

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL REPORT

Site:	Bowlee, Rochdale
References:	83-001
Date:	08 July 2026
Client:	Rochdale Borough Council





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QUALITY ASSURANCE

Report references

83-001-R1

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Site Address	Land off Heywood Old Road, Bowlee, Rochdale, M24 4SB
Grid Reference	SD 85018 07209
Site Area	Approximately 10.7 ha
Current Site Use and Adjacent Site Use	The site comprised three modified grassland sports fields, other neutral grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, introduced shrub, tall forbs, treelines, hedgerows, individual trees, several structures and one building. The site is open to the public and is frequently used by dog walkers. The site is located on the outskirts of Middleton. Heywood Old Road runs adjacent to the western boundary of the site, while Bowlee Community Park lies adjacent to the east of the site. Edgar Wood Academy is located to the north of the site and residential housing with a patchy area of woodland and scrub is located to the south of the site. Whittle Brook is located approximately 70 m west of the site at its nearest point and the M62 is located approximately 550 m west of the site at its nearest point.
Designated Sites	No statutory designated sites were identified within 1 km of the site boundary. However, the site is located within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of Rochdale Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is located approximately 3 km east of the site. Under the current framework plan, the development will be recreational in nature. As per the criteria listed on MAGIC (accessed June 2026), the proposed site will not require further consultation with Natural England to proceed, as the development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial SSSIs, SACs, or Ramsar sites. Furthermore, a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) will not be required due to the reasons for the SACs designation, such as aquatic plants and emergent vegetation, which are not to be impacted by the proposed development. Furthermore, multiple anthropogenic factors, such as roads and villages, separate the site and the designated site. One non-statutory designated Site of Biological Importance (SBI), Bowlee Meadow, was located within 1 km of the site. Bowlee Meadow was located approximately 100 m east of the site, within Bowlee Community Park. Due to the nature of the development, a slight increase in visitors to Bowlee Meadow SBI is anticipated, however, this is not anticipated to be significant for the SBI as the site already comprises an active club. To protect the SBI from pollution during the construction phase, Pollution Protection Measures should be implemented. Best Practice Protection Measures as detailed within PPG5 Pollution Prevention Guidelines (2007) are to be put in place to ensure there are no negative impacts on the SBI, and any wildlife using it.
Survey Results	The site was found to comprise modified grassland sports fields, other neutral grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, introduced shrub, tall forbs, treelines, hedgerows and individual trees. The site was found to have the following potential ecological constraints: Opportunities for common amphibians in their terrestrial phases within the modified grassland along the western boundary, bramble scrub,



mixed scrub, ruderal/ephemeral, tall forbs, other neutral grassland and the bases of the individual trees and native hedgerows.

- ✿ T024 and T067 were assessed as having PRF-I bat roosting potential.
- ✿ B1 was assessed as having Low bat roosting potential.
- ✿ Low commuting and foraging potential for bats within the ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees on site.
- ✿ The site offers suitable foraging and sett-building opportunities for badgers on-site within the understorey of the hedgerows, ruderal/ephemeral, modified grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, lines of trees and bases of individual trees.
- ✿ Potential presence of hedgehogs on-site within the modified grassland, other neutral grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs and the understorey of the hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees.
- ✿ Opportunities for nesting birds within the bramble scrub, mixed scrub, hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees.
- ✿ Potential presence of reptiles within the other neutral grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, ruderal/ephemeral and understorey of hedgerows.
- ✿ Potential presence of common invertebrates and cinnabar moth within the grasslands and mixed scrub.
- ✿ Invasive plant species, Himalayan balsam, was identified on-site.
- ✿ Field horse tail, a plant species known to cause damage to hardstanding, was identified within the site.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the preliminary ecological appraisal, the following additional works are recommended:

The following further surveys are required to inform a planning application:

- ✿ If the ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees on site are to be removed, or they cannot be retained as dark areas, further Bat Activity Surveys will be required, as per Collins (2023). One Night-time Bat Walkover (NBW) survey visit per season (spring- April/May, summer June/July/August, autumn - September/October) will be required, with automatic/static bat detector surveys also undertaken for a minimum of five consecutive nights per season (April-October) in appropriate (or best available) weather conditions for bats.
- ✿ One Nocturnal Bat Survey on B1 to be undertaken between May and August (inclusive).

The following mitigation is recommended.

- ✿ Pollution prevention measures will be implemented to protect Bowlee Meadow SBI from harmful pollution.
- ✿ Common amphibians are to be removed by hand from the working area during the clearance phase.
- ✿ The lighting design should ensure sensitive habitats including Bowlee Meadow SBI and the bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees on and adjacent to the site are maintained as dark areas during and post-construction.
- ✿ T024 and T067 should be soft-felled under ecological supervision if removal is required. Furthermore, a compensatory bat box for each tree would be required to be installed on a retained mature tree prior to the soft-felling of the trees.
- ✿ Updated badger walkover prior to the start of works.
- ✿ Precautionary Working Methods for badger.
- ✿ Vegetation should be retained where possible. Where vegetation requires removal, it should be checked for the presence of hedgehogs prior to removal. If any vegetation is too dense to be fully inspected, it should be strimmed to 50 cm and checked for hedgehog before being cleared to ground level. If trees are removed, their bases should be checked, prior to removal, for sheltering hedgehogs. It is recommended that any clearance takes place outside of December-March (inclusive) to avoid impacting hibernating hedgehogs.
- ✿ Vegetation should be retained where possible. If any vegetation requires removal, they should be removed outside of the breeding bird season (March to September inclusive). If this is not possible, a nesting bird check should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist up to 48 hours before works commence. If a nest, or nest in construction, is located, then a stand-off distance should be maintained until the young have fledged.
- ✿ Precautionary Working Methods for reptiles.
- ✿ Areas of ragwort should be retained throughout the development. If this is not possible, ragwort plants that are being utilised by the cinnabar should be removed by hand away from the



construction activities. Invertebrate houses and ragwort planting should be installed throughout the development to mitigate for the loss of invertebrate habitat.

- Eradication of invasive species, Himalayan balsam, and field horsetail prior to works commencing on-site.

A 10% gain in biodiversity will be required on-site. If this cannot be achieved on-site, off-site compensation will be required.



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Rochdale Borough Council commissioned E3P to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal at Land East of Heywood Old Road (Bowlee, Rochdale), hereafter referred to as “the site”.

