
EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY

THE STABLES, PARADISE WHARF,
DUCIE STREET, MANCHESTER

SEPTEMBER 2021



**RACHEL
HACKING
ECOLOGY**

Bowden Hall,
Bowden Lane,
Marple, Stockport
SK6 6ND
0161 465 8971

www.rachelhackingecology.co.uk
mail@rachelhackingecology.co.uk



CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	2
2.0	METHODOLOGY	3
3.0	RESULTS.....	4
	HABITATS	4
	PROTECTED SPECIES	7
	INVASIVE SPECIES	8
	PROTECTED SITES	8
4.0	ASSESSMENT	10
5.0	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	12
6.0	REFERENCES	13
	APPENDIX A PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP	



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2021 by Victor (M1) Limited to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of land at The Stables, Paradise Wharf, Ducie Street, Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ 84965 98141 – see Figure 1). The proposed development site currently comprises an area of hardstanding, with a small shrub bed. Ashton Canal lies to the south, with commercial and residential buildings existing adjacent to the site to the north, east and west.

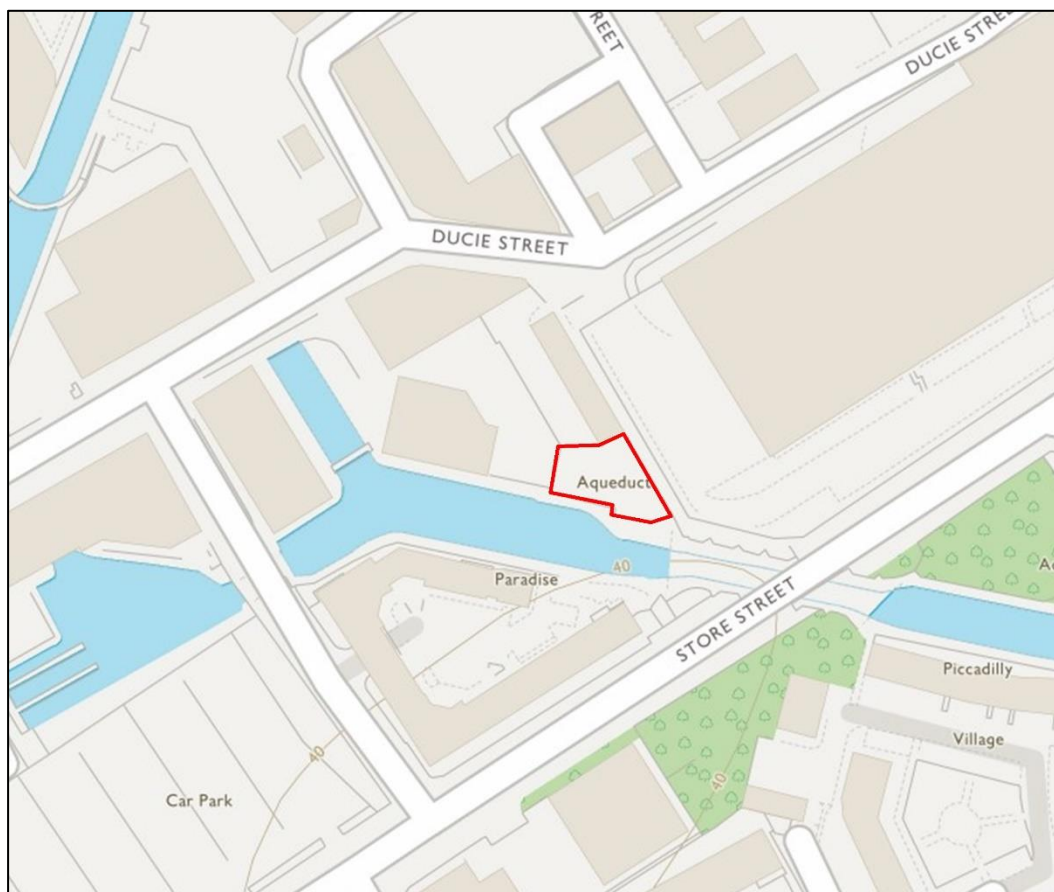


Figure 1 showing the location of the site

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the construction of a four-storey residential building, comprising 4no. dwellings, with parking.

