

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND ROOST ASSESSMENT

MAY 2025

Albert Bridge House
Dolefield,
Spinningfields,
Manchester,
M3 5AH

**U R B A N
G R E E N**



QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Project No.:		UG2852			
Project:		Albert Bridge House			
Location:		Dolefield, Spinningfields, Manchester, M3 5AH			
Title:		Preliminary Ecological Appraisal			
Document Type:		PEA	Issue No.:	01	
Date:					
Prepared By:	Barnaby Indio Gardner	Signature:		Qualifications:	BSc, MEnvSci, PGCert, Ecologist
					Reviewed By:
Revision Status					
Rev	Date	Comment	Prepared	Checked	
02	22/05/2025	Amends to address client comments.	BIG	SP	

CONTENTS

1	Executive Summary	1
2	Introduction	5
2.1	Scope	5
2.2	Site Context.....	5
2.3	Purpose of Report	5
3	Previous Surveys.....	6
3.1	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Urban Green, 2022)	6
3.2	Bat Survey Report (Urban Green, 2023).....	6
4	Methods.....	6
4.2	Desk Study	6
4.3	Field Survey.....	8
4.4	Bat Assessment.....	9
4.5	Constraints to the Survey	11
4.6	Lifespan of Report	12
4.7	Definitions.....	12
5	Baseline Ecological Conditions.....	13
5.1	Site Context.....	13
5.2	Designated Sites	13
5.3	Flora and Fauna	13
5.4	Field Survey.....	15
5.5	Site Suitability for Protected and Notable Species.....	16
5.6	Invasive Species	17
6	Ecological Assessment and Recommendations	18
6.1	Overview	18
6.2	Designated Sites	18
6.3	Habitats	18
6.4	Fauna	19
6.5	Invasive Species	20
7	Opportunities for Enhancement.....	21
8	References.....	22

TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1. PEA Summary Findings	1
Table 2. Desk Study Sources of Information	6
Table 3. Key to species abundance	8
Table 4. Suitability of buildings and trees for roosting bats	9
Table 5. Suitability of site for foraging and commuting bats.....	10
Table 6. Notable and protected birds recorded within 1km.....	13
Table 7. Granted Bat EPSL within 1km	14
Figure 1. Site Context.....	2
Figure 2. Habitat Map.....	3
Figure 3. Site Photographs.....	4

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1.1.1 Oval Real Estate Limited is proposing to develop land at Albert Bridge House in Spinningfields, Manchester (hereafter referred to as ‘the site’). The proposals include the demolition of the existing site building, and the construction of a trio of mixed-use high-rise buildings.
- 1.1.1.2 Urban Green has been appointed to complete a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site. The objectives of the assessment are to identify habitats on site and determine the suitability for any ‘protected and/or notable’ species that may occur on site. Further ecological surveys and mitigation, where appropriate, are recommended which aim to minimise potential impacts on ecology, due to the proposed development.
- 1.1.1.3 Following the survey work, the key recommendations are summarised in the following table:

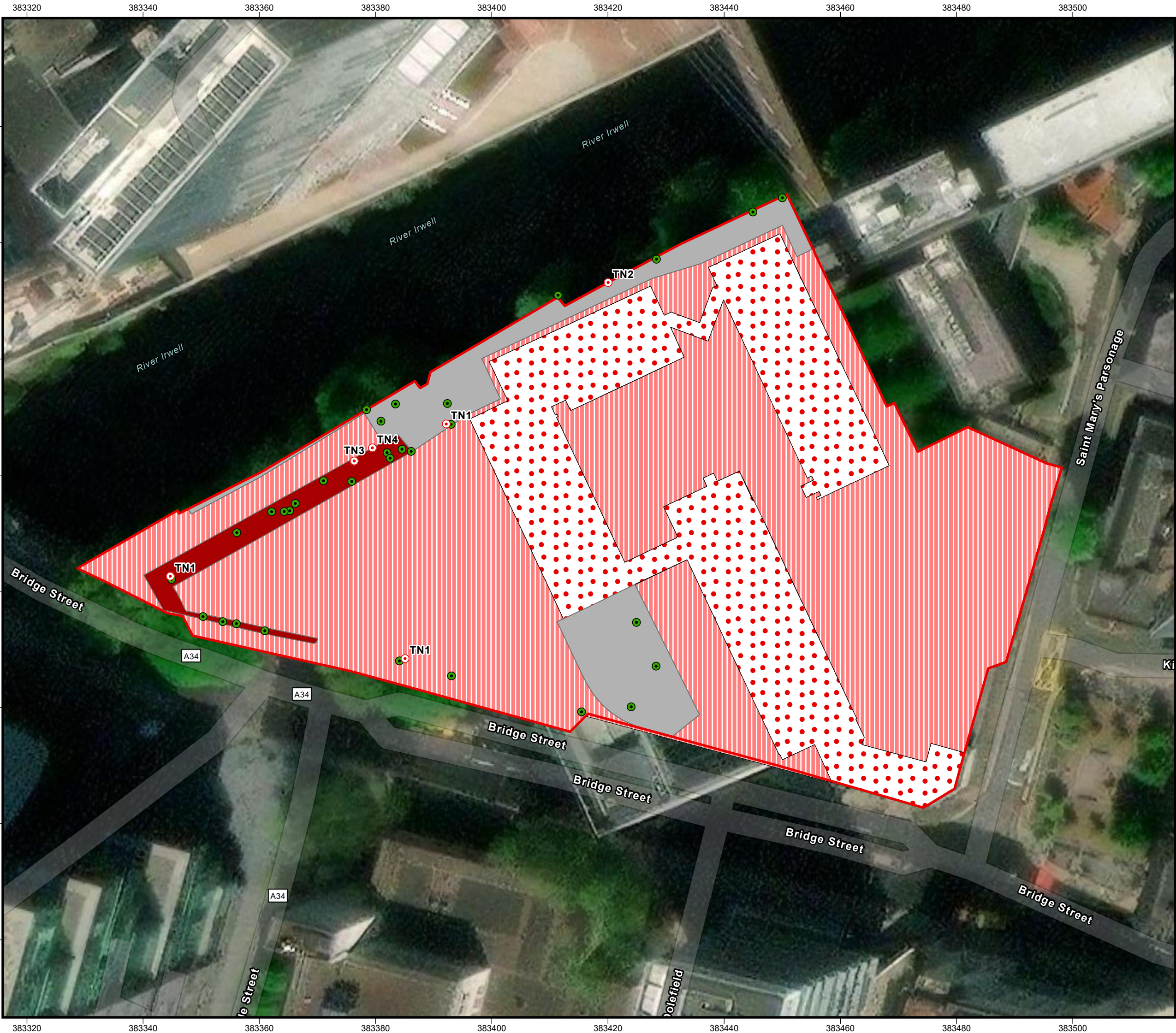
Table 1. PEA Summary Findings

Current Site Use and Adjacent Site Use	The site currently comprises the disused Albert Bridge House office building, and its grounds. The surrounding area is a busy quarter of Manchester city centre’s Spinningfields district.
Potential Impacts on Designated Sites	No potential impacts on designated sites nearby to the site are anticipated to occur due to the proposed development. The site is located at a sufficient distance from nearby designated sites, and the proposed development activities have been considered.
Habitats	The site comprised predominantly hardstanding and buildings, with minor bordering areas of ornamental planting including mature trees.
Ecological Constraints	The following potential ecological constraints were identified during the assessment: • Known potential for bat activity • Suitable habitat for nesting birds
Recommended Ecological Mitigation	The following mitigation measures are recommended to minimise potential impacts due to the proposed development: • If any vegetation requires removal, it should be completed outside of the breeding bird season (March to September, inclusive). If this is not feasible, a Nesting Bird Check is to be completed by a qualified ecologist within 48 hours before removal is completed.
Recommended Further Surveys and Reports	No further ecological surveys nor reports are recommended to further assess the suitability of the site. Development should proceed in a timely manner.
Recommended Ecological Enhancements	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) highlights the requirement for planning policies and decisions to conserve and enhance the natural environment. The proposed development provides the opportunity to enhance the site and ecological enhancements have been recommended.



Do not scale this drawing (printed or electronic version).
This drawing is copyright and is for use on this site only. This drawing should be read in conjunction with all relevant consultants drawings and specialist subcontractors / supply chain drawings and specifications.
Responsibility for the reproduction of this drawing in paper form, or issued in electronic format, lies with the recipient to check that all information has been replicated in full and is correct when compared to the original paper or electronic image.

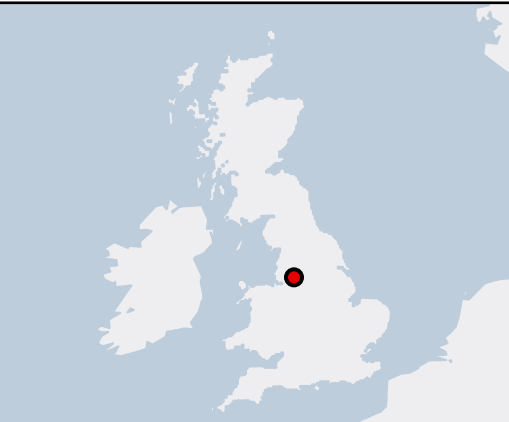
Legend: Red Line Boudnary		1 Kilometers		N
Client: Oval Real Estate		Issue: 01	Figure: 01	U R B A N G R E E N A: Ground Floor, The Tower, Deva City Office Park, Trinity Way, Manchester M3 7BF T: +44 (0) 161 312 3131 weareurbangreen.co.uk
Project: Albert Bridge House		Scale @ A4 1:12,000		
Title: Site Context		Approved by: CL	Checked by: SP	
Drawing Ref: UG_2852_SITE_CONTEXT		Author: CL	Date: 01/05/2025	



