

Land off Mayfield Street, Rochdale OL16 2UZ

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

September 2025

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd Reference: 2025-178

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CONTENTS

Summary	3
1.0 Introduction.....	5
1.1 Background and Rationale.....	5
1.2 Scope of Works	5
2.0 Method of Survey	6
2.1 Desktop Study and Data Search	6
2.2 Vegetation and Habitats.....	6
2.3 Animal Life.....	7
2.4 Survey and Reporting Limitations	9
2.5 Evaluation Methods	10
3.0 Survey Results.....	10
3.1 Desktop Study and Data Search	10
3.2 Vegetation and Habitats.....	13
3.3 Animal Life.....	15
4.0 Evaluation and Assessment	16
4.1 Introduction and Description of Proposals	16
4.2 Designated Sites for Nature Conservation	16
4.3 Vegetation and Habitats.....	16
4.4 Protected Species and Other Wildlife.....	17
5.0 Recommendations and Ecological Enhancement	18
5.1 Introduction.....	18
5.2 Protection of Existing Vegetation and Recommendations in Relation to Site Layout.....	18
5.3 Protection of Existing Features and Wildlife During Construction Phase.....	19
5.4 Provision of Opportunities for Nesting Birds and Roosting Bats	20
5.5 Enhancement and Management of the Retained Habitats and Landscape Planting	23
6.0 Conclusion	25
7.0 References.....	26
8.0 Appendix 1: Tables and Figures.....	28
8.1 Plant Species Lists	28
8.2 Photographs	31
8.3 Figures.....	32

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Definition of Terms and Suitability Categories Used in Tree Survey for Roosting Bats	8
Table 2.2: Consideration of Suitability of Foraging and Commuting Habitat for Bats	8
Table 2.3: Important Habitat Characteristics for Reptiles.....	9
Table 3.1: SBI Within a 2 Kilometres Radius from the Centre of the Site	11
Table 3.2: Records of Protected Species Within a 2 Kilometres Radius from the Centre of the Site	12
Table 3.3: Bird species Detected on 18 th July and 18 th August 2025.....	15
Table 5.1: Suitable Native Species for Tree and Shrub Planting	24
Table 5.2: Recommended Plants for Use in Gardens to Attract Bats.....	24
Table 8.1: Plant Species List for Unmanaged Neutral Grassland	28
Table 8.2: Plant Species List for Scrub	29

Table 8.3: Plant Species List for Woodland	30
Table 8.4: Photographs.....	31

List of Figures

Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Site and its Surroundings	32
Figure 2: Phase 1 Habitat and Vegetation Map.....	33

Document Control

Survey Type:	Surveyors	Survey Date(s)
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Reporting	Personnel	Date
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SUMMARY

Introduction and Scope

- i. This ecological survey and assessment presents the ecological, biodiversity and nature conservation status of the land off Mayfield Street, Rochdale OL16 2UZ. The assessment was requested in connection with proposals to develop the site to a SEN school.
- ii. This report presents the results of a desktop study, data search and extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey carried out in July and August 2025. The scope of survey undertaken is appropriate to identify potential ecological constraints, the remit of mitigation required and opportunities for biodiversity associated with the development proposals.
- iii. The site comprises an area of unmanaged neutral grassland, areas of scrub and an area of woodland.

Results of Survey and Assessment

- iv. The proposals will have no adverse direct or indirect effect on statutory or non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.
- v. In terms of each habitat's importance in a geographical context, the woodland within the site is considered to be of 'local' importance as it supports habitats of value to nesting and foraging birds, and bats, and will contribute as wildlife links across the wider area. The neutral grassland and scrub are considered to be of 'site' value only.
- vi. No habitats within the site are Priority Habitat.
- vii. Montbretia, an invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), was detected in the northern area of the site associated with the neutral grassland. It is an offence to cause the spread of this species in the wild. Guidance on the removal of this species is described at **Section 5.3**.
- viii. The woodland and scrub provide favourable foraging and nesting habitat for the species of birds detected within the site and the wider area via the records search (including house sparrow, a Priority Species). Measures to ensure protection of nesting birds are presented at **Sections 5.3**. Recommended enhancements for Priority Species are presented at **Section 5.4**.
- ix. The habitats are suitable for use by foraging and sheltering hedgehog, a Priority Species. Reasonable avoidance measures to ensure protection of wildlife during works are outlined at **Section 5.3**.
- x. Appropriate survey effort and / or assessment, in accordance with standard guidance, has been carried out to reasonably discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species.

Recommendations

- xi. The recommendations in **Section 5.0** outline all the mandatory measures and additional actions to be applied to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and best practice.
- xii. The proposals will secure an opportunity to implement beneficial measures such as habitat management and habitat creation that will safeguard habitats for wildlife such as birds and bats, with the aim of providing a net gain in biodiversity in accordance with the principles of the NPPF.

Conclusion

- xiii. It is concluded that the proposals are feasible and acceptable in accordance with ecological considerations and relevant planning policy. Development at the site will provide an opportunity to secure ecological enhancement for wildlife associated with a school development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

- 1.1.1 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned by Rochdale Borough Council to carry out an ecological assessment of the land off Mayfield Street, Rochdale OL16 2UZ (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference at the centre of the site is SD 90757 14148. An aerial image of the site and its surrounding habitats is appended at **Figure 1** (source image: ESRI World Imagery).
- 1.1.2 The assessment was requested in connection with a planning application to develop the site to a SEN school.

1.2 Scope of Works

- 1.2.1 The scope of ecological works undertaken in July and August 2025 comprised:
- A desktop study and data search for known ecological information at the site and the local area;
 - An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and assessment, and assessment of the habitats present at the site using the UK Habitats Classification;
 - Assessment of the ecological value of the habitats within the site with the use of the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and the Ratcliffe criteria, as presented in *A Nature Conservation Review* (Ratcliffe, 1977);
 - Survey and assessment of all habitats for relevant statutorily protected species¹ and other wildlife including badger (*Meles meles*), bird species and reptiles;
 - A daytime bat walkover survey for bats, which has comprised a ground level tree assessment and an assessment of the suitability of the habitats within the site and the surrounding area for foraging and commuting bats;
 - The identification of any potential ecological constraints on the proposals and the specification of the scope of mitigation and ecological enhancement required in accordance with wildlife legislation, planning policy guidance and other relevant guidance; and
 - The identification of any further surveys or precautionary actions that may be required to inform the progression of the site through the planning process or prior to the commencement of any construction activities.

