

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

February 2026

Project Reference: PR-25-0364

Bamford Fieldhouse Cricket Club

Hollin Lane

Bamford

Rochdale

OL11 5PW

National Grid Reference: SD 86122 12922



Bamford Fieldhouse Cricket Club, Hollin Lane, Bamford, Rochdale, OL11 5PW
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Document Title	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Project Reference	PR-25-0364
Issue Number	1.0
Prepared for	CV Planning
Prepared by	Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd

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Survey Date	11/12/2025	
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Review Dates	25/02/2026	27/02/2026
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Date of Issue	04/03/2026	

Revision	Date	Amendment
-		

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As per CIEEM Guidelines, in most cases ecological surveys are likely to be valid for 12 – 18 months. Beyond this, an updated site visit, desk study and/or report are likely to be required.

Executive Summary

As part of a proposed planning application with Rochdale Council concerning a development at Bamford Fieldhouse Cricket Club in Bamford, Tyrer Ecological Consultants carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in December 2025.

The PEA was commissioned by CV Planning on behalf of their client; proposals are understood to involve the creation of six padel courts with associated pedestrian access and an additional parking area.

Extensive findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented throughout the report; however, the reader should be aware of the following further surveys and key recommendations.

Key recommendations:

Birds

Regarding wider breeding bird species, high levels of activity of a range of passerine bird species were observed within the blackthorn scrub in the north-east section of the site, which offer suitable nesting platforms and are highly likely to be used within the nesting bird season of March – August, inclusive.

In order to prevent impacting upon these potential nesting sites, it is recommended that any vegetation clearance is undertaken outside of the nesting bird season of March – August inclusive. If works are proposed during this period, then a pre-commencement check should be carried out by a competent and professional Ecologist for signs of nesting behaviour within 48 hours or less prior to works commencing.

Other terrestrial mammals

Whilst no direct evidence of badger or hedgehog was located within the site boundary, both species are likely to exist in proximity to the site and there are no barriers around the site which would prevent access by these species, and thus their presence on the site is considered possible.

*A programme of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) are recommended to be enacted on the site to prevent impacting these species. See **Section 7.0** for details.*

Herpetofauna

Despite the unsuitable nature of the site-surrounding habitats, the on-site habitats provide suitability for common amphibians and reptiles and as such their presence on site is considered possible. In addition to this, the vegetated turf mats act as potentially valuable refugia that could be utilised by these species.

The RAMs detailed previous for terrestrial mammals should be extended to cover common amphibians and reptiles. The vegetated turf mats should be subject to a pre-commencement check, included within the RAMs procedures, for the presence of amphibians and reptiles prior to any works taking place. Any of these features to be unaffected by the proposed works should be retained.

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1.0 Introduction & Scope

- 1.1 As part of a proposed planning application with Rochdale Council concerning a development at Bamford Fieldhouse Cricket Club, Tyrer Ecological Consultants carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in December 2025.
- 1.2 The PEA was commissioned by CV Planning on behalf of their client; proposals are understood to involve the creation of six padel courts with associated pedestrian access and an additional parking area. See **Figure 1.1** for a proposed site plan.

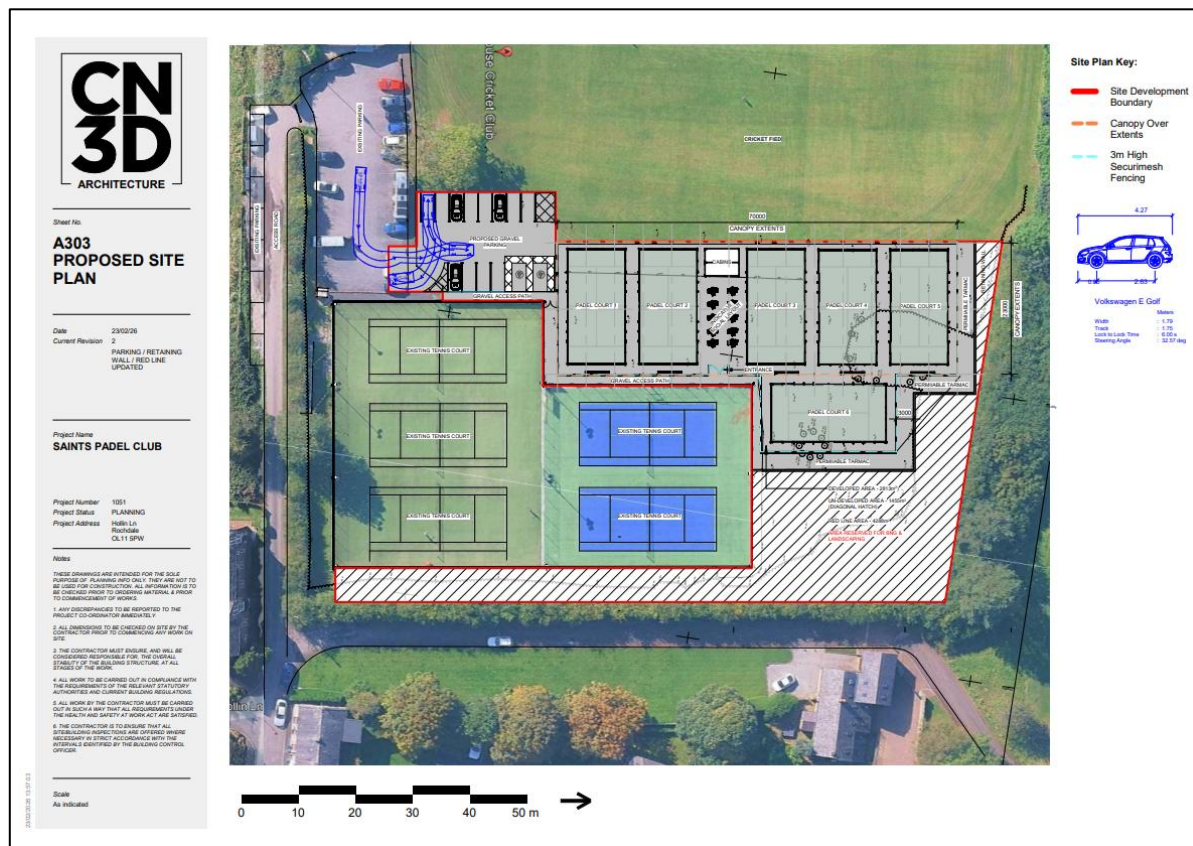


Figure 1.1 – Proposed site plan (© CN3D Architecture)

- 1.3 As part of the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) planning policies and obligations to the Planning Framework, ecological surveys are generally required prior to planning permission being granted, particularly where protected / priority habitats or species are, or may be, present, and where these species have the potential to be impacted by the proposals for which the applicant seeks consent.
- 1.4 The PEA was carried out in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd Edition' (CIEEM, 2017) and all associated 'CIEEM Competencies for Species Survey (CSS)', whilst this report has been presented in accordance with the British Standard 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

Aims & Objectives

- 1.5 The appraisal aims to ascertain the baseline nature of the site and, where possible, obtain information on any priority wildlife habitats, or species, that may be present and if so determine if they will be affected by the proposals. The survey, therefore, includes the following objectives:

- Gather and present baseline ecological information on site / off site (as necessary) within a suitable report,
- Identify, measure and map habitats using UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (2023) habitats,
- Identify any likely ecological constraints associated with the proposals for the site (i.e. the presence of protected / priority habitats or species that exist within the confines of the application boundary, or zone of influence (ZOI),
- Identify measures likely to be required in line with the mitigation hierarchy (i.e. impact avoidance > minimisation > mitigation > compensation),
- Identify any additional survey requirements,
- Identify general enhancement opportunities for biodiversity in line with national and local planning policy,
- Set out any requirements for post-development monitoring, management, or other commitments, and how they can be secured, where required.

1.6 As a functioning component of this specific ecological appraisal:

- Habitats on site were identified, measured and mapped using the UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (2023).

1.7 This report therefore provides important baseline information as derived from the diurnal appraisal process outlined above and recommends any necessary additional surveys, or work, where applicable, to provide a conclusive ecological impact assessment.

1.8 The Applicant should be aware then that if during the appraisal:

- The application site/area was found to be suitable for any European Protected Species (EPS), otherwise protected, or priority habitats / communities / species, or,
- Signs of use by particular protected species were found, or suspected, or,
- Seasonal constraints significantly limit the gathering of ecological information to arrive at an accurate conclusion upon which the planning application can proceed;

Then more detailed surveys may be recommended where necessary, to allow the ecologist to arrive at a conclusive impact assessment.

1.9 If protected species were subsequently found either during appraisal or during detailed further surveys and / or may be affected by the development proposals, then a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) may be required to proceed with the development.

1.10 Where more detailed surveys are recommended by the Ecologist, following ecological appraisal, then LPAs, on the advice of their ecological advisors, may not grant permission until such time that all relevant material information is gathered in accordance with their obligations to the legislature.

1.11 Protected / priority species omitted from this report have been discounted due to negating factors including obvious absence / isolation of suitable habitats, and / or distributional aspects negating the necessity to survey for them, and / or the proposed works were not considered to impact the species or encroach on areas where the species may be present.

