

208 DRAKE ST, ROCHDALE

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Potential Bat Roost Survey





GEO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING

Project Quality Assurance Information Sheet

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GEO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING

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PROJECT NO: 26008

REPORT REF: BEK-26008-1

DATE: February 2026

REVISION STATUS / HISTORY

Rev	Date	Issue / Comment	Prepared	Checked

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Guidelines

This assessment has been designed to meet:

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal second edition' (2017)
- British Standard 42020 (2013) 'Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development'
- The Bat Conservation Trust publication *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins, J. (Ed) 2023).
- National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF, Para 170(d) and Para 175(d))
- CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA *Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide*. CIRIA C776a. London, 2019.

Summary

Carol Edmondson MSc MRSB undertook a Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Potential Bat Roost Survey at 206-208 Drake St, Rochdale, OL16 1PJ on 02.02.2026. The aim of the assessment was to complete an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site and desk study of 2000m buffer zone area (all land that will be impacted by the proposals) and to consider the value and suitability of the land and any structures to be affected by the development for protected wildlife species, including identifying any potential for roosting bats (PRA), and environmental impacts on protected landscapes or habitats.

The site is overall is of moderate habitat value in the local area for birds due to the areas of scrub present on site, species recorded in the desk study area and the location in the landscape.

No further surveys have been recommended.

Biodiversity enhancement as recommended at 4.3 and mitigation recommendations need to be incorporated into any landscaping and building design.

Recommendations – This is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation.

Ecological Factor	Recommendations
Birds	A site check for any active birds' nests by suitably qualified ecologist if any site clearance is to be carried out between March & August inclusive.
Hedgehogs	A hand search for hibernating hedgehogs should be carried out during their hibernation period, otherwise a Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) approach should be adopted. Method statement at Appendix 4 to be strictly adhered to, in addition to the enhancement and mitigation measures at 4.3.



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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Background

BEK Enviro Limited were commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) 206-208 Drake St, Rochdale, OL16 1PJ, to support a planning application to for a housing development.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at central National Grid Reference SD 89427 12866 in a residential area of Rochdale, consisting of an area of un managed land which has developed areas of dense and scattered scrub.

1.3 Scope of the Report

The aim of this report is to obtain data on existing ecological conditions at the site; evaluates habitats within the survey area in the context of the wider environment; and describes the suitability of those habitats for notable or protected species. It identifies significant ecological impacts resulting from the development proposals; summarises the requirements for further surveys and mitigation measures, to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, forms the baseline survey data for Biodiversity Net Gain calculations, achieve planning or other statutory consent, and to comply with wildlife legislation.

The desk study covers a 2km radius, while the field survey includes a 50m area from the site boundary/proposed footprint and the scheme's zone of influence.

Taking into account the desk and field study, likely impacts on features of value, as a resulting from of the development proposals, have been identified.

A survey plan is presented in Appendix 1, the proposed Project Plan is included in Appendix 2 (where available), desk study results are provided in the Appendix 3, RAMS method statement at Appendix 4.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study Methodology

Existing biological records data relating to the site and a surrounding 2km radius (the study area) are required to conform to national guidelines and have been requested from Lancashire Environmental Record Network (LERN).

The data search is confidential information that is not suitable for public release, however a summary is provided and included at Appendix 3.

A review of the following information sources has also been undertaken to inform the assessment:

- Landscape structure using aerial images from Google Earth and OS maps
- Designated sites, habitat and granted EPSL records held on Magic.gov.uk.



2.2 Site Survey Methodology

The survey was undertaken by Carol Edmondson MSc MRSB (Natural England bat licence number: **2015-12195** CLS-CLS) on 02.02.2026.