This report has been prepared by Daniel Syddall BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist at E3P. Daniel holds a Qualifying CIEEM membership and has experience undertaking Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, protected species surveys and ecological mitigation for a wide variety of projects across the UK.

1.2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals comprise the redevelopment of the site for enhanced sports and training facilities, including a new building and a range of football pitches.

1.3. SITE LOCATION

The site is located on the outskirts of Middleton. Heywood Old Road runs adjacent to the western boundary of the site while Bowlee Community Park lies adjacent to the east of the site. Edgar Wood Academy is located to the north of the site and residential housing with a patchy area of woodland and scrub is located to the south of the site. Whittle Brook is located approximately 70 m west of the site at its nearest point and the M62 is located approximately 550 m west of the site at its nearest point. Please refer to **Figure 1** for the approximate site location.

Figure 1 Approximate Site Location





1.4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal are as follows:

- ✧ Identify the major habitats present.
- ✧ Ascertain the presence or potential presence of any legally protected species and habitats.
- ✧ Recommend any further surveys or mitigation that may be required.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal comprises a desk study and site walkover. This survey has been completed as a baseline assessment of the site, and as such please see the end of the report for further surveys and mitigation proposed.

1.5. CONFIDENTIALITY

E3P has prepared this report solely for the use of the client and those parties with whom a warranty agreement has been executed or with whom an assignment has been agreed. Should any third party wish to use or rely upon the report's contents, written approval must be sought from E3P; a charge may be levied against such consent.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. DESKTOP SURVEY

The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:

- ✳ MAGIC – A web-based interactive mapping system, on which geographic information regarding key environmental schemes and designations are collated, including details of statutory conservation sites, accessed June 2026.
- ✳ Aerial mapping and ordinance survey maps.
- ✳ Local data records from the past 10 years provided by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) on 2nd April 2026.

A 1 km search area was utilised for the data search, with this being deemed an appropriate distance for the Zone of Influence of the site due to the urban nature of the surrounding area. Data from the last ten years was considered during the assessment. Historic data (over 10 years ago) was only utilised where relevant.

The data search included the request for details of protected and notable species of flora and fauna within 1 km of the central grid reference of the site. In addition, a request was made for any non-statutory designated sites within 1 km of the site boundary.

Please note that a lack of up-to-date records does not confirm the absence of a species from the area. The lack of records may simply be a result of a lack of protected species surveys being undertaken within the local area.

2.2. VEGETATION AND HABITATS

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the proposed development site was undertaken by Daniel Syddall BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist, who holds a level 3 Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC), on 24th April 2026. The weather was warm and clear, with a slight breeze. An Updated Walkover based on a revision to the red line boundary was undertaken on 17th June 2026 by Daniel Syddall. The weather was warm and clear with a light breeze.

The walkover survey was undertaken to the standard methodology as detailed by the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab, 2023). The assessment follows the methodology as per “Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal” (CIEEM, 2017).

A vegetation and habitat plan has been produced for the proposed development site (please refer to **Appendix II**). The mapping is based on the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab, 2023).

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. All plant nomenclature follows Stace (2019).

Searches were carried out for the presence of invasive species, including those listed on the revised (April 2010) Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) including Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

2.3. FAUNA

A thorough search of the site for signs of protected species of fauna was undertaken during the site walkover. A Quadrat survey was undertaken within all grassland fields within the site; this is detailed



within the Biodiversity Net Gain Report (Report Reference: 83-001-R2). These searches considered the following:

- ✳ Suitability of any ponds to support notable amphibians, and the suitability of the site's terrestrial habitats to support amphibians.
- ✳ Suitability of the site to support reptiles by way of habitat structure and refuge piles, as well as links to the wider landscape.
- ✳ Signs of badgers (*Meles meles*), by way of setts, mammal paths, foraging signs or latrines to indicate usage of the site by the species.
- ✳ Search of any watercourses for signs or suitability for water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and otter (*Lutra lutra*) by way of burrows, resting places, holts and foraging signs.
- ✳ Suitability of the site to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.
- ✳ Suitability of the site to support notable bird species.
- ✳ Suitability of the site to support notable invertebrates.
- ✳ Search of the site for any invasive species.

2.4. PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken by Daniel Syddall on 24th April 2026.

The survey involved undertaking a systematic search of the trees and structures, searching for signs of bats, or spaces where bats would be able to access. The methodology followed that described in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, 4th Edition (Collins, 2023).

The structures were categorised for their bat roosting potential as described in **Table 2.1**, with the trees categorised as described in **Table 2.2** in accordance with Collins (2023).

Table 2.1 Bat Roosting Potential Classification of Structures

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year.
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.



Table 2.2 Bat Roosting Potential Classification of Trees

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

2.5. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal does not constitute a full botanical survey. Instead, key species are identified to give a representative description of each habitat type.

This survey was undertaken in April, which is an appropriate time of the year to undertake a survey. However, as a result of differing flowering times, some species of flora may have been missed or misidentified, including some invasive/non-native species. However, this is not considered to be a significant constraint, as the survey was undertaken during the flowering period. An updated walkover of the southeastern parcel was undertaken in June, due to the revision on the red line boundary, this is not considered to be a constraint as it was undertaken during the optimal survey period.

Access to all areas within a 30 m buffer of the site to search for signs of badger was not possible due to private land being located to the west of the site. As such, some features may have been missed. However, this is not considered to be a major constraint due to the urban nature of the surrounding area.

Internal access to B1 was not possible during the survey, however, this is not considered to be a significant constraint as the building was able to be assessed effectively from an external perspective.

These constraints have been taken into consideration during the assessment.



3. SURVEY RESULTS

3.1. SITE CONTEXT

The site is predominantly made up of three modified grassland sports fields, maintained at a short sward. These areas are not anticipated to have a high ecological value; however, the other neutral grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, introduced shrub, tall forbs, treelines, hedgerows and individual trees located on site are anticipated to provide value for a range of species including birds, common amphibians, reptiles and terrestrial mammals such as bats, badgers and hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*). The hedgerows, treelines, introduced shrub, mixed scrub and individual trees in particular are likely to provide nesting opportunities for common bird species as well as foraging and commuting value for bat species.

Two areas of Open Mosaic Habitat are located within 1 km of the site boundary, the closest of which is located approximately 570 m southeast of the site. Such habitat comprises brownfield land that, due to previous disturbance and modification, supports a notable diversity of habitats within close proximity. As such, they are anticipated to provide valuable habitat for a variety of fauna, including rich assemblages of invertebrates. The closest area of Open Mosaic Habitat now appears to be developed and as such may not comprise the same level of opportunities for species, additionally there is limited connectivity between the site and these areas due to the presence of significant anthropogenic barriers.

