

Extended Phase One Habitat Survey (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal)

Version One. 28.04.2025
Prepared for: The Northern Group

Prepared by Simon Brain Managing Director

NAME OF SITE:	Land at Station Road
PROJECT No:	12596
CLIENT NAME:	Northern Group
SPECIALIST:	Amenity Tree Care Ltd
DATE PREPARED:	28.04.2025
PREPARED BY:	Simon Brain
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1. Introduction

Amenity Tree have been instructed by The Northern Group (the client) to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) on land located at Station Road, Stockport (central grid reference, SJ 8874 3945) as shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1:

Site location plan, highlighting the development boundaries (redline).



1.1 Background to the project

Proposed redevelopment of the site includes the erection of new residential properties, restoration of one of the water bodies, creation of new vehicular, pedestrian and cycle links through the site. Site wide landscaping including lakeside paths, seating areas and fishing huts.

1.2 Site location, context and main habitats

The Site is predominantly located within the northern part of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. A portion of the Site (western parcel) falls within Manchester City Council's boundary. The survey area consisted of Bramble Scrub (h3d), native hedgerow, non-native hedgerow (h2b), Sparsely Vegetated Land (S) Other standing water (r1g). Mixed scrub (h3h), other standing water (r1g) developed land buildings and sealed surfaces (u1b), other woodland (mixed) / other broadleaf woodland and urban trees (w1h, w1h5) and other neutral grassland (g3c).

1.3 Report purpose

To prepare a Preliminary Ecological Assessment or Extended Phase One Habitat Survey for the development site following CIEEM guidelines (*Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, December 2017*). The purpose of the report is to provide information relating to the location, extent and distribution and impact on the conservation of wild plants and animals and natural and semi natural habitats affected by development. This report sets out the methods, results and recommendations arising from the above work.

1.3.1 Surveyor information

Ryan Whitmarsh is an experienced ecologist who has attained a BSc (Hons) and has undertaken a range of ecological surveys for protected species and Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (PEA). He has attended courses in bats and is currently working towards a Class 2 Bat License.

Simon Brain has 15 years experience as the Managing Director within ecology.

2. Desk Study

2.1 Methodology

The desk study collated information on designated statutory and non-statutory wildlife sites within 1km search radii around the proposed development site.

Information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites and legally protected/notable species records were obtained from <http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx> and are contained

in section 2.2 below. Local Records Centre data was also requested from Greater Manchester Ecological Unit

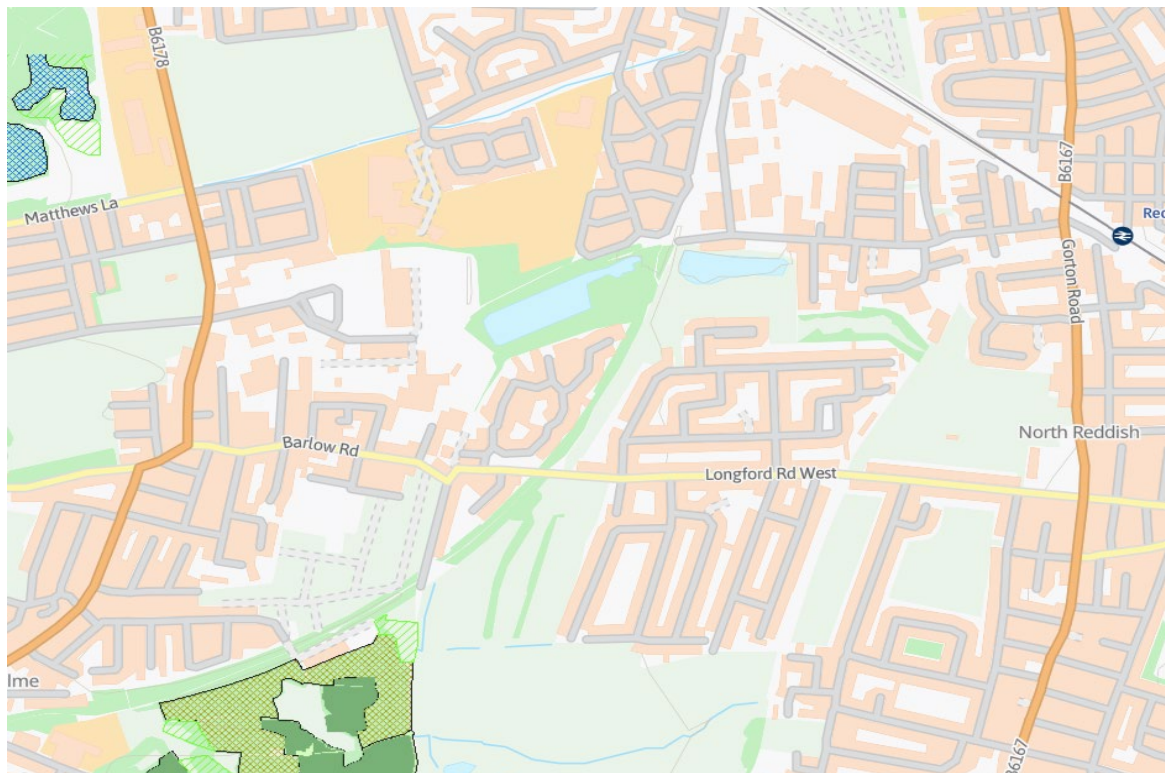
2.2 Designated sites, species and habitats - Results Overview

