Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Ryebank Fields, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester. (Grid Reference SJ811946).

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1 Summary

This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was commissioned by Friends of Ryebank Fields to assess the conservation status of Ryebank Fields, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester (Grid Reference SJ811946) in connection with an application to retain the land as a community woodland and meadow.

This report details the findings of the habitat and protected species surveys, evaluates the conservation status of Ryebank Fields and recommends a course of action aimed at protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the site.

1.1 The Main Findings

With a mosaic of habitats including woodland, aspen grove, grassland, and scrub habitats that have naturally regenerated since the area was abandoned in 1996, Ryebank Fields contributes significantly to the biodiversity of the area. It supports a rich diversity of flora and fauna, including protected species such as bats, hedgehogs, badgers, and breeding birds. The site is also home to a rare native black poplar tree and an ecologically significant hedgerow.

Ryebank Fields supports several Greater Manchester nature-based and green space initiatives including:

- The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP)
- Greater Manchester Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
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Ryebank Fields satisfies the criteria for Local Green Space designation and qualifies for protection within the context of Greater Manchester due to its significant environmental, social, and ecological value.

The site, an important green space in an increasingly urbanised city, provides a vital habitat for local wildlife and acts as a natural carbon sink, aiding in climate change mitigation and flood prevention.

1.2 Recommendations

Ryebank Fields is an ecologically significant area that has benefited from the process of natural succession over the past 30 years. In the long term, its biodiversity has the potential to be enhanced by a minimal, 'light touch' conservation and management approach.

Recommendations aim to protect and enhance the biodiversity and ecological integrity of the site.

1.2.1 Key objectives

- Biodiversity Conservation: Protect existing habitats and priority species.
- Community Engagement: Continue to foster local involvement in conservation and education activities.
- Historical Preservation: Safeguard historical features.
- Sustainable Land Management: Use chemical-free methods for habitat restoration and long-term care.
- Climate Resilience: Increase carbon sequestration through woodland conservation.

1.2.2 Management of specific habitats

- Woodland Conservation: Protect mature trees and plant more native species.
- Grassland and Meadow: Implement rotational scything, encourage wildflowers, and support pollinators.
- Hedgerows and Scrub: Protect hedgerows, conduct coppicing, and enhance habitat corridors.
- Badger, Hedgehog and Bat: Protect badger setts, preserve bat and hedgehog habitats, and install bat boxes.

1.2.3 Other recommendations

- Monitoring and evaluation strategies include annual surveys, assessing habitat restoration success, and gathering community feedback through meetings and surveys.
- Inclusion of Ryebank Fields in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is recommended to emphasise its role in enhancing regional biodiversity.

2 Introduction

2.1 Terms of Reference and Scope of Study

Friends of Ryebank Fields (FORF) is a community organisation dedicated to preserving Ryebank Fields, a 5.07ha green space on the border of Chorlton and Stretford in South Manchester. Established in 2018, FORF aims to protect this unique wild space for the benefit of the community and its diverse flora and fauna.

A planning application is expected to be submitted imminently by Asteer Planning on behalf of Step Places, Southway Housing and Manchester Metropolitan University, to develop Ryebank Fields for housing. If the development goes ahead it will result in the irreversible loss of locally important habitats that currently support a diverse range of fauna and flora.

This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was commissioned by FORF to assess the conservation status of Ryebank Fields, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester (Grid Reference SJ811946) in connection with an application to retain the land as a community woodland and meadow.

This report details the findings of the habitat and protected species surveys, evaluates the conservation status of Ryebank Fields and recommends a course of action aimed at protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the site.

2.2 Relevant Legislation

The 1994 The Conservation Regulations have been amended to allow the obsolete European Union Habitat Regulations to be transposed, almost word for word, into domestic law. This means that there is effectively no change in the laws protecting the UK's vulnerable species and habitats now that the Brexit transition period has ended.

All wild birds, their nests and their young are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Protection in the UK is afforded to badger under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Further protection is afforded to badger under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

Protection in the UK is afforded to all amphibians and reptiles under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

All bats their places of rest are protected by law under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) and as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. As 'European Protected Species', further protection is afforded to all UK bat species under the Regulation 39(1)

of the Conservation Regulations 1994 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

It is an offence under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Part II of Schedule 9 as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to plant or cause the growth of Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed.

2.3 Site Description

Ryebank Fields comprises 5.07ha mosaic of woodland, hedgerow, grassland and scrub habitats situated on the border of Chorlton and Stretford in South Manchester (Grid Reference SJ811946: See Appendix One and Two: Photos 1 to 3).

The site, a large proportion of which was formerly clay pits and subsequently pre regulations landfill, was remediated in the 1970s under the national open spaces initiative, Operation Eyesore. It was then converted into playing fields by the City Council before being entrusted to Manchester Polytechnic (now Manchester Metropolitan University) for use by students and the public. The fields were last maintained in the mid-1990s when the University relocated its sports facilities. Since being abandoned in 1996, the area has naturally transformed into a diverse habitat, now home to over 1,400 trees and a rich variety of birds, bats, mammals, and insects.

Habitats adjacent to Ryebank Fields include Longford Park, amenity grassland, semi-improved grassland, marshy grassland, hedgerow, scattered broadleaved woodland and gardens.

2.4 Proposed Housing Development

A development partnership between Step Places and Southway Housing Trust is proposing to build 120 new housing units (See Appendix Three).

According to the latest development plan some of the woodland will be retained. However, most of the remaining habitats will be lost.

3 Survey Methodology

All survey methodology follows best practice outlined in the *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017)* published by the Institute of Chartered Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and survey guidelines relevant to each species.

3.1 Data Search

A data search was conducted to identify species records from within the boundary of Ryebank Fields.

Data sources included the Greater Manchester Local Records Centre, iNaturalist, eBird and the National Biodiversity Network Atlas (NBNA).

A search for protected areas, such as Local Nature Reserves, SSSIs, SACs and SPAs, within 1.5km of Ryebank Fields was also conducted.

3.2 Phase One Habitat Survey

A Phase One Habitat Survey was carried out in 2024 to establish baseline data on habitats present within the boundary of Ryebank Fields.

Habitats were assessed and mapped in the field using standard JNCC habitat classification.

Where necessary, target notes (TNs) were also made in the field describing features of interest.

The survey also aimed to identify the presence of non-native invasive plant species, important habitat for protected species (such as breeding habitat for birds) and habitat of high wildlife conservation value.

A final colour digital habitat map was prepared using standard JNCC codes.

3.3 Protected Species Walkover Survey

Several walkover surveys were carried out in 2024/25 to identify protected species within the boundary of Ryebank Fields.

3.3.1 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment: Trees

Trees were surveyed from the ground with the aid of binoculars looking for features capable of supporting bat roosts, including rot holes, cracks, splits, woodpecker holes, folds, overhangs, wound callus rolls and flaking bark, and were classified as one of the following categories:

- **No Potential (Cat. 3):** No features able to support roosting bats.
- **Unknown Potential:** Tree cannot be fully assessed from ground due to size or view obscured by leaves or ivy.

- **High potential:** Tree has features with potential for roosting bats including rot holes, cracks, splits, woodpecker holes, folds, overhangs, wound callus rolls and flaking bark.

3.3.2 Bat Foraging and Commuting Habitat

The habitat within the footprint of Ryebank Fields was assessed for its potential use by bats for foraging and commuting. Based on this assessment, the habitat was categorized into the following levels:

- **High Potential**: High-quality habitat that is well-connected to the broader landscape, and likely to be used regularly by foraging bats. This includes features such as broad-leaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses, and grazed parkland. The site is in close proximity to known roosts and is connected to them. This continuous, high-quality habitat provides an ideal corridor for bat flight-paths, including river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees, and woodland edges.

- **Moderate Potential:** Habitat that is continuous and connected to the surrounding landscape, offering potential for bats to use it for flight-paths. This may include lines of trees, scrub, or linked back gardens. It also includes habitat suitable for foraging, such as trees, scrub, grassland, or water features.

- **Low Potential:** Habitat that may be used by small numbers of bats for flight-paths but is isolated and not well-connected to the surrounding landscape. Examples include gappy hedgerows or unvegetated streams. Suitable, yet isolated, habitat for foraging bats could include a lone tree (not in a parkland setting) or a small patch of scrub.