¹ In accordance with Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and Their Impact on the Planning System (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005) developers should not be required to undertake surveys for protected species unless there is reasonable likelihood of the species being present and affected by the development. In this instance (for example) there are no ponds within an unobstructed radius of 500 metres from the site, and no water bodies or water courses within or adjacent to the site; there has been no requirement to consider great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*), water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) or otter (*Lutra lutra*) as part of this assessment

2.0 METHOD OF SURVEY

2.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

2.1.1 The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:

- a. MAGiC Maps: A web-based interactive map which brings together geographic information on key environmental schemes and designations, including details of statutory nature conservation sites;
- b. Ancient Tree Inventory (Woodland Trust, 2025): An online database of ancient and veteran trees;
- c. Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy;
- d. Greater Manchester Local Records Centre (GMLRC); and
- e. Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

2.2 Vegetation and Habitats

- 2.2.1 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site was carried out by Amy Sharples B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. ACIEEM on 18th July 2025. The weather was dry with scattered cloud, a light air (Beaufort scale 1) and an air temperature of 20°C. The survey was completed by Amy Sharples on 18th August 2025. The weather was overcast with a light air (Beaufort scale 1) and an air temperature of 17 °C.
- 2.2.2 A habitat and vegetation map was produced for the site and the immediate surrounding area and is appended at **Figure 2**. The mapping is based on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC, 2010) with minor adjustments to illustrate and examine the habitats with greater precision.
- 2.2.3 On site habitat mapping was assisted via use of GPS technology and QField on-site mapping software, using ERSI world imagery and a site location plans as baseplans.
- 2.2.4 The plant species within the site boundary were determined with estimates of the distribution, ground cover, abundance and constancy of individual species. The estimation of abundance was based on the DAFOR system, where D = Dominant, A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional and R = Rare, this being a widely used and accepted system employed by ecological surveyors. The terms L = Locally and V = Very were additionally used to describe the plant species distributions with greater precision.
- 2.2.5 Stands of vegetation and habitats were described and evaluated using the National Vegetation Classification (NVC). The NVC provides a systematic and comprehensive analysis of British vegetation and is a reliable framework for nature conservation and land-use planning.
- 2.2.6 Habitats within the site were assessed in accordance with *The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (UKHab Ltd, 2023). The UK Habitat Classification, or 'UKHab' has been designed to function at two scales of minimum mappable unit (MMU): fine scale (25m² or 5 metres length) and large scale (400m² or 20 metres length). It has been considered for the purposes of this survey that the fine scale of 25m² or 5 metres length MMU is appropriate.
- 2.2.7 Searches were made for uncommon, rare and statutorily protected plant species, those species listed as protected in the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and species which are indicators of important and uncommon plant communities. Plant nomenclature follows *New Flora of the British Isles 3rd Edition* (Stace, 2010).

- 2.2.8 Searches were carried out for the presence of invasive species, including those listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

2.3 Animal Life

Badger

- 2.3.1 The survey area for badger covered the site (as annotated on **Figures 1 and 2**) and extended to accessible land within a radius of 50 metres from the site boundary. Private gardens / land were excluded from the survey.
- 2.3.2 The survey was conducted in accordance with guidance presented within *Badgers and Development* (Natural England, 2007) and *Badgers: advice for making planning decisions* (Natural England, 2022).
- 2.3.3 The following signs of badger activity were searched for:
- Sett entrances, e.g. entrances that are normally 25 to 35cm in diameter and shaped like a 'D' on its side;
 - Large spoil heaps outside sett entrances;
 - Bedding outside sett entrances;
 - Badger footprints;
 - Badger paths;
 - Latrines;
 - Badger hairs on fences or bushes;
 - Scratching posts; and
 - Signs of digging for food.
- 2.3.4 Habitats within and surrounding the site were assessed in terms of their suitability for use by foraging and sheltering badger in accordance with their known habitat preferences as detailed in current guidance and *Badger* (Roper, 2010).

Bat Species

Daytime Bat Walkover Survey

Ground Level Tree Assessment

- 2.3.5 A preliminary assessment of the trees within the site was conducted to assess their suitability for use by roosting bats, and to inform whether further surveys or precautionary measures were required.
- 2.3.6 Trees were assessed from the ground using binoculars and a high-powered torch. Each tree was searched for the presence of the following features:

Woodpecker holes, rot holes, hazard beams, other vertical or horizontal cracks or splits in stems and branches, partially decayed platey 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 Ivy (*Hedera helix*) with stem diameters in excess of 50mm and bat, bird or dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) boxes.

- 2.3.7 Terms used to describe any features present follow (where possible) those outlined and described in *Bat Tree Habitat Key, 2nd Edition* (Andrews, H (ed), 2013) and *Bat Roosts in Trees: A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-care and Ecology Professionals* (BTHK, 2018).
- 2.3.8 Trees have been assessed and described using the categories presented at Tables 4.2 and 6.2 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)*, (Collins, J. (ed), 2023), as presented in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Definition of Terms and Suitability Categories Used in Tree Survey for Roosting Bats

Terms and Suitability Categories	Description
PRF	Potential Roost Feature
None	Either no PRFs in the tree(s) or highly unlikely to be any.
FAR	Further Assessment Required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree
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.

- 2.3.9 The requirement for further presence / absence surveys at each tree was then considered.

Habitat Assessment for Commuting / Foraging Bats

- 2.3.10 Habitats within and adjacent to the site were assessed for their value and suitability for commuting and foraging bats in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023). Reference has been made to the categories, descriptions and examples presented in **Table 2.2**.

Table 2.2: Consideration of Suitability of Foraging and Commuting Habitat for Bats

Suitability	Potential Flight Paths and Foraging Habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that 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 as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	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	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	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).	

Bird Species

- 2.3.11 Bird species observed and heard during the survey were recorded.
- 2.3.12 Habitats throughout the site and in the immediate surrounding area were assessed for their value to roosting, feeding and nesting birds, as indicated by the amount of shelter, feeding value, woody vegetation structure and species diversity of tree and shrub species in the site.

Reptile Species

- 2.3.13 The site and its surroundings were assessed in terms of their suitability for use by reptile species using the important characteristics for reptiles outlined in the draft document *Reptile Mitigation Guidelines* (Natural England, 2011), and the *Reptile Habitat Management Handbook* (Edgar, et al., 2010). These habitat characteristics are outlined in **Table 2.3**.

Table 2.3: Important Habitat Characteristics for Reptiles

1. Location (in relation to species range)	7. Connectivity to nearby 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

Other Wildlife

- 2.3.14 Evidence of other wildlife, including Priority Species, observed whilst on site, but for which specific surveys were not made, was recorded and has been included in this report where it is considered of relevance to the planning application.
- 2.3.15 Habitats have been assessed for their suitability for Priority Species identified in the data search results where this is considered relevant to the application.

2.4 Survey and Reporting Limitations

- 2.4.1 All areas of the site were fully accessible at the time of the survey, no significant survey limitations were experienced.
- 2.4.2 All measurements within this report are approximate only, and have been either measured (using QField) or estimated whilst on site or calculated using mapping software (QGIS) or internet-based mapping services such as MAGiC Maps and Google Earth.

2.5 Evaluation Methods

- 2.5.1 The habitats, vegetation and animal life were evaluated with reference to standard nature conservation criteria as described in *A Nature Conservation Review* (Ratcliffe, 1977) and *Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs* (Bainbridge, et al., 2013). These are size (extent), diversity, naturalness, rarity, fragility, typicality, recorded history, position in an ecological or geographical unit, potential value and intrinsic appeal.
- 2.5.2 Habitats have been assessed to determine whether they meet those described in *UK Biodiversity Action Plan: Priority Habitat Descriptions* (Maddock, A (ed), 2008); these lists are used to help draw up the statutory lists of Priority Habitats, as required under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006*. Where suitable, the ecological value of the habitats present has been assessed using the terms outlined in *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018). Each habitat and individual trees have been assessed to determine whether they are ‘irreplaceable habitat’, defined in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024)² as ‘Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen’. The further detail presented in *The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024* (GOV.UK, 2024) has also been referred to.
- 2.5.3 Government advice on wildlife, as set out in the NPPF and associated government circulars has been taken into consideration. Legislation relating to protected species, such as those listed under Schedules 1, 5, 6 and 8 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*, is referenced where applicable, and any impacts to protected species are evaluated in accordance with current guidance.
- 2.5.4 The presence of any Priority Species, as listed under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006* is noted, and habitats are assessed in terms of their suitability and value for these species. The presence of habitats and / or species listed by the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plans has been taken into account in the evaluation of the site.