Several parcels of Deciduous Woodland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat were located within 1 km of the site boundary, with the closest being located adjacent to the northeastern boundary of the site. These areas of woodland habitat contain high ecological value and are likely to support a wide range of notable plant and animal species including bats, birds and mammals such as badger. These areas are well connected to the site through treelines, hedgerows and Bowlee Community Park, as well as their close proximity to the site.

No waterbodies are located on-site. One waterbody was located within 250 m of the site boundary. Waterbody 1 (WB1) is located approximately 70 m west of the site. WB1 was associated with Greenhill Farm. This waterbody could offer suitable feeding and breeding habitat for great crested newts and other common amphibians.

The wider landscape is predominantly urban in nature, comprising residential and commercial properties, agricultural fields, woodland copses, grassland, watercourses, roads, farms and parks. The residential area to the east of the site is not anticipated to be of high ecological value, however, will provide some value for local species, including roosting bats. The wider area to the north and west of the site is anticipated to offer higher ecological value due to the presence of watercourses, tree-lined fields and patches of woodland which are of high value for local wildlife including notable invertebrates, birds and bat species and also have good habitat connectivity towards the site. Bowlee Community Park, located adjacent to the south and east of the site also offers ecological value and high connectivity to the site, allowing for local wildlife to effectively commute to this area.

3.2. DESIGNATED SITES

No statutory designated sites were identified within 1 km of the site boundary. However, the site is located within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of Rochdale Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is located approximately 3 km east of the site. The site is designated as both a SSSI and an SAC due to the canal containing important habitats for submerged aquatic plants and emergent vegetation, including extensive colonies of floating water plantain (*Luronium natans*), a nationally scarce species. The canal also supports a diverse assemblage of aquatic flora, including nice species of pondweeds (*Potamogeton spp.*), which represent a balanced community, reflecting the quality of the water.

Under the current framework plan, the development will be recreational in nature. As per the criteria listed on MAGIC (accessed June 2026), the proposed site will not require further consultation with



Natural England to proceed, as the development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial SSSIs, SACs, or Ramsar sites. Furthermore, a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) will not be required due to the reasons for the SACs designation, such as aquatic plants and emergent vegetation, which are not present within the site. Furthermore, multiple anthropogenic factors, such as roads and villages, separate the site and the designated sites.

One non-statutory designated site was located within 1 km of the site boundary. Bowlee Meadow Site of Biological Importance (SBI) is located approximately 100 m east of the site. This SBI comprises a small area of species rich grassland located within Bowlee Community Park, this site provides value for a number of bird species, including, goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), house martin (*Delichon urbicum*), wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), blackbird (*Turdus merula*), magpie (*Pica pica*) and wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*), as well as invertebrate species such as the meadow brown butterfly (*Maniola jurtina*), Burnett moth (*Zygaena filipendulae*) and 7 spot ladybird (*Coccinella septempunctata*).

3.3. HABITATS

The main habitats encountered during the survey are described in the following subsections. Please refer to **Appendix II** for the UKHab Habitat Plan.

3.3.1. MODIFIED GRASSLAND (G4)

The majority of the site comprised three modified grassland sports fields, which appeared to be regularly mown and maintained at a short sward, areas along the western boundary of the site had been left with a longer sward length and comprised a more diverse range of plant species. The dominant species within the grassland sports fields included perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), along with dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), common daisies (*Bellis perennis*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*) and ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*).

The grassland areas along the western boundary of the site comprised species such as perennial rye-grass, meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*), creeping buttercup, meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), ribwort plantain, cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), dandelion, common alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), tufted bullrush (*Trichophorum cespitosum*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*).



Figure 3.1 Showing Modified Grassland



3.3.2. OTHER NEUTRAL GRASSLAND (G3C)

Areas of other neutral grassland were identified along the northern boundary of the site and along the south, western and part of the eastern boundaries of the southeastern field. The other neutral grassland margins defined the modified grassland, with clear differences within the species composition between the two habitats. The species identified within the other neutral grassland included mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*), butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), soft-rush (*Juncus effusus*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), common sorrel, cleavers, ribwort plantain, creeping buttercup, common vetch (*Vicia sativa*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), tall oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), meadow foxtail, pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), tufted vetch (*Vicia cracca*), white clover, goat willow (*Salix caprea*), common poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*), common hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), creeping thistle and field horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*).



Figure 3.2 Showing Other Neutral Grassland



3.3.3. RUDERAL/EPHEMERAL (G,81)

A small area of ruderal/ephemeral was identified in the southwestern corner of the site. The flora in this area included common nettle, broad-leaved dock, cow parsley, creeping thistle, cleavers, daffodils (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*) and ground-elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*).

Figure 3.3 Showing Ruderal/Ephemeral





3.3.4. BRAMBLE SCRUB (H3D)

Multiple patches of bramble scrub were located along the southern boundary of the site. These areas were dominated by bramble, other species present included common nettles, creeping thistle, common hogweed and rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*).

Figure 3.4 Showing Bramble Scrub



3.3.5. MIXED SCRUB (H3H)

Mixed scrub was present along the northern boundary of the southeastern field. The flora present within this area included blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), bramble, willow species (*Salix* sp.), meadow buttercup, tufted vetch, Yorkshire fog, dandelion, ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), common nettles, creeping thistle, common sorrel, field rose (*Rosa arvensis*), common alder, pedunculate oak, silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and invasive species Himalayan balsam.



Figure 3.5 Showing Mixed Scrub



3.3.6. INTRODUCED SHRUB (U1,847)

A small patch of introduced shrub was located adjacent to the east of the car park. This patch of shrub comprised cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*).

Figure 3.6 Showing Introduced Shrub





3.3.7. TALL FORBS (G,16)

An area of tall forbs was located along the northeastern boundary of the southeastern field. Species present comprised common nettles, common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), cleavers, goutweed (*Aegopodium podagraria*), large bindweed (*Calystegia silvatica*), great willowherb, creeping thistle, common hogweed, field horsetail and Himalayan balsam.

Figure 3.7 Showing Tall Forbs



3.3.8. INDIVIDUAL TREES (G,32)

Numerous individual trees were identified throughout the site. The species comprised horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), pedunculate oak, weeping willow (*Salix babylonica*), beech (*Fagus* sp.) and larch (*Larix* sp.).