- Baseline information on the site and surrounding area has been recorded through an 'Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey', including a Phase 1 Habitat Survey (JNCC 2010) and recording further details in relation to notable or protected habitats and species
- The ecological value of the survey area has been assessed based on the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (CIEEM, 2018), using geographic frames of reference.
- The biodiversity value of any identified designated sites, habitat types and associated species assemblages has been considered. Botanical assemblages were assessed; the site was inspected for the presence of red listed (Stroh *et al*, 2014), NERC s.41 listed and LBAP listed species, alongside specially protected species listed under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981) and/or Schedule 5 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017).
- The site was also assessed in relation to the presence of invasive species listed under Schedule 9 (Part II) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

2.3 Suitability Assessment

The likelihood of occurrence of protected species is ranked according to the criteria listed in Table 1. The habitats on site were evaluated as to their likelihood to provide sheltering, roosting, foraging, basking or nesting habitat.

Table 1: Criteria considered when assessing the likelihood of occurrence of protected species

Present	Species are confirmed as present from the current survey or historical confirmed records.
High	Habitat and features of high quality for species/species assemblage. Species known to be present in wider landscape (desk study records). Good quality surrounding habitat and good connectivity.
Moderate	Habitat and features of moderate quality. The site in combination with surrounding land provides all habitat/ecological conditions required by the species/assemblage. Within known national distribution of species and local records in desk study area. Limiting factors to suitability, including small area of suitable habitat, some severance/poor connectivity with wider landscape, poor to moderate habitat suitability in local area.
Low	Habitats in the survey area are of poor quality with few or no data records. However, the presence of species cannot be ruled out as the site and surrounding landscape have all necessary conditions. Limiting factors may include isolation, poor-quality landscape, or disturbance.
Negligible	Very limited, poor quality, habitats and features. No local records from desk study; site on edge of, or outside, national range. Surrounding habitats considered unlikely to support species/species assemblage.



Where relevant, all affected survey buildings and trees on site were categorised according to the likelihood of bats being present, in line with best practice guidelines (Collins, J. (ed) 2016). The features that dictate the likelihood of roosting bats are summarised in Tables 2 and 3 below. Roost suitability is classified as high, moderate, low and negligible and dictates any further surveys required before works can proceed.

Table 2: Features of a building that are correlated with use by bats

Likelihood of bats being present	Feature of building and its context
Higher	Buildings/structures with features of particular significance for roosting bats e.g. mines, caves, tunnels, icehouses and cellars. Habitat on site and surrounding landscape of high quality for foraging bats e.g. broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is connected with the wider landscape by strong linear features that would be used by commuting bats e.g. river and or stream valleys and hedgerows. Site is proximate to known or likely roosts (based on historical data).
Lower	A small number of possible roost sites/features, used sporadically by more widespread species. Habitat suitable for foraging in close proximity, but isolated in the landscape. Or an isolated site not connected by prominent linear features. Few features suitable for roosting, minor foraging or commuting.

Table 3: Features of a tree that are correlated with use by bats

Likelihood of bats being present	Feature of tree and its context
Higher	A tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
Lower	A tree of sufficient size and age to contain potential roosting features but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.

2.5 Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present.

Specific Limitations:

- Botanical assessment carried out outside the optimal survey period.
- However, the management of the area & surveyor experience reduce the likelihood of missing important botanical assemblages or species.

3.0 RESULTS AND EVALUATION

3.1 Desk Study Results

A summary of desk study results is provided below; full details are included in Appendix 3.

3.2 Designated Sites & Priority Habitats

3.2.1 National and Internationally Designated Areas:

The site lies within the following designated areas:

- The closest designated site is Rochdale Canal SSSI & Natura 2000 ~1.2km to the south.
- The site lies within the Impact Risk zone of the above SSSI site.

3.2.2 Biological Heritage Sites & Local Nature Reserves within 2km Survey Area (*Priority habitat/species in brackets*):

The following designated areas lie within the 2km desk study area:

- Rochdale Canal (unfavourable condition).

3.2.3 Other Priority Habitats (Listed on Natural England PHI MAGiC layers)

- Deciduous Woodland: small areas within the 2km desk study area – closest at 150m north
- Lowland Fen areas along the canal.