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

Statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation and SSSI Impact Risk Zones

- 3.1.1 The site is not and does not form part of any statutory designated site for nature conservation.
- 3.1.2 The site lies within the Natural England Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone for the overlapping Rochdale Canal SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 3.1.3 The SSSI Impact Risk Zone requires the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England on likely risks from the following development categories (Natural England, 2025):

²Hereafter the NPPF

- a. **Infrastructure:** Pipelines and underground cables, pylons and overhead cables (excluding upgrades and refurbishment of existing network). Any transport proposal including new or extended footways, cycleways, roads / car parks, railways and waterways (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- b. **Minerals, Oil and Gas:** Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions, extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil and gas exploration / extraction.
- c. **Residential:** Residential development of 100 units or more.
- d. **Rural Residential:** Any residential development of 50 or more units outside existing settlements / urban areas.
- e. **Air Pollution:** Any industrial / agricultural development that could cause air pollution including: industrial processes, livestock and poultry units with a floorspace greater than 500m², slurry lagoons greater than 200m² and manure stores greater than 250 tonnes.
- f. **Combustion:** General combustion processes greater than 20 megawatt energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis / gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration / combustion.
- g. **Waste:** Landfill. Including: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill.
- h. **Compost:** Any composting proposal with more than 500 tonnes maximum annual operational throughput. Including: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.
- i. **Water Supply:** Any development needing its own water supply e.g. remote rural housing that is not connected to a mains water supply, or large infrastructure such as warehousing / industry where the total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is greater than 1,000m².

Non-statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

- 3.1.4 The site is not and does not form part of any non-statutory designated site for nature conservation, called 'Sites of Biological Importance' or 'SBI' in Greater Manchester.
- 3.1 Four SBI are located within a 2 kilometres radius from the centre of the site, and are summarised in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: SBI Within a 2 Kilometres Radius from the Centre of the Site

SBI	Distance and Direction from the Site	Reasons for Designation
Rochdale Canal (Scowcroft to Warland)	0.87 kilometres to the south-east	Canal (Fw3); Floating Water Plantain (GGSG1)
Slopes by River Beal, Fir Grove Farm	1.14 kilometres to the east	Grassland (Gr2)
Buckley Wood Reservoir	1.22 kilometres to the north-west	Ponds & Small Lodges (Fw2); Woodland (Wd1)
Stanney Brook	1.71 kilometres to the south-east	Grassland (Gr2); Mud Snail (GSG)

- 3.1.5 The presence of the SBI is considered further at **Section 4.2**.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

- 3.1.6 No habitats within the site are identified as areas for potential creation or enhancement within the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Priority Habitats Inventory

- 3.1.7 The Priority Habitats Inventory³ was checked via MAGiC Maps. No Priority Habitats are identified at the site by the inventory.

Ancient Tree Inventory

- 3.1.8 No ancient or veteran trees are identified at the site by the inventory.

Protected and Notable Species

- 3.1.9 Records of protected and notable species for a 2 kilometres radius from the centre of the site are summarised in **Table 2.2**.

Table 3.2: Records of Protected Species Within a 2 Kilometres Radius from the Centre of the Site

Taxon Group	Species Name and Designations ¹ and Notes
Amphibians	Common toad (<i>Bufo bufo</i>): PS and WCAs5 (sale only) 1 record from 2019, located 1445 metres to the north of the site.
Birds – PS Species	Bullfinch (<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>), curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>), dunnoek (<i>Prunella modularis</i>), grasshopper warbler (<i>Locustella naevia</i>), grey partridge (<i>Perdix perdix</i>), herring gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>), house sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>), lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>), lesser redpoll (<i>Carduelis cabaret</i>), linnet (<i>Linaria cannabina</i>), reed bunting (<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>), skylark (<i>Alauda arvensis</i>), song thrush (<i>Turdus philomelos</i>), starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>), yellow wagtail (<i>Motacilla flava</i>).
Birds – WCAs1 Species	Barn owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>): WCAs1. 2 records, dated 2005 and 2020. The closest record is 1510 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2005.
	Hobby (<i>Falco subbuteo</i>): WCAs1. 1 record from 2008, located 1390 metres to the north of the site.
	Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>): WCAs1. 43 records, dated between 1988 and 2023. The closest record is 470 metres to the south of the site, and from 2009.
	Little ringed plover (<i>Charadrius dubius</i>): WCAs1. 9 records, dated between 2004 and 2022. The closest record is 1275 metres to the east of the site, and from 2014.
	Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>): WCAs1. 80 records, dated between 2006 and 2024. The closest record is 1375 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2024.
Bony Fish	Brown trout (<i>Salmo trutta</i>): PS. 2 records, dated 2014 and 2019. The closest record is 1530 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2014.
Terrestrial Invertebrates	Cinnabar (<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>): PS. 7 records, dated between 2010 and 2023. The closest record is 890 metres to the west of the site, and from 2020.
	Small heath (<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>): PS. 24 records, dated between 2009 and 2021. The closest record is 910 metres to the east of the site, and from 2021.
	Wall (<i>Lasiommata megera</i>): PS. 8 records, dated between 2010 and 2015. The closest record is 1210 metres to the east of the site, and from 2010.

³ A spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.

Terrestrial Mammals	Soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>): EPS, WCAs5, PS and GMBAP. 5 records, dated between 2005 and 2014. The closest record is 945 metres to the north of the site, and from 2005.
	Noctule bat (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>): EPS, WCAs5, PS and GMBAP. 1 record from 2013, located 1275 metres to the east of the site.
	Bat sp (<i>Chiroptera sp.</i>): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 5 records, dated between 2007 and 2021. The closest record is 90 metres to the west of the site, and from 2007.
	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 96 records, dated between 1989 and 2023. The closest record is 85 metres to the south of the site, and from 2009.
	Daubenton's bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 5 records, dated between 1995 and 2014. The closest record is 1010 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2009.
	Nathusius's pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 1 record from 2013, located 1480 metres to the west of the site.
	Pipistrelle sp (<i>Pipistrellus sp.</i>): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 39 records, dated between 1988 and 2022. The closest record is 85 metres to the south of the site, and from 1992.
	Water vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>): WCAs5 and PS. 15 records, dated between 1998 and 2017. The closest record is 75 metres to the south-east of the site, and from 2000.
	Badger (<i>Meles meles</i>): PBA. 22 records, dated between 1994 and 2025. The closest record is more than 500 metres from the site.
	Brown hare (<i>Lepus europaeus</i>): PS and GMBAP. 1 record from 2021, located 1555 metres to the east of the site.
	Hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>): PS. 31 records, dated between 2015 and 2022. The closest record is 185 metres to the north of the site, and from 2021.
Vascular Plants	Floating water-plantain (<i>Luronium natans</i>): EPS, WCAs8 and PS. 7 records, dated between 2003 and 2007. The closest record is 910 metres to the east of the site, and from 2007.
¹Key to Designation Codes: EPS = European Protected Species under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. WCAs1 = Species receives full protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). WCAs5 = Species receives full protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). WCAs8 = Species receives full protection under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). PBA = Protection of Badger Act 1992. PS = Priority Species listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. GMBAP = Species listed on the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.	