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx>) has confirmed no statutory designations apply to the site and the site boundaries.

A 1km search of the environs surrounding the site has confirmed there are no statutory designated sites or protected habitat records/protected species records. The development proposal does not appear to conform to those development types that require the LPA to consult Natural England on the likely risks.

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside website data has confirmed the following habitats and species apply to the site and its immediate locality:

- There are section 41 habitats listed on the priority habitat inventory (woodland is located within 1km, approximately 750m to the south west which forms part of Highfield Country Park, and 850m to the northwest which forms part of Knutsford Vale Park) as shown below.



- The whole of the SMBC part of the site is designated as Green Chain with no other nature conservation designations as listed in Stockport's Local Plan.
- Parts of the site have been identified within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) pilot study for Greater Manchester.
- A Network Expansion Zone is not located onsite.
- The site is covered by the Grassland Assemblage Farmland Birds (2 species) (England).
- The site is covered by the Arable Assemblage Farmland Birds (4 species) (England).
- There are no important Bird Areas, Seabird considerations, or water and wetland considerations in respect of avian species.
- A Great Crest Newt class survey license return (positive) is located 1,050m to the northeast (Note: separated from site by road barrier Reddish Lane)
- The closest granted European Protected Species (EPS) license application by Natural England was for Bat species approximately 2,000m from site to the northwest. No granted European Protected Species licenses are located within a 1km radius of site.

In addition, Local Records Centre data has been obtained from Greater Manchester Local Records Centre (GMRC/GMEU) in April 2025. The data search has confirmed the site is a candidate Site of Biological Importance (SBI) and is awaiting ratification from Stockport Council. The site and its adjacent boundaries have confirmed records of seven Section 41 species including Reed Bunting, Lesser Redpoll, Common Toad, Bullfinch, Dunnock, House Sparrow, and Grasshopper Warbler (see appendices for species records distribution maps).

There are numerous species level records, mainly avian and chiropteran that are largely located along the Fallowfield Loop, and to the south around Highfield Country Park LNR, along with the survey site itself. Some of these records such as woodland, open water or scrub species could use the habitat on site.



The closes Great Crested Newt record is for Wingates Reservoir and dates from 2014. A protected species map provided by GMRC details a record of GCN for the main lake, but there are no details of which dates these are from and it is assumed they are historic.

3. Extended Phase One Habitat Survey

3.1 Methodology and survey results

The site was visited on the 10th April 2025 and a survey of the site was conducted using the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (at <https://www.ukhabs.org>). Distinct habitats were identified and any features of nature conservation interest or habitat areas that were too small to map were subject to a more detailed description in a Target Note (T1 etc) and contained in Appendix 2 –UK Habitat Classification Survey Map.

3.1.2. Vascular Plants and Habitat

A site vascular plant list is included in Appendix 2.

