

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report



**Tyler
Grange**

**MMU Brooks Building,
Manchester**

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Summary

- S.1. This Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) report has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Ltd on behalf of Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) in relation to works at Brooks Building, centred on OS grid reference SJ 83791 96685.
- S.2. This report has been completed to accompany a planning application for removal of a bin store to install a permanent standby generator, which requires the removal of three onsite trees and a section of shrub and amenity grassland.
- S.3. Following the PRA, the trees were assessed as offering negligible bat roost potential, and no further surveys are required.
- S.4. Onsite shrub offered potential habitat for nesting birds- all site clearance works should be preceded by a check for active nests by a suitably qualified ecologist if conducted in core nesting season (March – August inclusive).
- S.5. Bird boxes should also be accommodated in the final scheme for the site to mitigate for impacts from loss of nesting habitat associated with loss of trees and shrubs as part of the development.



Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Ltd on Behalf of Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU). It sets out the findings of a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and habitat survey for a parcel of land located adjacent to MMU Brooks Building (OS Grid Reference SJ 83791 96685), hereinafter referred to as the 'site'.
- 1.2. The site is currently in use as a bin store outside of a building associated with MMU. It is located to the west of the A5103. At the time of survey, the site comprised a bin store, with associated access, shrubs, scattered trees and amenity grassland.
- 1.3. This assessment is to accompany a planning application for the removal of a bin store, to be replaced with a standby generator (See **Appendix 2**).
- 1.4. The aim of the survey was to assess the suitability of the onsite trees to support roosting bats and see if their removal would have an effect on protected species.
- 1.5. The survey also assessed other onsite habitats for their potential to support other protected and notable species.



Section 2: Methodology

- 2.1 A site walkover survey was conducted on the 14th January 2021 by Steven Coyne (Natural England Class 2 Bat Licence Holder – ref 2015-14981-CLS-CLS), who is an experienced field ecologist and member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM). The methods used during the walkover survey broadly followed methods used in an ‘extended’ Phase I habitat survey. This technique provides an inventory of the habitat types present and dominant species. Note was taken of the more conspicuous fauna and any evidence of, or the potential for, the presence of protected notable flora and fauna. Weather conditions during the survey were 100% cloud cover, light rain, gentle breeze and temp 3°C.

Tree Preliminary Roost Assessments

- 2.2 All trees within and along the boundaries of the site were subject to a preliminary roost assessment to determine their suitability for bats. The survey was completed by Steven Coyne during the walkover and followed guidance provided in the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) good practice guidelines (2016)¹.
- 2.3 The survey comprised a thorough visual inspection of each tree from the ground level, using binoculars where necessary. The surveyor searched for features which could be used by roosting bats (i.e. woodpecker holes, lifted bark) and any evidence of bat use (i.e. droppings, urine staining) around features. The surveyor then categorised the trees within the site into one of the categories listed below in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Roost potential categories

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. 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 (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation). A tree of sufficient size or age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features with only very limited roosting potential.
Moderate	A structure or tree 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 (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure or 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.

¹ Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.



Evaluation

- 2.4 The evaluation of habitats and species is defined in accordance with published guidance (CIEEM, 2018). The level of importance of specific ecological receptors is assigned using a geographic frame of reference, with international importance being highest, then national, regional, county, local and lastly, within the site boundary only.
- 2.5 Judgements are based on various characteristics that can be used to identify ecological resources or features likely to be important in terms of biodiversity. These include site designations (such as SSSIs), or for undesignated features, the size, conservation status (locally, nationally or internationally), and the quality of the ecological resource. In terms of the latter, quality can refer to habitats (for instance if they are particularly diverse, or a good example of a specific habitat type), other features (such as wildlife corridors or mosaics of habitats) or species populations or assemblages.

Limitations

- 2.6 The survey was undertaken early in the year and outside of the optimal time for recording botanical species, but this is not expected to affect the results of the survey, due to the nature of habitat types onsite being of negligible ecological importance within an urban context.

Quality Control

- 2.7 The contents of this report have been prepared by ecologists at Tyler Grange Group Limited, all of whom are members of CIEEM (with peer review by a MCIEEM member) and abide by the Institute's Code of Professional Conduct.



Section 3: Results

Habitats and Flora

3.1. At the time of survey, the site supported the following habitats

- Amenity Grassland
- Building
- Hardstanding
- Shrub
- Scattered trees

Amenity Grassland

3.2. There is a small patch on amenity grassland within the site. Given the low species diversity, its prevalence in the area and its small area, which is unconnected to other habitats, the amenity grassland is of **negligible ecological importance**. See Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Amenity grassland with associated trees.