3.1.10 The presence of these protected and notable species within the wider area has been taken into account throughout this report.

3.2 Vegetation and Habitats

General Description

- 3.2.1 The approximately 1.38 hectare site is located in an urban area of Rochdale adjacent to existing commercial developments and residential properties and comprises an area of unmanaged neutral grassland, areas of scrub and an area of woodland.
- 3.2.2 The northern, eastern and western site boundaries are fenced, with a fence also dissecting the site from east to west. The southern site boundary is demarcated by an offsite line of trees. Existing commercial development lies beyond the southern, eastern and western boundaries, with the northern site boundary lying adjacent to residential properties.

- 3.2.3 The appended **Figure 2** can be referred to for all habitat descriptions. Photographs are appended in **Section 8.2**.

Unmanaged Neutral Grassland

- 3.2.4 The northern area of the site supports unmanaged neutral grassland (**Photos 1 and 2**).
- 3.2.5 The vegetation is characterised by occasional False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Rosebay Willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*), Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Soft-rush (*Juncus effusus*), Perennial Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) and White Clover (*Trifolium repens*) with locally abundant Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*) and Broad-leaved Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*). A plant species list is appended at **Table 8.1**.
- 3.2.6 The neutral grassland is not characteristic of an NVC community but has affinities with an *MG1 Arrhenatherum elatius* ley grassland community of the NVC (Rodwell, 1992) and is described by the UKHab as g3c other neutral grassland.

Scrub

- 3.2.7 The southern area of the site supports scrub (**Photos 3 and 4**), and a small area in the north-western corner of the site also supports scrub.
- 3.2.8 The vegetation is characterised by constant and abundant Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*), occasional Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Grey Poplar (*Populus alba x tremula* = *P. x canescens*), Bramble, Grey Willow (*Salix cinerea*) and Willow species (*Salix* sp.) with locally abundant Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). The ground layer is characterised by occasional Rosebay Willowherb and locally abundant Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Creeping Thistle, Cock's-foot, Common Couch (*Elytrigia repens*), Yorkshire-fog, Perennial Rye-grass and Tufted Vetch (*Vicia cracca*). A plant species list is appended at **Table 8.2**.
- 3.2.9 The scrub is not characteristic of an NVC community and is described by the UKHab as h3h mixed scrub.

Woodland

- 3.2.10 A woodland belt dissects the site from east to west, and continues northwards at the eastern boundary (**Photos 5 and 6**).
- 3.2.11 The canopy layer is characterised by occasional Silver Birch, Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*) and Grey Willow (*Salix cinerea*) and locally abundant Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Lime species (*Tilia* sp.). The scrub layer is characterised by very locally frequent Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*).
- 3.2.12 The ground layer of the woodland is sparsely vegetated with bare earth and occasional Bramble and locally frequent Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Field Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), Yorkshire-fog, Perennial Rye-grass, Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.) and Colt's-foot (*Tussilago farfara*). A plant species list is appended at **Table 8.3**.
- 3.2.13 The woodland is not characteristic of an NVC community and is described by the UKHab as w1g other broadleaved woodland.

Invasive Plant Species

- 3.2.14 No Japanese Knotweed was detected at the site.
- 3.2.15 As illustrated on **Figure 2**, stands of Montbretia, an invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), are present within the area of unmanaged neutral grassland. This species is listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended); it is an offence to spread or cause its spread in the wild. This is considered further at **Section 4.3**.

3.3 Animal Life

Badger

- 3.3.1 No evidence of badger was detected at the site or in the wider area. The presence of badger and any adverse effects on this species as a result of the proposals are reasonably discounted.

Bat Species

Trees

- 3.3.2 No trees support any features suitable for use by roosting bats. The suitability of all trees within the site for use by roosting bats is assessed to be 'none'.

Habitat Assessment for Commuting and Foraging Bats

- 3.3.3 The areas of woodland and scrub at the site are of 'low' suitability for use by foraging and commuting bats, and are considered most likely to attract edge feeding species, such as common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*). A diverse range of species and/or large number of bats are considered unlikely at the site owing to the absence of habitats such as extensive areas of woodland and/or large waterbodies within the site.

Bird Species

- 3.3.4 Birds detected in the site in July and August 2025 are listed in **Table 3.3**.

Table 3.3: Bird species Detected on 18th July and 18th August 2025

Scientific Name	Common Name	BOCC Status ¹
<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Wood pigeon	Amber
<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Robin	Green
<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	Blue tit	Green
<i>Pica pica</i>	Magpie	Green
<i>Turdus merula</i>	Blackbird	Green

¹BOCC: Birds of Conservation Concern (Stanbury, et al., 2021).

- 3.3.5 The woodland and scrub at the site are suitable for use by nesting passerine (i.e. perching) species, including those detected within the site during the survey. This is considered further at **Section 4.4**.
- 3.3.6 No signs of ground nesting birds were detected during the survey conducted at the site. It is considered that the site is unsuitable for ground nesting birds and wintering bird species due to the small field size, the proximity to existing commercial developments and housing.

Reptiles

- 3.3.7 The site supports an even topography and there are no piles of garden waste or other suitable debris for use by sheltering or hibernating reptiles. The site supports no favourable habitat for basking reptiles. The habitats within the site are reasonably unlikely to support a large population or a variety of invertebrate prey.
- 3.3.8 The site is not adjacent or linked to any areas of favourable habitat for reptile species, and there are no records of reptile for the site or within a two kilometre radius of the site. The presence of reptiles within the site is reasonably discounted.

Other Wildlife

- 3.3.9 The site provides habitats suitable for use by foraging and sheltering hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), a Priority Species. The suitability of the site for hedgehog is considered further at **Section 4.4**.

4.0 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction and Description of Proposals

- 4.1.1 In accordance with *BAP-SEV-ZZ-XX-RP-A-09000-S02- Feasibility Study* (Seven Manchester, 2024) it is proposed to develop the site to a SEN school.
- 4.1.2 **Section 4.2** provides an assessment of any impacts of the proposed development on the designated sites for nature conservation present in the wider area. The ecological value of habitats within the site are evaluated at **Section 4.3**, and protected and notable species are considered at **Section 4.4**.

4.2 Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

- 4.2.1 The site and adjacent land have no statutory or non-statutory designation for nature conservation.
- 4.2.2 The site has no terrestrial or hydrological connectivity to any designated sites for nature conservation, and does not support any habitat which would be complementary to the statutory designated sites present in the wider area.
- 4.2.3 It is considered that the site is sufficiently small and distant from the BHSs in the local area that the proposed development will have no adverse direct or indirect effect upon them or their features of interest.

4.3 Vegetation and Habitats

- 4.3.1 Only common and widespread plant species were found. None of the habitats present are representative of semi-natural habitat. The NVC communities present are typical of the geographical area and conditions present.
- 4.3.2 In terms of each habitat's importance in a geographical context⁴, the woodland within the site is considered to be of 'local' importance as it supports habitats of value to nesting and foraging birds, and

⁴ Using the terms presented at Section 4.7 of *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018), i.e. International and European, National, Regional, Local Authority-wide area,

bats, and will contribute as wildlife links across the wider area. The neutral grassland and scrub are considered to be of 'site' value only.