3.3 Landscape

The site is located close to the centre of Rochdale, in a residential and commercial area. Broadfield Park lies adjacent to the north of the site, with mature trees and managed grass. Small areas of woodland are scattered in the landscape, and following the contours of the River Roch to the north, but with limited connectivity to the site. There is a pond within the adjacent park (>250m), however high numbers of wildfowl make it unsuitable for amphibians.



Figure 1: Aerial photo of site, showing landscape structure

3.4 Protected Species: Species Protected under Schedule 5 Section 9.1a of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Section 41 (S41) of the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act.



3.4.1 Bats

- A search of the MagiC database for granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSMLs) within a 2km radius found three licenced sites for bats which include damage to a resting & breeding site for common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmeus* and Daubenton's bat *Myotis Daubentonii*.
- This is evidence of the presence of these species within the proximity of the site but does not exclude the presence of other bat species.
- Pipistrelle species of bat are known to roost in residential areas and buildings, foraging along hedgerows and under trees around urban areas and parks such as the location of the site.

3.4.2 Great Crested Newts (GCN)

- A search of the MAGIC database returned 0 positive class licence results and 0 granted mitigation licences pertaining to GCN within the 2km survey area.
- No ponds are present within 150m but a single pond at >265m, with no potential breeding habitat. No breeding habitat for GCN is present within the site. Potential terrestrial habitat is present within the site, but there is no connectivity to any breeding habitat.

3.4.3 Historical Records from the Local Environmental Records Centre

- No records from within the site. The full 2km radius records are summarised below.

Table 4. Summary of GMEU records of WCA/S41protected and NERC 2006 species of conservation concern within 2km data study area (Full records available on request):

Not yet available

3.5 Field Survey Results

Table 5: The environmental variables recorded at the time of the survey:

Date 02/02/2026	
Temperature	5°C
Cloud Cover	85%
Wind	5km/h
Rain	light

3.5.1 Site Feature Descriptions and Photos

Site description

The site of the proposed development is an area of approx. 0.37ha comprising overgrown areas of tarmac & waste piles. The wall to the north boundary with the road has a heavy ivy covering. Immature & sapling trees forming dense scrub make up the majority of habitat on site.

Fly-tipped waste has accumulated in piles some areas.



Figure 2: Aerial view of the site.



Figure 3: View north across the site.

Habitats present onsite
u1b Developed land sealed surface: Map Ref BH1

Comprising tarmac with some bryophyte cover developing.
Dominant Species: *Calliergonella cuspidata*.



Figure 4: View east across the site.

h3h 13 16 523 518 Mixed scrub, scattered, tall forbs, non-native, neglected
Map Ref: BH2/BH3

The majority of the site was covered with mixed scrub of non-native shrub species and brambles. Some areas being dense and others scattered.

The ground flora varied across the site, see species list below.



Figure 5: Example of scrub on the site.

h3h 13 16 523 518 Mixed scrub, scattered, tall forbs, non-native neglected: Map Ref BH2/3

In the central area of the site the scrub was much more scattered, with saplings less developed.
This would be more obvious in spring and summer when the scrub was in leaf.



Figure 6: Central area with more scattered scrub.

Table 6: Plant species list

Species list	
Hypnum moss	<i>Hypnum spp.</i>
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>
Ribwort	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Lesser trefoil	<i>Trifolium dubium</i>
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Cocksfoot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Rosebay willow herb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>
Cr. buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Docks	<i>Rumex spp.</i>
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
Mugwort	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>
Creeping bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>
Nipplewort	<i>Lapsana communis</i>
Gt birds foot trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
Red/crimson willow	<i>Salix alba vitellina Britzensis, Salix alba Chermesina</i>
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Ornamental birch	<i>Betula spp.</i>
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Brambles	<i>Rubus fruticosus spp.</i>

Evidence of protected species and potential bat roosting features (PRA).

There are no buildings within the site boundary.
The habitats on site were not suitable for any bats to use for roosting. The ivy clad wall to the north was too dense for bats to access for roosting.
No bat roosts will be affected by this proposal.