3.1.3 Protected and Notable Species (Mammals)

Water Voles

A culvert fed by an overflow from the western lake is located to the north western corner of site which is densely populated by bramble and scrub. Open areas of water were located to the northeastern corner of the western lake, and to the western boundary of the eastern lake which are subject to seasonal variation with aerial imagery indicating these areas are subject to significant periods of time as dry ditches. No running watercourses apart from the overflow were located elsewhere on site.

Bat species

Bats are comprehensively protected under UK and European legislation. Bats are largely ubiquitous there is green infrastructure linking the site to the wider landscape. The site contains good foraging habitat. Trees will need to be removed for development which could contain bat roost(s). The section of retaining wall and the bridge structure over the Fallowfield Loop may be affected by the proposals and contain features suitable for crevice dwelling Bat species.

Badgers and Hedgehog

Badgers are protected under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which prohibits deliberate interference with the animal or its sett. A standard badger survey was undertaken making checks on site and in the immediate site margins. For example, up to 30m+ from site was checked for signs for field signs of Badger (hair, tracks, prints, dropping or latrines), No evidence of Badgers

using the site was discovered. This is most likely due to the site being heavily used by dog walkers, anglers and the area being subject to high levels of anti-social behaviour.

Amphibians

The desktop and field survey exercises indicate field ponds and ditches are located within 500m of the site and the two lakes provide potential aquatic breeding habitat, foraging, dispersal and hibernating habitats for amphibians to be present.

3.1.5 Birds

All birds with only minor exceptions are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), as amended. It is also an offence to disturb birds whilst nesting or displaying breeding behaviour, during the breeding season. There are numerous habitats and associated foraging areas for breeding birds to be present and a suite of breeding bird surveys is recommended. Urban birds may use the site such as house sparrow and starling which are birds of conservation concern.

3.1.6 Vascular Plants

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 section 13 1(b) affords some wild flowers protection from uprooting. No other IUCN listed, BAP or other notable plants were identified. Non-native invasive (WCA Schedule 9) vascular plants were found within the site. (see target notes).

3.1.7 Reptiles

All native reptile species in the UK are protected under law from killing or sale. Suitable basking habitat is present onsite and refugia in the form of areas of fly tipped materials. Reptiles have potential to be present on site.

3.2. Constraints to the Surveys

The timing of the site visit was optimal for all species and habitats to be identified within the framework of a Phase 1 survey due to there being an unusually warm and dry period for the time of year.

4. Summary and Impact

4.1 Summary – Protected habitats

The surveys have confirmed that the site does support a habitat protected under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (*NERC*) Act 2006 - Habitats and Species of Principal Importance in England (woodland to the north). There are no priority hedgerows on the site.

Summary - Protected species

No evidence of protected species was found during the site walkover other than S41 bird species for example Bullfinch.

Summary – Protected sites

There are currently no statutory or non-statutory designated sites within the boundaries of the development site.

Impact – General

The development proposal seeks to construct residential dwellings and associated infrastructure and there is a direct loss of scrub, woodland, grassland, water bodies, and reedbed for the footprint of the development.

Impact - Species

The full extent of protected species that may reside on this site will require confirmation following further surveys as recommended in section 4.2. The following general impacts are considered to apply:

Species	Impact of species of development
Amphibians	Low level impact considered likely.
Badger/hedgehog	Currently no evidence of badger, historic records of Badger have been identified. hedgehog has potential to be present on site.
Bats	Loss commuting and foraging habitat. The existing trees to be removed may contain bat roosts. The structures of the existing

	bridge and supporting walls outside of the red line boundary may be affected by indirect disturbance.
Birds	Loss of foraging habitat and disturbance during the breeding season. The habitats on site may support notable avian species.
Reptiles	Affected habitats onsite have some suitability for reptiles
Grassland	Loss of vascular plant habitat identified on site is likely a low-level impact
Water vole	No impact considered likely.

4.2 Recommendations for protected species

4.2.1 Mammals

Bat species

A Ground Level Tree Inspection (GLTA) is required to assess the trees that may be affected for bat roost suitability, further aerial inspections by a suitably qualified climber may be required to examine inaccessible Potential Roost Features (PRFs). Subsequent bat emergence survey may need to be undertaken after inspection of potential features.

A night-time bat walkover survey (NBW) coupled with a static detector for 5 days for two occasions is sufficient survey effort to advise the planning application if bats are present on this site. High levels of anti social behaviour may necessitate the need for further transect surveys as leaving static detectors on site may not be viable due to ASB.