- 4.3.3 Recommendations relating to the retention and protection the woodland habitats are presented at **Section 5.2**.
- 4.3.4 The proposals plan currently has the potential for direct impacts to the area of woodland, and also indirect impacts to retained areas of woodland via damage through inappropriate construction techniques. Inappropriate construction techniques have the potential to impact upon the nature conservation value of the habitats associated with the woodland via direct damage and pollution. Appropriate measures to ensure that the off-site woodland is protected during the construction phase of the proposed development are presented at **Section 5.3**.
- 4.3.5 It is considered that the protection of the retained woodland during works is feasible provided appropriate measures are taken for its protection, and impacts to the woodland during the construction phase of the proposed development can be avoided.
- 4.3.6 Inappropriate lighting has the potential to disturb nocturnal wildlife such as foraging and commuting bats and also nesting and roosting birds. An appropriate lighting design for the site which will avoid excessive lighting shining over the off-site woodland is recommended at **Section 5.4**.
- 4.3.7 The proposals plan demonstrates that the site has been designed in a manner which will minimise direct impacts to the woodland. Appropriate measures to be adopted during the construction phase of the proposed development will avoid impacts associated with development during this phase of the proposals and are presented at **Section 5.2**.
- 4.3.8 The presence of Montbretia, an invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) has been detected within the site. It is considered that the proposals present an opportunity for the eradication of this species as part of the proposed development. Further guidance is presented at **Section 5.3**.

4.4 Protected Species and Other Wildlife

- 4.4.1 Habitats within and adjacent to the site are suitable for foraging and commuting bats. Recommendations relating to the retention of features suitable for use by foraging and commuting bats and ensuring the habitats remain suitable for foraging bats are outlined in **Section 5.3**. Features to enhance habitats for roosting bats at the site are presented at **Section 5.4**.
- 4.4.2 The scrub and woodland provide favourable foraging and nesting habitat for the species of birds detected within the site and the wider area via the records search (including house sparrow, a Priority Species). Measures to ensure protection of nesting birds are presented at **Sections 5.3**. Recommended enhancements for Priority Species are presented at **Section 5.4**.

River Basin District, Estuarine system / Coastal cell or Local. The term 'site' value is additionally used to highlight ecological features considered to be of importance in the context of the wider site habitats, but which are of negligible value in the context of the local area.

- 4.4.3 The site also supports suitable habitat for hedgehog, also a Priority Species. Hedgehog have the potential to be harmed during the site strip; measures for the protection of hedgehog and other wildlife during the works are presented at **Section 5.3**.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 These recommendations aim to ensure that the development is implemented in accordance with relevant wildlife legislation, Natural England guidance, the principles of the NPPF, local planning policy and best practice.
- 5.1.2 The recommendations address the potential impacts identified in **Section 4.0** and are appropriate and proportionate.
- 5.1.3 In accordance with Chapter 15, paragraph 193(d) of the NPPF:
- ‘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’.*
- 5.1.4 Where possible, opportunities to enhance the ecological interest and habitat connectivity and seek biodiversity gain through appropriate landscape planting and habitat creation have been identified.
- 5.1.5 All recommendations are appropriate to the geographical area, the habitats in the wider area, the wildlife present in the local area (and likely to use the site post-construction) and take into consideration the end use of the site as a school.

5.2 Protection of Existing Vegetation and Recommendations in Relation to Site Layout

Recommendations in Relation to Site Layout

- 5.2.1 It is recommended that the site layout accommodates the following:
- a. Green infrastructure and green links through the site with the use of landscape planting and trees as stepping stones;
 - b. Compensation for the loss of grassland habitat via the provision of wildflower grassland within the landscape planting within the site;
 - c. Use of native species in the landscape planting scheme;
 - d. Avoidance of unnecessary lighting and preparation and implementation of a sympathetic external lighting scheme in accordance with current guidance (see below); and
 - a. Incorporation of features for wildlife such as boxes for roosting bats and nesting birds within the developed areas of the site and the retained woodland (refer to **Section 5.4**).

Consideration of Lighting

- 5.2.2 Paragraph 198(c) in Chapter 15 (conserving and enhancing the natural environment) of the NPPF states that development should:

'limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.'

- 5.2.3 The lighting scheme to be implemented at the developed site must involve the use of appropriate products and screening, where necessary, to ensure no excessive artificial lighting shines over the retained woodland, areas of ecological enhancement and any landscape planting, as lighting overspill may deter use by wildlife such as foraging bats.
- 5.2.4 The lighting scheme will be designed with reference to current guidance, namely:
 - a. *Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night* (Institution of Lighting Professionals & Bat Conservation Trust, 2023); and
 - b. *Bats and lighting: Overview of current evidence and mitigation guidance* (Stone, 2014).

5.3 Protection of Existing Features and Wildlife During Construction Phase

Invasive Plant Species

- 5.3.1 It is an offence under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) to cause the spread of Montbretia in the wild. It is recommended that the Montbretia are grubbed out by the roots during site clearance and disposed of either by burying on site or removal to a suitable tip.

Protection of Woodland and Scrub

- 5.3.2 During the construction phase, temporary protective demarcation fencing will be used to protect any trees and shrubs to be retained. The fencing must extend outside the canopy of the retained trees and must remain in position until all areas have been developed to ensure protection is provided throughout the construction phase.
- 5.3.3 The fencing will be in accordance with *BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations* (BSI, 2012).

Protection of Bat Foraging Habitat During Works; Construction Phase Lighting

- 5.3.4 The measures outlined above will protect the habitats identified as being suitable for use by foraging and commuting bats during the construction phase of the proposed development. To ensure that this habitat is not degraded due to unsuitable lighting, any lighting to be used at the site during construction should be directional and screened where possible. This specification should be included within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) or similar document.

Protection of Nesting Birds

- 5.3.5 All wild birds are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) while they are breeding. Any works such as vegetation clearance that will affect habitats suitable for use by nesting birds are scheduled to commence outside the bird nesting season. Commencement of works in the nesting season must be informed by a pre-works nesting bird survey, carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist. The bird breeding season typically extends between March to August inclusive.
- 5.3.6 If breeding birds are detected the ecologist will issue guidance in relation to the protection of the nesting birds in conjunction with the scheduled works. This may involve cordoning off an area of the site until the young birds have fledged.

Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement for Hedgehog and Other Wildlife

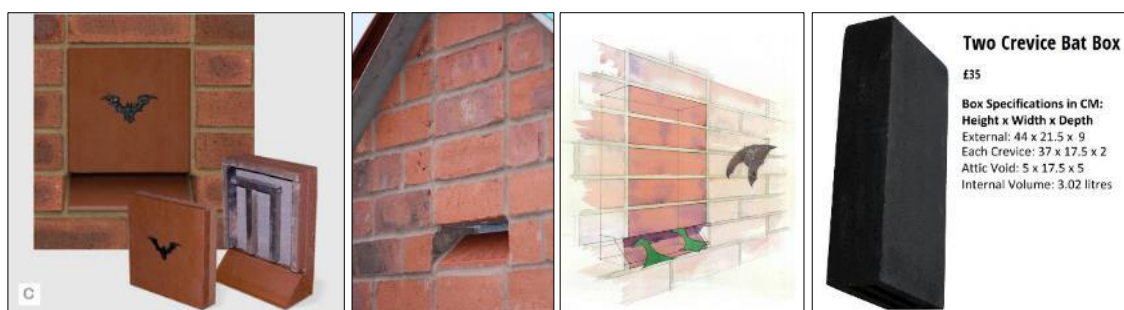
5.3.7 During the site preparation works and construction operations it is essential that the following best practice and Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement (RAMMS) are applied for the protection of terrestrial mammals and other wildlife:

- a. All site personnel must be made aware of this RAMMS and best practice guidance;
- b. A pre-commencement check of the site for amphibians and terrestrial mammals including hedgehog will be completed by a suitably experienced ecologist prior to the commencement of works. The results of the pre-commencement surveys will be presented in the form a letter;
- c. During works all arising waste must be either removed from the area or placed in a skip to avoid the accumulation of materials that may create suitable habitat and shelter for terrestrial mammals;
- d. During construction, bricks etc. must ideally be stored on pallets or raised from the ground in another suitable manner in order that no suitable habitat for hedgehog is created;
- e. Trenches or holes must be fitted with a means of escape (such as ramped edge or a sloping plank of timber). This will ensure that any inquisitive animals do not become trapped;
- f. Deep trenches / excavations must not be left open overnight. Any open excavations (e.g. foundations/ footings/ service trenches etc) will be covered with plywood sheeting (or similar) at the end of each working day;
- g. Any pipes must be stored with caps on (to prevent animal entry);
- h. No fires must be lit at the site;
- i. The use of chemicals (such as fertilisers and herbicides) harmful to wildlife should be avoided wherever possible; and
- j. If a hedgehog is detected on site, it must be carefully picked up, placed in a clean bucket and moved to an area of suitable habitat beyond the working area. ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd (01772 750502) can be contacted for further guidance if required

5.4 Provision of Opportunities for Nesting Birds and Roosting Bats

Enhancing Habitats for Roosting Bats

- 5.4.1 It is recommended that the development incorporates the installation of one bat access panels at the new buildings.
- 5.4.2 The bat access panels should be sited at least 4 metres above ground level, ideally facing or close to areas of landscape planting or existing linear features. The access panels should not be positioned over windows or doorways where bat droppings may become a nuisance. Once the development layout has been finalised, an ecologist should advise on appropriate positions for the bat access panels. Suitable bat access panels are available from NHBS Ecology (www.nhbs.com), Wild Care (www.wildcare.co.uk) and / or Greenwood's Ecohabitats (www.greenwoodsecohabitats.co.uk) and are presented at **Insert 1**.



Insert 1: Examples of integrated bat access panels and an externally mounted box⁵

5.4.3 It is recommended that three bat boxes are erected onto suitable retained mature trees within the site. An ecologist will advise on the siting of the bat boxes whilst on site.

5.4.4 Bat boxes should be installed to the following guidelines (Bat Conservation Trust, 2024)

- At least 4 metres above the ground (where safe installation is possible);
- Sheltered from strong winds and exposed to the sun for part of the day (usually south or south-west). Ideally several bat boxes will be installed to provide a variety of different thermal options for bats. Grouping a number of boxes each with a different aspect can achieve this; while a number of boxes is preferable to one, a single box is still viable and may be used by roosting bats;
- Located close to unlit linear features, such as lines of trees or hedgerows; and
- Installed where the bat box entrance is not cluttered or impeded by branches, or accessible to predators (such as cats) by large branches underneath them.

5.4.5 Suitable bat boxes are the Schwegler 1FF, Greenwood Ecohabitat's single or double cavity boxes and Schwegler 1FD, see **Insert 2**.



Insert 2: Schwegler 1FF, Greenwood Ecohabitat's single cavity and Schwegler 1FD bat boxes

⁵ Left to right: IBstock Enclosed Bat Box 'c' (left); Habibat Bat Access Panels (centre left and centre right) and Greenwood's Ecohabitat's two crevice bat box (right). Products with a brick face are illustrated, however the Habibat bat access panels can be supplied unfaced to enable the addition of matching material.

Enhancing Habitats for Nesting Birds

House Sparrow

- 5.4.6 House sparrows are associated with suburban areas. Monitoring suggests a severe decline in the UK house sparrow population, estimated as dropping by 71 per cent between 1977 and 2008 with large falls in both rural and urban populations (RSPB, 2023).
- 5.4.7 The installation of one house sparrow terrace nest boxes is recommended at the proposed new housing. The boxes will not be positioned over windows or doorways where droppings may become a nuisance. RSPB advice states that boxes should ideally be sited facing north to east, to avoid exposure to direct sunlight, which may cause overheating of chicks in the nest.
- 5.4.8 Once the development layout has been finalised, an ecologist should advise on appropriate positions for the bird boxes. Such bird boxes are available from the NHBS (www.nhbs.com) or Wild Care (www.wildcare.co.uk). ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd will advise on the siting of bird boxes. An example of a suitable house sparrow bird box is given below at **Insert 3**.



Insert 3: Schwegler 1SP House Sparrow Nesting Terrace

Swift

- 5.4.9 The swift (*Apus apus*) has been added to *The Birds of Conservation Concern* Red list (Stanbury, et al., 2021) owing to recorded declines and its identified status as a high conservation priority.
- 5.4.10 The installation of one swift nest boxes is recommended at the proposed new building. The box will not be positioned over windows or doorways where droppings may become a nuisance. RSPB advice states that boxes should ideally be sited facing north to east, to avoid exposure to direct sunlight, which may cause overheating of chicks in the nest.
- 5.4.11 Once the development layout has been finalised, an ecologist should advise on appropriate positions for the bird boxes. Such bird boxes are available from the NHBS (www.nhbs.com) or Wild Care (www.wildcare.co.uk). ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd will advise on the siting of bird boxes. An example of a suitable swift nest boxes is given below at **Insert 4**.



Insert 4: Examples of swift nest boxes⁶

Woodland Birds

- 5.4.12 Four bird boxes (one of each type presented at **Insert 5**) associated with woodland bird species are to be installed at the retained mature trees within the site. An ecologist will advise on the siting of the woodland bird boxes whilst on site. RSPB advice states that boxes should ideally be sited facing north to east, to avoid exposure to direct sunlight, which may cause overheating of chicks in the nest. The boxes should be at least 4 metres from ground level.



Insert 5: Schwegler 3S, Schwegler 1N, Schwegler 2M and Schwegler 2H bird boxes, suitable for a variety of woodland birds.

5.5 Enhancement and Management of the Retained Habitats and Landscape Planting

Enhancement and Management of the Retained Habitats

- 5.5.1 It is recommended that the retained areas of woodland are brought into active management for biodiversity and to promote the longevity of the habitat. A Habitat Management Plan will be prepared to include the following:
- Specification of the removal / control and safe disposal of invasive species such as Indian Balsam and Montbretia.
 - Installation of bird boxes including boxes of a design for specific species such as nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*), robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) and tawny owl (*Strix aluco*);

⁶ From left to right No. 17A Schwegler Swift Nest Box (Triple Cavity) as installation (centre), Manthorpe Swift Nesting Box (right) and Ibstock Eco-habitat for Swift (right), all available from www.NHBS.com and / or Wild Care (www.wildcare.co.uk).

- c. Creation of dead wood habitat piles for colonisation by invertebrates, fungi and small mammals including hedgehog (a Priority Species); and
- d. Plug planting of woodland herbs such as native Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*).