- **No Potential:** Areas without any habitat features likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year. This includes habitats that do not provide continuous shelter or protection for flight-lines or support insect populations that would attract foraging bats.

- **Negligible Potential:** While no obvious habitat features are present that would typically attract bats, a small degree of uncertainty remains in case of non-standard bat behaviour. These areas are unlikely to be used by bats but cannot be entirely ruled out.

3.3.3 Badger

Since 2020, the badgers at Ryebank Fields have been the subject of an ongoing study by FORF.

During the walk over surveys and the on-going study, all habitat within the footprint of Ryebank Fields was surveyed for evidence of badgers including:

- Sett entrances;
- Badger paths linking sett entrances and foraging areas;

- Tufts of black and white hair caught on barbed wire and/or outside sett entrances;
- Footprints;
- Claw marks scratched on tree trunks;
- Spoil heaps of earth outside sett entrance;
- Bedding dropped on paths or near sett entrances; and
- Latrines (droppings).

In addition, camera traps have been regularly set up overlooking the badger sett entrances to determine the status of the local badger clan.

3.3.4 Breeding Birds

All habitat within the footprint of the proposed development was assessed for suitability to support breeding birds.

3.3.5 Amphibians and Reptiles

Potential refugia (e.g. stones, logs and debris such as sheets of metal) and breeding and foraging habitat within the footprint of the proposed development were assessed.

3.3.9 Non-native Invasive Plant Species.

The site was surveyed for non-native invasive plant species such as Himalayan balsam, giant hog weed and Japanese knotweed.

4 Results

4.1 Data Search

4.1.1 Protected Species

A total of 281 species were reported from within the footprint of Ryebank Fields during the data search. This included 80 species of bird (See Appendix Four and Five), 10 terrestrial mammals (See Appendix Six), two amphibians, 90 flowering plants (See Appendix Seven), 59 insects (See Appendix Eight and Nine), 26 trees and shrubs (See Appendix Ten), one moss, one lichen and 12 fungi.

However, the number and abundance of protected species utilising the site is likely to be significantly under reported due to a lack of formal biological recording.

63 bird species were recorded within the boundary of Ryebank Fields (See Appendix Four) with a further 17 species recorded in fight above the site (See Appendix Five). Confirmed breeding birds included blackbird, blackcap, blue tit, carrion crow, chaffinch, dunnock, house sparrow, goldcrest, long tailed tit, robin, song thrush, sparrow hawk, stock dove, willow warbler and whitethroat.

Eleven species from the UK Birds of Conservation Concern Red List were reported within the boundary of Ryebank Fields during the data search, along with an additional 15 species from the Amber List (See Appendix Four).

Notable mammal species included badger, soprano pipistrelle bat, noctule bat and hedgehog.

Common toad and common frog were both recorded within the footprint of the site. Tadpoles were observed in March 2023 in a ‘bath tub pond’ located in the south western corner of the site. The bath tub was removed in 2023.

Bee orchid and northern marsh orchid are located at TN1 (See Appendix Two: Images 32 and 33). Although not currently listed as threatened species in the UK, both species of orchid face threats from habitat destruction, inadequate maintenance, and competition with other plants.

Nine species of bee were reported including the relatively uncommon dull-vented sharp tailed bee and the rufous-footed furrow bee (See Appendix Nine and Appendix Two: Image 4).

A rare native black poplar tree - *Populus Nigra Betulifolia* Clone 28 - also known as the 'Manchester' Poplar was reported at TN2 (See Appendix Twelve) on the boundary between Ryebank Fields and the Longford Park Conservation area (See Appendix Two: Image 13). The tree was confirmed as a native black poplar through a DNA test in April 2021.

In April 2021 a survey conducted by Greater Manchester Ecological Unit (GMEU) confirmed that the hedgerow at TN3 (See Appendix Twelve and

Appendix Two: Photos 29 to 31) meets ecological and regulatory thresholds under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 for designation as an *Important Hedgerow*.

No records of Japanese knotweed, giant hog weed or Himalayan balsam were reported.

4.1.2 Protected Areas

The nearest non-designated sites included the Bridgewater Canal, Broad Ees Dole, Chorlton Ees, Hardy Farm and Meadows at Sale Waterpark Sites of Biological Interest (SBIs) which were located approximately 1044m, 1271m, 1163m, 1569m and 1609m south west of Ryebank Fields respectively (See Appendix Eleven).

Broad Ees Dole and Chorlton Ees are also designated as Local Nature Reserves

4.2 Phase One Habitat Survey Summary

Ten habitats were identified during the phase one habitat survey (See Appendix Twelve for Phase One Habitat Map and Appendix Thirteen for Target Notes).

4.2.1 A1.1.1 Semi-natural broadleaved woodland

Approximately 1.4ha of semi-natural broadleaved woodland is located on the perimeter of Ryebank Fields. Since the site was abandoned over three decades ago the woodland has naturally succeeded onto the adjacent grassland.

Woodland at TN4, along the western edge of Ryebank Fields, has good structure with a canopy, understory, field layer and ground layer all present (See Appendix Two: Photos 5 to 12). Tree species include oak, black poplar and ash with the shrub layer comprising dogwood, holly, hawthorn, elder, hazel coppice and regenerating trees. Ground flora includes ramson, wood anemone, bramble, wood sorrel and grasses.

The native black poplar reported in the data search is located at TN2 (See Appendix Two: Photo 12).

An aspen grove at TN5 comprised several mature trees along with hundreds of new sucker shoots (See Appendix Two: Photos 12 to 14).

4.2.2 A2.1 - Dense/Continuous Scrub

Several areas, totalling 1.25ha, of dense and continuous scrub dominated by bramble have developed on the edges of the semi-improved neutral grassland (See Appendix Two: Photos 18 to 21).

The scrub provided excellent potential for a variety of nesting birds and cover for mammals including fox, badger and hedgehog.

4.2.3 A3.1 - Scattered Broadleaved Trees

Scattered trees, both planted and self-seeded, were recorded throughout the site. A number of oak trees, now approximately 25 years old, were grown from locally gathered acorns and planted in 1999 to commemorate the new millennium. Self-seeded saplings recorded around the planted oaks are likely to be a result of acorns having been buried by jays and other wildlife.

The scattered trees provide valuable foraging opportunities for bats and offer nesting cover for birds. (See Appendix Two: Photos 22 to 26).

4.2.4 A3.2 Scattered Conifer trees

Two scattered Leyland cypress, also known as Leylandii, were recorded during the habitat survey.

4.2.5 B2.2 - Semi-improved Neutral Grassland

The dominant habitat within the footprint of Ryebank Fields comprised 2.36ha of semi-improved neutral grassland (See Appendix Two: Photos 27 to 33). The lack of management since the site was abandoned in 1996, has resulted in the grassland being transformed from amenity grassland with little or no biodiversity to a diverse habitat supporting a wide range of fauna and flora.

The grassland to the north of the Nico ditch at TN6 was dominated by false oat grass with abundant cocksfoot. Other species included crested dogs' tail, Yorkshire fog, meadow fox tail, ribwort plantain, sorrel, creeping thistle, and red clover.

Grass species recorded in the grassland to the south of the Nico ditch at TN7 included Yorkshire fog, cocks' foot and red fescue. Other plant species recorded during the survey comprised creeping buttercup, ragwort, meadow butter cup, lesser stitchwort, yarrow, and lesser trefoil.

Bee and northern marsh orchid are both present at TN1 (See Appendix Two: Photos 32 and 33).

The long grass provides cover for invertebrates and small mammals such as field vole and weasel.

4.2.6 C3.1 - Tall Ruderal

Several patches of tall ruderal were present within the boundary of the proposed development. Predominant species was rosebay willowherb (See Appendix Two: Photo 34).

Rosebay willowherb is beneficial for a variety of insects including pollinators such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies.

The caterpillars of the elephant hawk moth feed on the leaves whilst ladybirds and lacewings are known to feed on the aphids found on the plant.

4.2.7 J2.1.2 Intact Hedge - Species Poor

A laurel hedge is located on the southern boundary of Ryebank Fields at TN8 (See Appendix Two: Photo 35 and 36).