There were no signs of badger, or other mammal activity on the site.

The site provides forage and nesting habitat for birds & invertebrates in the local area.

Scrub and tufted grass provide suitable foraging and hibernating habitat for hedgehogs.



Figure 7: Dense ivy covering the wall to the north boundary.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS, IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Informative Guidelines

- The habitats on site were evaluated for their likelihood to provide sheltering, roosting, foraging, basking or nesting habitat. The likelihood of occupancy of protected species is ranked according to the criteria listed in Table 1.
- It will be clearly stated where a preliminary value can be given and where further information or survey effort is required.

4.2 Evaluation

Taking the desk-based assessment and site survey results into account, the following value has been placed on each site survey feature in Table 7 below.



Table 7: Evaluation of Site

Ecological Factor	Survey assessment conclusions (with justification)	Foreseen impacts	Mitigation & Recommendations The following recommendations are valid for two years from the date of this report; if the development is delayed beyond this point, an updated survey will be required.
Designated sites	Within SSSI Impact Risk Zone for Rochdale Canal.	Unknown	Following the SSSI IRZ Guidance, due to the development size, pre-application consultation with Natural England will be required.
Notable habitats and plants	No notable plants recorded on site at the time of the survey.	None	N/A
Sch.9 Invasive Non-native species	None present	No Impact	N/A
Bats	Due to the lack of potential roosting features this site is considered negligible likelihood of supporting roosting bats.	No impact on roosting habitat, loss of foraging habitat.	No further surveys. See also Enhancement measures at 4.3
Invertebrates	Scrub habitat present	Loss of forage & hibernation habitat	Planting native pollinator shrub & perennial species in the proposed garden areas.
Birds	Habitat for nesting birds within the scrub areas.	Active nests could be destroyed during vegetation removal. Breeding and foraging resources for local birds will be destroyed with the removal of vegetation. Loss of local nesting habitat.	A site check for any active birds' nests if any site clearance is to be carried out between March & August inclusive. A Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) approach should be adopted. Method statement at Appendix 4 to be strictly adhered to, in addition to the mitigation measures at 4.3.
Amphibians	No amphibian breeding habitat in the study area.	No impact on breeding populations. Loss of areas of potential terrestrial habitat.	See mitigation measures at 4.3
Otters	No habitat for otter or water voles on site.	No impact	No further surveys.
Badgers	No Badger snuffle holes or other signs of presence were recorded. No badger sett or habitat on site.	No impact.	N/A



Hedgehog	Good quality habitat present on site.	Animals could be harmed during scrub removal, and during construction.	A hand search for hibernating hedgehogs should be carried out during their hibernation period October – April inclusive, otherwise a Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) approach should be adopted. Method statement at Appendix 4 to be strictly adhered to, in addition to the mitigation measures at 4.3.
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4.3 Biodiversity Enhancement

Enhancements <i>The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ask for enhancements under the NPPF and circular 06/2023: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation.</i>	A full Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan should be implemented (produced as part of planning conditions). This could include: Any landscape planting should include native pollinator friendly species, including fruit producing native species. Tree and shrub species for proposed landscaping will be a mix of native species which offer habitat for insects and autumn foraging for birds and reflect the surrounding landscape. Suggested examples include: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Common Oak</td><td style="width: 50%;"><i>Quercus robur</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Rowan</td><td><i>Sorbus aucuparia</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Bird Cherry</td><td><i>Prunus padus</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Silver Birch</td><td><i>Betula pendula</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Willow spp.</td><td><i>Salix spp.</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Alder</td><td><i>Alnus glutinosa</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Hawthorn</td><td><i>Craetagus monogyna</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Hazel</td><td><i>Corylus avellana</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Blackthorn</td><td><i>Prunus spinosa</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Dog rose</td><td><i>Rosa canina agg.</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Holly</td><td><i>Ilex aquifolium</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>Native honeysuckle</td><td><i>Lonicera spp.</i></td></tr> </table> Yew <i>Taxus baccata</i> offers an excellent evergreen alternative to non-native hedging species.	Common Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Bird Cherry	<i>Prunus padus</i>	Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	Willow spp.	<i>Salix spp.</i>	Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Hawthorn	<i>Craetagus monogyna</i>	Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina agg.</i>	Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Native honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera spp.</i>
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	• Bats There is some foraging habitat in the area in the form of residential gardens, parks, trees & deciduous woodland in the immediate area. Mitigation & Enhancement will include: The installation of a minimum of 1 bat box or integrated bat bricks/tubes on each building to provide additional roosting habitat for bats. for example (depending on the final design): • Build-In Woodstone Bat Access (wildcare.co.uk) • https://www.wildcare.co.uk/soffit-bat-box.html • Greenwoods Ecohabitats https://www.greenwoodsecohabitats.co.uk/bats Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south/south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance. • Birds Bird nesting boxes will be included in the building plans to add to the available nesting opportunities in the local area. For example: ○ Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace ○ Swallow & house martin boxes ○ Schwegler 2H Robin Boxes																								