URBAN
GREEN

Legend

- Red Line Boudnary
- Building
- Developed land sealed surface
- Sparsley vegetated land
- Urban
- Tree
- Target Note
TN1 - Bird box
TN2 - Giant hogweed
TN3 - Rhododendron tree
TN4- Cotoneaster



Do not scale this drawing (printed or electronic version).
This drawing is copyright and is for use on this site only. This drawing should be read in conjunction with all relevant consultants drawings and specialist subcontractors / supply chain drawings and specifications.
Responsibility for the reproduction of this drawing in paper form, or issued in electronic format, lies with the recipient to check that all information has been replicated in full and is correct when compared to the original paper or electronic image.

Client: Oval Real Estate		
Project: Albert Bridge House		
Title: UKHAB Habitat Map		
Issue: 01	Figure: 00	
Drawn: CL	Checked: BG	Approved: SP
Project: UG2852	Scale @ A3: 1:600	Date: 10/04/2025
Dwg No: UG_2852_ECO_HM_01		Revision: 01

Figure 3. Photographs of the Site



Photograph 1: The site's typical character



Photograph 2: The site's 'garden' of sparsely vegetated land and trees.



Photograph 3: Scattered trees and shrub align the main entrance



Photograph 4: The site, viewed from across the Irwell

2 Introduction

2.1 Scope

- 2.1.1.1 Urban Green has been instructed by Oval Real Estate Limited to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to British Standard 42020:2013 guidelines at Albert Bridge House and produce our findings in a report.
- 2.1.1.2 The proposals include the demolition of the existing site building and the construction of a trio of mixed-use high-rise buildings.

2.2 Site Context

- 2.2.1.1 The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 83438 98375 and comprises a total area of approximately 1ha (see Figure 1).
- 2.2.1.2 The site is located in a densely urban area of Manchester. Immediately north of the site lies the River Irwell. The wider environment comprises a heavily urban environment, of commercial buildings, railway and major roads.

2.3 Purpose of Report

- 2.3.1.1 This report has been produced to set out the methods, results, and conclusions of a PEA. The purpose of the PEA report is to identify habitats on site and determine the site's potential value for protected and/or notable fauna and flora, with the addition of potential impacts on designated sites. This will inform the need for any further ecological surveys and/or mitigation to minimise the potential impacts on ecology on site and within the local area.
- 2.3.1.2 Further information and details of UK legislation for those species which are formally protected is defined in Appendix 1, which are considered throughout the assessment.
- 2.3.1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and other Local Planning Policies are considered with the PEA. Ecological enhancements are advised to be in line with relevant Planning Policies.

3 Previous Surveys

3.1 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Urban Green, 2022)

- 3.1.1.1 Urban Green was appointed to complete a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site in 2022, with a site visit conducted in February of that year.
- 3.1.1.2 The survey found “an office block, with commercial and residential buildings present on all aspects”, “predominantly hardstanding and buildings, surrounded by introduced shrub and scattered broadleaved trees” and assessed there to be “no potential impacts on designated sites nearby to the site [...] anticipated”.
- 3.1.1.3 Ecological constraints were limited to nesting birds, commuting bats, and indirect impacts to otters in the adjacent River Irwell.
- 3.1.1.4 No further surveys were assessed to be required, though a CEMP report was recommended for production to account for indirect impacts to the River Irwell during the construction phase.

3.2 Bat Survey Report (Urban Green, 2023)

- 3.2.1.1 Urban Green were requested by the client to complete a bat survey and report of the site in July 2023. One survey, in the form of a nocturnal emergence bat survey, was requested to further assess the buildings suitability for roosting bats.
- 3.2.1.2 The survey assessed that no evidence was observed to suggest the presence of a roost within B1, B2, B3 or B4, with commuting and foraging activity recorded throughout. No further mitigation in relation to roosting bats was assessed to be required for any building on site, although mitigation regarding lighting disturbance should still be undertaken due to the presence of foraging and commuting bats.

4 Methods

- 4.1.1.1 The PEA assessment and Report follows the good practice methodology as detailed within the *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* (CIEEM, 2019).