4.2.8 J2.3.1 Hedge with Trees – Native Species Rich

As described in the results of the data search, in April 2021 a survey conducted by Greater Manchester Ecological Unit (GMEU) confirmed that the hedgerow at TN3 (See Appendix Two: Photos 37 to 39) meets ecological and regulatory thresholds under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 for designation as an *Important Hedgerow*.

4.2.9 J2.6 Dry Ditch

A dry ditch known as the Nico ditch was located at TN9.

Nico ditch is a historical earthwork that runs approximately 6 miles (10 km) across Greater Manchester from Ashton-under-Lyne to Stretford. It is thought to date back to the early medieval period, possibly the 8th or 9th century, and may have served as a boundary marker or defensive fortification.

The Ryebank Fields section of the ditch is obscured by bramble scrub (See Appendix Two: Photo 40).

4.2.9 J2.8 Earth Bank

An earth bank with young, scattered trees growing on it is located at TN10 (See Appendix Eleven; See Appendix Two: Photos 41 to 42).

4.2.11 J4 - Bare Ground

Hard standing was recorded at TN11 where a carpark and driveway were located when the site was used as a sports facility prior to 1996. The hard standing is gradually being invaded over by scrub and trees (See Appendix Two: Photo 43).

4.3 Protected Species

4.3.1 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment: Trees

The majority of trees within the boundary of Ryebank Fields were relatively young and did not have any features suitable for roosting bats and were assessed as *No Potential (Cat. 3).*

However, 14 mature trees were assessed as having high or unknown potential for roosting bats. A black poplar at TN14, Norway maple at TN22 and a London Plane at TN23 all had features with potential for roosting bats (See Appendix Two: Photos 44 to 46).

4.3.2 Bat Foraging and Commuting Habitat

The woodland, scrub, and semi-improved neutral grassland within the footprint of the proposed development all offered excellent foraging and commuting potential for bats.

The nearby houses and mature trees are also likely to provide roosting opportunities for a variety of bat species.

As a result, the habitat was assessed as having high potential for foraging and commuting bats.

4.3.3 Badger

[redacted]

4.3.4 Breeding Birds

The broadleaved woodland, hedges, scattered trees, and scrub within Ryebank Fields offered excellent foraging and nesting opportunities for a diverse range of bird species.

Although a data search recorded 63 bird species within the boundary of Ryebank Fields, with 16 species observed breeding, a coordinated breeding bird census would likely reveal that breeding birds have been significantly under-recorded.

The rot hole located high in the black poplar at TN15 has potential for nesting tawny owl (See Appendix Two: Photos 44).

4.3.5 Amphibians and Reptiles

Although frogs are regularly seen in Ryebank Field, no evidence of amphibian or reptile was recorded during the walkover surveys.

Terrestrial habitat favoured by both common toad and common frog includes wet/rough grasslands, woodlands, forest edges, hedgerows and ditches.

Slow worms require dense vegetation and tussock grass for cover to forage and sunny areas to bask. In Manchester they typically hibernate from October to March depending on the weather, with hibernation sites including large tussocks of grass, burrows and loose soil.

Common lizards can be found in a wide variety of habitats including heathland, moorland, woodland glades, rough grassland and embankments. In the Manchester area, they typically hibernate from October to March. As with slow worms, the exact timing depends on weather conditions. If autumn is mild, they might stay active longer, and if spring warms up early, they may emerge sooner. They usually hibernate in frost-free refuges such as burrows, rotting logs, or dense vegetation.

The habitat within the footprint of Ryebank Fields, therefore, was assessed as providing good foraging opportunities for reptiles and amphibians with several areas suitable for basking or hibernating reptiles.

4.3.6 Non-Native Invasive Plant Species

No areas of Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed or giant hog weed were recorded during the course of the walkover survey.

5 Ecological Assessment

Biodiversity loss in the UK is a significant environmental issue, driven by habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, invasive species, and intensive agriculture.

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries globally, with over 40% of species in decline and 15% at risk of extinction. For instance, over the last 20 years, hedgehog populations in the UK have declined by around 30% in urban areas due to urbanisation, habitat loss, road deaths, and food shortages caused by pesticides.

Efforts to combat biodiversity loss include conservation initiatives, rewilding projects, and government policies like the Environmental Land Management Scheme and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). However, urgent action is needed to restore ecosystems and prevent further declines.

With its mosaic of habitats including woodland, aspen grove, grassland, and scrub habitats that have naturally regenerated since the area was abandoned in 1996, Ryebank Fields contributes significantly to the biodiversity of the area by supporting a rich diversity of flora and fauna, including protected species such as bats, hedgehogs, badgers, and breeding birds. The site is also home to a rare native black poplar tree and an ecologically significant hedgerow.

Ryebank Fields also qualifies for, and supports several Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) nature-based and green space initiatives including:

- The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP)
- Greater Manchester Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Local Green Space (LGS)

5.1 The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP)

The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP) highlights key species and habitats that are locally significant and require focused conservation efforts to ensure their preservation and improvement. These species and habitats were chosen based on their status in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and their relevance to the Greater Manchester area.

Priority species supported by Ryebank Fields include:

- Bats
- Native Black Poplar
- Farmland Birds
- Hedgehog

- Willow Tit

Priority habitats supported by Ryebank Fields include:

- Grasslands
- Hedgerows
- Native woodlands
- Urban managed greenspace

5.2 GMCA Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has developed a draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) aimed at fostering nature's recovery across the city-region. This strategy outlines a vision to create a resilient network for nature, connecting and enhancing wild spaces to benefit both people and wildlife. It serves as a roadmap detailing collaborative efforts and priority areas to maximize impact.

The draft LNRS identifies 16 priority species and groups of species that are particularly at risk locally and in need of bespoke conservation action.

Priority species supported by Ryebank Fields include:

- Willow Tit
- Swift
- Hedgehog
- Black Poplar
- Common Toad

The draft LNRS also identifies six broad habitat types that are priorities for the area.

Habitat types supported by Ryebank Fields include:

- Woodland, trees, scrub, and hedgerows
- Grassland, *[farmland, and lowland heath]*
- Urban green spaces *[and buildings]*

Although neighbouring Longford Park is included in the draft LNRN, Ryebank Fields has been omitted. However, a number of agencies, including the two Local Wildlife Trusts, have advocated for Ryebank Fields to be additionally included via the recent consultation round which closed on January 31 2025.

5.3 Local Green Space (LGS)

Local Green Space (LGS) confers protection similar to Green Belt status and is intended to protect green spaces of particular importance to a local community. To qualify for LGS designation, a green space must meet specific criteria outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Criteria to qualify as an LGS includes:

- Proximity: The green space should be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
- Special Significance: It must be demonstrably special to the local community, holding particular local significance due to factors such as beauty, historic importance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of wildlife.
- Local Character: The area should be local in character and not constitute an extensive tract of land.

It's important to note that LGS designation can only occur during the preparation or review of a local or neighbourhood plan. Therefore, engaging with local planning authorities during these times is crucial to advocate for the protection of valued green spaces.

FORF responded to the Local Plan consultation in 2020 proposing Ryebank Fields as a LGS. Although the process has been postponed several times, GMCA replied in summer 2024 confirming: "The material you previously sent in 2020 effectively fulfils the requirements set out in national guidance to enable its consideration within the Local Plan. This will be considered alongside the wider evidence base and any relevant national legislation/guidance."

5.4 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a legal requirement in England under the Environment Act 2021. It requires developers to assess the biodiversity value of a site before and after development, aiming for at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity. This is achieved through habitat creation, restoration, or off-site compensation if necessary.

A baseline BNG score is the initial assessment of a site's biodiversity value before any development or enhancements take place. It is typically measured using biodiversity units, which are calculated based on factors like habitat type, size, distinctiveness, condition, and strategic significance.

Although Ryebank Fields would be allocated a relatively high baseline BNG score if calculated, determining this score is unnecessary at this time since the Ryebank Fields Community Group’s proposal does not involve developing the site.

6 Conclusion

Ryebank Fields qualifies for protection within the context of Greater Manchester due to its significant environmental, social, and ecological value.

The site, an important green space in an increasingly urbanised city, provides a vital habitat for local wildlife, including many protected species, and acts as a natural carbon sink, aiding in climate change mitigation and flood prevention.

7 Recommendations

7.1 Aims

Ryebank Fields is an ecologically significant area that has benefited from the process of natural succession over the past 30 years. In the long term, its biodiversity has the potential to be enhanced by a minimal, 'light touch' conservation and management approach.