Figure 3.8 Showing Individual Trees





3.3.9. DEVELOPED LAND; SEALED SURFACE (U1B)

A concrete access road and car park were located in the centre of the site, between the two grassland fields. The car park was accessible via the access road which connected to Heywood Old Road. The access road and car park were in good condition and had not been colonised by any flora species.

Figure 3.9 Showing Developed Land; Sealed Surface



3.3.10. BUILDINGS (U1B5)

A large building (B1) was located to the east of the car park, within the centre of the site. This building comprised red brickwork with a concrete tiled roof.

Figure 3.10 Showing Buildings





3.3.11. OTHER DEVELOPED LAND (U1B6)

Several structures were located throughout the site. These comprised shipping containers which were constructed entirely of metal.

Figure 3.11 Showing Structures



3.3.12. NATIVE HEDGEROW (H2A)

Two native hedgerows were present within the site. Please see **Table 3.1** for a summary of these hedgerows.

Table 3.1 Native Hedgerow Summaries

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHS
H1	Hedgerow 1 (H1) ran from the northeastern corner of B1 towards the eastern boundary of the site. Species present included hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) and beech. The hedgerow was approximately 3 m tall and 2 m wide.	



REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHS
H2	Hedgerow 2 (H2) ran perpendicular to the south of H1. Species present included hawthorn. The hedgerow was approximately 2 m tall and 2 m wide.	

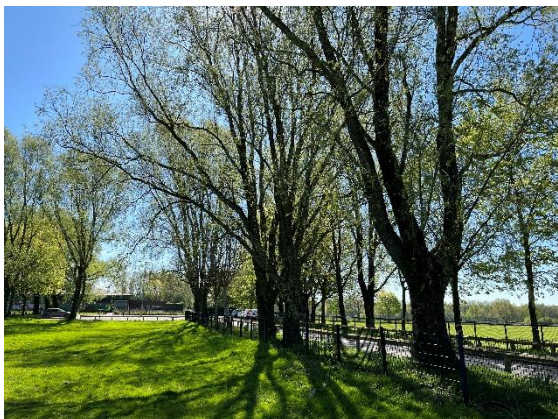
3.3.13. LINE OF TREES (W,33)

10 treelines were identified throughout the site. Please see **Table 3.2** for a summary of these treelines.

Table 3.2 Treeline Summaries

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHS
TL1	Treeline 1 (TL1) ran along part of the southern boundary of the site. Species present included alder (<i>Alnus</i> sp.) and hornbeam (<i>Carpinus betulus</i>).	
TL2	Treeline 2 (TL2) ran along part of the eastern boundary of the southwestern field, adjacent to the footpath. Species present included horse chestnut, Norway maple (<i>Acer platanoides</i>), pedunculate oak and rowan (<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>).	



REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHS
TL4	Treeline 4 (TL4) ran adjacent to a footpath, separated from the southwestern field by a fence. Species present included sycamore.	
TL5	Treeline 5 (TL5) ran adjacent to the south of the access road, along the northern boundary of the southern field. Species present included Norway maple, sycamore, maple species (<i>Acer</i> sp.) silver birch, weeping willow and willow species (<i>Salix</i> sp.).	
TL6	Treeline 6 (TL6) ran adjacent to the western boundary of the southern field. Species present included sycamore, beech, field maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>), alder, silver birch, hornbeam, London plane (<i>Platanus x hispanica</i>) and pedunculate oak.	
TL7	Treeline 7 (TL7) ran adjacent to the north of the access road, along the southern boundary of the northern field. Species present included weeping willow, Norway maple, pedunculate oak, maple species and rowan.	



REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHS
TL8	Treeline 8 (TL8) ran adjacent to the north of the car park, along the southern boundary of the northern field. Species present included weeping willow and Norway maple.	
TL9	Treeline 9 (TL9) ran adjacent to the north of H1, along part of the southern boundary of the northern field. Several saplings were present between the larger trees. Species present included ash.	
TL10	Treeline 10 (TL10) ran adjacent to the western boundary of the northern field. Species present included alder, hornbeam, cherry (<i>Prunus</i> sp.) and pedunculate oak.	



3.4. PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES

3.4.1. AMPHIBIANS

Consultation with GMEU identified numerous records of great crested newts (GCN) within 1 km of the site. All records of GCN were located approximately 900 m northwest of the site, associated with Broom Hill Farm, GCN were recorded here every year between 2009 and 2021.

Consultation with MAGIC did not identify any great crested newt European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) within 1 km of the site, with the closest EPSL being located approximately 1.9 km northeast of the site, active in 2017, this licence was associated with the land south of the M62 and allowed for the damage and destruction of a GCN breeding location.

Great crested newts' upper dispersal limit is generally considered to be up to 250 m from a waterbody (though occurrence of greater distances does exist where habitat connectivity is of high quality) (English Nature, 2001). No waterbodies were located within the site boundary; however, one waterbody (WB1) was located within 250 m of the site boundary. WB1 was located approximately 70 m west of the site and was associated with Greenhill Farm. Due to this waterbody being separated from the site by a busy main road, which acts as a significant barrier to dispersal, GCN are not anticipated to be present on site. In addition, the site comprises low value habitat for the species as the defining habitat includes short, modified grassland used for recreational purposes. Furthermore, due to its recreational use, it is also subject to high levels of disturbance, reducing its suitability further. As such, great crested newts have been discounted from further assessment.

Please see **Appendix V** for the Waterbody Plan.

Consultation with GMEU also identified several records of common toads (*Bufo bufo*) within 1 km of the site. All records of common toads were located approximately 900 m northwest of the site, associated with Broom Hill Farm, common toads were recorded here in 2011, 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2020.

The habitats on-site were assessed as providing foraging and resting value for common amphibians in their terrestrial phases within the modified grassland along the western boundary, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, ruderal/ephemeral, tall forbs, other neutral grassland and the bases of the individual trees and native hedgerows. These habitats would provide suitable shelter and hibernation habitats. The modified grassland sports fields, where the grass was maintained at a short sward, offer limited cover for amphibians, instead they are anticipated to use the grassland margins and areas with a longer sward.

3.4.2. BATS

Consultation with GMEU identified numerous records of bat species within 1 km of the site, including common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus* sp.). Three of these records were located within the site boundary, all comprising common pipistrelles recorded during a survey conducted in 2020.

Consultation with MAGIC did not identify any ESPL for bat species within 1 km of the site, with the closest EPSL being located approximately 1.5 km north of the site, active in 2020, this licence was associated with Siddal Moor Farm and allowed for the destruction of a common pipistrelle non-breeding daytime roost.