2.0 Legislation & Policy

2.1 The legislature considered for the purposes of this report includes the following:

- Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development (2019),
- BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development (2013),
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended),
- Countryside Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (2000),
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006),
- National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (as last revised),
- Protection of Badgers Act (1992),
- The Environment Act (2021), including all six statutory instruments in relation to BNG,
- The Hedgerow Regulations (1997),
- The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019,
- Town and Country Planning Act (1990),
- Wild Mammals Protection Act (1996),
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

2.2 These acts entail relevance to both protected and invasive species. The degree of protection offered to taxa provided within existing UK and EU legislature often varies depending on species / group, for example, some species may purely be protected during one of its life stages (e.g. common species of breeding bird whilst nesting / with eggs / young); some species may receive full protection within the EU, whereas others may be protected solely on a national basis (e.g. grass snake).

2.3 **Table 2.1** contains appropriate legislature to each species / group specifically respective to the site and provides the relevance of said legislation.

Table 2.1 – Relevant legislation

Species Group / Species	Relevant Legislation	Level of Protection
Badger	Protection of Badgers Act (1992), Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)	Illegal to: Wilfully kill, injure or take a badger (or attempt to do so), cruelly ill-eradicate a badger, dig for a badger, Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy a badger sett or obstruct access to it, cause a dog to enter a badger sett, disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett.
Bats	CRoW Act (2000) Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)	All British bats and their roosts are afforded full protection from damage/destruction and bats may not be injured/killed/taken at any life stage. Once identified, roosts are protected whether the bat is in occupation or not.

Species Group / Species	Relevant Legislation	Level of Protection
Birds	CRoW Act (2000) Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)	All wild birds (with only minor exceptions) and their nests whilst being built or containing eggs or dependant young are protected. Birds listed on Schedule 1 Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) are afforded a greater level of protection.
Great Crested Newt (GCN)	CRoW Act (2000) Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)	Great Crested Newts (GCN's) are fully protected from disturbance, killing, injuring or possession at any life stage. Confirmed breeding ponds and resting places are afforded the same protection.
Invasive Plant Species	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019	Species listed within Schedule 9/Schedule 2 as invasive, including Japanese knotweed (<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>) and Himalayan balsam (<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>), for example, carry notoriety regarding development. The Acts make it an offence for any person to grow or cause to grow in the wild any plants listed as invasive.
Reptiles	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) – SL/SS Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) CRoW Act (2000)	All native reptile species have some degree of protection in the UK, through section 8(1) and (5) (specified in Schedule 5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Sand lizard and smooth snake are species of principal importance however with greater protection.
Terrestrial Invertebrates	CRoW Act (2000) Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2019) (EU Exit) Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)	Only certain terrestrial invertebrates (e.g. some butterflies, beetles, and spiders) are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act or the Habitats Regulations. These species are protected from killing, injuring, taking or selling, and in some cases, from disturbance or habitat destruction.

Relevant Policy

- 2.4 Guidance for Local Authorities: Extract from Office of the Deputy Prime Minister – Circular 06/2005:

“It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision”.

2.5 Paragraph 193 of the National Policy Planning Framework (as revised in December 2024) states:

“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) 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;

b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

c) 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 reasons¹ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”

2.6 The following policies from Rochdale Core Strategy² and Places for Everyone³, a long-term joint development plan for nine Greater Manchester districts including Rochdale Council, are considered relevant to this assessment (see **Table 2.2** below):

Table 2.2 – Relevant policies

Title	Summary
G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity	Developments with adverse impacts to protected species and habitats will not be permitted unless mitigation can be provided. New developments will be required to protect and include existing biodiversity within new developments, protect and enhance existing natural features, promote biodiversity and new habitat creation, enhance strategic wildlife corridors and improve access to areas of biodiversity interest for public enjoyment.
JP-G8 A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Development should increase the quality, quantity, extent and diversity of habitats, as well as the connections between them, enhancing existing management, protecting designated sites and facilitate greater access to nature, whilst supporting local initiatives such as the Great Manchester Wetlands Nature Recovery Network and safeguarding soil resources. It should also follow the mitigation hierarchy, avoid fragmenting habitats, achieve a measurable net gain of no less than 10% and make appropriate provision for long-term management of habitats and geological features.

¹ For example, infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act and hybrid bills), where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat

² See: <https://www.rochdale.gov.uk/downloads/file/405/core-strategy>

³ See: <https://www.greatchmanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/9578/places-for-everyone-joint-development-plan-document.pdf>

Priority Habitats & Species

- 2.7 In the United Kingdom, legal protection and otherwise legislative recognition is afforded to particular habitats and species based on a variety of ecological factors. These are typically referred to as priority habitats and species and can be identified under a variety of legislation and local policy, notably the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP), Section 41 (s.41) of the NERC Act as well as under Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPS).

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 As part of the ecological appraisal report, a desk-top and field-based study is conducted. Methods for both components of the appraisal are given below.

Desktop Study

- 3.2 Prior to a site visit, a desktop study was conducted using online resources to obtain information pertaining to any sites afforded statutory (e.g. SSSI) and non-statutory (e.g. LWS) designations for nature conservation within 2.0 kilometres of the site boundary. To do so, the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGiC – provided by DEFRA) and the Natural England Open Data Geoportal was accessed to gather such information; this particular interactive mapping service was also used to locate any locally granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSML) and species records to further inform conclusions concerning such species in the context of the study site and its proposed development.
- 3.3 Historic satellite imagery was reviewed using sources such as Google Earth (© 2025/26) to help establish past use of the land and determine the nature of adjoining and extending habitats; such information aids in the understanding of how the site might interact with its surroundings ecologically and its value in that context, and how the development may impact at a wider scale.
- 3.4 In addition, the Rochdale Council ‘Search planning applications’ function was utilised to help inform the desktop study by analysis of existing publicly accessible ecological survey results that have been carried out locally within the previous five years.
- 3.5 A commercial data request to the Local Environmental Records Centre (LERC) serving the area, in this case, Greater Manchester Local Record Centre has not been sourced at this time, with the combination of online EPSML data, extensive company records and the daytime survey data available to the ecologist considered to contain enough information in relation to the protected species likely to be present on site. **If, however, a data search is considered to be necessary by the Local Authority or advisory body to better inform the appraisal, a proportionate data search should be commissioned with results interpreted into the conclusions and recommendations of a re-issued / updated report.**

Field Survey

- 3.6 A daytime preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) was conducted on 11th December 2025 in clear, sunny conditions (8°C), 2/12 (Beaufort scale), average 20% cloud cover, by the following surveyors (see **Table 3.1** below).

Table 3.1 – Site surveyor credentials

Name	Description of most relevant credentials
Mr. G. Windle Qualifying CIEEM	- Junior Ecologist with a range of experience and currently undergoing extensive training, - BSc (Hons) Ecology & Wildlife Conservation, MSc Conservation Management, - Accredited agent on the Class 2 Natural England bat licence of Mrs. K. Wilding (2025-84395-CL18-BAT), - Meets the requirements of CIEEM's Competency Framework Section S (Surveying) to Capable or higher level.

Floristic assessment

Habitats

- 3.7 The survey followed the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHabs, 2023) methodology, which was introduced as the successor to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Phase 1 Habitat Methodology standards (JNCC, 2010) in conjunction with the nationwide roll out of Biodiversity Net-gain. Survey techniques were also carried out with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Technical Guidance Series “Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd Edition” (CIEEM, 2017).

Vegetation

- 3.8 During the survey walkover, botanical assemblages were assessed, and the land was inspected for the presence of red-listed (Stroh et al., 2014; Hodgetts, 2011), s.41 and LBAP species alongside specially protected species as listed under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981) (as amended) and / or Schedule 5 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2019) (EU Exit). Species nomenclature follows Stace, C. (2019) – definitive English names.
- 3.9 In addition to attributing ecological value to red-listed / BAP species, in accordance with existing CIEEM guidance, a geographic frame of reference is also adopted. Plant species and habitats may be recognised for their ecological value on a geographical scale which is adopted on a site-to-site basis (*International – National – Regional – County/Vice-County – Local*). For botanical species list compiled in full, see **Appendix II**.
- 3.10 In combination with assessing the area in relation to flora and habitats of conservation importance, the land was also assessed in relation to the presence of invasive non-native species (INNS) as listed under Schedule 9 (Part II) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 (IASO).

Faunal assessment

- 3.11 During site walkover, direct presence and / or evidence of priority fauna encountered was documented, whilst in tandem the area was assessed for the potential to support the priority species discussed in **Section 6.0**. The walkover also aimed to identify any ephemeral pools or unmapped waterbodies.

Bats

- 3.12 Criteria for preliminary bat roost assessment are based upon the determinants given in the Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023) (see **Figures 3.1 – 3.4**).
- 3.13 The site was assessed for bats; a daytime bat walkover (DBW) was undertaken to observe, assess and record any habitats or features suitable for usage by bats, either as commuting, foraging or roosting provision. Wider connectivity to other habitats was also considered during the DBW.
- 3.14 Buildings and other permanent / semi-permanent structures (where present) would be subject to a preliminary roost assessment (PRA), to identify potential areas which may be of value to bats and to determine evidence of use. This typically involves a systematic search of the external aspects of any structure(s), comprising an investigation of features known to be used by bats (for example roofing material, soffits, fascia, lead flashing hanging tiles) using a high-powered torch and close-focus binoculars, where necessary. Where possible, an internal

assessment of any structures was also carried out, with the aid of a high-powered torch and endoscope, where necessary, to identify any evidence of bat use of a structure. Field signs of bats typically comprise bat droppings, urine splashing, fur-oil staining, incidental animal presence, dead specimens and / or the presence of prey items, such as moth wings.