Confirmation of the proposals and their effects on the Fallowfield Loop railway bridge and retaining walls located will need to be confirmed and if the structures are affected, crevice dwelling Bat species will need to be considered which will require endoscopy of suitable PRF's.

Badgers / hedgehog

No further surveys required. An updated Badger Walkover Survey could be conditioned ahead of approved works proceeding should planning approval be granted.

4.2.2 Amphibians

An amphibian appraisal is required for these species and eDNA analysis of the water bodies on site should be undertaken.

4.2.3 Avian

A suite of (4-6) surveys for breeding birds can advise the planning application of the presence of any notable bird species from which any species level mitigation can be designed into the scheme.

A precautionary breeding bird appraisal / survey will be required prior to any tree removal ascertain the importance of the site to breeding birds at that time and check for presence of active nests to avoid damage and disturbance. This may require hand searching and dawn observations depending upon the time of year.

4.2.4 Vascular Plants

No other further surveys are required for vascular plants.

4.2.5 Reptiles

Reptile surveys in those areas classed as having suitable habitat will be required, the placing of refugia mats during the optimum survey period, along with a suite of subsequent checks to confirm presence/absence is recommended.

5. Recommendations, mitigation, enhancement measures

5.1 Recommendations, mitigation, enhancement measures

Mitigation applies to works required to comply with legislation when developing land where protected species reside, or protected habitats are being lost. Enhancement relates to biodiversity improvements often made under the National Planning Policy Framework.

At present there is no evidence of protected species on the site, which could be affected by development. The extent of protected species requires the surveys referred to in section 4.1 and 4.2 to be complete before mitigation can be proposed to support this development. Upon completion of these surveys, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures can be provided and confirmed.

The provision of a Biodiversity enhancement report and a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment is considered to apply to the site in accordance with the NPPF guidelines and best practice.

Appendix 1: Species List



12596 Land at Station Road

Red Line Boundary Area: 11.4241 ha

- Redline boundary
- f2e** Reedbeds
- g3c** Other neutral grassland
- g4** Modified grassland
- h2b** Non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- h3d** Bramble scrub
- h3h** Mixed scrub
- r1g** Other standing water
- s** Sparsely vegetated land
- u1b** Developed land - sealed surface
- u1b5** Buildings
- w1h** Other woodland - mixed
- w1h5** Other woodland - mixed - mainly broadleaved
- Trees



Amenity Tree

Drawn by: **simon brain**

Version Date: **05/08/25**

AMENITYTREE
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Appendix 2: UK Habitat Survey Map

<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass
<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	Common ragwort
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle
<i>Rubus</i> sp.	
<i>Tilia x europaea</i>	Common lime
<i>Tilia x europaea</i>	Common lime
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash
<i>Carex</i> sp.	
<i>Rubus</i> sp.	
<i>Crataegus crus-galli</i>	Cockspurthorn
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
<i>Rubus</i> sp.	
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass
<i>Taraxacum</i> sp.	
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover
<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	Butterfly-bush
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn
<i>Rubus</i> sp.	
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
<i>Salix alba</i>	White Willow
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat Willow
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild Cherry
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder
<i>Populus nigra</i>	Black-poplar
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash
<i>Salix</i> sp.	
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat Willow
<i>Betula pubescens</i>	Downy Birch
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Bulrush
<i>Carex</i> sp.	
<i>Juncus</i> sp.	
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed
<i>Plantago maritima</i>	Sea Plantain
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Iris
<i>Carex nigra</i>	Common Sedge
<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	Indian Balsam
	Rosebay
<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>	Willowherb)+B112
<i>Lemna minor</i>	Common Duckweed

Mentha aquatica

Asplenium scolopendrium

Pteridium aquilinum

Typha latifolia

Ligustrum ovalifolium

Rubus sp.