One building (B1) was located within the site boundary. This building was assessed for its suitability to support roosting bats, as detailed in Collins (2023). B1 was assessed as having Low bat roosting potential. Please see **Appendix III** for the detailed assessment and photographs of the potential roost features and access points and **Appendix IV** for potential roost feature and access point locations.

Multiple metal storage containers were located throughout the site. The storage containers were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats, as detailed in Collins (2023). All storage



containers were assessed as having No bat roosting potential as no features or access points were present that could support roosting bats.

All trees that could be accessed within the site boundary were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats, as detailed in Collins (2023). The majority of the trees were assessed as having no bat roosting potential due to a lack of any potential roost features suitable to support roosting bats. Two trees (T024 and T067) located within the site boundary were assessed as having PRF-I roosting potential. Please see **Appendix III** for the detailed assessment and photographs of the trees.

Much of the site comprises modified grassland which is not anticipated to form high-value habitat for local bat species. However, the ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees on site, site are likely to attract some invertebrate prey and in turn, provide valuable foraging opportunities for the species group. Additionally, Bowlee Community Park, located adjacent to the south and east of the site is anticipated to offer foraging and commuting opportunities for local bat species as well as connecting the site to the wider landscape. As such, the site is assessed as having Low foraging and commuting value for bats.

3.4.3. BADGER

Consultation with GMEU identified records of badger within 1 km of the site.

No badger setts or signs of badger were identified during the survey. The site was assessed as having suitability for badgers within the understorey of the hedgerows, ruderal/ephemeral, modified grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, lines of trees and bases of individual trees. These habitats provide both suitable foraging and sett-building opportunities for badgers.

3.4.4. OTHER TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS

Consultation with GMEU identified several records of hedgehog within 1 km of the site. The closest record was located approximately 250 m north of the site and was identified in 2015. The site was assessed as providing suitable refuge and foraging habitat for hedgehogs within understorey of the hedgerows, ruderal/ephemeral, modified grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, lines of trees and bases of individual trees. The bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, ruderal/ephemeral, other neutral grassland, understorey of hedgerows and the bases of individual trees where the understory is dense may also offer suitable hibernation opportunities for the species.

Consultation with GMEU identified several records of brown hare within 1 km of the site. The closest record was located approximately 760 m southwest of the site and was identified in 2011. The habitats on site were assessed as being unsuitable for brown hare due to a lack of cover for the species and high levels of human activity, including regular mowing of the modified grassland sports fields. As such, brown hare have been discounted from further assessment.

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of polecat (*Mustela putorius*) within the 1 km search area. Polecat tend to favour lowland landscapes, particularly riparian, wetland, woodland edges and grassland but are also associated with agricultural land. The habitats on site were assessed as being unsuitable for polecat due to a lack of cover for the species, high levels of recreational activity, and regular mowing of the modified grassland sports fields. As such, polecats have been discounted from further assessment.

3.4.5. OTTER AND WATER VOLE

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of otter or water vole within 1 km of the site. Additionally, consultation with MAGIC did not identify any ESPL for otter within 1 km of the site.



The site did not provide suitable habitat for otter or water vole, furthermore, the nearest watercourse was located approximately 70 m west of the site at its nearest point. As such, both otter and water vole were discounted from further assessment.

3.4.6. BREEDING BIRDS

Consultation with GMEU identified numerous records of notable birds within 1 km of the site including, but not limited to, bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), dunnoek (*Prunella modularis*), grasshopper warbler (*Locustella naevia*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), reed bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) and tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*).

During the survey grey wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*) were identified utilising the site.

Common and notable bird species are anticipated to be present within the grassland habitats, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, introduced shrub, lines of trees, individual trees and hedgerows. Additionally, the trees, hedgerows, introduced shrub, mixed scrub and bramble scrub on site have the potential to support nesting birds.

3.4.7. WHITE-CLAWED CRAYFISH

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of white-clawed crayfish within the 1 km search area.

The site did not provide suitable habitat for the species, furthermore, the nearest watercourse was located approximately 70 m west of the site at its nearest point. As such, white-clawed crayfish were discounted from further assessment.

3.4.8. REPTILES

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of reptiles within the 1 km search area.

The site is not anticipated to support large numbers of reptiles due to predominantly comprising modified grassland sports field that are regularly mown and maintained at a short sward. Additionally, Bowlee Community Park adjacent to the south and east of the site is anticipated to offer higher value habitat for reptiles. However, the other neutral grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, ruderal/ephemeral and understorey of hedgerows on site may provide some shelter for reptiles. As such, reptiles may be present on site in small numbers.

3.4.9. NOTABLE INVERTEBRATES

Consultation with GMEU identified several notable invertebrate species within 1 km of the site, including the following UK BAP species: the white letter hairstreak (*Satyrrium w-album*), cinnabar (*Tyria jacobaeae*) and latticed heath (*Chiasmia clathrata*).

Common invertebrates are likely to be present within the other neutral grassland, modified grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, ruderal/ephemeral, hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees. Ragwort was identified within the grassland and mixed scrub on-site. Ragwort is known to support the cinnabar moth during their larva stage; however, no cinnabar larva was identified during the site walkover. Due to the limited floristic diversity and large extent of managed modified grassland, the site is not expected to be of significance for notable invertebrate species.



3.5. INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of invasive plant species within 1 km of the site.

During the survey, Himalayan balsam was identified within the mixed scrub and tall forbs habitats along the boundaries of the southeastern field.

Though not listed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Field horsetail was also identified within the mixed scrub, tall forbs and other neutral grassland habitats along the boundaries of the southeastern field. This species was noted due the damage it is known to cause to hardstanding.

See **Appendix II** for locations.



4. ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATION

4.1. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Framework plans detail that the site will be redeveloped into an enhanced sports and training facility, including a new building and a range of football pitches.

4.2. NON-STATUTORY DESIGNATED SITES

One Site of Biological Importance (SBI), Bowlee Meadow, was located within 1 km of the site. Bowlee Meadow was located approximately 100 m east of the site, within Bowlee Community Park.

To ensure the SBI is not negatively impacted during the construction of the facility, all best practice guidance relating to pollution will be adhered to. This will include best practice use of refuelling machinery to avoid fuel spills.