4.2 Desk Study

4.2.1 Online Resources and Local Records Centre

- 4.2.1.1 Due to the size and low impact of the proposed development and being located within a predominantly urban area of Manchester, a 1km Local Data Search was conducted as it is deemed an appropriate distance for the Zone of Influence.
- 4.2.1.2 Sources of information used in the desk study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Desk Study Sources of Information

Source	Date Consulted	Information Sought
MAGIC website (www.magic.gov.uk)	07/02/2025	Locations of statutory designated sites within 1km of the site boundary. Locations of National Site Network sites (Ramsar, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA)) within 5km of the site boundary. Locations of European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) and Class Licences within 1km.
Natural England (https://designatedsites/.naturalengland.org.uk/)	07/02/2025	Relevant statutory designated site citations.
JNCC (https://jncc.defra.gov.uk/)	07/02/2025	Information on European wildlife sites. Details of relevant Section 41 species and habitats.
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit	07/02/2025	Locally designated wildlife sites within 1km of site boundary. Records of protected and notable species within 1km of the site boundary.
Greater Manchester Local Biodiversity Action Plans	07/02/2025	Species and habitats which are given special conservation status at the local level.

4.3 Field Survey

4.3.1 Vegetation

- 4.3.1.1 The site was subject to a field survey on 22nd May 2025, by Ecologist Barnaby Gardner and Senior Biodiversity Net Gain Consultant, Sarah Pendle. The weather conditions were 6°C, partly sunny (5/8 oktas), wind speed 2 Beaufort scale.
- 4.3.1.2 The methods were based on the standard methodology as detailed by The UK Habitat Classification User Manual (UKHab Ltd. 2023). A UKHab Habitat Plan has been produced to demonstrate habitats within the proposed development and the surrounding area. The mapping techniques are based on The UK Habitat Classification User Manual (Butcher et al, 2020) guidance.
- 4.3.1.3 Flora species listed as protected in the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and species which are indicators of important and/or uncommon habitats, were searched for during the survey.
- 4.3.1.4 Species abundance is described using the DAFOR scale as shown in Table 3. Percentages are an approximate indication rather than a quantitative measure.

Table 3. Key to species abundance

Code	Category	Description	Indicative Percentage Ranges
D	Dominant	Covers most of the area	50% or greater
A	Abundant	Very common throughout the area.	30 – 50%
F	Frequent	Common or with many individuals.	15 – 30%
O	Occasional	Occurs in several places but not throughout; populations are not large.	5 – 15%
R	Rare	Occurs in low numbers in relation to size of area.	Less than 5%
“L” will be used to indicate abundance in a localised area, e.g. LA = Locally abundant			

- 4.3.1.5 Any invasive species, including those listed on the revised (April 2010) Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) were noted during the field survey when sighted.

4.3.2 Fauna

4.3.2.1 A site search for field signs of protected and notable fauna was undertaken, and incidental sightings are detailed. The searches completed were as follows:

- Suitability of any ponds to support notable and protected amphibians, and the suitability of the site's terrestrial habitats to support amphibians.
- Suitability of the site to support reptiles by way of habitat structure and refuge piles, as well as links to the wider landscape.
- Search of any watercourses for signs or suitability for white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and otter (*Lutra lutra*) by way of burrows, resting places, holts, and foraging signs.
- Suitability of the site to support notable bird species. Bird nests and droppings of notable and protected bird species.
- Suitability of the site to support notable invertebrates.
- Search of the site for any invasive species.
- Badger (*Meles meles*) field signs such as setts, mammal, paths, snuffle holes and latrines.
- Suitability of the site to support notable terrestrial mammals including harvest mouse (*Micromys minutus*) and brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*).

4.4 Bat Assessment

4.4.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

4.4.1.1 A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was carried out on the site buildings using close-focussing binoculars.

4.4.1.2 The PRA methodology is based on information contained within the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines, 4th edition (Collins, 2023). The categorisation within this report is based on that set out in Table 4, which is used as a basis for determining the requirement for further surveys.

Table 4. Suitability of buildings and trees for roosting bats

Category of Suitability	Typical Characteristics	Further Survey Requirements
High Roost Suitability	A structure 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.	Three separate survey visits spaced a minimum of three weeks apart. Surveys can be undertaken between May and September, with at least two surveys between May and August.

Category of Suitability	Typical Characteristics	Further Survey Requirements
Moderate Roost Suitability	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	Two separate survey visits spaced three weeks apart. Surveys can be undertaken between May and September with at least one survey between May and August.
Low Roost Suitability	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 condition and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by larger numbers of bats.	One survey between May and August.
Negligible Suitability	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	No further work required.

4.4.2 Commuting and Foraging Bats

- 4.4.2.1 The site was assessed for its suitability for use by commuting and foraging bats.
- 4.4.2.2 The commuting and foraging assessment methodology is based on information contained within the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines 4th edition (Collins, 2023). The categorisation within this report is based on that set out in Table 5, which is used as a basis for determining the requirement for further surveys.

Table 5. Suitability of site for foraging and commuting bats

Category of Suitability	Typical Characteristics
High Suitability	Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting or foraging bats such as; river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees or woodland edge. Site is close to or connected to known roosts.
Moderate Suitability	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by commuting bats such as lines of trees, scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat connected to wider landscape that could be used for bats for foraging such as; trees, scrub, grassland or water.