The following recommendations aim to protect and enhance the biodiversity and ecological integrity of the site. However, it is recognised that decisions to be taken around implementing any of the proposed recommendations would need to be the product of discussion amongst the community and other key stakeholders and subject to availability of resources, future ownership, and further specialist advice.

7.2 Management Objectives

7.2.1 Biodiversity Conservation

Maintain and enhance existing habitats to support wildlife populations, particularly priority species identified in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.

7.2.2 Community Engagement

Continue to support and grow the existing community connection through ecological, cultural, educational and recreational activities and by introducing improved accessibility measures and outreach events.

7.2.3 Historical Preservation

Protect features of historical significance, such as the Nico ditch and the treeline boundary within the historic Longford Conservation Area, in a way that also respects their value as important wildlife corridors.

7.2.4 Sustainable Land Management

Implement best practices for habitat restoration and long-term maintenance without the use of harmful chemicals.

7.2.5 Climate Resilience

Enhance carbon sequestration through woodland conservation and habitat management initiatives.

7.3 Habitat Management

7.3.1 Woodland Conservation

- Maintain semi-natural broadleaved woodland.
- Protect mature trees, especially those with potential bat roosts.
- Plant additional native tree species to enhance canopy diversity.
- Consider management options for the aspen grove including recommendations to mitigate the impact of succession onto the semi-improved neutral grassland.

7.3.2 Grassland and Meadow Management

- Implement of a programme of rotational cutting to encourage wildflower growth and maintain habitat for pollinators.
- Leave sections of grassland uncut to support invertebrates and small mammals.
- Introduce additional wildflower species to improve plant diversity.

7.3.3 Hedgerow and Scrub Management

- Protect and extend species-rich hedgerows.
- Conduct periodic coppicing to maintain structural diversity.
- Enhance habitat corridors by linking hedgerows with additional planting.

7.3.4 Badger, Hedgehog and Bat Conservation

- Protect and buffer known badger setts from disturbance.
- Protect high-value bat foraging and commuting routes.
- Install bat boxes in suitable locations to support roosting.
- Protect existing hedgehog habitat for foraging and wildlife corridors allowing hedgehogs to move safely in search of food, mates, and shelter.
- Maintain long grass, logs piles, and leaf piles for shelter and food sources.

7.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

7.4.1 Biodiversity Monitoring

- Conduct annual surveys of key species and habitats.
- Engage local universities and citizen scientists in monitoring efforts.
- Maintain a central database of ecological data.

7.4.2 Habitat Management Review

- Assess the success of habitat restoration efforts annually.
- Adapt management techniques based on ecological findings.
- Report progress to stakeholders and the local community.

7.4.3 Community Feedback

- Host public meetings to gather input on site management.
- Conduct periodic visitor surveys to assess community engagement.
- Adjust educational and recreational programs based on feedback.

7.5 Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

It is recommended that the inclusion of Ryebank Fields in the LNRS is reconsidered by GMCA allowing its existing and potential benefits for nature to be highlighted whilst contributing to and enhancing the region's habitat and wildlife connectivity.

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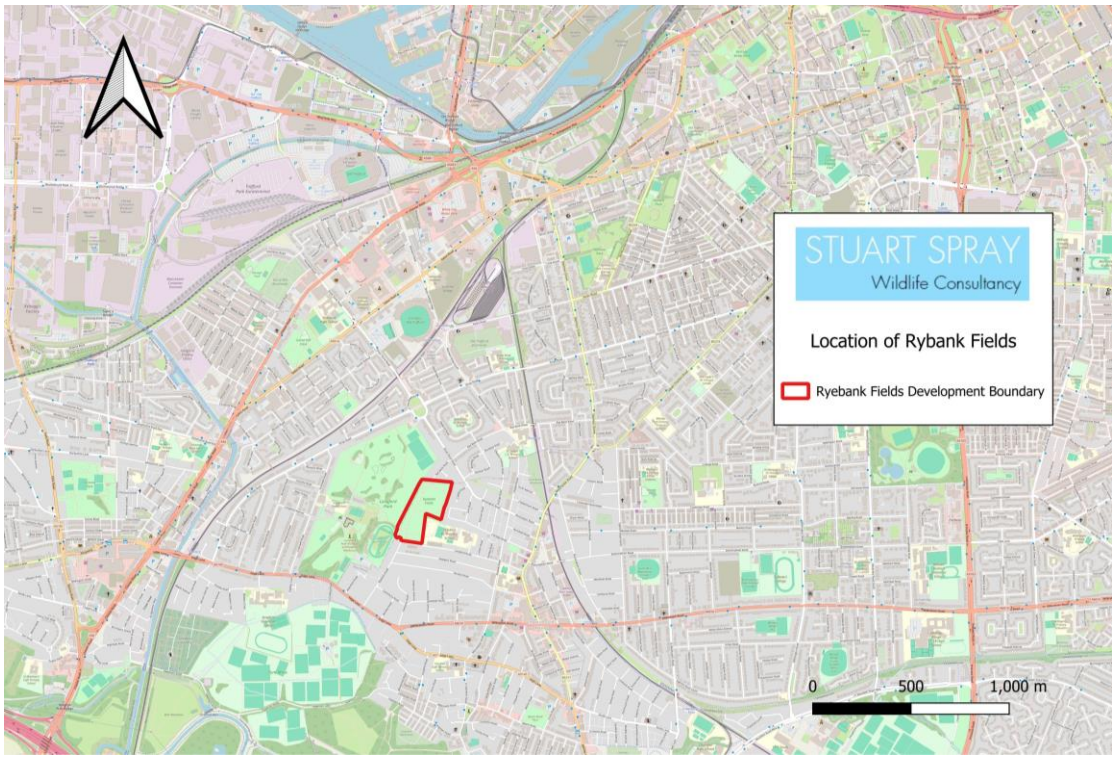
9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix One: Map Showing the Location of Ryebank Fields



9.2 Appendix Two: Site Photographs

Photo 1: Image showing an aerial view of Ryebank Fields from the south.

Photo 2: Image showing an aerial view of Ryebank Fields from the north.

Photo 3: Image showing an aerial view of Ryebank Fields and its close proximity to the City of Manchester.

Photo 4: Images showing a selection of pollinators recorded at Ryebank Fields (Images: Jay Clarke).

Photo 5: Image showing broadleaved woodland at TN4.

Photo 6: Image showing broadleaved woodland at TN4.

Photo 7: Image showing broadleaved woodland at TN4.

Photo 8: Image showing broadleaved woodland at TN4.

Photo 9: Image showing broadleaved woodland at TN4.

Photo 10: Image showing broadleaved woodland at TN4.

Photo 11: Image showing 140-year-old Hybrid Poplar trees *P. nigra x P. deltoides* emerging from important hedgerow and broadleaved woodland at TN4 (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 12: Image broadleaved woodland at TN4 (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 13: Image of the native black poplar at TN2 (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 14: Image showing aspen grove at TN5.

Photo 15: Image showing aspen grove at TN5.

Photo 16: Image showing aspen grove at TN5.

Photo 17: Image showing aspen grove at TN5.

Photo 18: Image highlighting the location of some of the areas of scrub.

Photo 19: Image showing example of scrub habitat.

Photo 20: Image showing example of scrub habitat.

Photo 21: Image showing example of scrub habitat.