- 3.15 This assessment also included an assessment of any structures relative to their potential to offer winter roosting suitability for bats, with environmental conditions noted, including temperature, relative humidity, and a systematic inspection of any cracks, crevices and voids for bats undertaken. The information recorded was assessed relative to the non-classic hibernation site criteria contained within the BCT guidelines, and derived from 'Assessing Sites for Hibernation Potential. A Practical Approach, including a Proposed Method & Supporting Notes.1 (*Middleton, 2019*).
- 3.16 Trees (where present) would be subject to a ground level tree assessment (GLTA) using equipment such as close-focus binoculars and a high powered-torch. Potential roost features (PRFs) can include woodpecker holes, rot holes, hazard beams, other vertical or horizontal cracks or splits in stems and branches, partially decayed lifted bark, knot holes, man-made holes, tear-outs, cankers in which cavities have developed, other hollows or cavities, including butt-rots, double-leaders forming compression forks with included bark, gaps between overlapping stems or branches, partially detached climbing species with stem diameters in excess of 50mm or pre-existing bat / bird boxes. These PRFs can then be determined as PRF-I or PRF-M, dependent on their suitability for individual / low numbers of bats or their capability to host multiple bats.
- 3.17 Factors considered during the preliminary roost assessment include:
- Practical experience of the surveyor,
 - Knowledge of bat species relevant to the site location and geographical range,
 - Nature of the immediate / surrounding habitat in relation to foraging opportunities,
 - Presence / absence of roost potential,
 - Value and types of roost potential, if present (i.e. – maternity, hibernation, transitional).

Table 4.1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.

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

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

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

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

Figure 3.1 – BCT guidelines extract

Table 4.2. Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees on proposed development sites for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.	
Suitability	Description
NONE	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present

Figure 3.2 – BCT extract on tree roost suitability criteria

Table 6.2. Guidelines for categorising the potential suitability of PRFs on a proposed development site for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.	
Suitability	Description
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

Figure 3.3 – BCT extract on tree roost categorisation criteria

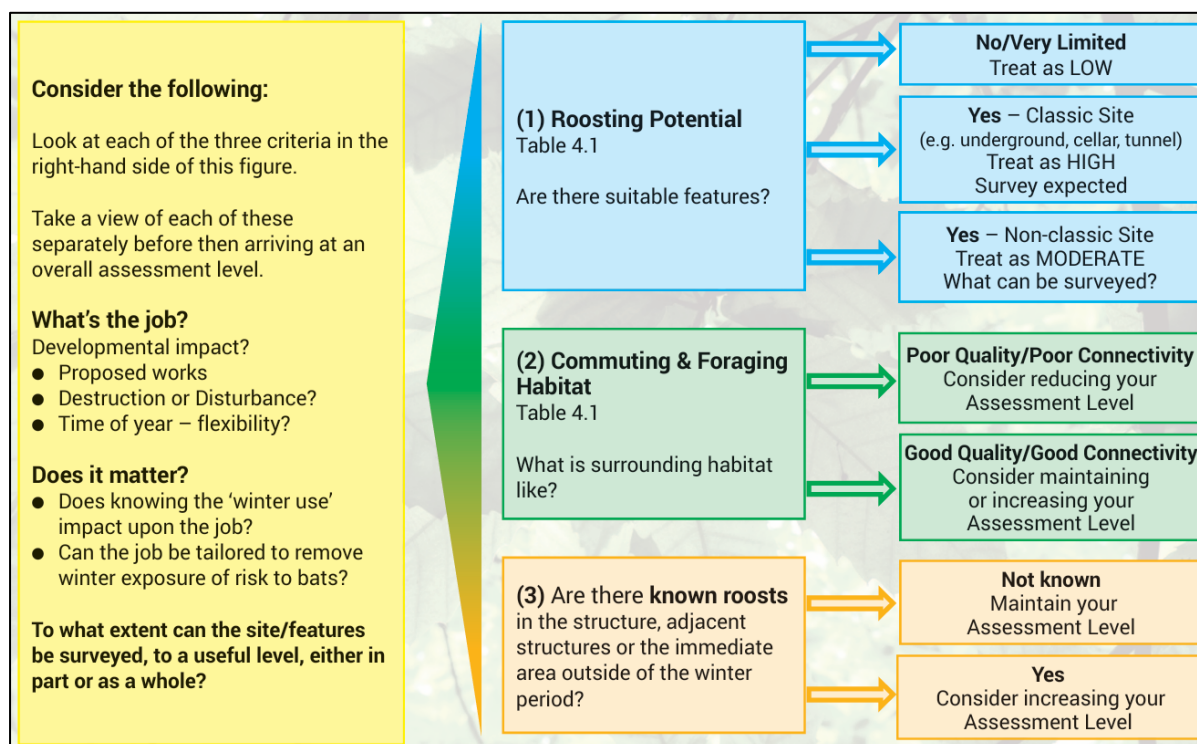


Figure 3.4 – BCT extract on hibernation roost categorisation criteria

Birds

- 3.18 The site was inspected for evidence of nesting and suitability for relevant species. Bird species observed and heard were recorded on site, and a search was made for nest material, or areas suitable for nesting – this can take the form of searching structures, woody vegetation, semi-aquatic vegetation such as reeds and / or ground flora. Elevations of any buildings or

structures on site were inspected for evidence of birds that show a high dependency upon built structures, many of which are in a state of decline. These might include the following species for example (list non-extensive):

- House martin (*Delichon urbica*): Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) red status,
- House sparrow (*Passer domesticus*): BoCC red status,
- Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*): BoCC red status,
- Swift (*Apus apus*): BoCC red status.

3.19 Additional to the site's capacity to support generally common species for breeding, the area was also subject to an assessment for wider capacity to support species with extra protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and other priority species.

3.20 Where relevant, the application site and surrounding area were assessed in relation to their value to overwintering bird species, including consideration to the presence of sites designated for their wintering bird assemblages and populations, or functionally linked land (FLL) around such sites.

Other terrestrial mammals

3.21 The walkover included an assessment for the presence / suitability of badger (*Meles meles*), which includes signs of activity such as prints, hairs, digging, setts, 'runs' leading to and from a sett and the existence of latrines or 'snuffle' holes where badgers have foraged in the ground.

3.22 The site was also assessed for the presence / suitability of European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and other priority mammals.

Herpetofauna

3.23 In order to quantify risks to GCN in a PEA, a range of factors need to be considered (see below and **Table 3.2**):

- Presence of ponds on site, and impacts to those ponds,
- Site proximity to any additional ponds within 250-500m,
- Pond quality (suitable for breeding, or not),
- Nature, extent, and connectivity of available terrestrial habitat around the pond(s), considering core, intermediate and distant ranges, to be affected by works,
- Presence of significant barriers between ponds and site,
- Area of site habitat loss and permanence of that loss.

Table 3.2 – Factors that can increase/decrease risk of committing an offence

Increases risk to GCN	Decreases risk to GCN
Large population size	Small population size
High local pond density	Low local pond density
Good terrestrial habitat	Poor terrestrial habitat
Low pre-existing habitat fragmentation	Substantial pre-existing dispersal barriers
Large development footprint	Small development footprint
Long construction period	Short construction period

- 3.24 During desktop assessment, a 250 metres radial search was undertaken from a site central grid reference in relation to the presence of ponds, ditches or other water bodies that may support great crested newt (GCN). The information gathered would then be used to aid in establishing if more detailed surveys are required.

NB: *English Nature's (now Natural England) Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (2001) states ponds within 500m of a proposed development site should be considered for their potential to support GCN, however, in some instances this distance may be reduced to 250m due to the presence of physical barriers and obstructions or based on the likely magnitude of impacts arising from the proposed development.*

- 3.25 Following current best practice considering the partial roll out of District Level Licencing (DLL) across England and based on likely effects, a proportionate assessment of the water bodies range within 250m from site has been applied. Where a development is anticipated to affect GCN the search can be extended up to 500m or more.
- 3.26 The site and surrounding habitats were also assessed relative to their potential to offer suitability for wider, generalist amphibians, in addition to GCN, for example common toad (*Bufo bufo*) and common frog (*Rana temporaria*).
- 3.27 The site and its surroundings were assessed for suitability for use by reptiles, with particular attention paid to features that could be used as basking areas (e.g. south-facing slopes), hibernation sites (e.g. banks, walls, leaf litter, piles of hardcore) and opportunities for foraging (e.g. rough grassland and scrub). Beebee & Griffiths (2000) state specific habitat preferences of common UK reptiles:
- Common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) use a variety of habitats from woodland glades to heaths, walls and pastures, as well as brownfield sites.
 - Grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) have broadly similar habitat requirements to the above species, but with an increased reliance on wetland habitats where they prey on amphibian species.
 - Slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) also use habitats similar to common lizard, and are often found in allotments and gardens where they find an abundance of invertebrate prey.
- 3.28 In assessment of a site for reptiles several important habitat characteristics are considered, outlined in **Table 3.3** overleaf, as derived from the Reptile Habitat Management Handbook (Edgar, 2010).