Biodiversity in Planning

- 1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) gives specific reference to minimising the impacts of development on biodiversity. Local and Neighbourhood plans also provide guidance towards protecting and enhancing biodiversity, including priority habitats and notable species.



2.0 METHODOLOGY

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.1 A Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2010). The site was walked and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries. An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required to provide an overview of the habitats present within the site and to assess any potential protected species issues on the site.
- 2.2 During the Extended Phase 1 survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g. setts, paths, latrines and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt. The Ashton Canal adjacent to the site was assessed for its potential to support Water Vole and Otter.
- 2.3 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

- 2.4 Dr. Rachel Hacking (Principal Ecologist) and Joel Hacking (Senior Ecologist) carried out the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey on the 16th September 2021. Both surveyors have many years of experience in habitat surveys and protected species assessments. September is just outside of the optimal time of year for botanical surveys but given the habitats present on site, a thorough assessment could be undertaken. Protected species assessments can be undertaken at any time of year. The weather at the time of the survey was warm and dry with light cloud.

Survey Constraints

- 2.5 The site was fully accessible and there were no survey constraints.



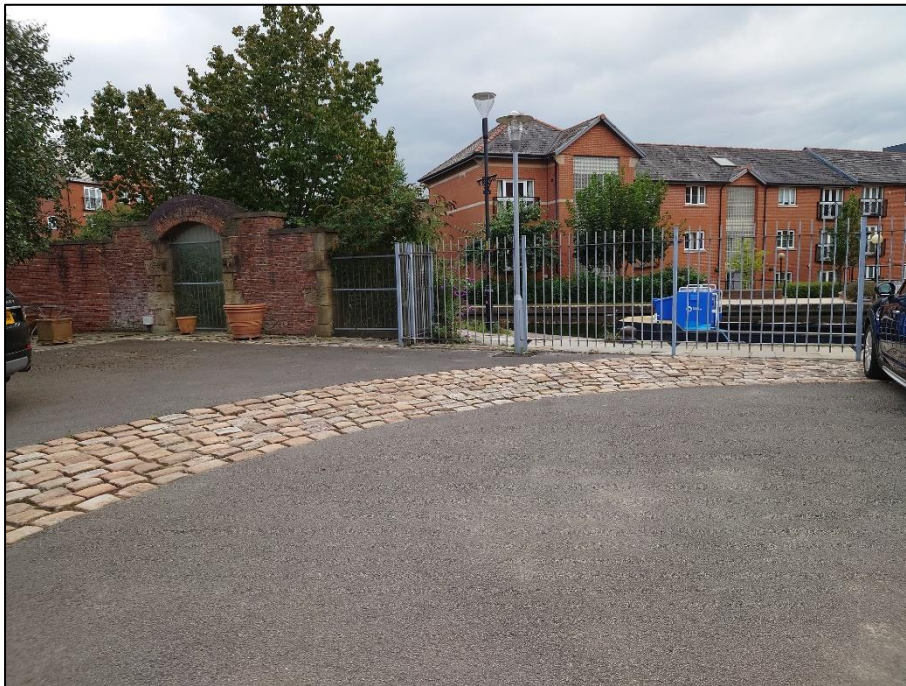
3.0 RESULTS

HABITATS

- 3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map can be found at the back of the report. The habitats on the proposed development site are described below.

Bare Ground

- 3.2 This majority of the site comprises bare ground, which is a mixture of paved areas, hardstanding and cobbles (see Photograph 1).



Photograph 1 showing the bare ground

Introduced Shrub and Tree

- 3.3 A small shrub bed exists on site (see Photograph 2). This comprises rose bushes, with an ornamental Birch *Betula* var.



Photograph 2 showing the shrub bed and tree

Boundaries

- 3.4 The site is mostly enclosed by brick walls (see Photograph 3), on the eastern, southern and western edges.