To protect the SBI from pollution during the construction phase, Pollution Protection Measures should be implemented. Best Practice Protection Measures as detailed within PPG5 Pollution Prevention Guidelines (2007) are to be put in place to protect the SBI. The following control measures would be required during any ground works and during the construction phase to ensure there are no impacts on the SBI, and any wildlife using them:

- ✿ All operational plant will be kept well-maintained.
- ✿ Turning off plant when not in use.
- ✿ Dampening of the operational areas will be regularly undertaken during dry weather conditions to avoid dust. Dust management will be extended to cover the plant and operational areas and will be complied with throughout the period of development.
- ✿ Measures to prevent pollutants from entering ground and surface water are standard construction practice through the use of a bunded fuel storage and refuelling areas at a discrete distance from the SBI. These measures should be underwritten by spill management equipment being kept on-site and capable of being effectively utilised by trained operatives to contain any accidental spillage within any part of the operational area.
- ✿ A Toolbox Talk should be completed by a qualified ecologist to ensure contractors are aware of the SBI, and its ecological importance.
- ✿ No lighting is to be directed towards the SBI to ensure wildlife is not deterred from using it.
- ✿ A 'Site Tidy' protocol is to be put in place on-site. All litter is to be appropriately controlled, whilst on-site materials are to be adequately stored overnight.
- ✿ All excavations will be battened at a 45-degree angle, or a ramp installed to allow escape should animals become trapped.

4.3. HABITATS

The site comprised habitats that were found to be widespread within the local area; however, they did contain value for wildlife such as bats, birds, badgers, hedgehogs, reptiles, common invertebrates and common amphibians. The developed land, sealed surface, and modified grassland are of the lowest value for wildlife, with the ruderal/ephemeral, other neutral grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees comprising the areas of the highest value.



4.3.1. OTHER NEUTRAL GRASSLAND, RUDERAL/EPHEMERAL, BRAMBLE SCRUB, MIXED SCRUB, TALL FORBS, INTRODUCED SHRUBS, NATIVE HEDGEROWS, LINES OF TREES AND INDIVIDUAL TREES

It is recommended that, where possible, the other neutral grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, introduced shrubs, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees are retained and protected through development.

If any trees require removal, they should be replaced as soon as practicable. Any replacement planting should endeavour to be on the same aspect as that to be lost. If the hedgerows require removal, they should be replaced as soon as practicable using lengths of more valuable hedgerows. Any replacement planting should endeavour to be on the same aspect as that to be lost, in order to retain commuting features through the site. It is recommended that the landscape planting comprises native species and species known to be of value for the attraction of wildlife. This will include fruiting and flowering species. Species deemed suitable for this development could include berry-bearing native species such as:

- ✿ Hawthorn.
- ✿ Rowan.
- ✿ Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*).
- ✿ Whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*).
- ✿ Spindle (*Euonymus europaea*).
- ✿ Dog rose (*Rosa canina*).
- ✿ Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*).
- ✿ Elder (*Sambucus nigra*).

All planting should be from a trusted pest-free source and, where possible, be of local provenance.

Any trees, hedgerows or shrubs within the site boundary, to be retained, are to be appropriately protected during the construction phase. Temporary protective demarcation fencing will be used to protect the trees and shrubs. The fencing must extend outside the canopy of the retained trees and must remain in position until all works have been completed to ensure protection is provided throughout the construction phase.

The fencing will be in accordance with BS 5837:2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations*.

4.4. PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES

4.4.1. COMMON AMPHIBIANS

The site may support common amphibians during their terrestrial phase within the modified grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, lines of trees, bases of individual trees and native hedgerows. It is recommended that during the clearance phase of works, any common amphibians encountered be moved by hand, away from construction activities.

4.4.2. BATS

The on-site bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees provide foraging and commuting value for local bat species. It is



recommended that any lighting during construction is appropriately placed to avoid being directed at any retained habitats. Further surveys will be required if significant areas of these habitats are removed or they cannot be kept as dark areas, and these are detailed in **Section 5.1.1**.

The two PRF-I bat potential trees (T024, T067) should be retained, however, if they require removal, they can be soft felled under the guidance of a qualified ecologist. The tree should be cut below the feature and the feature lowered gently to the ground, then the tree is to be left overnight, with the roosting feature facing upwards, to allow any bats to escape before being chipped the next day. bat boxes will need to be installed as part of the development to mitigate the loss of any potential roosts.

To reduce the potential lighting impacts for bats, the following recommendations are advised for the lighting strategy:

- ✿ Lighting should be pre-fixed on any proposed buildings, to ensure impacts on sensitive areas such as Bowlee Meadow SBI and the bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees on and adjacent to the site are diminished.
- ✿ Warm white tones are preferable to blue toned lights (3000k).
- ✿ LED lights are preferable as they produce minimal UV.
- ✿ To avoid light spill skyward, ensure lights face downward.
- ✿ Make use of vegetation to block light spill into dark areas.

Lighting should follow the protocols outlined in the Institute for Lighting Engineers document “Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting” (2005) and The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2023). “Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. Guidance Note GN08/23”.

It is recommended that any planting within the site be of native fruiting/flowering species in order to enhance the site for foraging bats post-completion. Bat boxes could be installed throughout the site post-construction to enhance the site for the species group.

4.4.3. BADGERS

No badger setts or signs of badger were identified during the survey; however, badgers are highly mobile and can create new setts in a short period of time. It is recommended that a pre-commencement site walkover prior to the development is carried out to identify any new badger setts.

If a badger sett is located, a stand-off distance will be required as well as precautionary working methods. If the sett requires closure, a Natural England Badger Licence would be required. Please note that badger licences can only be obtained between July and November (inclusive) each year to avoid potential impact on pregnant females.

The following precautionary working methods will be adhered to during the construction phase to ensure that no badgers within the local area are impacted by the proposed development:

- ✿ All site operatives will be inducted to the presence of the species and their working limits and legal responsibilities.
- ✿ If areas of vegetation are too dense to be fully inspected for signs of badger during the updated walkover, vegetation clearance will be undertaken in stages under the supervision of an ecologist to check for any potential badger setts.
- ✿ All site operatives will be inducted to identifying potential badger setts and should be vigilant if they suspect they locate a new sett during works and inform the project ecologist immediately.
- ✿ All excavations will be battered at a 45-degree angle, or ramps will be installed, to allow the escape should animals become trapped. Alternatively, excavations will be covered overnight.



- ☛ All site machinery and materials will be appropriately stored to avoid harm to the species, notably between July and November each year when extra care is needed to avoid potential impacts on pregnant females.

It is not anticipated that the development will have a significant negative impact on badgers within the local area.