Table 3.3 – Important habitat characteristics for reptiles

1. Location (in respect of species range)	7. Connectivity to good quality habitat
2. Vegetation structure	8. Prey abundance
3. Insolation	9. Refuge opportunity
4. Aspect	10. Hibernation habitat potential
5. Topography	11. Disturbance regime
6. Surface geology	12. Egg-laying site potential

Invertebrates

- 3.29 The site was assessed for the presence of features that should be considered of high value to invertebrates. Several important features were considered, based on the assemblage

descriptions provided within the Research Report "Surveying terrestrial and freshwater invertebrates for conservation evaluation" (NERR005, 2007), including but not limited to:

- Wood decay,
- Early successional mosaic habitat,
- Shaded ground layer,
- Still and flowing water.

Quality Assurance (QA)

- 3.30 The results, conclusions and recommendations of this report are based on a number of factors i.e.
- Skills and experience of the surveyor,
 - Knowledge of flora and fauna relevant to the site location and geographical range,
 - Nature of the immediate and surrounding habitat in relation to shelter, foraging and commuting opportunities.
- 3.31 The results, conclusions and recommendations of this report have been assessed by Mrs. K. Wilding, Director of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, and her assessment concurs with the findings and recommendations of the surveyor Mr. G. Windle.

4.0 Limitations

- 4.1 This report does not contain a comprehensive list entailing the totality of botanical taxa on site. Species listed within **Appendix II** are recorded from a combination of the seasonal timing that the survey took place and botanical identification skills of the surveyor. Many plant species are only evident at certain times of the year; consequently, it is possible that some plant species may have gone undetected.
- 4.2 The optimal time of the year to carry out a preliminary ecological appraisal / UK Habitats survey is April to October; the survey was thus undertaken outside of the optimum period. However, based upon the habitats identified at the application site, it is considered unlikely that any habitats or species of conservation concern would be missed due to seasonal timing. Survey timing is therefore not considered a limitation.
- 4.3 The survey took place outside of the bat active season (broadly acknowledged to be May – September), therefore, there was a lower probability of encountering direct evidence of bats, such as through droppings. However, potential roost features and suitability of potential roost features can still be judged as effectively and conclusively as within the active season of bats. Therefore, whilst suboptimal, survey timing is not considered a limitation in this instance.
- 4.4 Similarly, the survey was undertaken outside of the main breeding period for birds; though direct evidence is less evident, historic nests or suitability for nesting can be assessed throughout the year by a suitably qualified surveyor. No constraints in relation to breeding birds are therefore considered applicable.
- 4.5 In considering all potential survey constraints, no significant limitations were experienced that might adversely influence the results, conclusions, and recommendations of this report.

5.0 Desk Study Results

- 5.1 Bamford Fieldhouse Cricket Club (referred to in-part as “the application site” and “the site”) is located within the town of Rochdale, approximately 15.0km north of Manchester city centre, and broadly comprises areas of grassland and scrub adjacent to a large cricket field along the western boundary, and tennis courts along the eastern boundary. See **Figure 5.1** below for the location of the site within the surrounding landscape.



Figure 5.1 – Location of red line boundary within surrounding landscape

- 5.2 The immediate environment to the east is sub-urban in nature, extending north, south and further east into densely populated areas within Rochdale which are interspersed with tree cover and urban green spaces. The immediate environment to the west is characterised by agricultural fields intersected by ditches, hedgerows and lines of trees which provide connectivity with a river valley encompassing Naden Brook and the dense riparian woodland cover that surrounds it, classified as Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland and connected to additional areas of Priority Habitat Inventory deciduous woodland, lowland dry acid grassland and lowland fens (see **Figure 5.2** overleaf). To the east, the residential area of Bamford has dense tree cover that extends south, forming connectivity with an extensive riparian woodland area surrounding the River Roch.

Relevant Planning History

- 5.3 A search of the Rochdale Council planning portal revealed one planning application for the application site within the last five years, an approved application (Ref: 25/00954/TELE⁴) for the prior notification for a 30m high lattice tower supporting antennas and transmission dishes and associated ancillary development, which was submitted in 2025. Within this application,

⁴ See: https://account.rochdale.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0rSI00000e8DXjIAM?c_r=Arcus_BE_Public_Register

a Preliminary Ecological Assessment was prepared by Brooks Ecological, which found the loss of the area in question to not be of ecological significance.

- 5.4 No planning applications have been undertaken in the surrounding area within the last five years, with the most recent application in proximity to the site being a single storey side extension in 2013 (Ref: 13/00753/HOUS⁵). No ecological documentation has been submitted with this application.

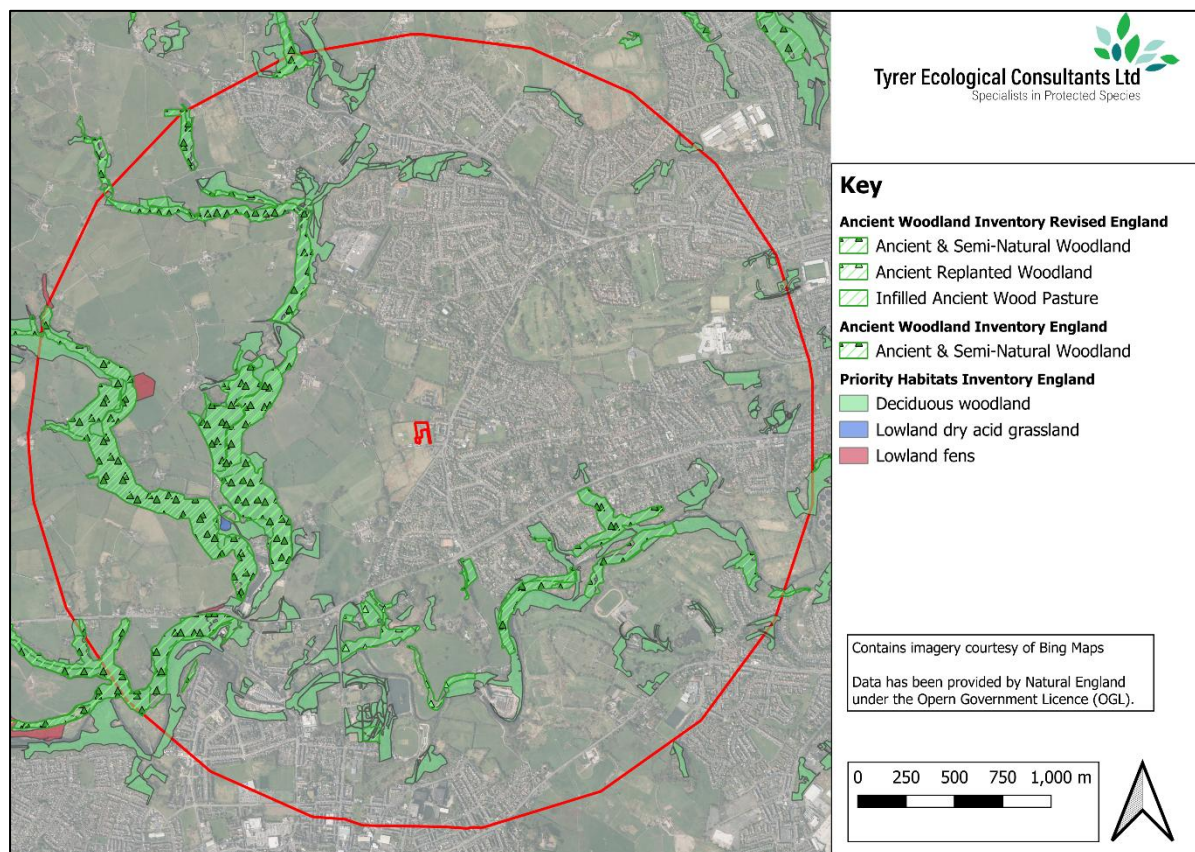


Figure 5.2 – Priority habitat and protected species data within 2.0km of application site

Designated Sites

- 5.5 No statutory designated sites for nature conservation occur within 2.0km of the site. However, the site is positioned within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), the closest of which is the Rochdale Canal SSSI approximately 3.1km to the south-east.
- 5.6 Based on the IRZ – Threshold Checker⁶ available on MAGiC Maps (2025), the site does not meet any of the listed development descriptions and thus the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial SSSIs and the SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites that they underpin. Where no impact to SSSIs is predicted, NE issue the following advice within their standing guidance on SSSI impact zones (NE, 2019):

"It is important to note that the SSSI IRZs only indicate Natural England's assessment of likely risk to the notified features of SSSIs. Where they indicate such a risk is unlikely, this does not mean that there are no potential impacts on biodiversity or the wider natural environment."

