

Ramsden Farm, off Round Thorn Road, Middleton M24 1ZB:

**REASONABLE AVOIDANCE MEASURES FOR PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE AND A BIODIVERSITY
ENHANCEMENT SCHEME
Conditions 10, 11 and 14**

May 2026

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd ref: 2024-242d
Rochdale Borough Council reference: 24/00924/FUL

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Document Control

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Revised and issued	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM	18 th May 2026
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale and Scope

1.1.1 Planning permission for the “Construction of three detached dwellings with garages including associated access and landscaping”, Rochdale Borough Council reference 24/00924/FUL, was granted on 13th March 2025.

1.1.2 Condition 10 of the consent states:

‘No clearance of trees and shrubs in preparation for (or during the course of) development shall take place during the bird nesting season (March - August inclusive) unless an ecological survey has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to establish whether the site is utilised for bird nesting.’

1.1.3 Condition 11 of the consent states:

‘Prior to any vegetation clearance, earth works or machinery on the site, a precautionary working measures method statement for mammals and amphibians shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be implemented in accordance with the agreed details.’

1.1.4 Condition 14 states:

‘No above ground works shall take place until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements for the site including, but not limited to, bird nesting opportunities, mammal gaps, bat bricks and bat boxes to be integrated to the fabric of the dwellings and elsewhere within the site hereby approved has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The duly approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation of the dwellings and retained thereafter.’

1.2 Aims and Objectives

1.2.1 This Reasonable Avoidance Measures for the Protection of Wildlife and a Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme (hereafter referred to as the ‘Report’) provides a comprehensive and practical document that can be referred to and consulted by the developer and their appointed contractors.

1.2.2 To address Conditions 10 and 11, this report also includes the reasonable avoidance measures method statements (RAMMS) to be applied prior to *and* during construction for the protection of wildlife relevant to the site.

1.2.3 To address Condition 14, a Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme is presented at **Appendix 2**.

1.3 Distribution of Reasonable Avoidance Measures for the Protection of Wildlife and a Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme

1.3.1 All construction site personnel must be made aware of this Report and its content. This document must be accessible and available on site at all times during site preparation and construction operations.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 Ecological Surveys and Reports

- 2.1.1 The relevant scope of ecological survey and assessment has been carried out to inform the planning application and decision and is presented in the following reports (hereafter referenced as the 'ecology reports'):
- a. Ramsden Farm, off Round Thorn Road, Middleton M24 1ZB. *Ecological Survey and Assessment* (ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd, 2024); and
 - b. Ramsden Farm, off Round Thorn Road, Middleton M24 1ZB. *Assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain* (ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd, 2025)
- 2.1.2 The ecology reports have been referred to during the preparation of this document.
- 2.1.3 Reference has also been made to the *Arboricultural Impact Assessment in Relation to Proposed Three-Unit Residential Development at Ramsden Farm, Roundthorn Road, Middleton, Greater Manchester M24 1ZB* (Bowland Tree Consultancy Limited, 2024).

2.2 Updated Site Walkover

- 2.2.1 A site visit was carried out on 21st April 2026 by Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM. The weather conditions were dry and sunny with a light air (Beaufort scale 1) and an air temperature of 11°C. The objective of the walkover survey was to validate the findings of the ecology reports and to determine the presence, or otherwise, of any additional ecological considerations relevant to the commencement of works and the preparation of this Report.
- 2.2.2 There were no survey limitations on the intended scope of survey carried out in April 2026.

2.3 Brief Description of the Site and Surrounds

- 2.3.1 Refer to **Appendix 1: Figure 1**.
- 2.3.2 The Ordnance Survey grid reference at the centre of the site is SD 87702 05393. The total site area is 1.0228 hectares.
- 2.3.3 The site comprises an area of land that was previously used as a site compound during the construction of the existing four detached properties at Ramsden Farm. Since the completion of construction, the sandy ground has been levelled and areas have been seeded with a wildflower grassland. Along the southern margin of the site is a steep mound colonised by secondary woodland of Sycamore with the Bramble understorey.
- 2.3.4 The site is bordered by existing development to the south and west. The access road to the existing four properties lies to the north. Land to the east comprises a mosaic of unmanaged grassland Bramble scrub, Indian Balsam, mixed scrub and scattered trees leading down to Wince Brook which is over 90 metres away from the site boundary.