4.4.4. HEDGEHOGS

The site was assessed as providing suitable refuge, foraging and hibernation opportunities for hedgehogs within the modified grassland, other neutral grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs and the understorey of the hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees. These habitats should be retained where possible. Where vegetation requires removal, it should be checked for the presence of hedgehogs prior to removal. If any vegetation is too dense to be fully inspected, it should be strimmed to 50 cm and checked for hedgehog before being cleared to ground level. If trees are removed, their bases should be checked, prior to removal, for sheltering hedgehogs. It is recommended that any clearance takes place outside of December-March (inclusive) to avoid impacting hibernating hedgehogs.

Post-development, a series of hedgehog houses could be installed throughout the site to enhance the site's value for the species.

4.4.5. BREEDING BIRDS

The site was assessed as having value for common bird species within the bramble scrub, mixed scrub, hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees. These habitats should be retained where possible.

If any vegetation requires removal, it should be carried out outside of nesting bird season. Breeding bird season occurs between March–September (inclusive). If this is not possible a suitably qualified ecologist should inspect the area no more than 48 hours prior to the removal. Should any nests, or nests in construction be located, a suitable stand-off distance should be maintained until the young have fledged. The ecologist will advise on suitable standoff and provide a toolbox talk to all site contractors regarding their working limits and legal implications.

Post-development, bird boxes could be installed on retained mature trees to enhance the site's value for the species group.

4.4.6. REPTILES

The site was assessed as having potential for a small number of reptiles, within the other neutral grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, ruderal/ephemeral and understorey of hedgerows. Where clearance is required, it is recommended that the following Precautionary Working Methods:

- ☛ All site contractors are to be inducted as to the potential presence of the species group, their legal responsibilities and working limits, by a suitably qualified experienced ecologist.
- ☛ Any suitable vegetation to be removed will be checked by an ecologist for the presence of reptiles, and once deemed free, the area will be turfed with a toothed bucket. If any vegetation is too dense to be inspected, it will be strimmed to a length of approximately 150 mm under the supervision of the ecologist.



- ✿ During works the site should be kept tidy of debris and material, and any vegetation within the working areas should be maintained below 50 mm in height to discourage amphibians and reptiles from re-entering these areas.
- ✿ If a reptile is identified, works should cease, and the project ecologist contacted immediately to capture the individual.

4.4.7. NOTABLE INVERTEBRATES

Records of the cinnabar moth were identified within 1 km of the site. Ragwort, which is located within the site, supports the cinnabar larva. Areas of ragwort should be retained throughout the development. However, if this is not possible, ragwort plants that are being utilised by the cinnabar should be removed by hand away from the construction activities. Invertebrate houses and pollinator friendly plant species should be installed or planted throughout the development to mitigate for the loss of invertebrate habitat.

4.4.8. INVASIVE SPECIES

Several patches of Himalayan balsam, an invasive species as listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), were identified along the northern and eastern boundaries of the southeastern field. It is an offence to cause the spread of this species in the wild.

Field horsetail was also identified along the northern and southern boundaries of the southeastern field. Field horsetail is not listed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) but is known to cause damage to hardstanding, as such it is recommended for removal.

It is recommended that prior to the development, that the Himalayan balsam and field horsetail are eradicated following the most current guidance set out by the Environment Agency by a qualified contractor.



5. FURTHER SURVEYS

5.1. FURTHER REQUIREMENTS TO INFORM A PLANNING APPLICATION

5.1.1. BATS

The ruderal/ephemeral, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, tall forbs, other neutral grassland, native hedgerows, lines of trees and individual trees on site were assessed as having Low value for foraging and commuting bats. These habitats should therefore be retained as dark areas during and post construction to retain their value for local bat species. If large areas of the habitats on site are to be removed or cannot be maintained as dark areas, Bat Activity Surveys will be required, as per Collins (2023).

One Night-time Bat Walkover (NBW) survey visit per season (spring - April/May, summer - June/July/August, autumn - September/October) will be required, with automatic/static bat detector surveys also undertaken for a minimum of five consecutive nights per season in appropriate (or best available) weather conditions for bats. Further surveys may be required if any activity of interest is revealed that requires further observation on-site. The results of the activity surveys will inform any mitigation required.

Under current development proposals, B1 is due to be removed. B1 was assessed as having Low bat roosting potential, as it may support a small number of roosting bats on an occasional basis. Therefore, prior to the removal of the building, one emergence survey will be required between May and August (inclusive). If, during the survey, bats are identified roosting within B1, additional surveys will be required to characterise the roost and to inform the licence application.

The surveys are to follow the guidance set out in Collins (2023), surveyors are to be positioned at areas of greatest roosting potential and should be completed by suitably qualified ecologists. Further surveys will be used to inform a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL), which will be required to destroy any identified bat roosts within the building. An EPSL can only be granted once full planning permission has been obtained and all wildlife conditions have been discharged.

5.2. TABLE OF FURTHER SURVEYS

Please refer to **Table 5** for a summary of further surveys which could be required to inform a planning application.

Table 5 Recommended Further Surveys

SURVEY TYPE	TIMESCALES	REQUIRED BASED ON CURRENT PROPOSALS
Night-time Bat Walkover and Static Detector Surveys	Three surveys with one taking place in spring (April/May), one in summer (June/July/August) and one in autumn (September/October). Automatic/static bat detector surveys also undertaken for a minimum of five consecutive nights per season (April-October) in appropriate (or best available) weather conditions for bats.	Dependent on lighting during and post-development
One Nocturnal Bat Survey on B1	One survey on B1 is to be undertaken between May - August (inclusive).	Yes



6. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The scheme will be required to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity. Full details of this and a calculation of net gain could be finalised after detailed landscape plans have been prepared. It is recommended that an ecologist is consulted during the design stage to ensure, where possible, that biodiversity net gain can be achieved. If this is not feasible on-site, a conservation offset payment, or off-site compensation may be required.

- ✿ Retaining and enhancing the scrub habitats.
- ✿ Retaining and enhancing the grassland habitats.
- ✿ Retaining the hedgerows.
- ✿ Retaining the individual trees.
- ✿ Retaining the lines of trees
- ✿ Native hedgerow planting.
- ✿ Native scrub planting.
- ✿ Native tree planting.
- ✿ Wildflower meadow creation.

Habitat measures should be provided within areas of open space or designated wildlife zones. A 30-year management plan should be produced to ensure biodiversity is secured on-site.