Landscape Planting

- 5.5.2 It is recommended that the landscape planting within the site is composed from native species and species known to be of value for the attraction of wildlife.
- 5.5.3 It is recommended that trees which support blossom and fruit which will attract insects are incorporated into the landscape planting. Suitable species are presented in **Table 5.1**.

Table 5.1: Suitable Native Species for Tree and Shrub Planting

Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	<i>Rosa arvensis</i>	Field Rose
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	<i>Rosa canina</i>	Dog-rose
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder
<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	Crab Apple	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild Cherry	<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	Wych Elm
<i>Prunus padus</i>	Bird Cherry	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Guelder Rose

- 5.5.4 The understorey and ground cover planting design should be prepared to optimise the attraction of invertebrates such as feeding bumblebees and butterflies. Where possible the use of native species should be maximised but where necessary non-native species known to be attractive to invertebrates should be used.
- 5.5.5 Planting schemes that include flowering species such as *Viburnum*, *Ceanothus*, *Hebe*, *Lavandula*, *Lonicera*, *Potentilla*, *Rosmarinus* and *Vinca* can maximise opportunities for feeding invertebrates and for the attraction of foraging bats and birds.
- 5.5.6 For further plants suitable for the attraction of pollinators please refer to the *Perfect for Pollinators Plant List* (Royal Horticultural Society, 2012). It is recommended that the selection of plant species at the site ensures that a variety of flowering species are available throughout the year.
- 5.5.7 Other appropriate plants to include within the landscaping scheme include night-scented flowers which will attract moth species and bats; a list of suggested species is presented at **Table 5.2**.

Table 5.2: Recommended Plants for Use in Gardens to Attract Bats⁷

Flowers for Borders	
Aubretia species (<i>Aubretia</i> sp.)	Michaelmas Daisy (<i>Aster</i> sp.)
Candytuft (<i>Iberis sempervirens</i>)	Night-scented Stock (<i>Matthiola longipetala</i>)
Cherry pie (<i>Heliotropium arborescens</i>)	Oxeye Daisy (<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>)
Corncockle (<i>Agrostemma githago</i>)	Fiddleneck (<i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i>)
Cornflower (<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>)	Poached Egg Plant (<i>Limnanthes douglasii</i>)
Corn Marigold (<i>Glebionis segetum</i>)	Primrose sp. (<i>Primula</i> sp.)
Corn Poppy (<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>)	Red Campion (<i>Silene dioica</i>)
Coneflower species (<i>Echinacea</i> sp.)	Common Valerian (<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>)

⁷ Extracted from *Encouraging bats, A guide for bat-friendly gardening and living* (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016).

Bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>)	Scabious species (<i>Scabiosa</i> sp.)
Evening primrose (<i>Oenothera biennis</i>)	St John's Wort species (<i>Hypericum</i> sp.)
Honesty (<i>Lunaria annua</i>)	Sweet William (<i>Dianthus barbatus</i>)
Ice plant 'Pink lady' (<i>Delosperma cooperi</i>)	Tobacco Plant species (<i>Nicotiana</i> sp.)
Knapweed species (<i>Centaurea</i> sp.)	Vervain species (<i>Verbena</i> sp.)
Mallow species (<i>Malva</i> sp.)	Wallflower species (<i>Erysimum</i> sp.)
Mexican aster (<i>Cosmos bipinnatus</i>)	
Herbs	
Wild Angelica (<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>)	Hyssop (<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>)
Bergamot (<i>Monarda didyma</i>)	Lavender species (<i>Lavandula</i> sp.)
Borage (<i>Borago officinalis</i>)	Lemon Balm (<i>Melissa officinalis</i>)
Coriander (<i>Coriandrum sativum</i>)	Marjoram (<i>Origanum majorana</i>)
English Marigold (<i>Calendula officinalis</i>)	Rosemary (<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>)
Fennel (<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>)	Sweet Cicely (<i>Myrrhis odorata</i>)
Feverfew (<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>)	Thyme species (<i>Thymus</i> sp.)

- 5.5.8 Provision of wildflower grassland within the landscape design is also recommended, where feasible. Wildflower grassland mixtures such as Emorsgate Seeds EM3F Special General Purpose Wild Flowers⁸ or British Wildflower Seeds Special General Meadow Seed Mix⁹ should be considered as part of the landscape design.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This ecological appraisal has demonstrated that a school development at the land off Mayfield Street, Rochdale is feasible and acceptable in accordance with ecological considerations and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 6.2 Adverse effects on designated sites for nature conservation, ecologically valuable habitats and protected species are reasonably discounted and Reasonable Avoidance Measures and best practice actions to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation will be implemented.
- 6.3 Measures to achieve a net gain for biodiversity in accordance with the development proposals are specified in **Section 5.0** and are entirely feasible to achieve compliance with the NPPF and best practice.

⁸<https://wildseed.co.uk/product/mixtures/wild-flower-only-mixtures/special-general-purpose-wild-flowers/>

⁹ <https://britishwildflowermeadowseeds.co.uk/collections/neutral-soils/products/special-general-meadow-seed-mix-44>

7.0 REFERENCES

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8.0 APPENDIX 1: TABLES AND FIGURES

8.1 Plant Species Lists

Table 8.1: Plant Species List for Unmanaged Neutral Grassland

Scientific Name	Common Name	DAFOR ¹	Cover
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping Bent	LA	<1%
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass	O	10%
<i>Aster novi-belgii</i> agg.	Michaelmas Daisy	VLF	<1%
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	O	10%
<i>Carex pendula</i>	Pendulous Sedge	LA	<1%
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay Willowherb	O	10%
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle	LA	5%
<i>Crocsmia pottsii</i> x <i>aurea</i> = <i>C. x crocosmiiflora</i>	Montbretia	VLF	<1%
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	O	5%
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Carrot	VLA	<1%
<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Wild Teasel	VLF	<1%
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Field Horsetail	LA	<1%
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue	LA	<1%
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	O	5%
<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	Tutsan	VLF	<1%
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft-rush	O	10%
<i>Juncus inflexus</i>	Hard Rush	LA	<1%
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow Vetchling	VLA	<1%
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass	O	5%
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil	VLA	<1%
<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>	Yellow Loosestrife	LA	5%
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	VLA	<1%
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup	LA	<1%
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	O	10%
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	O	10%
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curled Dock	VLA	<1%
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock	LA	5%
<i>Salix</i> sp.	Willow sp.	O	10%
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common Ragwort	O	10%
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge Woundwort	VLA	<1%
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	VLA	<1%
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	O	10%
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Colt's-foot	LA	<1%
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch	VLA	<1%

¹**Key to DAFOR:** D=Dominant, A=Abundant, F=Frequent, O=Occasional, R=Rare, V=Very, L=Local and *denotes a constant species