Building

3.3. There one a single structure on site which consisted of a metal bin store without a roof. This structure is of **negligible ecological importance** given that it has no inherent interest for biodiversity. See Figure 2 below.





Figure 2: Bin store

Hardstanding

- 3.4. The area of hardstanding present on site consisted of a pavement adjacent to the building and within the bin store. Hardstanding is of **negligible ecological importance**, offering no value to the local biodiversity resource. See Figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Hardstanding areas on site

Shrub

- 3.5. Ornamental shrubs are located between the onsite hardstanding and the adjacent road and hold no inherent interest for biodiversity hence are of **negligible ecological importance**;





Figure 4: Ornamental shrub

Scattered trees

- 3.6. Three immature silver birch *Betula pendula* trees are present in a patch of amenity grassland lawn (Figure 1). Given their immaturity they are considered to be of **negligible ecological importance**.

Protected Fauna

- 3.7. No evidence of old bird nests was recorded within the ornamental shrubs; however they do provide **low potential to support nesting birds**. See Figure 4 above. The trees are immature and do not have potential to support nesting birds.
- 3.8. The trees did not have any potential bat roosting features and are considered to have **negligible potential for roosting bats**.



Section 4: Impacts and Conclusions

- 4.1. The proposed works include removal of the three onsite trees and a section of shrub and amenity grassland to allow replacement of the bin store with a permanent standby generator (see **Appendix 2**).
- 4.2. The works proposed are not considered to result in any residual adverse ecological impacts if the recommended procedures outlined below are followed in relation to habitats and protected species.
- 4.3. All habitats onsite are considered to be of negligible ecological importance, however it is recommended that trees are re-located, or that replacement trees should be planted elsewhere onsite to replace the three that are lost. This would satisfy Policy A1.21 in the local plan to protect and conserve the city's existing trees.
- 4.4. Timing of works to remove the onsite hedgerow will ensure that legislation relating to the protection of nesting birds will timetabled outside of the bird breeding season (generally accepted to be March - August inclusive) to avoid conflicts with active bird nests. Where this is not possible, all tree/vegetation clearance should be preceded by a check for active bird nests by a suitably experienced ecologist. It should be noted, however, that some species of bird can nest year-round and due diligence to observe for active bird nests must be shown during any clearance outside of the bird nesting season, to protect nesting birds as far as is reasonably practicable.
- 4.5. Onsite trees scheduled for removal were considered to be of negligible bat roost potential, and no further surveys or specific mitigation are required.
- 4.6. Bird boxes should also be accommodated in the final scheme for the site to mitigate for impacts from loss of nesting habitat associated with loss of trees and shrubs as part of the development.
- 4.7. Providing the above recommendations are implemented, there are no ecological reasons why redevelopment of the site should not proceed in accordance with relevant wildlife legislation and planning policy.



Appendix 1: Legislation and Conservation Status

A1.1 This section summarises the legislation and national, regional and local planning policies, as well as other reference documents, relevant to the baseline ecology results.

Legislative Context

A1.2 Specific habitats and species receive legal protection in the UK under various pieces of legislation, including:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended);
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (as amended).
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997;
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992; and
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006.

A1.3 The European Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna, 1992, often referred to as the 'Habitats Directive', provides for the protection of key habitats and species considered of European importance. Annexes II and IV of the Directive list all species considered of community interest. The legal framework to protect the species covered by the Habitats Directive has been enacted under UK law through The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (as amended).

A1.4 In Britain, the WCA 1981 (as amended) is the primary legislation protecting habitats and species. SSSIs, representing the best examples of our natural heritage, are notified under the WCA 1981 (as amended) by reason of their flora, fauna, geology or other features. All breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young are protected under the Act, which makes it illegal to knowingly destroy or disturb the nest site during nesting season. Schedules 1, 5 and 8 afford protection to individual birds, other animals and plants.

A1.5 The CROW Act 2000 strengthens the species enforcement provisions of the WCA 1981 (as amended) and makes it an offence to 'recklessly' disturb a protected animal whilst it is using a place of rest or shelter or breeding/nest site.

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance and the UK Biodiversity Action Plan

A1.6 The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework succeeded the UK BAP partnership in 2011 and covers the period 2011 to 2020. However, the lists of Priority Species and Habitats agreed under the UKBAP still form the basis of much biodiversity work in the UK. The current strategy for England is 'Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' published under the UK Post-2010 UK Biodiversity Framework. Although the UK BAP has been succeeded, Species Action Plans (SAPs) developed for the UK BAP remain valuable resources for background information on priority species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

A1.7 Priority Species and Habitats identified under the UKBAP are also referred to as Species and Habitats of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales within Sections 41 (England) and 42 (Wales) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. The commitment to preserving, restoring or enhancing biodiversity is further emphasised for England and Wales in Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006.