At least 1 bird box to be located on each new building and **should include a sparrow terrace**. Nest boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight, away from any artificial lighting source.

- **Hedgehogs**

Hedgehog numbers are rapidly declining across the UK; providing a refuge on site will help to protect hedgehogs from predators and loss of habitat in which they can shelter. It is recommended that hedgehog highways are provided between properties to allow hedgehogs free passage, See <http://www.hedgehoghighway.co.uk> for further information.

- **Lighting**

Any external lighting should not be directed at any wildlife features of the building as this will cause disturbance.

Further information on wildlife friendly lighting:

See *Bat Conservation Trust Guidance note 8/23 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK*

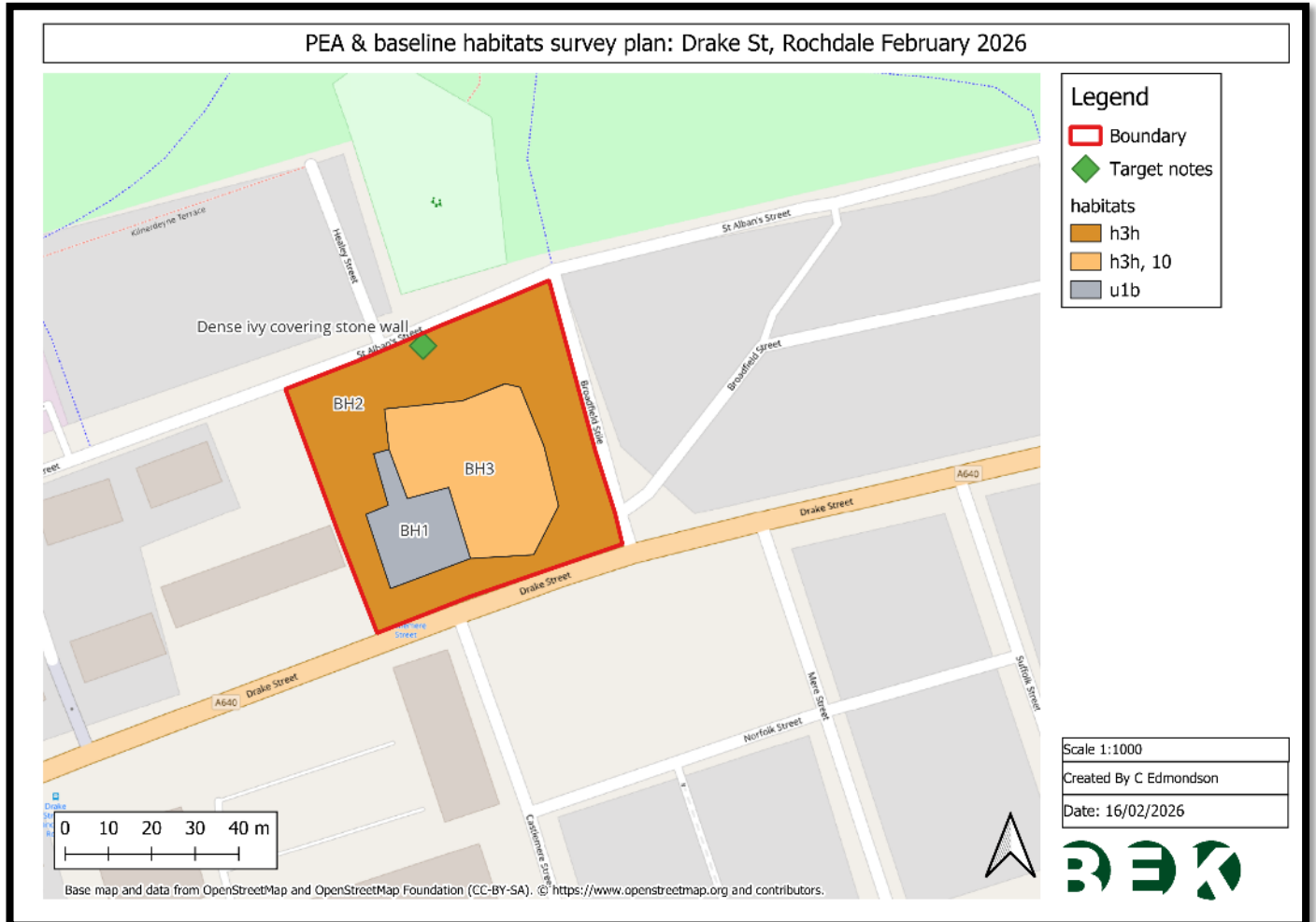


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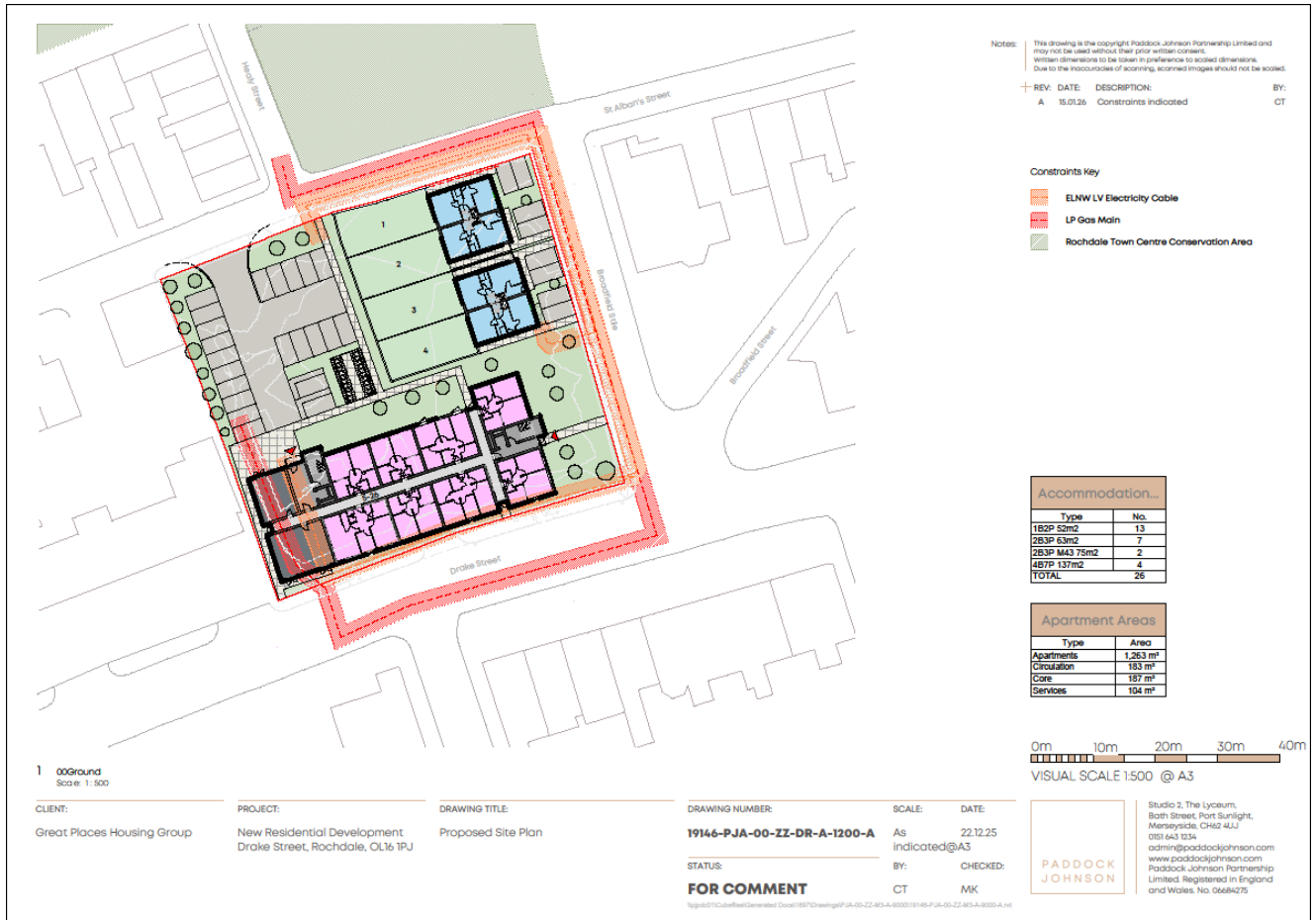
APPENDIX 1