⁵ See: https://account.rochdale.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0rSI00000e8CJFIA2?c_r=Arcus_BE_Public_Register

⁶ See:

[https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step3.php?irzcode=0300000430000¬es=&location=387670.439176%20%20\(IRZ%20polygon%20centre\)](https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step3.php?irzcode=0300000430000¬es=&location=387670.439176%20%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre))

- 5.7 Several non-statutory designated sites, specifically Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are present within 2.0km of the site, including Naden Brook which is located 0.8km west of the site, and is designated for its UK BAP Priority Habitats including wet woodland and upland oak wood⁷, as well as being part of an important complex of ancient woodlands including Ashworth Valley which contains UK BAP species such as skylarks and song thrushes⁸.

Bats

- 5.8 No EPSMLs in relation to bats have been granted within a 2.0km search radius of the site. The closest record to the site is the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bats located approximately 3km to the east (Licence Number: EPSM2009-709).
- 5.9 Habitats in the immediate vicinity of the site provide moderate commuting and foraging opportunities, with a series of hedgerows and trees connecting the site to residential areas with associated gardens to the east and to semi-natural grassland and scrub habitat to the south and north-west, which are likely to be unilluminated at night due to their rural nature. The residential gardens in the suburban environment to the east and their associated tree cover, and the hedgerows and tree lines to the west, form a network of habitat features facilitating the movement of bats through the landscape. Woodland in proximity to the site offers suitable habitat for brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*) and noctules (*Nyctalus noctula*) whilst rivers to the west and south could be utilised by Daubenton's bats (*Myotis daubentonii*); the common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) is considered most likely to exist within proximity to the application site, typically linked with roosting in dwellings, including occupied structures.

Birds

- 5.10 Given the mixture of woodland and agricultural land in the immediate and wider environment, the landscape is likely to support raptor species, such as kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) and barn owl (*Tyto alba*) with an abundance of prey items likely to be present. In addition, the presence of hedgerows and residential gardens are likely to support common passerine species such as blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), house sparrow and blackbird (*Turdus merula*).

Other Terrestrial Mammals

- 5.11 The site lies in proximity to semi-natural habitats including a parcel of ancient woodland located approximately 0.7km to the west of the site, forming an extensive area offering valuable habitat for protected mammal species such as badger and European hedgehog which could find favourable habitat with connectivity to the site via hedgerows, tree lines and agricultural fields.

Herpetofauna

- 5.12 No EPSMLs in relation to GCN, data points for GCN Pond Surveys (2017-2019) or GCN Class Survey Licence Returns were located within a 2.0km search radius of the site. The closest record to the site is the destruction of a resting place located approximately 4km to the south-west (Licence Number: EPSM2010-1923).

⁷ See:

<https://democracy.rochdale.gov.uk/documents/s75192/Sites%20of%20Biological%20Importance%20Update%20enc.%201.pdf>

⁸ See: <https://democracy.rochdale.gov.uk/documents/s66621/Sites%20of%20Biological%20Importance%20-%20update.pdf>

- 5.13 A detailed desktop assessment revealed no standing waterbodies within a 250m radius of the application site. Based on the absence of any mapped wetland network or ponds, and the apparent lack of suitable terrestrial habitat, with connectivity to the site identified during the desktop study, it is considered unlikely that great crested newt would be present within a 250m radius of the site, despite being identified within the wider landscape.
- 5.14 Despite the absence of waterbodies in close proximity to the site, the presence of riparian and wet woodland habitat, approximately 0.7km to the west beyond a road and agricultural fields, means that the occurrence of more robust amphibians such as common frog and common toad in the immediate landscape is considered possible.
- 5.15 The surrounding habitat is absent of suitable habitat for reptiles, being formed of largely urban and agricultural land, which are lacking in the habitat mosaics which are typically favoured by this taxon.

Invertebrates

- 5.16 The habitats in proximity to the site are unlikely to support a specially protected or significant assemblage of invertebrates, given the extensive residential development and agricultural fields to all aspects.

6.0 Field Survey Results

6.1 Habitat Survey

6.1.1 See **Tables 6.1.1** (below) for baseline information and habitat descriptions; refer to **Appendix I** for any supporting imagery; additional scientific names are given in **Appendix II**. Refer to **Appendix IV** – UK Habitats Maps for the location of described habitats.

Table 6.1.1 – UK Area Habitat types within the survey area

Area habitat	Sec. Codes	Description
g4 (1) Modified grassland	106 Mown	A mown area of modified grassland covering the majority of the site with characteristics indicative of amenity use, similar to a neighbouring cricket pitch. Graminoids present in the grassland include creeping bent (<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>), crested dog's-tail (<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>), perennial rye-grass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>) and cock's-foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>), whilst forbs include crane's-bill (<i>Geranium</i> sp.), creeping thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>), garden lady's mantle (<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>), common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), common mouse-ear (<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>), sticky mouse-ear (<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>), clover (<i>Trifolium</i> sp.), common ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>), daisy (<i>Bellis perennis</i>), common chickweed (<i>Stellaria media</i>), meadow buttercup (<i>Ranunculus acris</i>) and ribwort plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>). The parcel is clearly subject to a mowing regime and is highly modified due to its amenity use, whilst its low density of species (approximately 4 species per m²), abundance of fast-growing grasses such as perennial rye-grass, and presence of broadleaved species associated with high fertility including clover and ribwort plantain.
g4 (2) Modified grassland	14 Scattered rushes 16 Tall forbs 503 Wet 521 Unmanaged	An unmanaged area of modified grassland adjacent to the blackthorn and willow scrub habitats along the northern site boundary. This parcel differs from g4 (1) in that it has a taller sward height containing a greater proportion of forbs and rushes, generally characterised by wet conditions, though no ephemeral pools were present in this section of grassland. This area contains a series of stripped turf mats (Target Note 1), which are scattered in piles and vegetated, forming potential habitat for amphibians and reptiles, as well as a couple of brash piles (Target Note 2). Graminoids present in this grassland include cock's-foot, creeping bent and perennial rye-grass, with rush (<i>Juncus</i> sp.) also present, and forbs include ribwort plantain, creeping buttercup, broad-leaved dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>), great willowherb (<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>), common nettle, bramble and common chickweed. Although it contains a high coverage of broadleaved herbs (>30%), the parcel is generally species-poor, with a density of approximately 5 species per m², a high coverage of fast-growing grasses including perennial rye-grass, and broadleaved species associated with high fertility including common nettle and bramble.

Area habitat	Sec. Codes	Description
h3a6 Other blackthorn scrub	521 Unmanaged	A parcel of unmanaged blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>) scrub in the north-western corner of the site, extending along the majority of the northern border; the habitat is dominated by blackthorn with occasional hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) and common ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>). The blackthorn scrub parcel is continuous in nature and mostly over 5m in height, with a range of shrubs from saplings to more mature individuals.
h3j Willow scrub	521 Unmanaged	A parcel of willow scrub to the north of the site extending south from the blackthorn scrub; the habitat is comprised of goat willow (<i>Salix caprea</i>) and crack willow (<i>Salix fragilis</i>) with an understory of bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>), common nettle, creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>), common sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosa</i>) and cock's-foot. The willow scrub parcel is smaller in coverage than the blackthorn scrub but is still a continuous patch with developed individuals over 5m in height.
u1b6 Other developed land	-	A small section of hardstanding in the corner of the existing car park to the south, leading into the entrance to the site.

6.2 Vegetation

Notable species

- 6.2.1 No species of conservation importance were located anywhere within the site during the appraisal.

Invasive non-native species (INNS)

- 6.2.2 No INNS listed under either Schedule 9 (Part II) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) or Schedule 2 of The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (IASO) 2019 were identified on site by the surveyors.

6.3 Bats

- 6.3.1 No buildings or trees are present on the site and therefore there are no features that could support roosting bats.
- 6.3.2 From a habitat suitability assessment in relation to bat activity, the site provides moderate value foraging habitat with the scrub and grassland area to the north of the site likely to support a range of insect species for bats to feed on. The hedgerow just beyond the eastern site border is adjacent to a series of residential properties where bats could be roosting, as well as their associated gardens which could be used by bats for foraging and commuting. Hedgerows and tree lines adjoining to the site via the north-western border connect with ancient woodland located across the agricultural landscape. Due to the adjacent tennis courts, the site is likely subject to some illumination, although this would not be expected to significantly reduce the suitability for commuting and foraging bats.

6.4 **Birds**

Breeding birds

- 6.4.1 In relation to WCA Schedule 1 specially protected bird species, up to five redwings (*Turdus Illiacus*) were identified by the surveyor on site, using the blackthorn scrub in the north-east corner of the site. Although this habitat was dense and likely contains areas suitable for nesting, considering the overwintering habits of this species in the local region (October – March, inclusive), and its breeding distribution within the UK being limited to the north of Scotland, their presence on site in a breeding or nesting capacity is considered to be unlikely; instead using the site as foraging resource as part of passage. No evidence or suitability relating to other Sch. 1 species, such as barn owl, was identified on site by the surveyor.
- 6.4.2 In relation to more common birds no evidence of active or historic nesting was identified, however, high levels of activity were observed within the scrub on site, which offer suitable nesting platforms and are highly likely to be used within the nesting bird season of March – August, inclusive. Species observed using the site include coal tit (*Periparus ater*), starling, goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), blue tit, house sparrow, robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), blackbird, great tit (*Parus major*) and bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*).