National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2019

- A1.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in July 2019 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It replaces the National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012.
- A1.9 Paragraph 11 states that:
- “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.”
- A1.10 Section 15 of the NPPF (paragraphs 170 to 177) considers the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment.
- A1.11 Paragraph 170 states that planning and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- “protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; and
 - minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures”
- A1.12 Paragraph 171 states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.
- A1.13 Paragraph 174 states that in order to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- “Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
 - promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”
- A1.14 When determining planning applications, Paragraph 175 states that local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:
- “if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;



- development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁵⁸ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.”

A1.15 As stated in paragraph 176 the following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- “potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.”

A1.16 Paragraph 177 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the planned project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitat site (alone or in combination) unless an appropriate assessment concluded the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System

A1.17 ODPM Circular 06/05 was prepared to accompany PPS9, however continues to be valid, and material in the consideration of planning applications since PPS9's replacement by the NPPF.

A1.18 ODPM Circular 06/05 provides guidance on applying legislation in relation to nature conservation and planning in England. Part I considers the legal protection and conservation of internationally designated sites (namely candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs), SACs, potential Special Protection Areas (pSPAs), SPAs and Ramsar sites) and Part II considers the legal protection and conservation of nationally designated sites, namely Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

A1.19 Part III considers the protection of habitats and species outside of designated areas (particularly UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats), which it states are capable of being a material consideration in the preparation of local development documents and the making of planning decisions.

A1.20 Part IV considers species protected by law and states that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration in the consideration of a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat and that it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted.



Local Planning Policy

Manchester City Council Core Strategy

A1.21 Local Policy EN 15 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation' states:

'The council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the City. Particular consideration will be given to:

- *Sites with international or national designations for their biodiversity value and other sites of biodiversity value (SBIs, LNRs);*
- *Protected and priority species, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP);*
- *Sites that are recognised for their geological importance;*
- *The council's objective to protect and conserve the City's existing trees and woodlands and aim for a net increase in trees across the City*

Developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable habitat areas where appropriate, with reference to the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and the Green Infrastructure Framework for Manchester'

Biodiversity Action Plans

A1.22 The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework succeeded the UK BAP partnership in 2011 and covers the period 2011 to 2020. However, the lists of Priority Species and Habitats agreed under the UKBAP still form the basis of much biodiversity work in the UK. The current strategy for England is 'Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' published under the UK Post-2010 UK Biodiversity Framework. Although the UK BAP has been succeeded, Species Action Plans (SAPs) developed for the UK BAP remain valuable resources for background information on priority species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

A1.23 Priority Species and Habitats identified under the UKBAP are also referred to as Species and Habitats of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales within Sections 41 (England) and 42 (Wales) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. The commitment to preserving, restoring or enhancing biodiversity is further emphasised for England and Wales in Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan – Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan

A1.24 The greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan lists the following habitat relevant to the site:

- Urban Managed Greenspace



Appendix 2

Site Plan



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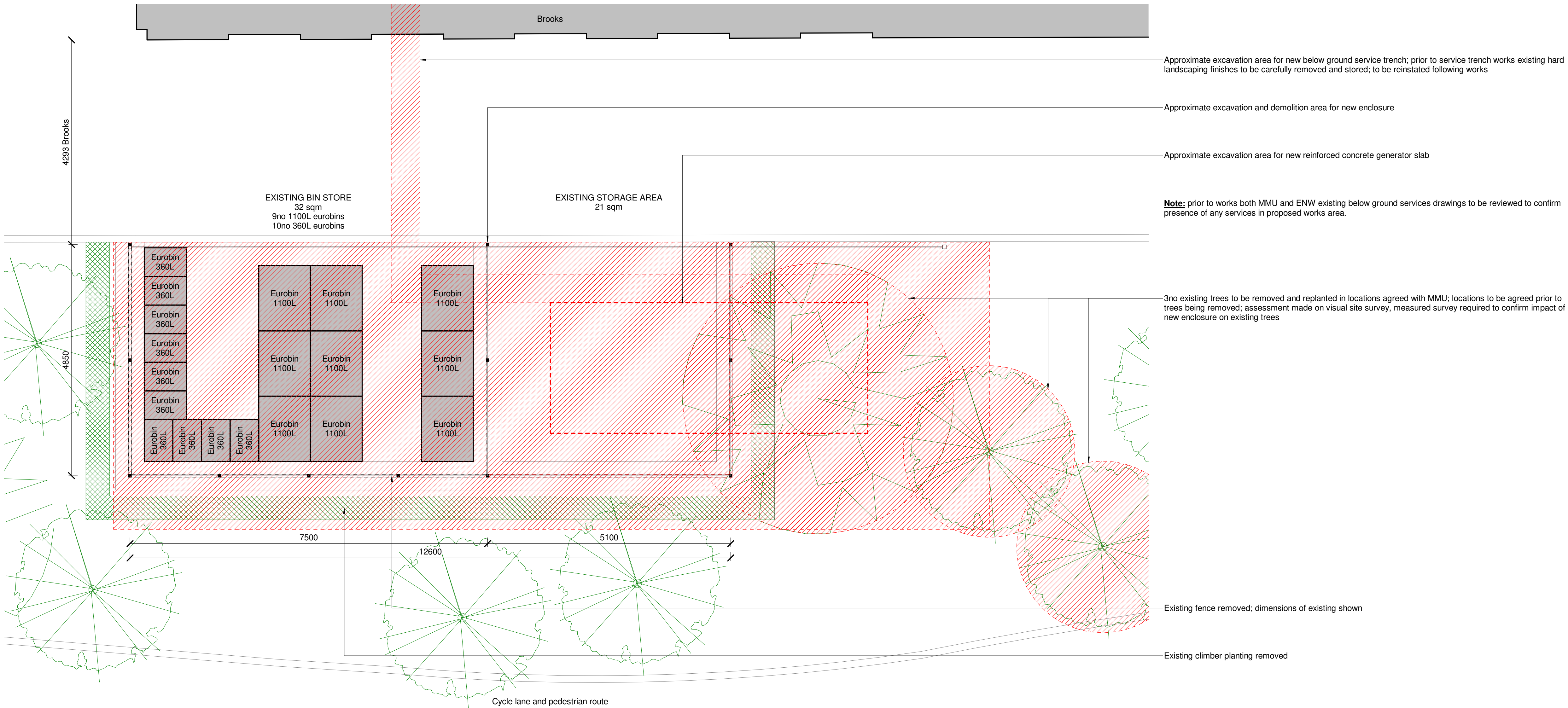
DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING
The contractor shall check and verify all dimensions on site and report any discrepancies in writing to Sheppard Robson before proceeding work

FOR ELECTRONIC DATA ISSUE
Electronic Data / drawings are issued as "read only" and should not be interrogated for measurement. All dimensions and levels should read, only from those values stated in text on the drawing.

Notes:
Design input required from structural engineer for:
- Hard landscaping sub base build ups
- Below ground service trench
- Kerb perimeter

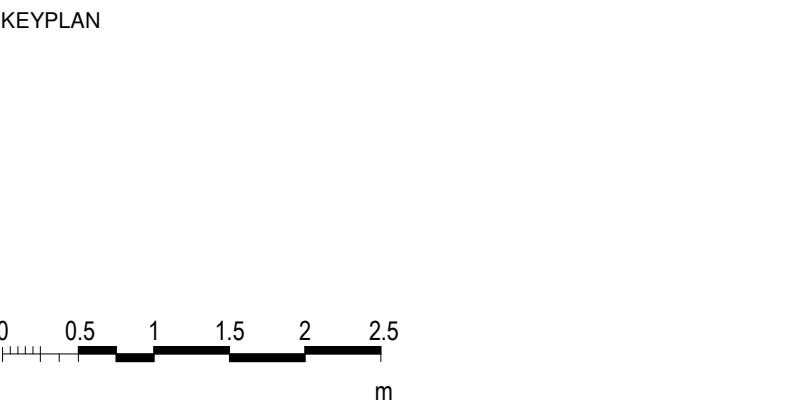
Drainage requirements to be reviewed

Generator design based on drawing: 000-2468 provided by Lymington Projects on 15/07/2020



1 Brooks - Existing GA Plan
20103 1 : 50

REV.	DATE	AMENDMENT
P01	16.06.20	Issued for Tender
P02	19.06.20	Issued for Tender
P03	16.07.20	Issued for Tender



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PROJECT
Site Wide Resilience Project 7 Birley Fields

SCALE@A1	DATE	ORIGINATOR	CHECKED	AUTHORISED
1 : 50	16.07.20	NG	NM	RG

Brooks
Existing GA Plan

STATUS	PURPOSE FOR ISSUE	SR NO.
S2	For Tender	6599
DRAWING NO.	REV.	
6599 - SRA - XX - XX - DR - A - 20103	P03	

An abstract collage of various geometric shapes and icons in shades of blue, purple, and yellow. The shapes include triangles, squares, and circles, some with patterns like polka dots or stripes. Icons include a hand, a leaf, a star, and a fan-like shape. The central text is overlaid on a large yellow hexagon.

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