Water Mint

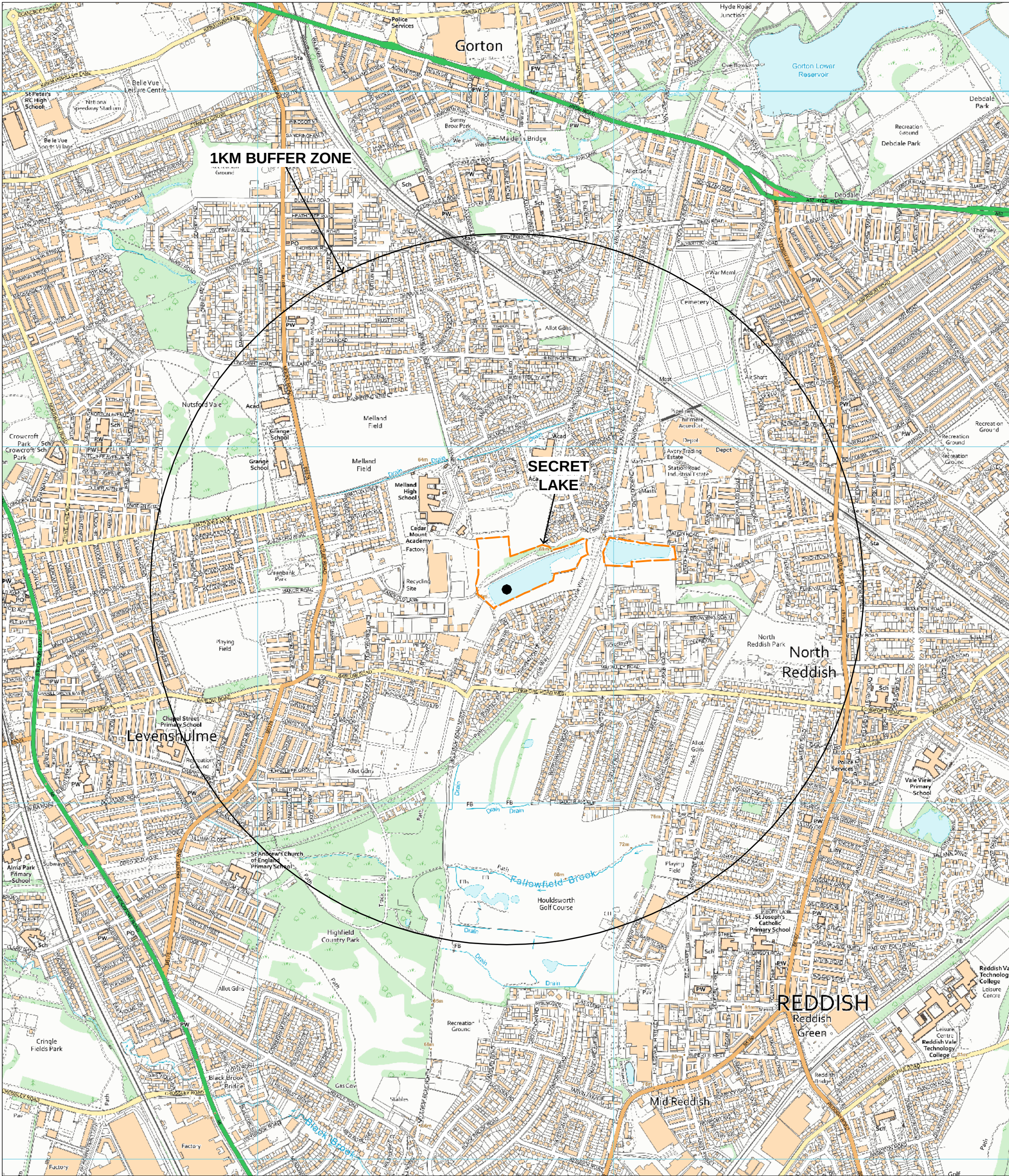
Hart's tongue

Bracken

Bulrush

Garden Privet

Appendix 3 GMRC Maps



**GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8870 9460
SECRET LAKE - MAP 1**

SCALE 1:10,000

- KEY**
SITE OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE
 **SBI BOUNDARY**
 **CANDIDATE SBI**