6.5 **Other Terrestrial Mammals**

Badger & hedgehog

- 6.5.1 No field signs of badger, such as latrines, pathways, hairs, footprints, or feeding signs, for example snuffle holes and scratched trees / logs, were located within the site boundary. The site provides minimal value for sett building, in that it is formed of open grassland with surrounding scrub but generally an absence of cover. Despite this, no barriers are present that would prevent this species from accessing the site, though only on an occasional foraging and / or commuting capacity. The presence of this species cannot, therefore, be ruled out.
- 6.5.2 Whilst no direct evidence of hedgehog was identified, the site habitats provide potentially suitable habitat for hedgehog, with the open grassland suitable for foraging and the scrub in the north-east corner of the site providing suitable refuge areas. As such, their presence within the site on an occasional basis is considered likely.

6.6 **Herpetofauna**

Great crested newt (GCN)

- 6.6.1 Important elements to consider when assessing likely impacts against GCN includes:
- The scale, nature and magnitude of proposals,
 - Site proximity to a potential breeding pond and to any additional ponds,
 - Habitat linkage / barriers between potential breeding ponds and the site,
 - Nature and extent of available terrestrial habitat around the pond,
 - Area of site habitat loss,
 - Nature of habitat to be lost and potential value to GCN,
 - Most up to date Government guidance considering EPS.
- 6.6.2 As derived from the desktop assessment, no granted EPSMLs, GCN Pond Surveys 2017 – 2019 data points of GCN Class Survey Licence Return points are present within the considered 2.0km radius around the site.

- 6.6.3 Habitat on site holds some terrestrial value for GCN, with the scattered and vegetated turf mats providing suitable hibernacula and the unmanaged, wet, tussocky grassland providing foraging opportunities. However, the majority of the site is covered by the highly managed modified grassland which is short cropped and unsuitable for the terrestrial purposes of GCN, as well as the active use of the adjacent cricket pitch being likely to create regular disturbance which also detracts the value of the site for GCN.
- 6.6.4 As derived from the desktop assessment, there is an absence of mapped standing waterbodies within 250m of the application site, or within the site boundary. As such, the site is unsuitable for the breeding purposes of GCN.
- 6.6.5 Based on the absence of a pond network, absence of records of GCN within a 2km radius of the site and largely unsuitable nature of the terrestrial habitat on site, the presence of GCN within the site boundary is considered highly unlikely.

Other amphibians

- 6.6.6 Based on the surrounding habitat information as described, specifically the lack of suitable waterbodies in proximity to the site, the presence of more widespread amphibians such as common frog and common toad in the surrounding area and on-site has a reduced likelihood. However, given the robust nature of these species, their ability to overcome barriers to dispersal, such as roads and agricultural fields, and the high suitability of terrestrial on-site habitat, their presence on-site is considered possible.

Reptiles

- 6.6.7 The site does include some suitable habitat features for reptiles within the smaller modified grassland parcel, g4 (2), with the more open grassland patches and exposed/raised sections of vegetated turf mats potentially suitable for basking, whilst the varied vegetation and habitat structure in the form of tussocky grassland and tall forbs, in combination with the folded and overgrown aspects of the turf mats, providing moderate value ecotones which could be utilised by reptiles. However, the larger modified grassland area, g4 (1), consists solely of short cropped grassland lacking ecotones favoured by reptiles and as such is not suitable for their purposes. The location of the site in between expanses of agricultural land and urban environs, in combination with a lack of identifiable areas of higher reptile habitat suitability in the surrounding environment, makes it unlikely that reptiles would find passage to the site. The presence of this taxon within the site is therefore considered highly unlikely.

Invertebrates

- 6.7.1 The site is absent of any habitats which are considered likely to support specially protected invertebrates, such as flower-rich unimproved grasslands or areas of dense woodland. Whilst the grassland is somewhat marshy in nature and contains tall forbs adjacent to scrub, which is likely to support invertebrate species, the features present on site are not locally notable.
- 6.7.2 Thus, it is considered unlikely that specially protected invertebrate species are present within the site boundary.

7.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

Designated Sites

- 7.1 The site is positioned within the Impact Risk Zone for the Rochdale Canal, located approximately 3.2km to the south-east of the site.
- 7.2 Based on the IRZ – Threshold Checker available on MAGiC Maps 2025 for the location of the site, the site does not meet any of the listed development descriptions and thus the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial SSSIs and the SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites that they underpin.
- 7.3 No further consultation with NE in relation to designated sites is therefore deemed necessary.
- 7.4 Due to the small scale of the works and spatial separation from locally designated sites, such as Naden Brook, the proposed development is unlikely to have detrimental impacts and as such there are no further recommendations in relation to these.

Habitats

- 7.5 No habitats of national or local priority status were located within the site boundary during the diurnal appraisal to warrant any specific intervention measures.
- 7.6 Any habitat loss will be suitably compensated for via the implementation of a Biodiversity Gain plan which will be produced as an addendum to this report.

Vegetation

- 7.7 No specially protected species were identified on site by the surveyors during the diurnal appraisal to warrant any specific intervention measures.
- 7.8 No INNS, listed under Schedule 9 (Part II) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) or Schedule 2 of The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 (IASO) were identified on site during the diurnal appraisal.

Bats

Buildings & Trees

- 7.9 No trees or structures are present within the red line boundary of the site, and thus no recommendations in relation to further bat emergence surveys are considered necessary.

Activity

- 7.10 The site does provide moderate value commuting and foraging habitat for bats, though given the small size of the site and the generally low impact nature of the proposals, a nighttime bat walkover (NBW) is not deemed necessary. Although a section of the scrub and grassland habitat are due to be lost as per the proposed plans, due to the retention of a portion of this habitat, it is considered that the site will continue to provide for commuting and foraging bats.
- 7.11 Nonetheless, installation of overly harsh artificial lighting as part of any development that exceeds current levels may have a negative impact upon foraging / commuting bats in the landscape, subject to their presence, particularly if increased light spillage occurs in areas that are currently free from illumination. A bat-sensitive lighting plan is therefore recommended in order to avoid potential impacts to bats. Several options to consider have been listed below,

though the reader is referred to the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' guidelines (August 2023) for further information.

Appropriate luminaire specifications: Light sources, lamps, LEDs and their fittings come in a myriad of different specifications which a lighting professional can help to select. However, the following should be considered when choosing luminaires and their potential impact on Key Habitats and features:

- All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used.
- LED luminaires should be used where possible due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability.
- A warm white light source (2700Kelvin or lower) should be adopted to reduce blue light component.
- Light sources should feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012).
- Internal luminaires can be recessed (as opposed to using a pendant fitting) where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill.
- Waymarking inground markers (low output with cowls or similar to minimise upward light spill) to delineate path edges.
- Column heights should be carefully considered to minimise light spill and glare visibility. This should be balanced with the potential for increased numbers of columns and upward light reflectance as with bollards.
- Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, should be considered - See ILP GN01.
- Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
- Where appropriate, external security lighting should be set on motion-sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow. For most general residential purposes, a 1 or 2 minute timer is likely to be appropriate.
- Use of a Central Management System (CMS) with additional web-enabled devices to light on demand.
- Use of motion sensors for local authority street lighting may not be feasible unless the authority has the potential for smart metering through a CMS.
- The use of bollard or low-level downward-directional luminaires is strongly discouraged. This is due to a considerable range of issues, such as unacceptable glare, poor illumination efficiency, unacceptable upward light output, increased upward light scatter from surfaces and poor facial recognition which makes them unsuitable for most sites. Therefore, they should only be considered in specific cases where the lighting professional and project manager are able to resolve these issues.
- Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and so should not be relied upon solely.

- 7.12 The scheme could, however, include enhancement measures for bats, on trees or buildings within the wider ownership, to ensure that it meets wider biodiversity goals and complies with local and national policy. This could be secured via a suitably worded planning condition. Indicative options have been provided in **Appendix III**.

Birds

- 7.13 Impacts in relation to Sch.1 (WCA) specially protected bird species have been identified specific to redwing, which were noted using the onsite scrub as a foraging resource during the daytime assessment. The Sch.1 (WCA) protections which are afforded to redwing relate to specifically breeding individuals, of which the UK breeding population is restricted to Scotland. Consequently, the identified individuals within the site have been assessed to be overwintering within the region and using the site as an occasional foraging opportunity and not a breeding

resident. Furthermore, no evidence or suitability relating to any other Sch.1 species, such as barn owl, was identified on site by the surveyor.

- 7.14 Since the redwing are using the site in an overwintering capacity, thus not relating to the breeding purposes for which they are protected under Sch.1 (WCA), there are no recommendations in relation to this or any other Sch.1 species.
- 7.15 Regarding wider breeding bird species, high levels of activity of a range of passerine bird species were observed within the blackthorn scrub in the north-east section of the site, which offer suitable nesting platforms and are highly likely to be used within the nesting bird season of March – August, inclusive.