Category of Suitability	Typical Characteristics
Low Suitability	Habitat that could be used by small number of commuting bats such as; defunct hedgerow, isolated features not well connected to surrounding habitat or Isolated habitat that could be used by a small number of foraging bats such as a lone tree or patch of scrub.
Negligible Suitability	No features on site suitable for use by commuting and foraging bats.

4.5 Constraints to the Survey

- 4.5.1.1 Whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment.
- 4.5.1.2 This PEA does not constitute a full botanical survey. The protected species assessment provides a view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on the site based on the known distribution of species in the local area and the suitability of the habitat.
- 4.5.1.3 January is a suboptimal time for carrying out UKHab Habitat Surveys due to being outside of the optimal plant growing season. Therefore, it is likely that some plants are present on the site but were not evident at the time of the survey and were not recorded. This is not considered to be a significant constraint with regards to the general UKHab Habitat Survey results as the habitats remained consistent with previous surveys, and due to the size and location of the site and the limited extent of the habitats, it is considered very unlikely that any rare or priority plant species were missed.
- 4.5.1.4 It should not, however, be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group.
- 4.5.1.5 Where a lack of records is found during the desk search for a defined geographical area, it does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of ecological interest; the area may be simply under-recorded.
- 4.5.1.6 The conclusions and recommendations detailed in this report are based upon the site redline boundary and the development proposals as outlined by the client at the time of writing. Should there be any changes to the site redline boundary or development proposals at a later stage, this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether any amendments or additional survey work is required.
- 4.5.1.7 The findings of this report represent the professional opinion of qualified ecologists and do not constitute professional legal advice. The client may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the relevant wildlife legislation cited within this document.

4.6 Lifespan of Report

- 4.6.1.1 In accordance with CIEEM's Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys (CIEEM, 2019), the details of this report will remain valid for a period of **18 months** from the date of the survey (i.e. until July 2026). After this date, this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether any updated surveys are required.

4.7 Definitions

- 4.7.1.1 For the purposes of this report, the term 'protected and notable species' relates to:
- Species included on Schedules 2 and 4 of *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*;
 - Species included on Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), excluding species that are only protected in relation to their sale (see section 9[5] and 13[2]);
 - Invasive non-native species included on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended);
 - Species of principal importance for the conservation of/maintaining and enhancing biodiversity as required under: Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006* (England), Section 7 of the *Environment (Wales) Act 2016*, Section 2[4] of the *Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004*;
 - Local species of importance as identified within various local biodiversity action plans; and,
 - Badgers, which are protected under the *Protection of Badgers Act 1992*.

5 Baseline Ecological Conditions

5.1 Site Context

- 5.1.1.1 The site is located in a densely urban area of Manchester. Immediately north of the site lies the River Irwell. The wider environment comprises a heavily urban environment, of commercial buildings, railway and major roads. Surrounding habitats are limited to the adjacent River Irwell, urban trees and gardens.

5.2 Designated Sites

- 5.2.1.1 No sites that form part of the National Site Network were located within 5km of the site boundary, nor were any non-statutory designated sites located within 500m of the site.
- 5.2.1.2 The site does fall within the impact risk zone of the Rochdale Canal SSSI and SAC. The canal, 6.2km northwest of the site, is designated for its significant population of floating water-plantain in its mesotrophic water.

5.3 Flora and Fauna

- 5.3.1.1 The following section summarises protected and/or notable species records that have been recorded within 1km of the site.

5.3.1 Invertebrates

- 5.3.1.1 One species of protected or notable moth have been recorded within 1km, for which there were eight records of white-letter hairstreak (*Satyrrium w-album*), the closest approximately 800m west of the site in 2019.
- 5.3.1.2 White-letter hairstreak are listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006.

5.3.2 Birds

- 5.3.2.1 A total of 114 records of protected or notable birds were returned within 1km of the site as detailed in Table 6.

Table 6. Notable and protected birds recorded within 1km

Scientific Name	Common Name	Protection	Closest Record to Site	
			Approx. Min. Distance (m)	Date
<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	Black redstart	Sch.1****, BoCC5**	88	2023
<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Bullfinch	BoCC5**, S41*****	525	2014
<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Cuckoo	BoCC5*, S41*****	434	2017
<i>Numenius arquata</i>	Curlew	BoCC5*, S41*****	325	2020
<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Dunnock	BoCC5**, S41*****	40	2020

Scientific Name	Common Name	Protection	Closest Record to Site	
			Approx. Min. Distance (m)	Date
<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Herring gull	BoCC5*, S41*****	800	2015
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House sparrow	BoCC5*, S41*****	725	2021
<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Kingfisher	Sch.1****, BoCC5**	90	2020
<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Linnet	BoCC5*, S41*****	825	2015
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrine	Sch.1*****	300	2023
<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Song thrush	BoCC5**, S41*****	400	2016
<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Spotted flycatcher	BoCC5*, S41*****	500	2014
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Starling	BoCC5*, S41*****	525	2014

5.3.3 Bats

- 5.3.3.1 Forty records of bats were returned during the pasta search: predominantly common pipistrelle and also including records of soprano Pipistrelle bat species (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), as well as multiple records of unidentified bat species (*Chiroptera* spp). The closest record was that of an unidentified bat species present approximately 22m north of the site in 2017. All species of bat returned are European protected species under the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and are listed as priority species on Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).
- 5.3.3.2 MAGIC also detailed the presence of twelve granted EPSL within 1km of the site (See Table 7 for details).