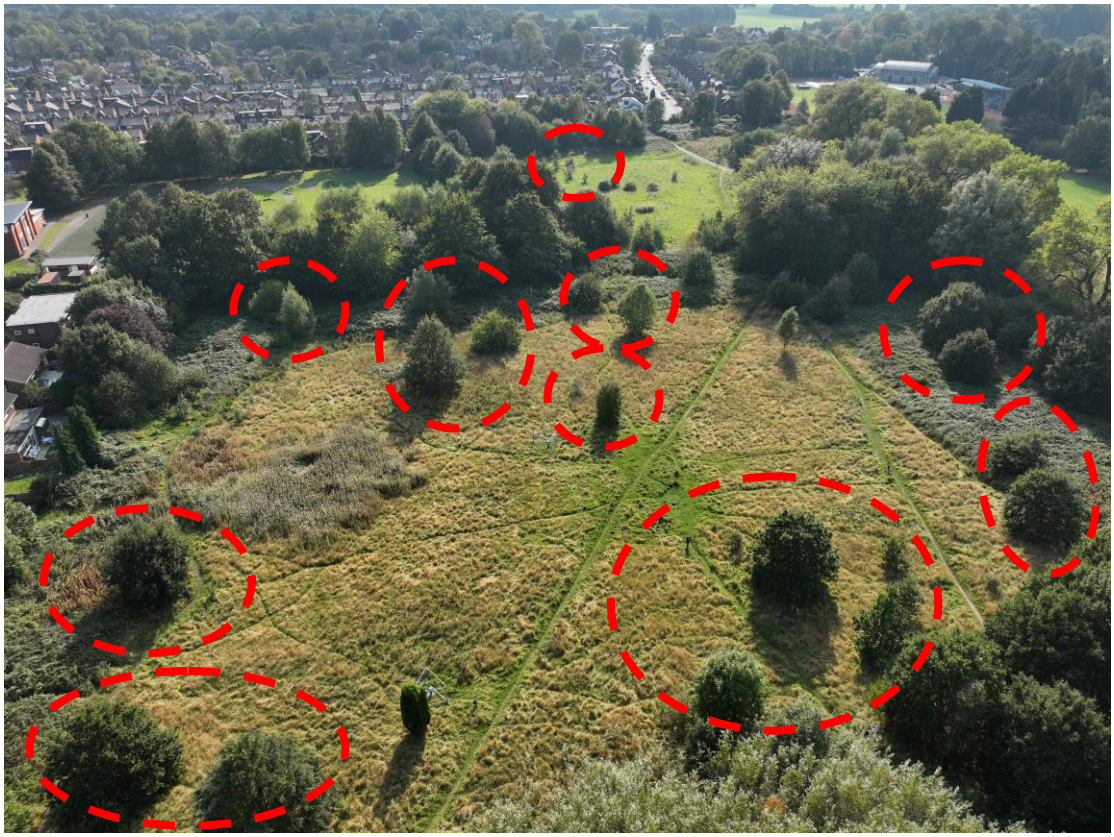


Photo 22: Image highlighting the location of the scattered trees.

Photo 23: Image showing scattered oak tree .

Photo 24: Image showing scattered oak trees (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 25: Image showing scattered trees (Image: Jay Clarke)

Photo 26: Image showing scattered trees (Image: Jay Clarke)

Photo 27: Image showing semi-improved neutral grassland at TN6.

Photo 27: Image showing semi-improved neutral grassland meadow buttercups at TN7.

Photo 28: Image showing semi-improved neutral grassland meadow buttercups at TN7 (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 29: Image showing semi-improved neutral grassland with red clover at TN7 (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 30: Image showing semi-improved neutral grassland with ragwort and creeping thistle at TN7 (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 31: Image showing semi-improved neutral grassland with creeping thistle at TN7 (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 32: Image showing northern marsh orchid at TN1 (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 33: Image showing bee orchid at TN1.

Photo 34: Image showing example of tall ruderal with rose bay willowherb (Image: Jay Clarke).

Photo 35: Image showing species poor intact laurel hedge at TN8.

Photo 36: Image showing species poor intact laurel hedge at TN8.

Photo 37: Image showing species rich hedge with trees at TN3

Photo 38: Image showing holly in native species rich hedge with trees at TN3

Photo 39: Image showing hazel coppice in native species rich hedge with trees at TN3

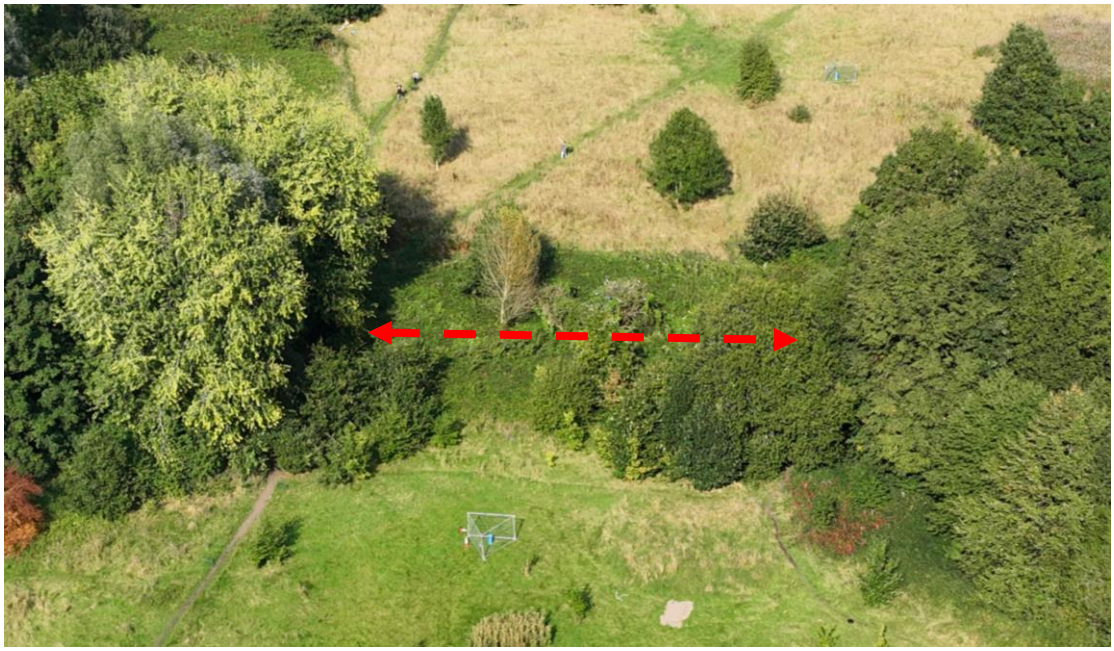


Photo 40: Image showing the location of the dry ditch known as the Nico ditch at TN9.

Photo 41: Image showing earth bank at TN10.

Photo 42: Image showing earth bank at TN10.

Photo 43: Image showing the hard standing at TN11 with scrub and self-seeded silver birch.

Photo 44: Image showing tree with high potential for roosting bats at TN15

Photo 45: Image showing tree with high potential for roosting bats at TN23

Photo 46: Image showing tree with high potential for roosting bats TN24

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9.3 Appendix Three: Plans of the Proposed New Housing Development.

9.4 Appendix Four: Birds reported in the data search highlighting species that on Red and Amber list of Birds of Conservation Concern.

Table One: Birds reported in the data search highlighting species that on Red and Amber list of Birds of Conservation Concern.

Blackbird (Breeding)	Dunnock (Breeding)	Long-tailed Tit (Breeding)	Spotted flycatcher
Blackcap (Breeding)	Great black backed gull	Mallard	Sparrowhawk (Breeding)
Black-headed gull	Goldfinch	Magpie	Starling
Blue tit (Breeding)	Goldcrest (breeding)	Meadow pipit	Swallow
Bullfinch	Great spotted woodpecker	Mistle thrush	
Buzzard	Great tit	Nuthatch	Tree pipit
Carrion crow (Breeding)	Greenfinch	Peregrine	Stock dove (Breeding)
Chaffinch (Breeding)	Grey heron	Pied wagtail	Tree creeper
Coal tit	Herring gull	Reed bunting	Tawny owl
Collared dove	Hobby	Redwing	Willow warbler (Breeding)
Common chiffchaff	House martin	Redpoll	Whitethroat (Breeding)
Common gull	House sparrow (Breeding)	Ring-necked parakeet	Great spotted woodpecker
Dunnock (Breeding)	Jackdaw	Robin (Breeding)	Woodcock
Feral pigeon	Jay	Rook	Woodpigeon
Garden warbler	Lesser black-backed gull	Siskin	Wren
Grasshopper warbler	Kestrel	Song thrush (Breeding)	

9.5 Appendix Five : Birds reported in flight above Ryebank Fields in the data search.

Table Two: Birds reported in flight above Ryebank Fields in the data search.			
Brambling	Heron	Merganser	Skylark
Canada goose	Lapwing	Moorhen	Swift
Cormorant	Linnet	Mute swan	
Curlew	Little egret	Pink footed goose	
Fieldfare	Little grebe	Raven	

9.6 Appendix Six: Table summarising the preferred habitats and conservation status for mammals reported in the data search

Table Three: Table summarising the preferred habitats and conservation status for mammals reported in the data search. Conservation Status is based on the IUCN Red List.		
Species	Conservation Status	Habitat Preferences
Pipistrelle Bat	Least Concern	Urban areas, woodlands, forests, agricultural land, near water
Fox	Least Concern	Woodlands, grasslands, urban areas, agricultural land
Badger	Least Concern	Woodlands, hedgerows, grasslands, farmlands, coastal areas
Noctule Bat	Least Concern	Woodlands, forests, parks, near rivers, rural areas
Soprano Pipistrelle	Least Concern	Woodland, urban areas, parks, farmland, near water bodies
Hedgehog	Vulnerable (declining)	Woodland edges, hedgerows, gardens, grasslands, parks
Weasel	Least Concern	Woodlands, grasslands, agricultural land, hedgerows, rural areas

9.7 Appendix Seven: Table summarizing the preferred habitats and conservation status of the flowering plants reported in the data search.