NB: *All wild birds (with only minor exceptions) and their nests whilst being built or containing eggs or dependant young are protected from destruction, damage and disturbance under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is a punishable offence to interfere in any way with an active nest.*

- 7.16 In order to prevent impacting upon these potential nesting sites, it is recommended that any vegetation clearance is undertaken outside of the nesting bird season of March – August inclusive. If works are proposed during this period, then a pre-commencement check should be carried out by a competent and professional Ecologist for signs of nesting behaviour within 48 hours or less prior to works commencing.

Point 3.24 of the British Standards Publication 42020:2013 defines a professional ecologist as: *“a person who has, through relevant education, training or experience, gained recognised qualifications and expertise in the field of ecology and environmental management.”*

- 7.17 Where / if active nests are / have been located by the Ecologist, then any works which may affect them would have to be delayed until the young have fledged and the nest has been abandoned naturally, this can be aided, for example, via implementation of appropriate buffer zone(s) around the nest site (typically 5 – 10 metres) in which no disturbance is permitted until the nest is no longer in use. This would have to be coordinated through the expert judgement of the professional ecologist and species pending.
- 7.18 The scheme could consider enhancement by way of erecting suitable nest boxes for the species present within the surrounding landscape, again on trees or buildings within the wider ownership and secured via a suitably worded planning condition. Relevant, indicative biodiversity enhancement measures can be found in **Appendix III**.

Other Terrestrial Mammals

Badger & hedgehog

- 7.19 Whilst no direct evidence of badger or hedgehog was located within the site boundary, both species are likely to exist in proximity to the site and no barriers are present to prevent occasional access.
- 7.20 It is therefore recommended that Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) are enacted at the site to avoid any impacts to either of these species. RAMs to minimise construction impacts and prevent harm or injury to badgers and hedgehog should include, as a minimum:
- All working hours should be limited to daylight (dawn – sunset, or dawn – 6pm in winter) to avoid disturbing any badger or hedgehog in vicinity of the development area.
 - A pre-commencement check of the site, any stored materials and the immediate vicinity of development footprint will be carried out prior to any works each morning in order to check for the presence of badger or hedgehog.

- Materials that may cause entrapment such as plastic / metal fencing, as well as those which could be potentially harmful to terrestrial mammals such as chemicals, should not be left around the site following the cessation of daytime work.
- No bulky equipment / general construction aggregates should be left around the development area, instead leave them on bare ground away from the risk zone.
- Stock piling of spoil material MUST be left un-compacted and not allowed to grass over, as if grassed over and compacted, terrestrial mammals may be encouraged to excavate new areas for refuge.
- Fires must not be used as a means of the disposing of waste materials.
- Any trenches or excavations must either be covered at the end of each working day, or a low angle (no more than 45°) sloping board of approximately 300mm width should be provisioned within any uncovered excavations to provide a means of escape for any terrestrial mammals.
- Any temporarily exposed open pipe system MUST be capped in such a way as to prevent badgers gaining access, as may happen when contractors are off site.
- In the event an underground void / potential sett entrance is exposed during the works, work must cease immediately; and an Ecologist must be contacted to determine if the opening forms part of a previously undiscovered tunnel network of a badger sett. If this cannot be ruled out, works will cease, and Natural England consulted for further advice.

Herpetofauna

Great crested newt (GCN)

- 7.21 Regarding GCN, whilst small areas of on-site habitats provide broad suitability for the terrestrial phase of this species, the lack of suitability of the majority of the site and absence of mapped standing waterbodies in proximity to the site in combination with an absence of records of GCN within a 2km radius of the site, indicate that it is highly unlikely that this species is present within, or in close proximity to, the application boundary. No further surveys or recommendations are required for GCN.

Other amphibians

- 7.22 Despite the lack of mapped waterbodies in proximity to the site, due to the suitability of small areas of on-site habitats and the robust nature of common amphibians, their presence on site is considered likely. Any works on site should therefore have due regard to local wildlife as discussed, and the RAMs detailed previous for terrestrial mammals should be extended to cover common amphibians.
- 7.23 In addition to this, as part of the RAMs procedures, the vegetated turf mats, located across the unmanaged grassland area adjacent to the scrub, act as potentially valuable refugia and hibernacula for amphibians. These should be subject to an ECoW check for the presence of amphibians prior to any works taking place. Any of these features to be unaffected by the proposed works should be retained.
- 7.24 Should any frogs or toads be encountered within the works area, they should be handled with wet gloves to prevent impact / injury and moved to an area of like for like habitat outside of the works area away from potential harm. The applicant and all contractors would be aware that if at any stage newts are encountered during works, or at any other stage of the programme of works, such works would be required to immediately cease and the Ecologist / ECoW would be made aware as to provide further guidance, if an Ecologist is not already present.

Reptiles

- 7.25 The site provides potentially suitable habitat for reptiles, containing open and raised areas suitable for basking in combination with denser vegetation and vegetated turf mats providing cover, providing moderate value ecotones which could be utilised by reptiles. Although the site-surrounding habitats are considered broadly unsuitable for reptiles and there is an absence of records or suitable habitats in the surrounding landscape, it is recommended that the pre-commencement check of the vegetated turf mats detailed previous for common amphibians, as part of the RAMs procedures, is extended to reptiles.

Invertebrates

- 7.26 Based on the combination of the desktop and field-based study, the presence of specially protected invertebrates is considered unlikely.

General Enhancement

- 7.27 Indicative enhancement measures which are deemed suitable for the scheme have been provided in **Appendix III**.

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Appendix I: Site Photographs



Plate 1 – *General character of the site from the south toward the north, showing the mown modified grassland adjacent to the tennis courts to the east*



Plate 2 – *General character of the site toward the east, where the existing tennis courts are located*



Plate 3 – *Northern section of the site containing the unmanaged grassland and associated scrub*



Plate 4 – *General character of the unmanaged grassland and associated scrub habitats*



Plate 5 – *Example of brash pile located in unmanaged grassland area*



Plate 6 – *Area of tall forbs and surrounding blackthorn scrub in north-east corner of the site*



Plate 7 – *Area of unmanaged grassland showing low sward patches in combination with tussocks and tall forbs, creating ecotones potentially suitable for reptiles, and containing wet areas potentially suitable for amphibians*



Plate 8 – *Example of scattered vegetated turf mats, with bare patches potentially suitable for basking by reptiles*



Plate 9 – *Example of gaps under vegetated turf mats providing potential refugia and hibernacula potential for reptiles and amphibians*

Appendix II: Botanical Species List

Species nomenclature follows Stace, C (2019) – definitive English names; scientific names for given flora are presented below.

Any invasive non-native species are denoted by the acronym (INNS).

Taxon	Common Name	Scientific Name
Anthophyta	Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
	Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
	Broad-leaved Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
	Clover	<i>Trifolium</i> sp.
	Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
	Common & Atlantic Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
	Common Chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>
	Common Mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>
	Common Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
	Common Ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>
	Common Sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
	Crack-willow	<i>Salix fragilis</i>
	Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium</i> sp.
	Creeping Bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>
	Creeping Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
	Creeping Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
	Crested Dog's-tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>
	Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
	Garden Lady's-mantle	<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>
	Goat Willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
	Great Willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>
	Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
	Meadow Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
	Perennial Rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
	Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
	Rush	<i>Juncus</i> sp.
	Sticky Mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>

Appendix III: Biodiversity Enhancement: General Recommendations

Breeding Birds – Other

This traditional design has proved to be highly effective in attracting robins, as well as other small species such as black redstart, spotted flycatcher and wren. It is designed to be installed on the walls of houses, barns, garden sheds or other buildings and should be hung so that the entrance is to one side (at an angle of 90° to the wall). The front panel can be easily removed for cleaning.

This type of box should not be made conspicuous on a tree or bush because small predators can enter through the unprotected opening. By hanging on a wall, predators won't be able to reach the box. Alternatively hide the box in Ivy, Honeysuckle or other climbing plants.



Hedgehog Home

Exterior quality 12mm resin bonded ply. The box remains untreated on the inside. Best situated in a quiet corner of the garden, and covered with leaves and other garden debris. Removable lid for cleaning purposes and reinforced corners, manufactured with surface sunk nails to resist rusting.

Nest box size: Height 22cm x Width 38cms x Length 47cm



Environmentally positive: Direct action to help hedgehog survival rates, encouraging biodiversity; FSC timber; Zero carbon footprint in use.

Amphibians – Hibernacula

Hibernacula are underground chambers that amphibians and reptiles use throughout the winter to protect themselves from the cold. Creating a hibernaculum will provide a safe space for amphibians and reptiles to hibernate over winter, as well as a spot for solitary bees to soak up the sun and for birds to relax. These habitats can be integrated into a wide variety newly created or enhanced habitats and attract herps to new areas.