Survey Plan



APPENDIX 2

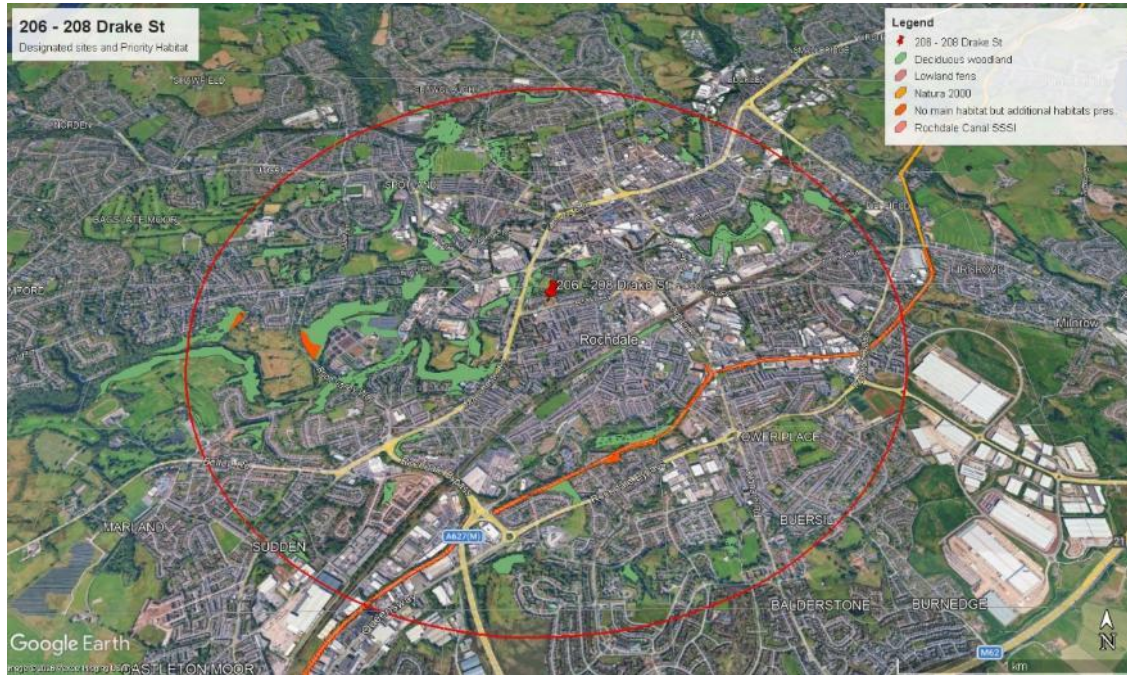
Location/Proposals Plan



APPENDIX 3

Desk Study Information

Full historical records can be provided on request.





