancement and the creation of new interest maximised through land management improvements and appropriate development activities.
4. **Countryside around towns** - our focus is to protect and enhance the biodiversity interest of river valleys, woodland, water and farmland including the reclamation of derelict and neglected land and flood risk management measures. We will also support actions which enhance public access and enjoyment of countryside close to urban areas including Local Nature Reserves and the wider countryside.
5. **Urban Areas** - our priority is to protect and enhance existing urban biodiversity and to support opportunities for new urban biodiversity corridors, sites and features including sustainable urban drainage schemes, new public realm provision, street trees and urban woodlands, ponds and lodges, green roofs and natural play areas.
6. **Designated sites of ecological importance** - will be given appropriate protection according to their European, national or local status and in accordance with policies in other development plan documents, supporting Supplementary Planning Documents and Biodiversity Action Plans.
7. **Protected Species:** Development proposals which would affect a species protected by law or its habitat will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. there is no adverse impact on the species concerned;
 - b. damage to habitats is minimal and alternative habitat provision is effective in maintaining those species.

Opportunities to protect, enhance and create features of biodiversity or geodiversity interest should be informed by the detail of any formal designation of a site or area and supporting plans and guidance such as Local Biodiversity Action Plans, Green Infrastructure Strategies and Action Plans and the Council's Biodiversity and Development SPD.

We will expect development proposals and improvements to:

- a. Protect and include existing biodiversity (including established biodiversity interest on brownfield land) within new developments, public realm and open spaces and meet the requirements of the Biodiversity and Development SPD, Greater Manchester and Local Biodiversity Action Plans;
- b. Protect and enhance existing features such as peatland, ponds, wetlands, reservoirs, mill lodges, trees, hedges, wooded areas, meadows, flora and fauna;
- c. Take opportunities to promote biodiversity and create new habitats through new development using landscaping and building and construction features wherever possible (e.g. ponds, species of vegetation, green roofs and walls, bat boxes, roof space, appropriate nest boxes and landscaping);
- d. Enhance strategic wildlife corridors and the most natural areas and ensure that habitats and corridors are not fragmented by development;
- e. Improve access where appropriate to new or existing biodiversity interest for public enjoyment; and
- f. Protect important geology and take opportunities to increase interest and accessibility.



Appendix 5 - Site Photographs

Figure 1. Silver Birch within the garden of Building 1.



Figure 2. Existing tree along southeastern boundary.



Figure 3. The existing southeastern boundary.



Figure 4. The existing driveway off Skye Road.



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Figure 5. Group of trees within the western extent of the Site



Figure 6. Extent of the grassland and northern boundary tree line on Site



Figure 7. Northern boundary tree line and dry stone wall.



Figure 8. Area of modified grassland



Figure 9. Eastern extent of the Site dominated by bramble scrub and nettle



Figure 10. Large areas of the Site dominated by Himalayan Balsam



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Figure 11. Existing camping facilities.



Figure 12. Existing drystone wall along northern boundary.



Figure 13. Existing Cottage northern elevation – Building 1



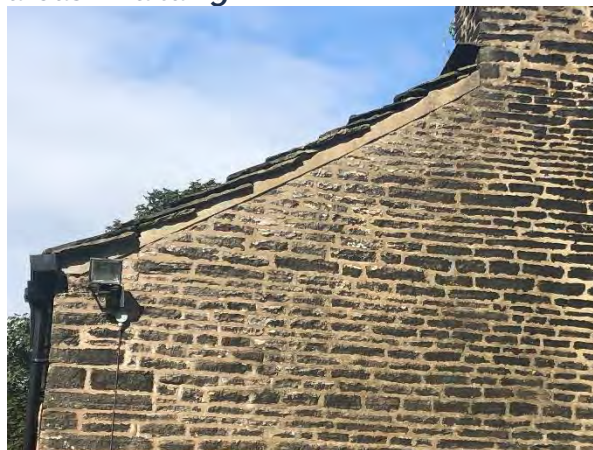
Figure 14. Existing cottage eastern elevation – Building 1



Figure 15. Existing Cottage, southern elevation Building 1



Figure 16. Eastern elevation slate tiles lifted in areas – Building 1



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Figure 17. Slate roof structure with access for crevice dwelling bat species



Figure 18. Slate roof structure with access for crevice dwelling bat species.



Figure 19. Existing toilet and shower block to be demolished



Figure 20. Sealed gable of the existing toilet block



Figure 21. Roof structure of the toilet block



Figure 22. Sealed gable of the existing toilet block



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Figure 23. Wooden shed on Site



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