You will need:

- A spade
- Logs and branches
- Rocks and bricks
- 2-3 drainpipe cut-offs or cement pipes (if using plastic drainpipes, roughen the insides with sandpaper, so that they are not too slippery for animals to climb)
- Turf or meadow flower seeds (optional)

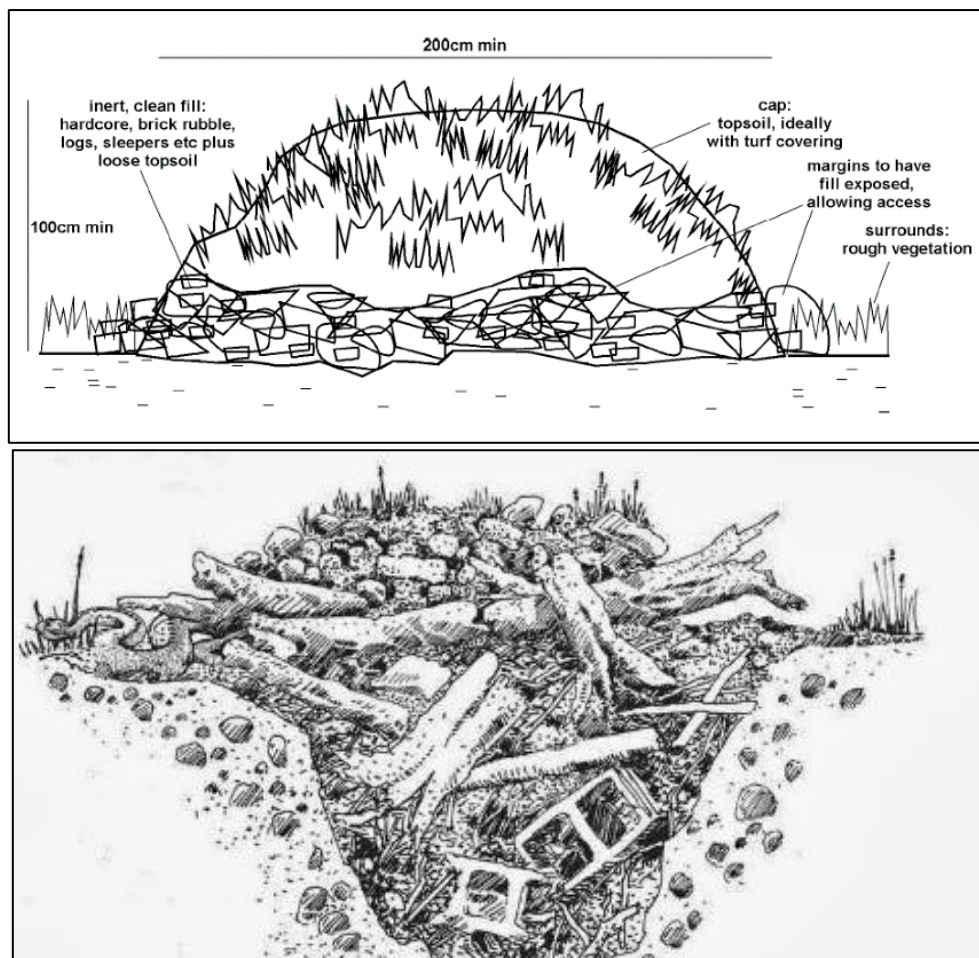
How to make your hibernaculum yourself:

- In a sunny spot, dig a hole about 50cm deep and 1.5 metres across.
- Fill with logs, branches, bricks and rocks, leaving plenty of gaps in between.
- Insert entrance tubes (drainpipes) at ground level into the hole.
- Cover the pile with soil (to about 50cm high).
- Plant meadow seeds or long grasses over the mound to create a feast for summer pollinators.

To construct a hibernaculum to Natural England standard:

- In desired areas, remove the turf from the footprint of the hibernaculum and set aside.
- On well-drained soil excavate to a depth of approximately 500 mm and set aside spoil (this is unnecessary on poorly drained soils).
- Fill the footprint or pit with core material. Materials likely to retain moisture are preferable, such as cut timber, brash and grubbed up tree roots. Other material such as inert hardcore, bricks, rocks, and building rubble may also be used. Materials that will decompose should not be placed beneath heavy components such as bricks or rocks, to reduce the risk of collapse.
- Pack the larger spaces within the core materials with wood chippings, loose topsoil or spoil.
- Cover the hibernaculum with the turves removed from the footprint.
- Take care not to create structures that might attract rodents, such as piles of rubble with many entrance holes. There has been no rigorous investigation of the optimum size of hibernacula, but larger hibernacula are probably more useful than small constructions because they contain a variety of different microhabitats and are more likely to maintain stable conditions.
- A suggested minimum size is 4.0 m long by 2.0 m wide by 1.0 m deep. 2.0 x 2.0 x 1.0 metres (length x width x height) as a minimum.

Illustrative aid for hibernaculum:



Invertebrates – Insect Hotels

Insect hotels provide a habitat for a variety of insects. Designs can be small or large enough to create a focal point in a wildlife garden and sturdy enough to last for years. Ensure hotels are made from untreated wood, which is important as insects need natural materials to thrive, and split into sections that each contain a different nesting material. There should be pinecones for ladybirds, wood slits for butterflies and moths, bamboo canes for solitary bees, and loose pieces of wood for beetles. Placement: Size against walls or fences and fix to prevent toppling. The feet keep the main body off the damp ground. You could push bricks against them to keep the bug hotel upright, which would also encourage woodlice and even frogs that enjoy cool stone conditions.



Invertebrates – Bee bricks

The Bee Brick can be used in place of a standard brick or block in construction to create habitat for solitary bees. Alternatively, it can be used as a standalone bee house in your garden or wild patch. It will provide much needed nesting space for solitary bee species such as red mason bees and leafcutter bees, both of which are non-aggressive.

Each Bee Brick contains cavities in which solitary bees can lay their eggs before sealing the entrance with mud and chewed-up vegetation. The offspring will emerge the following spring and the cycle will begin again. Each cavity goes part way into the brick, which is solid at the back. Bee Bricks should be placed in a warm sunny spot on a south-facing wall at a minimum height of 1m, with no vegetation obstructing the holes. It is highly recommended that bee-friendly plants should be located nearby so that the bees using the bricks have food, otherwise it is unlikely that the brick will be used. Available in a choice of four colours: white grey, dark grey, yellow and red.



Specification

- * Material: Concrete
- * Dimensions: W 215mm x D 105mm x H 65mm
- * Weight: 2.9kg
- * Colours: White grey, yellow, dark grey and red

Native Planting and/or Landscaping

The below species have been assessed against the local soil and habitat types and are deemed suitable for the site. All plant material should comply with the minimum requirements in BS 3936-1: 1992 Specification for trees and shrubs and BS 3936-4: 2007 Specification for forest trees and BS 8545: 2014 Trees from Nursery to Independence in the Landscape. Any plant material, which in the opinion of the appointed Landscape Architect, does not meet the requirements of the Specification, or is unsuitable, or defective in any other way, will be rejected. The minimum specified sizes in the plant schedule will be strictly enforced. The contractor should replace all plants rejected at own cost. New hedgerows should be primarily comprised of blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel, and holly, whilst climbers/creepers such as hops and honeysuckle can be planted at the base of boundary features such as fences and walls, and new tree planting should include species such as pedunculate oak, wild cherry, and alder buckthorn.

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Planting Preference
Ferns	Male Fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Semi-shade or shaded
	Soft Shield-fern	<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>	Semi-shade or shaded
	Maidenhair Fern	<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	Suitable for rockeries / walled gardens
	Royal Fern	<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	Full sun in moist-damp areas
Herbaceous plants	Bloody Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium sanguineum</i>	Dry soils - suitable for rockeries
	Columbine	<i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>	Semi-shade or open areas
	English Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	Moist soils in semi-shade or open areas
	Giant Bellflower	<i>Campanula latifolia</i>	Semi-shade or open areas
	Greater Knapweed	<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>	Dry-moist soils. Suitable for borders
	Greater Woodrush	<i>Luzula sylvatica</i>	Moist soils in semi-shade or open areas
	Meadow Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium pratense</i>	Humid-moist soils. Suitable for borders
	Musk Mallow	<i>Malva moschata</i>	Dry-moist soils. Suitable for borders and rockeries
	Sea Campion	<i>Silene uniflora</i>	Dry soils - suitable for rockeries
	Stinking Hellebore	<i>Helleborus foetidus</i>	Semi-shade or open areas
Climbers	Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Dry-moist soils
	Hops	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>	Dry-moist soils
	Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	Dry-moist soils
	Sweet-briar	<i>Rosa rubiginosa</i>	Dry-moist soils
Woody Shrubs	Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	-
	Guelder Rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	-
	Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	-
	Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	-
	Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	-
Trees	Alder Buckthorn	<i>Frangula alnus</i>	-
	Osier	<i>Salix viminalis</i>	-
	Pedunculate Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	-
	Purple Willow	<i>Salix purpurea</i>	-
	Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	-
	Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	-
	Wild Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>	-
	Wych Elm	<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	-



Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd
Specialists in Protected Species

Bamford Fieldhouse Cricket Club

UK Habitats Key

-  Red line boundary
-  Target notes
-  g4 - Modified grassland - 14, 16, 106, 503, 521
-  h3a6 - Other blackthorn scrub - 521
-  h3j - Willow scrub - 521
-  u1b6 - Other developed land

Survey Date: 11/12/2025
Drawn: Mr. G. Windle
Date Drawn: 24/02/2026
Checked & Approved: Mrs. K. Wilding
Size: A3
Scale: 1:700

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