APPENDIX 4

Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs)

Method Statement for Reasonable Avoidance Measures

Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) - Method Statement in relation to:

- Birds
- Amphibians & reptiles
- Terrestrial Mammals e.g hedgehog, badger, hare

Objectives of the Method Statement

Some development related activities on the site, such as excavation creation and removal of materials from site in areas local to otherwise suitable terrestrial habitat, has the potential to affect common amphibian and reptiles, and some terrestrial mammals, whilst protected mammals are known in the extending area. Therefore, safeguards must be implemented to protect these species and the Method Statement below outlines measures to be implemented in order to ensure this objective is achieved. Following these methods reduces the likelihood of negative impacts.

Timings – preferred timing of scrub clearance to minimise impact

- ***Nesting Birds:*** Outside the key breeding season which is 1st March – 31st August inclusive
- ***Hedgehog :*** Hibernation period October to April inclusive.

Before Any Works

- Before any works commence at the site all contractors will be attend a ‘tool box’ talk by a suitably licenced ecologist of the potential for protected species to occur on site, what to look out for and what to do in the event that protected animals are found.
- Photograph(s) of relevant protected species will be displayed at the site office and/or kept by the contractor’s personal being for visual reference purposes.
- Contractors to ask any questions as required following toolbox talk, before signing the Toolbox Talk Audit Form.

During Works

- Clearance works within the site should only commence after a careful visual inspection (Hand Search) has been carried out to determine that no animals, in particular hedgehogs, are present on site or targeted areas and therefore no animals are at risk.
- Site clearance during the breeding bird season (March – August inc.) will require a breeding bird site check to be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist within 48hrs of site clearance commencing.



- Habitat manipulation - vegetation that can support hedgehogs is to be reduced to a height of 300mm, followed by a visual hand search. After the hand search the vegetation is then to be cut to ground level and raked bare.
- Habitat manipulation will encourage animals to temporarily move away/abandon the area.
- For the full duration of the work, vegetation will be kept at ground level.
- No works are to extend off site in the areas adjacent to the red line boundary.
- The impact of works on adjacent habitats will be avoided by the clear demarcation of the works area.
- All work must strictly be in accordance with all of the relevant Pollution Prevention Guidelines published by the Environment Agency which may include, but is not limited to, PPG1 (general), PPG5 (works in, near, or liable to affect watercourses) and PPG6 (work at construction & demolition sites). Contingency/emergency plan should be drawn up to address chemical spillage, drainage, collision, etc.
- Machinery and materials are to remain on bare ground and reasonable efforts must be made to avoid the accumulation of materials piles. Materials that do require piling will be stored within areas of bare ground above ground level using pallets in order to prevent animals from seeking shelter beneath.
- Any excavated material stored overnight should be searched prior to being used as infill.
- Where open vertical-sided trenches are excavated it should be ensured that they are not left open overnight to avoid amphibians or small mammals falling into them and becoming trapped. If trenches cannot be back filled after the working day planks of 150-200 mm wide should be placed in them at a 45-degree diagonal angle to serve as an escape mechanism.
- Excavations should also be checked in the morning on a daily basis for the presence of any animals that may have fallen in during the night. In the event that a protected species is located in trenches then it/they should be left in situ and the ecologist promptly contacted to identify and provide further advice.

If in the event a protected species is found work must cease; the ecologist will be made aware of the finding and can then appraise the situation providing further advice.

Site staff must be made aware that if protected species are found there is a correct procedure in place to follow, and failure to halt works may result in committing an offence.

At no point should any person handle a protected species. Unlicensed handling is illegal and untrained handling may cause the animal unnecessary stress and injury.

A Natural England Protected Species Mitigation Licence may be required following the discovery of any protected species on site.