Table Four: Table summarising the conservation status of flowering plants reported in the data search. Conservation Status is based on the IUCN Red List.		
Species	**Conservation Status**	**Notes**
Bee Orchid	Common (Least Concern) Declining/Under Threat in UK	Habitat loss affecting population
Bindweed	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread and resilient
Bluebell (spn/hyb)	Protected (Native) / Invasive (Spanish Hybrid)	Native Bluebell protected; Spanish hybrid invasive
Bramble	Common (Least Concern)	Found in a variety of habitats
Broad-leaved Dock	Common (Least Concern)	Often considered a weed
Bull Thistle	Common (Least Concern)	Native thistle species
Broad-leaved Willowherb	Common (Least Concern)	No conservation concerns
Butterfly-bush	Invasive Species	Spreads rapidly, outcompeting native plants
Cat's-ear	Common (Least Concern)	Similar to dandelion
Cleavers	Common (Least Concern)	Prolific and widespread

Species	Conservation Status	Notes
Cock's-foot	Common (Least Concern)	Common grass species
Common Cleavers	Common (Least Concern)	Sticky weed, widespread
Common Dog-violet	Common (Least Concern)	Important for butterflies
Common Mugwort	Common (Least Concern)	No conservation concerns
Common Mouse-ear	Common (Least Concern)	Small flowering plant
Common Nettle	Common (Least Concern)	Beneficial for butterflies
Common Sallow	Common (Least Concern)	A willow species, important for pollinators
Common Sorrel	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread in grasslands
Common Vetch	Common (Least Concern)	A nitrogen-fixing legume
Cornus (Dogwood)	Common (Least Concern)	Shrub/tree species, various types
Cotoneaster	Invasive Species	Non-native, spreads aggressively
Cow Parsley	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread in hedgerows
Creeping Buttercup	Common (Least Concern)	Can become invasive in gardens
Creeping Thistle	Common (Least Concern)	Native but can be invasive
Crested Dog's-tail	Common (Least Concern)	A common grass species
Cuckoo Flower	Common (Least Concern)	Important for Orange-tip butterflies
Daisy	Common (Least Concern)	Found in grasslands and lawns
Dog Rose	Common (Least Concern)	Native hedgerow species
Dandelion Agg.	Common (Least Concern)	Important for pollinators
Druce's Crane's-bill	Common (Least Concern)	Less common than other geraniums
False Oat Grass	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread grass species
Field Forget-me-not	Common (Least Concern)	No conservation concerns
Field Mouse-ear	Common (Least Concern)	Small flowering plant
German Chamomile	Common (Least Concern)	Often used in herbal medicine
Garlic Mustard	Common (Least Concern)	Host plant for Orange-tip butterflies
Goat Willow	Common (Least Concern)	Supports early pollinators
Goat's-beard	Common (Least Concern)	Also called "Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon"
Great Willowherb	Common (Least Concern)	Thrives in damp areas
Greater Stinging Nettle	Common (Least Concern)	Beneficial for butterflies
Greater Plantain	Common (Least Concern)	Found in compacted soils
Ground-elder	Invasive Species	Spreads aggressively
Hairy Vetch	Common (Least Concern)	Legume species
Herb Robert	Common (Least Concern)	Wild geranium species
Hairy Sedge	Common (Least Concern)	Found in wetlands
Hard Rush	Common (Least Concern)	Common in damp areas
Ivy-leaved Speedwell	Common (Least Concern)	Small creeping plant
Ivy	Common (Least Concern)	Important for winter pollinators
Jointed Rush	Common (Least Concern)	Found in wet habitats
Leek	Cultivated/Non-Native	Occasionally found wild
Lenten Rose	Cultivated/Non-Native	A garden plant, not a true rose
Lesser Celandine	Common (Least Concern)	One of the first spring flowers
Lesser Trefoil	Common (Least Concern)	Small yellow-flowered clover
Lords and Ladies	Common (Least Concern)	Toxic, but widespread woodland plant
Marsh Foxtail	Common (Least Concern)	Found in wetlands

Species	Conservation Status	Notes
Meadow Salsify	Common (Least Concern)	Resembles Goat's-beard
Meadow Buttercup	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread in grasslands
Meadow Fescue	Common (Least Concern)	A grass species
Mugwort	Common (Least Concern)	Used in traditional medicine
Meadow Foxtail	Common (Least Concern)	A typical grassland species
Northern Marsh Orchis	Common (Least Concern) Declining/Under Threat in UK	Threatened by habitat loss due to human activities
Orange Hawkweed	Invasive Species	Non-native, spreads in meadows
Oxford Ragwort	Invasive Species	Originally from Sicily, spreads rapidly
Pale Persicaria	Common (Least Concern)	Found in damp areas
Pampas Grass	Invasive Species	Introduced ornamental grass
Perennial Rye-grass	Common (Least Concern)	Used in agriculture
Ragwort	Common (Least Concern)	Important for Cinnabar Moth caterpillars
Ramsons (Wild Garlic)	Common (Least Concern)	Found in woodlands
Raspberry	Common (Least Concern)	Cultivated and wild forms
Red Bartsia	Common (Least Concern)	Semi-parasitic plant
Red Clover	Common (Least Concern)	Beneficial for pollinators
Red Fescue	Common (Least Concern)	A grass species
Redshank	Common (Least Concern)	Found in damp soils
Reed Canary-grass	Common (Least Concern)	Found in wetland areas
Ribwort Plantain	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread, used in herbal medicine
Rock Crane's-bill	Common (Least Concern)	A type of geranium
Rose	Common (Least Concern)	Various species, including wild and cultivated types
Rosebay Willowherb	Common (Least Concern)	Pioneer species in disturbed areas
Rough Meadow-grass	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread grass species
Russian Spiraea	Invasive/Non-Native	Introduced ornamental plant that can spread
Smooth Vetch	Common (Least Concern)	Legume species, beneficial for pollinators
Smooth Meadow-grass	Common (Least Concern)	A widespread grass species
Snowdrop	Common (Least Concern) / Some Native Species Protected	Many cultivated varieties, some native populations under conservation interest
Spear Thistle	Common (Least Concern)	Native thistle species, supports insects
Spanish Bluebell	Invasive Species	Hybridizes with native Bluebell, threatening its genetic integrity
Syringa (Lilac)	Cultivated/Non-Native	Common ornamental shrub
Tufted Vetch	Common (Least Concern)	Important for pollinators
White Clover	Common (Least Concern)	Valuable for nitrogen-fixing and pollinators
Wood Avens	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread woodland plant
Yorkshire-fog	Common (Least Concern)	A common grass species in meadows and pastures
Yellow Archangel	Common (Least Concern) / Invasive (Garden Variety)	Native species is fine, but variegated garden forms can become invasive
Rough Meadow-grass	Common (Least Concern)	Widespread grass species
Russian Spiraea	Invasive/Non-Native	Introduced ornamental plant that can spread

9.8 Appendix Eight: Table summarizing the preferred habitats and conservation status of the invertebrates reported in the data search.

Table Five: Table summarizing the preferred habitats and conservation status of the invertebrates reported in the data search.