Table 7. Granted Bat EPSL within 1km

Case Reference of Application	Species Covered	License Allowance	License Start to End Date
2014-4219-EPS-MIT	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	27/10/2014 - 31/10/2020
2014-6380-EPS-MIT	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	18/02/2015 - 16/02/2020
2014-6380-EPS-MIT-1	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	01/12/2015 - 16/02/2020
2014-6380-EPS-MIT-2	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	15/08/2017 - 30/06/2023
2018-33674-EPS-MIT	Common Pipistrelle	Damage and destruction of a resting place	12/03/2018 - 30/04/2040
2017-31569-EPS-MIT	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	26/10/2017 - 31/10/2019
2020-45213-EPS-MIT	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	05/03/2020 - 01/01/2025
EPSM2012-5061	Brown Long-eared Bat	Destruction of resting and breeding place	10/12/2012 - 31/08/2015
EPSM2012-4767	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	28/08/2012 - 30/09/2013

Case Reference of Application	Species Covered	License Allowance	License Start to End Date
EPSM2013-5575	Common Pipistrelle	Unknown	23/05/2013 - 30/09/2016
2014-3569-EPS-MIT	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	07/10/2014 - 30/11/2014
2015-16009-EPS-MIT	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place	28/01/2016 - 27/01/2021

5.3.4 Hedgehog

- 5.3.4.1 Four records of hedgehog were returned with 1km of the site, with the closest record located approximately 500m west of the site from 2016. Hedgehog are listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).

5.3.5 Otter

- 5.3.5.1 Three records of otter were returned in the data search, the closest 650m west of the site in 2022. Otter are European protected species under the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and are listed as priority species on Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).

5.3.6 No Records Returned

- 5.3.6.1 The data search returned no records for:
- Vascular plants
 - Badger
 - Great crested newt
 - Hazel dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*)
 - Red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*)
 - Water vole
 - White-clawed crayfish

5.4 Field Survey

- 5.4.1.1 The site habitats and accompanying Target Notes are presented in the UKHab Habitat Map in Figure 2.
- 5.4.1.2 Secondary codes are added to confirm the identity of a habitat (when necessary) and also to provide information on management and the environment relating to that habitat parcel. The number and type of secondary codes added to a primary habitat will vary depending on the habitats present. There is no limit to the number of secondary codes that can be used for a single parcel. More details regarding the secondary codes used can be found in Appendix 2.

5.4.2 Hardstanding / Buildings / Urban

- 5.4.2.1 The site comprises the disused Albert Bridge House high-rise, and its grounds. Accordingly, this area is entirely artificial and urban in its character. The site is dominated by the main tower, as well as its two adjoined sub-buildings.
- 5.4.2.2 These buildings are surrounded to all aspects by hardstanding car parking and road access amenities.

5.4.3 Urban / sparsely vegetated land

- 5.4.3.1 The site featured urban planting for ornamental and amenity purposes along its bank of the River Irwell, this strip of sparsely vegetated urban land featured several mature scattered trees, of Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) and willow (*Salix* sp.). This strip also featured snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), with cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) present frequently. Ivy (*hedera helix*) was dominant in the ground layer. Additionally, there was one stand of invasive ornamentally planted *Rhododendron ponticum*.
- 5.4.3.2 A similar, smaller parcel of such habitat was situated west of the main tower, by the building's former main entrance and lobby.

5.5 Site Suitability for Protected and Notable Species

5.5.1 Species Discounted from Assessment

- 5.5.1.1 Water vole, otter and white-clawed crayfish have been discounted from assessment. Whilst the River Irwell flows immediately north of the site, it is within the context of city centre Manchester; its banks are channelised and comprise tall brick walls. Noise and light disturbance are constant, and its waters are polluted. The river is considered unsuitable habitat for such species.
- 5.5.1.2 As the site is situated in the densely urban, heavily disturbed city centre of Manchester, and features no natural nor semi-natural habitats beyond ornamental trees, it is not considered at all suitable for many, even common, species. Accordingly, the presence of terrestrial mammals, including hedgehogs, badgers, mice, and squirrels, is reasonably discounted; the presence of herpetofauna, including amphibians, and reptiles, is reasonably discounted, and the presence of notable vascular plants and invertebrates is reasonably discounted.