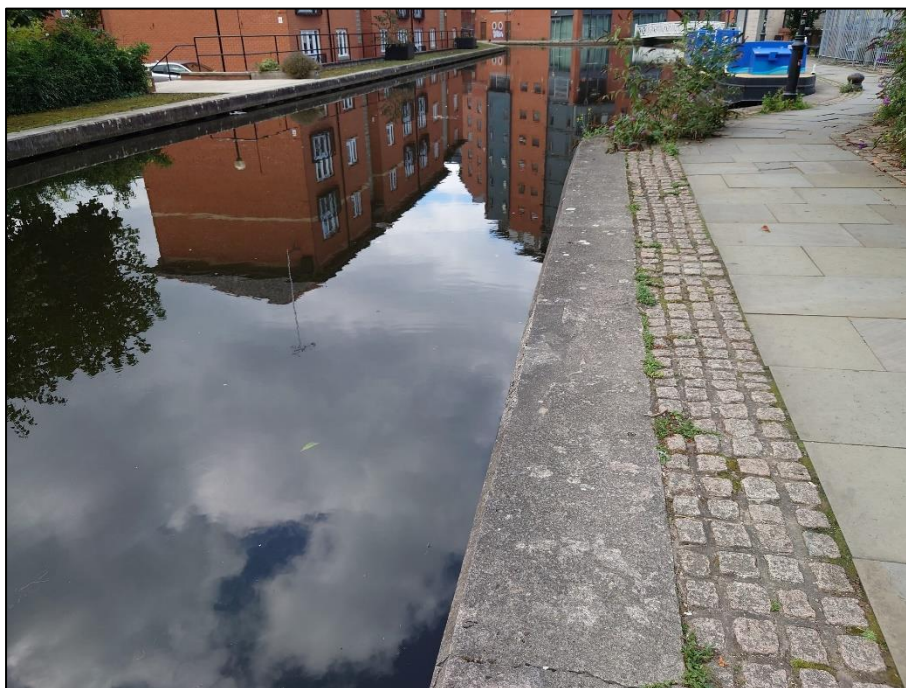


Photograph 3 showing part of the wall



Off-site Ashton Canal

- 3.5 The Ashton Canal and associated tow path lies adjacent to the site to the south (see Photograph 4). The banks adjacent to the site comprise concrete. Canadian Waterweed *Elodea canadensis* occurs submerged in the water. A shrub bed, which mostly comprises Cherry *Prunus* var. trees and Butterfly-bush *Buddleja davidii* lies between the site and the tow path (see Photograph 5).



Photograph 4 showing the banks of Ashton Canal



Photograph 5 showing the off-site scrub and shrubs



PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.6 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species (EPS) under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.7 No ponds exist on the site or within 250 metres of the site boundary. The adjacent Ashton Canal is not considered to be suitable Great Crested newt breeding habitat, due to the steep banks, lack of aquatic vegetation and deep water. No suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat exists on site.

Bats

- 3.8 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006).
- 3.9 No buildings exist on site. The Birch tree was inspected from the ground for Potential Roosting Features (PRFs), such as limb damage and cavities. No such PRFs were found. The brick walls are in excellent condition, with no missing bricks and most mortar intact. One crack exists on the southern wall (see Photograph 6). This was inspected and found to be shallow and covered in cobwebs. No evidence of bat usage was found associated with the crack. Limited bat foraging habitat exists adjacent to the site.



Photograph 6 showing the crack in the wall

Badger

- 3.10 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.
- 3.11 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity was located on site.

Water Vole & Otter

- 3.12 Water Vole *Arvicola terrestris* is fully protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Otter *Lutra lutra* is a European Protected Species under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Otter is also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.13 No suitable habitat for Water Vole or Otter exists on site. However, the Ashton Canal lies within 10 metres of the construction zone. No evidence of Water Vole or Otter activity was found along the canal next to the site and 30 metres either side of the site. The canal banks are concrete and no aquatic vegetation exists at the canal.