Table 8.2: Plant Species List for Scrub

Scientific Name	Common Name	DAFOR ¹	Cover
	Moss species	VLA	<1%
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	VLA	<1%
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping Bent	LA	2%
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass	VLA	<1%
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	O	5%
<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	Butterfly-bush	LA	<1%
<i>Carex pendula</i>	Pendulous Sedge	VLF	<1%
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common Knapweed	VLA	<1%
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay Willowherb	O	25%
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle	LA	5%
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	O	5%
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	LA	5%
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	LA	2%
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove	R	<1%
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Male-fern	VLF	<1%
<i>Elytrigia repens</i>	Common Couch	LA	2%
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Great Willowherb	LA	<1%
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Field Horsetail	VLA	<1%
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb-Robert	VLF	<1%
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	LA	2%
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	VLA	<1%
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft-rush	VLA	<1%
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow Vetchling	VLA	<1%
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass	LA	2%
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil	VLA	<1%
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	VLA	<1%
<i>Poa annua</i>	Annual Meadow-grass	LF	<1%
<i>Populus alba x tremula = P. x canescens</i>	Grey Poplar	O	5%
<i>Quercus robur</i>	Pedunculate Oak	LA	<1%
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	VLA	<1%
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	O	10%
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel	VLF	<1%
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat Willow	A*	75%
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	Grey Willow	O	10%
<i>Salix</i> sp.	Willow sp.	O	5%
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common Ragwort	LF	<1%
<i>Solidago virgaurea</i>	Goldenrod	VLF	<1%
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	Dandelion	LF	<1%
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	VLF	<1%
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	VLA	<1%
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Colt's-foot	VLA	<1%
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch	LA	5%
¹ Key to DAFOR: D=Dominant, A=Abundant, F=Frequent, O=Occasional, R=Rare, V=Very, L=Local and *denotes a constant species			

Table 8.3: Plant Species List for Woodland

Scientific Name	Common Name	DAFOR ¹	Cover
Canopy Layer			
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	LA	5%
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	O	40%
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	LA	10%
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat Willow	O	20%
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	Grey Willow	O	20%
<i>Tilia</i> sp.	Lime species	LA	5%
Scrub Layer			
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	VLF	<1%
Ground Layer			
<i>Carex pendula</i>	Pendulous Sedge	LF	<1%
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle	LF	<1%
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Field Horsetail	LF	<1%
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	LF	<1%
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass	LF	<1%
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	O	5%
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	Dandelion	LF	<1%
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Colt's-foot	LF	<1%
¹ Key to DAFOR: D=Dominant, A=Abundant, F=Frequent, O=Occasional, R=Rare, V=Very, L=Local and *denotes a constant species			

8.2 Photographs

Table 8.4: Photographs



Photo 1: Unmanaged neutral grassland



Photo 2: Unmanaged neutral grassland

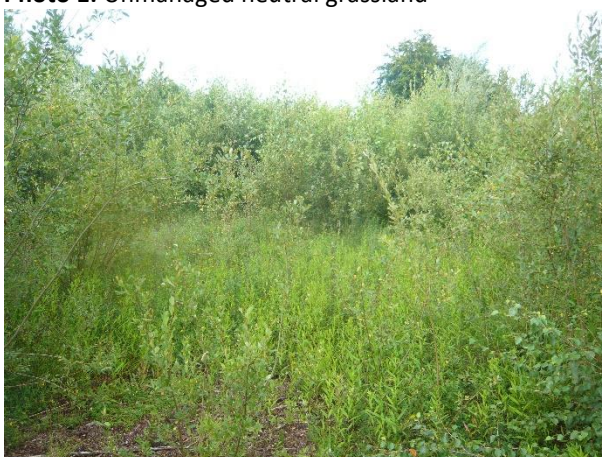


Photo 3: Scrub in southern area of the site



Photo 4: Scrub in the southern area of the site



Photo 5: Woodland belt at central area of the site



Photo 6: Woodland belt at central area of the site

8.3 Figures

Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Site and its Surroundings

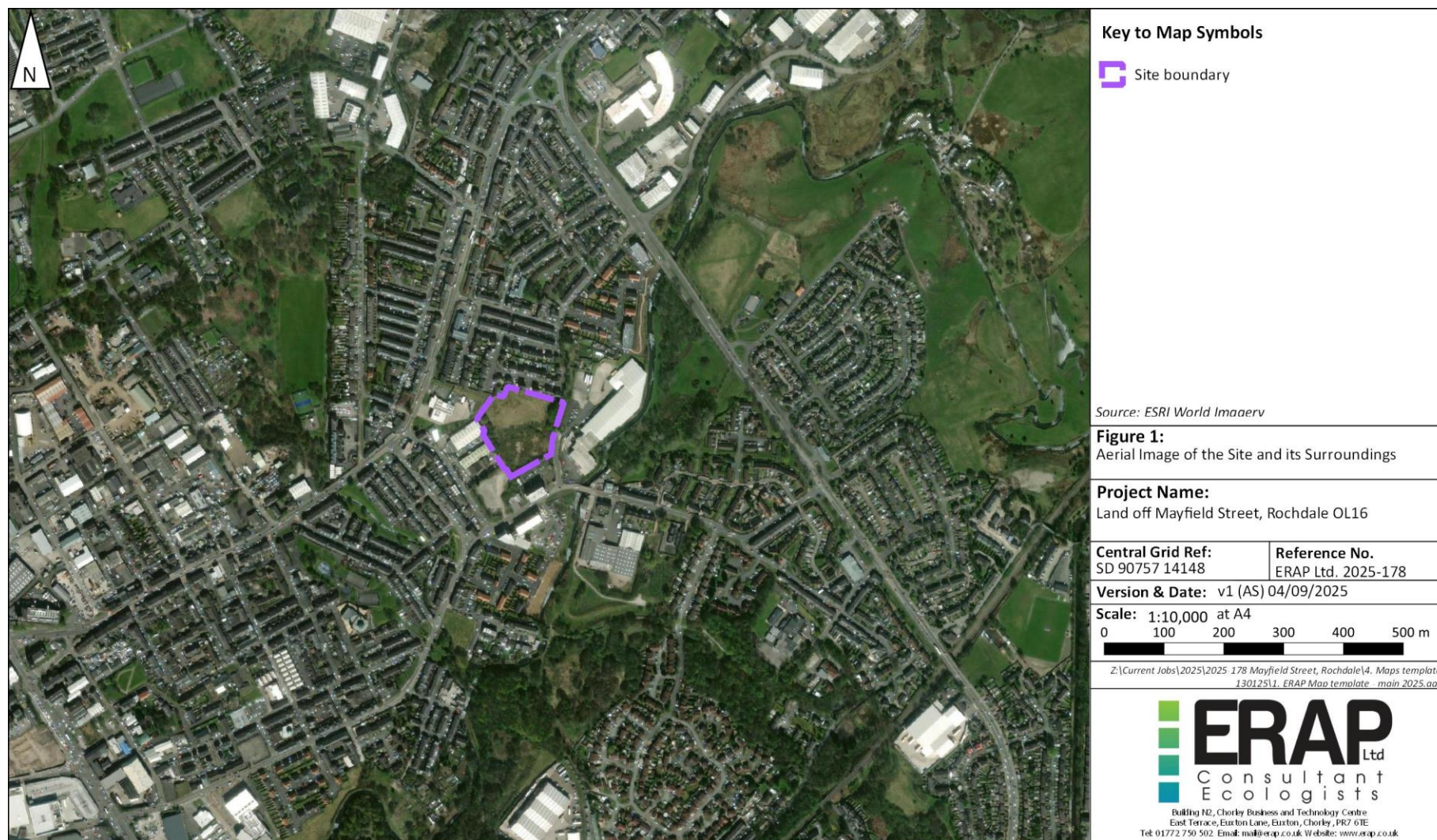


Figure 2: Phase 1 Habitat and Vegetation Map