5.5.2 Birds

- 5.5.2.1 The site offers minor suitable habitats for nesting passerine birds, in its relative abundance of mature trees in an urban city centre; several remnant nests of yesteryear were noted in the site trees. As a result, it is likely that birds use these habitats to nest in during the nesting season.

- 5.5.2.2 The site's tall building will, at height, be relatively free from street-level disturbance, owing to the building's disuse. The building may provide a vantage point for birds of prey. More notably, the disused heights of the main tower may emulate the steep cliffs that peregrines typically use to nest. Peregrines have been observed several times to utilise similar structures for nests in Manchester, including the CIS Tower in 2010, and currently reside in the town hall spire; several records of the species were returned in the data search.

5.5.3 Bats

Roost Assessment

- 5.5.3.1 A PRA was completed on all structures, and a GLTA on all trees on site and adjacent. No buildings, nor trees were noted for bat roosting potential.
- 5.5.3.2 The 2023 nocturnal bat surveys conducted by Urban Green furthermore found no evidence of roosting activity within the site's buildings.

Commuting and Foraging Bats

- 5.5.3.3 The site itself is of negligible value to commuting or foraging bats due to a lack of suitable habitat present on site and the density of built surfaces present. However, the River Irwell is immediately adjacent to the site and this river has potential to be of value to bats as a commuting route across the city.
- 5.5.3.4 This was confirmed by the 2023 nocturnal bat surveys conducted by Urban Green, which recorded moderate foraging activity within the site's central courtyard in association with its proximity to the Irwell.

5.6 Invasive Species

5.6.1 Flora

- 5.6.1.1 Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) was present on the site during the field survey (TN1). In previous surveys, giant hogweed has also been noted on the site, that would not have been present during the survey, undertaken during winter. These species are listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) as invasive non-native species.

6 Ecological Assessment and Recommendations

6.1 Overview

- 6.1.1.1 Protected species, designated sites etc will be considered in the context of the development, including legislation etc.

6.2 Designated Sites

- 6.2.1.1 The site is located within the impact risk zone for the Rochdale Canal SAC, 6.2km east. It is anticipated that the designated site is a sufficient distance away and separated by anthropogenic barriers such as residential areas, such that no impacts as a result of development are anticipated.

6.3 Habitats

- 6.3.1.1 The site comprised habitats that were found to be widespread within the local area; however, they did contain minor value for wildlife such as bats, and birds. The scattered broadleaved trees are of highest value.

6.3.2 The River Irwell

- 6.3.2.1 The River Irwell is present immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. This is an important habitat feature which provides value to multiple protected species such as kingfisher and otter known to be present in the surrounding area.
- 6.3.2.2 A detailed Construction and Environment Management Plan (CEMP) specific to the proposed development was prepared in 2023; this report should be adhered to throughout the construction phase to avoid, minimise, and mitigate for negative impacts resulting from construction practices on all habitats surrounding the site.

6.3.3 Broadleaved Woodland and Trees

- 6.3.3.1 Generally, the protection measures of retained trees will be through the use of temporary protective demarcation fencing to protect the trees and shrubs. The fencing must extend outside the canopy of the retained trees and must remain in position until all plots have been developed to ensure protection is provided throughout the construction phase.
- 6.3.3.2 The fencing will be in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations.
- 6.3.3.3 It is recommended that replacement tree planting at a 1:3 ratio is required to compensate for loss of any trees. It is recommended that the planting comprises native species and species known to be of value for the attraction of wildlife. This will include fruiting and flowering species.

6.4 Fauna

6.4.1 Birds

- 6.4.1.1 Vegetation removal should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (March to September, inclusive). If this is not possible, a suitably experienced ecologist should check the habitat for breeding bird activity no more than 48 hours before clearance.
- 6.4.1.2 Furthermore, the building's roof should be inspected, for the potential presence of peregrine, no more than 48 hours before clearance.
- 6.4.1.3 If nesting activity is found, nests must be left in situ until the young have fledged.
- 6.4.1.4 The site has been assessed to provide some suitable habitat for nesting birds, therefore it is recommended that the landscape scheme for this site contains a range of habitats such as scrub and trees, which will provide suitable shelter and nesting habitat for a range of bird species which are likely to be present in the surrounding area.