7. REFERENCES

- ✿ Bat Conservation Trust (2023). Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night Guidance Note 8.
- ✿ Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- ✿ CIEEM (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine.
- ✿ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- ✿ DEFRA (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide.
- ✿ Environment Alliance (2007). PPG5: Pollution Prevention Guidelines; Works and Maintenance In or Near Water; PPG5.
- ✿ Froglife (2001). Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook.
- ✿ Institute of Lighting Engineers (2005). Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light.
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- ✿ Stace, C. A. (2019). New Flora of the British Isles. Fourth Edition. Cambridge University Press.
- ✿ The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2023). Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. Guidance Note GN08/23.
- ✿ UKHab (2023) UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0
- ✿ Wildlife and Countryside Act (2010) Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

END OF REPORT

Appendix I: Limitations





GENERAL

This report and any associated works (together comprising the "Services") were compiled and carried out by E3P for the client (as present in Section 1) under the E3P "Terms of Business" or with those parties with whom a warranty agreement has been executed, or with whom an assignment has been agreed and outlined in the body of the report.

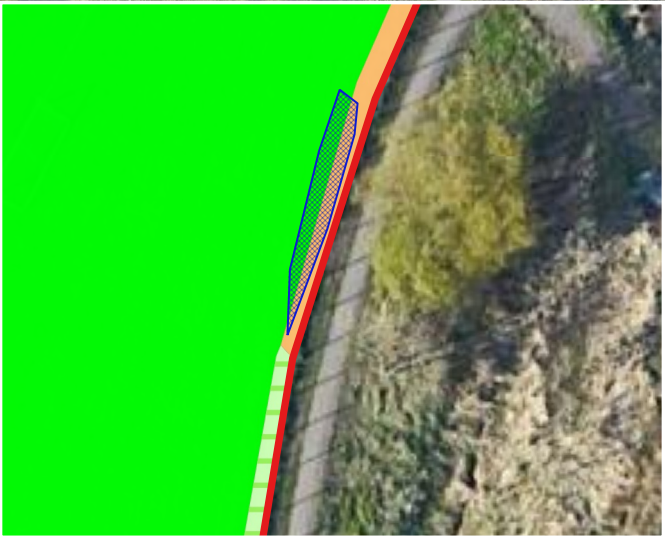
Unless explicitly agreed otherwise, in writing, this report has been prepared under E3P Standard Terms and Business as included within our proposal to the Client.

Project-specific appointment documents may be agreed upon at our discretion and a charge may be levied for both the time to review and finalise appointment documents and also for associated changes to the appointment terms. E3P reserves the right to amend the fee should any changes to the appointment terms create an increased risk to E3P.

The scope of this report is limited to the observations made on the date of the visit to site. While all efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the report, factors outside of our control may affect observations made on a future date.

Appendix II: UKHAB Habitat Plan



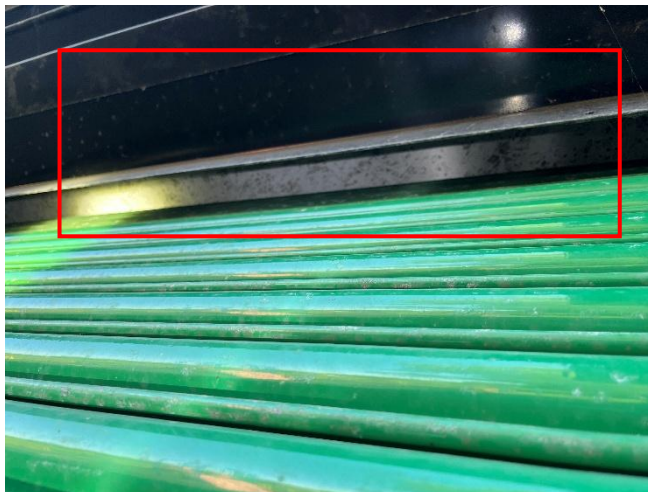
 Himalayan balsam

Appendix III: Preliminary Roost Assessment





REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD
B1	B1 comprised a community hub building and was the only building located within the site. The building was constructed of red brick with large plastic sheet boards and concrete roof tiles with solar panels installed.	
	The large plastic boards on the western aspect of B1 featured a small gap between them which could provide roosting opportunities for a small number of crevice-dwelling bats on an occasional basis.	
	Gaps beneath the metal shutters on the western aspect were present, these features could act as access points, providing access for bats into the building.	
	On the southern aspect of the building a door was left slightly ajar, this could allow bats access into the building.	
	Several gaps in the eaves on the eastern aspect of B1 were present, these features could provide roosting opportunities for a small number of bats on an occasional basis and could provide access further into the building.	





REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD
		 



REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD
		 



REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD
T024 (What3Words: insect.hoot.bolts)	Tree 024 (T024) comprised a mature weeping willow. The tree was approximately 14 m tall, with a northwest facing crevice in the fork of the tree trunk. The crevice was approximately 3 m high, located at the fork of the tree trunk. During torching, the crevice was identified as extending further into the trunk. Due to the location of the crevice, it is likely to be exposed to rainwater ingress, as such, the hole was identified as being suitable for crevice dwelling bats on an occasional basis only. T024 was assessed as having PRF-I bat roosting potential.	



REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD
T067 (What3Words: jacket.mining.became)	Tree 067 (T067) comprised a mature larch. The tree was approximately 12 m tall and was covered in dense ivy. The trunk of the tree was covered entirely with dense ivy, which provided potential roosting opportunities for a small number of bats on an occasional basis. The ivy also prevented the identification of any further potential roost features present on the trunk of the tree. T067 was assessed as having PRF-I bat roosting potential	

Appendix IV: Preliminary Roost Assessment Plan



Key:

-  Red line boundary
-  PRF-I tree
-  Buildings
-  Access Point
-  Potential Roost Feature

Notes

Issue: 1	Revision: 1	Date: 18/05/2026	Drawn: LS2	Authorised: CK
Client: Rochdale Borough Council			Job No. 83-001	Date: 18/05/2025
			Drawing No. 83-001-001	Scale: 1:1000 @ A4
Job title: Bowlee, Rochdale			Drawing title: Preliminary Roost Assessment Plan	



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Appendix V: Waterbody Plan



Key:



Red line boundary



250m from site boundary



Waterbodies

Notes

Issue: 1	Revision: 1	Date: 18/05/2026	Drawn: LS2	Authorised: CK
Client: Rochdale Borough Council			Job No. 83-001	Date: 18/05/2025
			Drawing No. 83-001-002	Scale: 1:5500 @ A4
Job title: Bowlee, Rochdale			Drawing title: Waterbody Plan	



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