2.4 Ecological Status

- 2.4.1 For context the ecological status at the site is summarised below.

Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

- 2.4.2 The site has no statutory or non-statutory designation for nature conservation. The proposals will have no direct adverse effect on statutory or non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.

Habitats and Plant Species

- 2.4.3 None of the habitats present are representative of Priority Habitat, semi-natural habitat or are classed as irreplaceable habitat.
- 2.4.4 No rare or uncommon plant species were found at the site.
- 2.4.5 Indian Balsam (an invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) is presented on land adjoining the construction zone. Please refer to the separate report entitled '2024-242 Ramsden Farm, Middleton M24 1ZB. Updated Walkover Survey for Invasive Non-native Species and Method Statement'.

Protected Species and Other Wildlife

Bat Species

- 2.4.6 None of the habitats at the site are suitable for use by roosting bats; the presence of roosting bats is reasonably discounted.

Bird Species

- 2.4.7 The clearance of shrubs and Bramble scrub will result in the loss of opportunities for use by nesting birds including common and widespread species typically associated with urban areas and Priority Species, such as dunnock.

Hedgehog and Other Fauna

- 2.4.8 Habitats at the site are suitable for use by feeding and sheltering roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) and Priority Species such as hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*).
- 2.4.9 Appropriate and proportionate survey effort and / or assessment, in accordance with standard survey guidelines, has been applied to inform the planning application and are presented in the ecology reports to reasonably discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species.

3.0 PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHOD STATEMENTS FOR PROTECTION OF EXISTING HABITATS / FEATURES AND WILDLIFE

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The actions and method statements outlined below must be implemented prior to the commencement of site preparation actions and during the construction period.

3.2 Protection of Retained Habitats and Protective Buffers of Associated Habitats

Demarcation Fencing at the Site Boundary / Construction Zone

- 3.2.1 Demarcation fencing must be installed to demarcate the construction zone boundary and the tree protection zone in accordance with the *Arboricultural Impact Assessment in Relation to Proposed Three-Unit Residential Development at Ramsden Farm, Roundthorn Road, Middleton, Greater Manchester M24 1ZB* (Bowland Tree Consultancy Limited, 2024). The demarcation fencing must protect all habitats to be retained as part of the provision on-site Biodiversity Net Gain. It is essential that the site compound / storage area and all other construction related activities are carried out within the fencing or on the hardstanding associated with the road.
- 3.2.2 A plan showing the recommended position for the construction zone demarcation fencing is appended at **Figure 2**.
- 3.2.3 No operation of machinery or construction activities, including the storage of materials, must be carried out beyond the protective fencing.

3.3 Nesting Birds (Condition 10)

- 3.3.1 All wild birds are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) while they are nesting. It is advised that works such as vegetation clearance and the commencement of habitat management works that will affect habitats suitable for use by nesting birds are scheduled to commence outside the bird nesting season.
- 3.3.2 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.
- 3.3.3 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.

3.4 Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement (RAMMS) for the Protection of Wildlife (including Hedgehog and Amphibian Species)

- 3.4.1 Prior to the commencement of works a Toolbox Talk will be provided by the ecologist.
- 3.4.2 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 wildlife:
 - a. All site personnel must be made aware of this RAMMS and best practice guidance;
 - b. Prior to the commencement of the removal of vegetation and soil stripping operations between the months of April to October inclusive it is recommended that arrangements are made for the progressive flailing of the vegetation in the site. The flailing will take the grassland in the construction zone to a height of 0.10 metres above ground; it is considered that this action will encourage the passive migration of fauna prior to the soil strip. Vegetation removal and soil stripping in the winter months (November to March inclusive) can progress with care;

- c. Scheduled clearance of dense vegetation must be informed by a pre-works inspection for nesting and hibernating hedgehog (dependent on the time of year);
- d. Cleared woody vegetation must be removed from site or chipped immediately to avoid the accumulation of brash that may be colonised by sheltering hedgehog, amphibians and other fauna;
- e. During any vegetation clearance works all arising materials 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 wildlife;
- f. Where practical, any pipes must be stored with caps on (to prevent entry by wildlife);
- g. Fires must not be lit at the site;
- h. Deep trenches / excavations must not be left open overnight. Footings, service trenches or holes must be covered with plywood sheeting (or similar) at the end of each day. The edges of sheets will be covered with a thick layer of topsoil or similar to prevent amphibians from seeking shelter beneath them. Any excavations must be in-filled and made good to ground level with compacted stone or similar at the earliest opportunity, so as to remove any hazard to amphibians;
- i. During construction, bricks etc must be stored on pallets or raised from the ground in another suitable manner in order that no suitable habitat for sheltering animals is created;
- j. The use of chemicals (such as fertiliser and herbicides) harmful to wildlife should be avoided wherever possible; and
- k. If a hedgehog, amphibian species or other wildlife (subject to species) 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 construction site boundary.

