

Stonebond Properties (Manchester) Limited

Reference: ECO-26-0077-L01-1

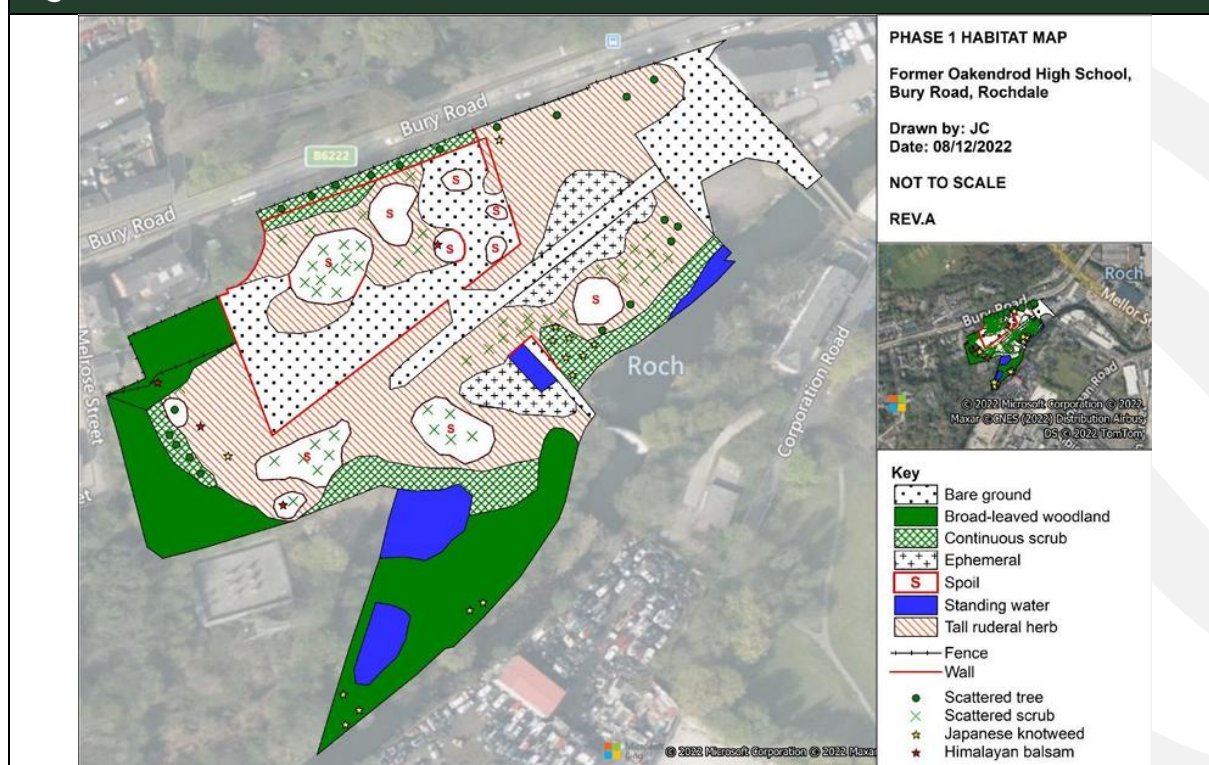
24th July 2026

Oakenrod, Rochdale
Updated Ecology Site Walkover

Background & Objectives

Woodbank Environmental Ltd were instructed by Stonebond Properties (Manchester) Limited to undertake an Updated Site Walkover at Oakenrod, Rochdale hereafter referred to as 'the site'. The survey area and previous Phase 1 Habitat Map (Rachel Hacking, 2022) is shown in Figure 1. The current document has been prepared to inform a revised application on the site.

Figure 1 Site Location



Previous Surveys

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken in March 2022 by Rachel Hacking Ecology. Habitats recorded on site included bare ground, tall ruderal, ephemeral short perennial, standing water, scattered trees, scrub and broadleaved woodland. Some trees with the potential to support roosting bats were identified. The on-site ponds were also noted to have the potential to support great crested newts.

Great crested newt surveys were subsequently undertaken by E3P in May 2023 (Report Reference: 81-303-L1-1). The on site ponds tested negative for the presence of great crested newts.

Methodology

Ecological Walkover

A site walkover was undertaken by Celia Kenyon BSc (Hons) BSc (Hons) MSc, MEnvSc, CEnv, MCIEEM on 24th July 2026 to assess whether the conditions on site had changed since the original aforementioned Ecological Appraisal. Celia holds a Level 3 Field Identification Certificate and has experience undertaking site assessments.

The walkover survey was undertaken in accordance with the standard methodology as detailed by the "Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal" (CIEEM, 2017).

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 but not limited to Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

Results

The site had been left unmanaged, with no vegetation management undertaken since the original PEA in 2022. As such, all of the tall ruderal and ephemeral vegetation previously identified had developed into scrub. This was the case across the entire site. The majority of the scrub present was dominated by bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*). A significant amount of self-set silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and self-set willow species (*Salix sp.*) had colonised the site. In addition to the species previously identified, a significant amount of broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) was also present across the site.

Previously identified ponds 2 and 3 were engulfed by bramble scrub and could not be located. Pond 1, a man-made structure, still held water.

Areas of bare ground were recorded during the 2022 survey, although these would be better assessed as hardstanding. These areas remained, with some scrub encroachment around the periphery.

Please see Photo 1, 2 and 3 for photos of the site.

Photo 1 Scrub



Photo 2 Self-Set Saplings and Broom



Photo 3 Hardstanding



The areas of previously identified Japanese knotweed and Himalayan Balsam were still present, although the extent of each area did not appear to have significantly increased. An additional area of Himalayan balsam was recorded in the south east corner of the site which appeared to be as a result of fly tipping (SD 88810 13125), see Photo 4. An additional area of Japanese knotweed was also noted along the river banks (SD 88795 13103) which could be viewed from the bridge to the east of the site with binoculars.

Photo 4 Himalayan Balsam



No evidence of protected species was identified on or adjacent to the site during the site walkover. No badger setts, or signs of badger were noted during the site walkover.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the site is considerably more overgrown than recorded in 2022, the extent of scrub and self-set trees has increased significantly. The recommendations of the original report largely remain applicable. Although due to the density of vegetation within the site, an Ecological Clerk of Works may be required during vegetation clearance, if clearance is undertaken within nesting bird season (1st March- 30th September).

Great crested newt eDNA surveys previously returned a negative result. There is no reason to believe that great crested newts have colonised the site since the survey was undertaken. The on-site ponds appear to have reduced suitability for great crested newts, due to being choked with vegetation. There is also limited connectivity for great crested newts to any ponds within the wider area.

Yours faithfully

Celia Kenyon
Woodbank Environmental Ltd

References

- Bat Conservation Trust (2023) Bats and Artificial Lighting At Night. Institute of Lighting Professionals.
- CIEEM (2017). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine.
- Rachel Hacking Ecology (2022). Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- Stace, C. A. (2019). New Flora of the British Isles. Fourth Edition. Cambridge University Press.
- UK Parliament (1981) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. (c. 69). London: The Stationery Office.

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All recommendations and conclusions are subject to the limitations of the data available at the time of reporting.