Nesting Birds

- 3.14 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.15 The Birch tree provides sub-optimal nesting habitat for birds, due to its size. No other bird nesting habitat exists on site. Immediately adjacent to the site lies a scrub/shrub bed which does offer suitable bird nesting habitat.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.16 No invasive, non-native species as listed on Schedule 9 Part II (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were found on or immediately adjacent to the site boundaries. Canadian Waterweed *Elodea canadensis* occurs in the Ashton Canal. This species is listed on Schedule 9 but will not be disturbed by the development.

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.17 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie on the site or immediately adjacent to the site boundary. The nearest statutory protected site is Clayton Vale Local Nature Reserve (LNR), which lies 2.6km away to the north-east. Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies 4.9km away to the north-east.



- 3.18 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may have a deleterious impact on protected sites nearby. Residential development is not listed as a concern at this location.
- 3.19 The nearest non-statutory protected site is Ashton Canal (East) Site of Biological Importance (SBI). This is located approximately 5m to the south of the proposed development site.



4.0 ASSESSMENT

HABITATS

- 4.1 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- 4.2 The site comprises negligible ecological value. The bare ground offers no value to wildlife. The shrub bed and tree are isolated. The tree offers sub-optimal nesting habitat for birds.

Development Context

- 4.3 The development proposals will affect all the habitats on site. Given the negligible value of the habitats to be lost, no specific habitat mitigation is considered to be necessary. However, the development should aim to bring biodiversity gain to the site, through suitable soft landscaping such as native or fruit tree planting and shrubs with bird and bat boxes erected onto the new building.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 4.4 No waterbodies exist on the site or within 250m of the site boundary. The site offers no suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt. Great Crested Newt is not considered to be a constraint on development at this time.

Bats

- 4.5 No suitable bat roosting habitat exists on site. The site also lacks linear vegetative features that bats may use for forging and commuting. Therefore, the site offers negligible bat roost suitability. The adjacent Ashton Canal offers bat foraging habitat, although this is limited by the lack of trees. It is recommended that the Ashton Canal is not impacted by artificial lighting from the development.

Badger

- 4.6 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity was located. Badgers are not considered to be a constraint on development.

Water Vole & Otter

- 4.7 The site does not support suitable habitat for Water Vole or Otter. No field signs of either species were found at the Ashton Canal. Water Vole and Otter are not considered to be a constraint on development at this time.

Nesting Birds

- 4.8 The tree on site and the scrub/shrubs just off-site offer suitable bird nesting habitat. It is recommended the vegetation clearance be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (which is generally March – August) unless a nesting bird survey is undertaken first.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.9 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie within the proposed development site or directly adjacent to the site boundary. The nearest statutory protected site is Clayton Vale LNR, which lies 2.6km away to the north-east. Given the distance involved, the buffer habitats between the LNR and the site and the small-scale nature of the proposals, it is considered that the proposed development would have no deleterious effect on the LNR.
- 4.10 The nearest non-statutory protected site is Ashton Canal (East) SBI. This is located approximately 5m to the south of the proposed development site. Whilst there will be no direct impact on the SBI from the development, the construction must be undertaken with a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to protect the SBI from any deleterious indirect impact such as pollution, noise and light.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Further Surveys

- 5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. Following the findings from the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, no further surveys are required.
- 5.2 Depending on the timing of vegetation removal, the following survey may be required:
- **Nesting Birds** - It is recommended the vegetation removal is carried out outside the nesting bird season (generally March – August). If the works need to be carried out within the bird nesting season, then a nesting bird survey will be required immediately prior to work commencing.

Habitat Enhancement

- 5.3 General recommendations to bring biodiversity gain to the site are:
- Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.
 - Bird and bat boxes should be erected on the newly constructed building.
 - Trees planting of native species or fruit varieties where practically possible.

6.0 REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed.). (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition*. Bat Conservation Trust. London.

JNCC. *Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental audit*. JNCC, Updated 2010.

MAGIC mapping: www.magic.gov.uk. Defra, London

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021). Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Preston, C.D., Pearman, D. & Dines, T. (2002). *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora*. Oxford University Press.

Stace, C. A. (2019). *New Flora of the British Isles, 4th Edition*. C&M Floristics.

APPENDIX A PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