3.5 Biosecurity and Invasive Plant Species

- 3.5.1 To minimise the risk of introduction of invasive species to the site *and* the spread of invasive species around the site, all machinery / plant to be brought to the site must be clean.
- 3.5.2 Wheels / tracks of machinery / plant must have been pressure washed before use at the site.
- 3.5.3 No excessive remnant soil or plant material from other sites must be present on the machinery / plant or in the tyre treads as this may increase the risk of spread of non-native and invasive plant species e.g. Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*). Contractors must not accept plant or machinery that is dirty / contains soil and plant material from off-site.

3.6 Pollution Prevention Guidelines

- 3.6.1 In the absence of updated guidance, the following Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPG) will be adhered to during site preparation and construction operations:
 - a. PPG1: Basic good environmental practices (Environment Agency, 2013);
 - b. PPG5: Works in, near or over watercourses (Environment Agency, 2014);
 - c. PPG6: Construction and demolition sites (Environment Agency, 2012); and
 - d. PPG7: Operating refuelling sites (Environment Agency, 2011).

- 3.6.2 In the event of a pollution incident the appropriate authority (Environment Agency) must be contacted¹ and the relevant guidance must be followed.

3.7 Good Housekeeping

- 3.1 To ensure no additional impacts to wildlife such as wind-blown debris and attraction of vermin (for example) are created as a result of the construction site, a good housekeeping policy will be applied at all times, and will comprise the following:
- a. All working areas will be kept in a clean and tidy condition;
 - b. Wheel washing areas will be brushed or spray cleaned frequently;
 - c. Adequate toilet facilities will be provided for all site staff;
 - d. Litter will be removed at frequent intervals and the site kept clean and tidy;
 - e. Food waste will be removed at frequent intervals; and
 - f. Any waste susceptible to spreading by wind or liable to cause litter will be stored in enclosed containers.

4.0 INSTALLATION OF FEATURES FOR USE BY ROOSTING BATS, NESTING BIRDS AND HEDGEHOG

- 4.1 As required under Condition 14 of the planning consent, a *Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme* has been prepared to show the locations for all provisions for roosting bats, nesting birds, hedgehog and biodiversity to be installed as part of the proposals. The *Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme* is presented at **Appendix 2**.
- 4.2 The relevant construction contractors must be made aware of these plans and the need to install the features at the relevant time.

5.0 ECOLOGICAL CLERK OF WORKS, RESPONSIBLE PERSONS AND LINES OF COMMUNICATION

- 5.1 Any queries in relation to this Report should be directed to ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd (contact details are presented below).
- 5.2 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd will provide an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) / Ecologist in relation to the following (as needed):
- a. Nesting bird inspections prior to vegetation removal between March and August inclusive (refer to **Section 3.3**);
 - b. Provision of the Toolbox Talk; and
 - c. General ecological guidance.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/report-an-environmental-incident>

Table 5.1: Responsible Persons and Lines of Communication

Role	Company Name / Address	Contact
Developer	Ramsden Farm Developments Ltd	Kevin Kelly
Principal Contractor	TBC	TBC
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6.0 REFERENCES

Bowland Ecology, 2020. *Clay Lane, St. Helens. Ecological Impact Assessment*, Clitheroe: Bowland Ecology.

Bowland Tree Consultancy Limited, 2024. *Arboricultural Impact Assessment in Relation to Proposed Three-Unit Residential Development at Ramsden Farm, Roundthorn Road, Middleton, Greater Manchester M24 1ZB*, Preston: Bowland Tree Consultancy Limited.

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Environment Agency, 2012. *Construction and Demolition Sites, PPG6: Prevent Pollution*. [Online]
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ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd, 2025. *Pykes Farm, Clay Lane, Eccleston St. Helens WA10 5PX. Biodiversity Enhancement Plan*, Chorley: ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd.