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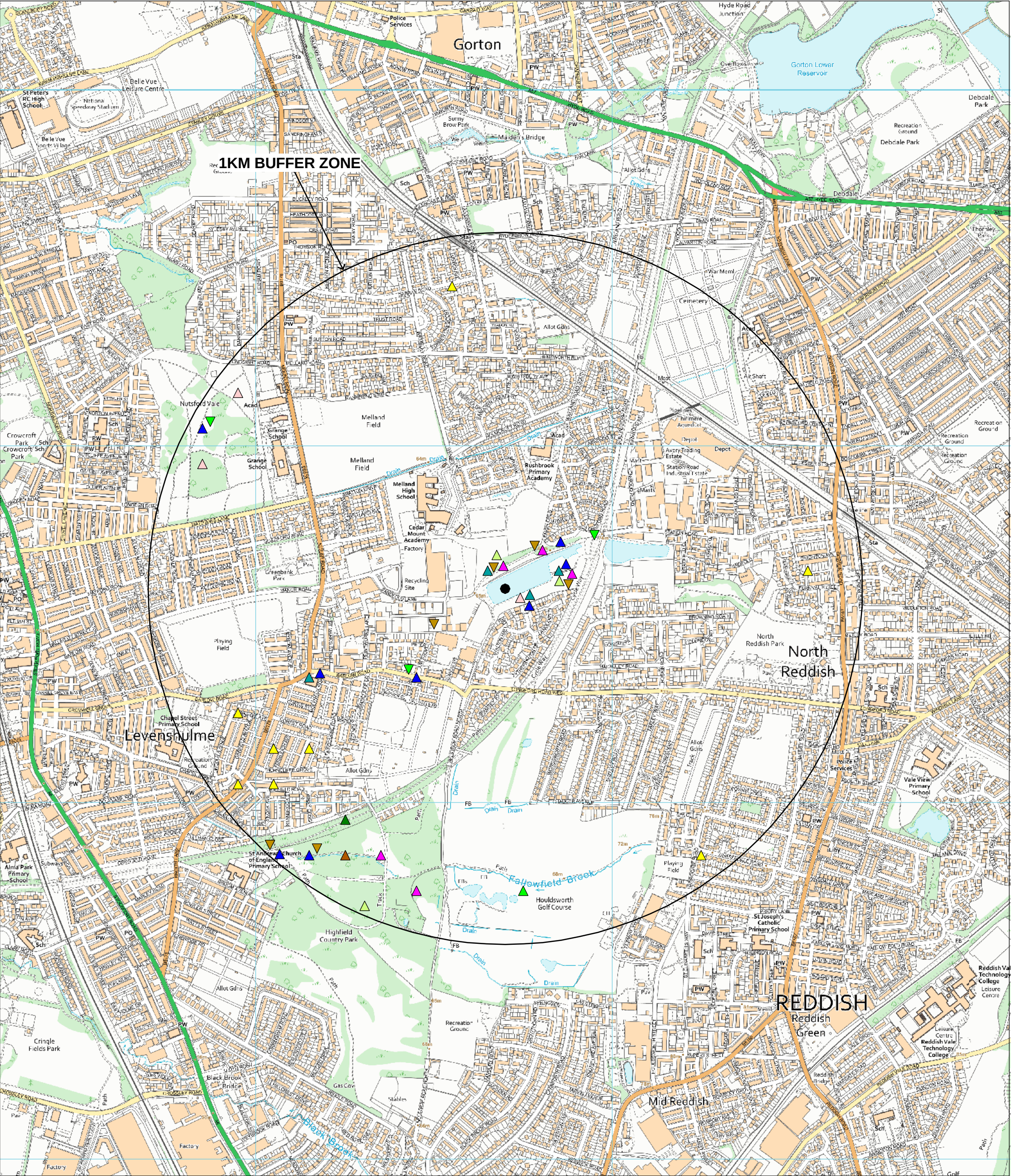
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Date Produced: 08/05/2025



KEY
SECTION 41 SPECIES

- ▲ BULLFINCH
- ▲ COMMON TOAD
- ▲ DUNNOCK
- ▲ GRASSHOPPER WARBLER
- ▲ HEDGEHOG
- ▲ HOUSE SPARROW
- ▲ LESSER REDPOLL
- ▲ REED BUNTING
- ▲ S41 MOTH
- ▲ SONG THRUSH
- ▲ STARLING

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8870 9460
SECRET LAKE - MAP 4

SCALE 1:10,000

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