Species	Preferred Habitat	Conservation Status
Speckled Wood	Woodlands, gardens, and hedgerows; prefers dappled sunlight	Common and widespread
Comma	Woodland clearings, gardens, and hedgerows; often found near nettles	Common and widespread
Large White	Gardens, fields, and meadows; commonly associated with cultivated brassicas	Common and widespread
Meadow Brown	Grasslands, meadows, and roadside verges; favours tall grasses	Common and widespread
Peacock	Gardens, parks, and woodland edges; often found near nettles	Common and widespread
Small Skipper	Grasslands, meadows, and roadside verges; prefers areas with abundant grasses	Common and widespread
Small Tortoiseshell	Gardens, meadows, and urban areas; commonly associated with nettles	Common and widespread
Small White	Gardens, fields, and meadows; often found near brassicas	Common and widespread
Pale Straw Pearl	Information on preferred habitat is limited	Data not available
Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet	Rough grasslands, calcareous grasslands, undercliffs, roadside verges, embankments, woodland clearings	Common and widespread
Cinnabar	Grasslands, meadows, and disturbed areas; often found near ragwort	Common and widespread
Apple Leaf Miner	Orchards and areas with apple trees; larvae mine apple leaves	Data not available
Black-headed Dwarf	Information on preferred habitat is limited	Data not available
Essex Skipper	Grasslands, meadows, and roadside verges; prefers areas with abundant grasses	Common and widespread
Gatekeeper	Hedgerows, woodland edges, and grasslands; often found near bramble	Common and widespread
Lesser Meadow Katydid	Wet meadows, marshes, and grasslands; prefers areas with tall grasses	Data not available
Roesel's Bush Cricket	Grasslands, meadows, and roadside verges; favours tall, ungrazed grasses	Data not available
Hairy Shieldbug	Various habitats including gardens, woodlands, and grasslands; often found on a variety of plants	Data not available
Cow Parsley Leaf Beetle	Hedgerows, woodland edges, and areas where cow parsley (Anthriscus sylvestris) is abundant	Data not available
Druce's Crane's-bill Beetle	Information on preferred habitat is limited	Data not available
Nettle Weevil	Gardens, woodlands, and areas with abundant nettles	Data not available
Common Red Soldier Beetle	Meadows, grasslands, and gardens; often found on flowers such as hogweed and cow parsley	Data not available
Meadow Spittlebug	Meadows, grasslands, and gardens; nymphs create characteristic frothy spittle masses on plants	Data not available
Two-spotted Lady Beetle	Various habitats including gardens, woodlands, and grasslands; often found on a variety of plants	Data not available
Sloe Bug	Hedgerows, woodlands, and areas with blackthorn (Prunus spinosa)	Data not available
Seven-spotted Lady Beetle	Various habitats including gardens, woodlands, and grasslands; often found on a variety of plants	Data not available

Species	Preferred Habitat	Conservation Status
Asian Lady Beetle	Various habitats including gardens, woodlands, and grasslands; often found on a variety of plants	Data not available
Patchwork Leafcutter Bee	Gardens, meadows, and areas with abundant flowering plants; nests in cavities	Data not available
Timothy Grassbug	Grasslands and meadows; associated with timothy grass (Phleum pratense)	Data not available
Green Shieldbug	Various habitats including gardens, woodlands, and grasslands; often found on a variety of plants	Data not available
Notch-horned Cleg	Long grasslands and damp woodlands.	Common and widespread.
Oak marble gall wasp	Associated with oak trees, particularly the native species *Quercus robur* and *Q. petraea*.	Introduced species.
Nursery Web Spider	Grasslands, meadows, and woodland edges; constructs nursery webs for its young	Data not available
Xysticus cristatus	Grasslands, meadows, and heathlands; often found on low vegetation or the ground	Data not available

9.9 Appendix Nine: Table summarising the preferred habitats and conservation status bees reported in the data search

Table Six: Table summarising the preferred habitats and conservation status of bees reported in the data search

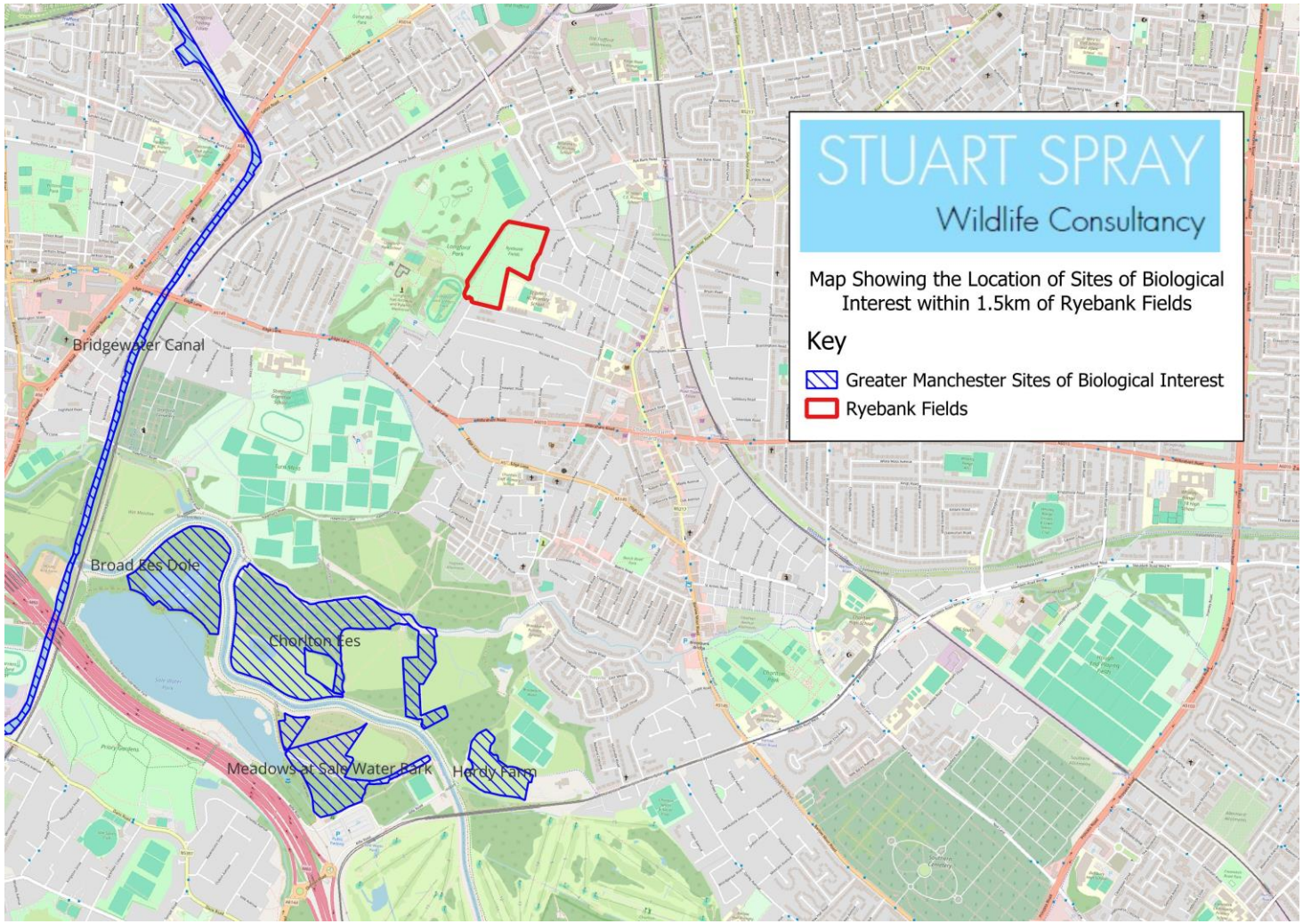
Species	Preferred habitat	Conservation Status
Western honey bee	Woodland, grassland and gardens.	Domestic
Common carder bumble bee	Feeds on a variety of wild flowers, including nettles knapweed, vetches, red and white clover, brambles and fruit trees.	Common and widespread
Tawney mining bee	Parks and gardens.	Common and widespread
Fabricius' nomad bee	Gardens, parks, allotments, churchyards, meadows, coasts, and roadside verges.	Widespread in the south of England and Wales, but more scattered and rarer in the north.
Rufous-footed furrow bee	Visits a variety of flowers, including hawkweeds, lesser celandine, wood anemone, bramble, and buttercups.	Uncommon.
Buff-tailed bumble bee	Gardens, farmland, grasslands, and urban areas.	Common and widespread
Early bumble bee	Gardens, woodlands, hedgerows, and meadows.	Common and widespread
Large red tailed bumble bee	Open landscapes like gardens, grasslands, and meadows.	Common and widespread
Dull-vented sharp-tail bee	woodland edges and scrub.	Widespread but local.