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd, 2025. *Ramsden Farm, off Round Thorn Road, Middleton M24 1ZB. Assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain. Version 3* ERAP Ltd ref: 2024-242b, Chorley: ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd.

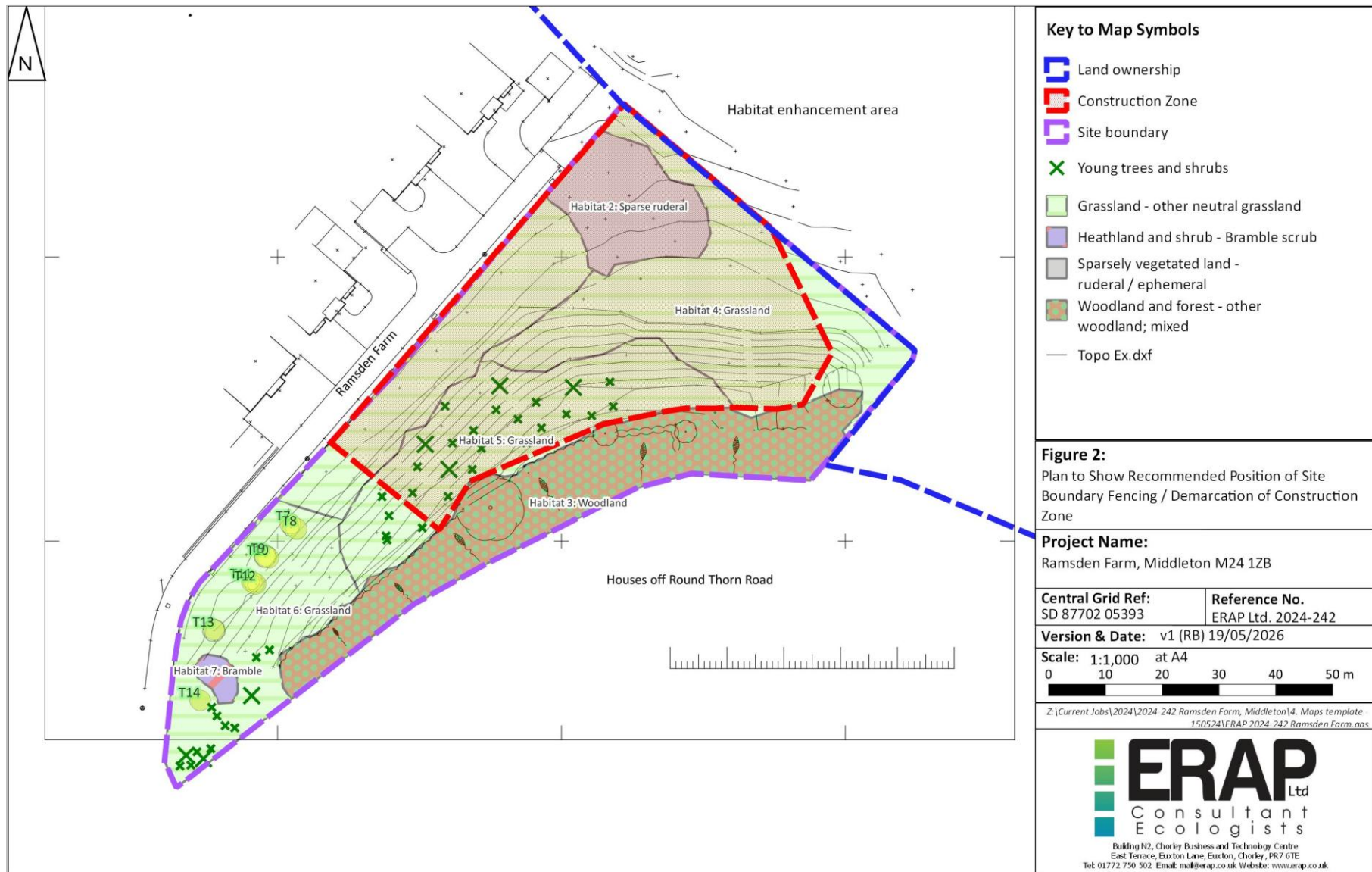
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7.0 APPENDIX 1: FIGURES

7.1 Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Site and Surrounds



7.2 Figure 2: Plan to Show Recommended Position of Site Boundary Fencing / Demarcation of Construction Zone



8.0 APPENDIX 2: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