9.10 Appendix Ten: Table summarizing the preferred habitats and conservation status of the invertebrates reported in the data search.

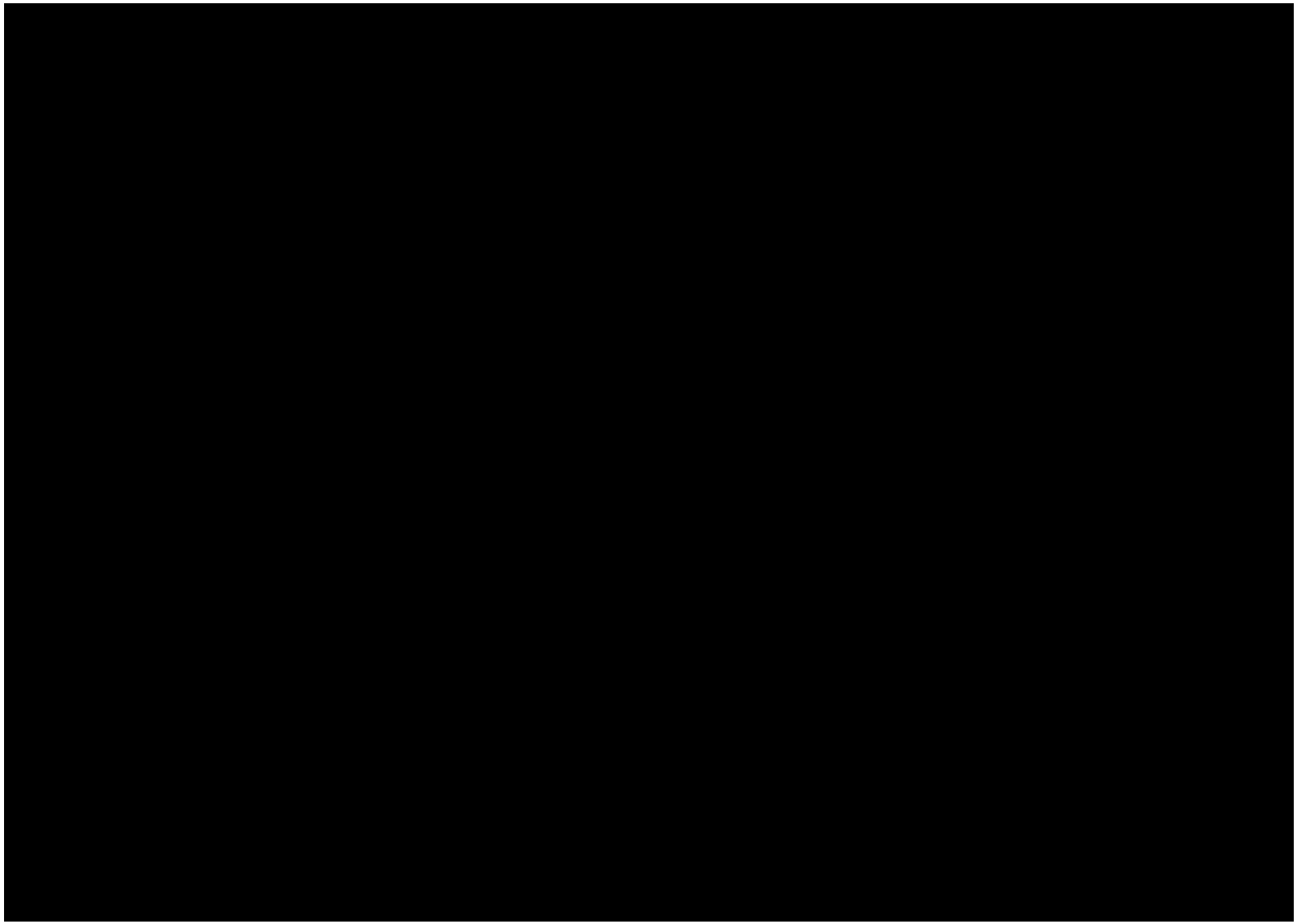
Table Seven: Table summarizing the conservation status of the trees and shrubs reported in the data search. Conservation Status is based on the IUCN Red List.

Common Name	Conservation Status	Notes
Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	Near Threatened (UK)	Severely affected by ash dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus).
Aspen (Populus tremula)	Least Concern	Important for biodiversity; supports many insect species.
Beech (Fagus sylvatica)	Least Concern	Iconic broadleaf tree; sensitive to climate change.
Birch (Betula spp.)	Least Concern	Includes silver birch & downy birch; pioneer species.
Black Poplar (Populus nigra)	Endangered (UK)	One of Britain's rarest native trees, suffering habitat loss.
Cherry (Prunus avium)	Least Concern	Attractive spring blossom; supports pollinators.
Elder (Sambucus nigra)	Least Concern	Produces edible berries; used in herbal medicine.
Elm (Ulmus spp.)	Critically Endangered (UK)	Dutch elm disease devastated populations.
Field Maple (Acer campestre)	Least Concern	UK's only native maple; thrives in hedgerows.
Goat Willow (Salix caprea)	Least Concern	Supports early pollinators with spring catkins.
Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	Least Concern	Important for wildlife; known as 'May tree'.
Hazel (Corylus avellana)	Least Concern	Produces edible nuts; traditional coppicing species.
Hornbeam (Carpinus betulus)	Least Concern	Dense hardwood; often used for hedging.
Holly (Ilex aquifolium)	Least Concern	Evergreen with red berries; important winter food for birds.
Hybrid Black Poplar (Populus x canadensis)	N/A	Fast-growing, commonly planted, but lacks biodiversity value.
Hybrid Poplar (Populus spp.)	N/A	Bred for timber & biofuel; various hybrids exist.
Lawson's Cypress (Chamaecyparis lawsoniana)	N/A	Introduced species; widely used in ornamental planting.
Lime (Tilia spp.)	Least Concern	Native small-leaved & large-leaved limes are pollinator-friendly.
London Plane (Platanus x hispanica)	Least Concern	Hybrid species; highly pollution-tolerant, common in cities.
Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)	Least Concern	Non-native; aggressive spreader in some areas.
Pedunculate Oak (Quercus robur)	Least Concern	Iconic British tree; supports over 2,300 species.
Silver Birch (Betula pendula)	Least Concern	Pioneer species; thrives in poor soils.
Swedish Whitebeam (Sorbus intermedia)	Least Concern	Non-native; planted in urban settings.
Silver Maple (Acer saccharinum)	Least Concern	North American species; fast-growing but weak-wooded.
Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)	Least Concern	Non-native; invasive tendencies but good for pollinators.
White Willow (Salix alba)	Least Concern	Used for cricket bats; fast-growing near water.

9.11 Appendix Eleven: Map showing the location of non-designated protected areas within 1.5 km of Ryebank Fields



9.12 Appendix Twelve: Phase One Habitat Survey Map



9.13 Appendix Thirteen: Phase One Habitat Survey - Target Notes

Table Seven: Details of target notes (TNs)

[redacted]	
2	Native black poplar - Potential bat roost in tree
3	Important species rich hedge
4	Semi-natural broadleaved woodland
5	Aspen grove
6	Semi-improved neutral grassland
7	Semi-improved neutral grassland
8	Species poor intact laurel hedge
9	Dry ditch known as Nico ditch
10	Earth bank
11	Bare ground – hard standing where car ark used to be

[redacted]

9.14 Appendix Fourteen: Table showing results of visual inspection of trees at from the ground looking for potential roosts

Table Eight: Table showing results of visual inspection of trees at from the ground looking for potential roosts

TN	Species	Description	Potential for roosting bats	Recommendations
2	Black Poplar	Mature tree to tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
12	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
13	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
14	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
15	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground. Cavity high in canopy.	High	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
16	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
17	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
18	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
19	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
20	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
21	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
23	Black Poplar	Mature tree too tall to inspect fully inspect from the ground.	Unknown	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
23	Norway maple	Cavities on trunk at 7m	High	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness
24	London plane	Cavity on branch at 12m	High	Inspect from ladders/rope and harness

[redacted]