6.4.2 Bats

Foraging and Commuting Bats

- 6.4.2.1 The site was assessed as being of low value to commuting and foraging bats. It is recommended that the landscape designs for this site contain a mix of native plant species and those known to be of value to native invertebrate species, providing additional value to local bat populations as a foraging resource.
- 6.4.2.2 The 2023 nocturnal bat surveys found a moderate level of activity in the site's centre courtyard; in accordance with the BCT guidance (Collins, 2023), the details of this report will remain valid for a period of **24 months** from the date of the first survey, that is until July 2025. A repeat survey may be recommended after this date.
- 6.4.2.3 Slow-flying species such as brown long-eared and Myotis species, which are known to be in the local area, are sensitive to lighting and may be impacted by the proposed development, should no mitigation for lighting be considered.
- 6.4.2.4 Lighting mitigation should follow the guidance outlined in the Institute for Lighting Engineers document "Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting" (2005) and BCT's "Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK" (2018).
- 6.4.2.5 Construction lighting should not be directed towards retained and surrounding habitats including the broadleaved woodland and grassland. The construction lighting may impact bats which are sensitive to light. Directional lighting will be achieved by angle and orientation of beam, use of a cowl, louvre or other light shield, or a combination of these.
- 6.4.2.6 An External Lighting Scheme had not been produced on the writing of this report. As such, the following recommendations are to be considered within the scheme during its condition, to minimise impacts of lighting.

6.4.3 Otter

- 6.4.3.1 Records of otter were returned on the River Irwell within 1km of the site. The vegetation present on site adjacent to the River Irwell was checked for any signs of otter, however none were observed. The banks within this section of the river are steep and offer limited suitable habitat for an otter to establish a holt or as a suitable resting place.
- 6.4.3.2 The site offers negligible suitable habitat of value to otter; however, the species may commute the river, offsite, on occasion. The River Irwell may be indirectly impacted during the construction phase, and the CEMP report should be adhered to, to mitigate harm to otters potentially present.

6.5 Invasive Species

- 6.5.1.1 Non-native invasive flora species were identified during the site walkover. As such, it is recommended, prior to the development, that an invasive species specialist should be contracted to map the extent of invasive species present within the site and produce a detailed management plan for the removal and eradication of such species.

7 Opportunities for Enhancement

7.1.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) highlights the requirement for planning policies and decisions to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

7.1.1.2 Paragraph 187 states that this should be achieved by (in terms of this assessment only):

- a) *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);*
- d) *minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*

7.1.1.3 Optional enhancement recommendations for the site include the following:

- Bat and bird boxes could be installed on the new buildings / retained trees. A plan to show the locations of these boxes and the specifications should be produced by an ecologist once the layout is finalised. This would increase the carrying capacity of roosting bats and nesting birds on the site.
- Installation of invertebrate hotels/bug hotels on site to increase the carrying capacity of invertebrates on the site.

8 References

Bat Conservation Trust, Institute of Lighting Professionals (2023). Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night.

Chanin P (2003). Ecology of the European Otter. Conserving Natura 2000

CIEEM (2019). Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. CIEEM.

CIEEM (2019). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. CIEEM. Rivers Ecology Series No. 10. English Nature, Peterborough.

Collins (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Fourth Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Dean M., Strachan R., Gow D., Andrews R. (2016). *The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook (The Mammal Society Mitigation Guidance Series)*. Eds Fiona Mathews and Paul Chanin. The Mammal Society, London.

Stanbury, A. *et al* (2021). The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. *British Birds* 114: 723-747. Available online at <https://britishbirds.co.uk/content/status-our-bird-populations>.

Froglife (1999) Reptile Survey: An Introduction to Planning, Conducting and Interpreting Surveys for Snake and Lizard Conservation. Froglife Advice Sheet 10. Froglife, Halesworth.

Gent, A.H & Gibson, S.D. (2003) Herpetofauna Workers' Manual. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Gov.uk (2020). Guidance Otters: surveys and mitigation for development projects. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/otters-protection-surveys-and-licences>.

Harris S., Cresswell P., Jefferies D. (1989). *Surveying Badgers*. The Mammal Society.

Mathews, F, *et al* (2018). A review of the population and conservation status of British mammals.

Manchester City Council (n.d.). Biodiversity Action Plan for Greater Manchester. Available from: https://gmlrc.org/projects/gm_bap/

Oldham, R.S., Keeble, J., Swan, M.J.S., and Jeffcote, M. (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*). *Herpetology Journal* 10 (4), 143-155.

Shuttleworth, C., RSST (n.d.). Red and grey squirrels distribution in the British Isles in 1945 and 2010.

The Mammal Society (2020). Species Factsheet: Red Squirrel.

UKHab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0

Wembridge, D., Al-Fulaij, N. and Langton, S. (2016). The State of Britain's Dormice 2016. Population index, p.100.

Appendix 1 – Relevant Legislation

Legislation relating to European Protected Species (e.g. bats, otter, great crested newt)

European Protected Species and their resting places (e.g. bat roosts) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transpose the European Union's 'Habitats Directive' (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (EC Habitats Directive) into UK law. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European Sites', the protection of 'European Protected Species' (EPS), and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European Sites. EPS are listed on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take certain animals listed in Schedule 5;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any structure or place which any wild animal specified in Schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

In addition, under this legislation there are offences relating to sale, possession and control of wild animals listed in Schedule 5.

Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal listed as a European Protected Species;
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species in such a way as to be likely:
- to impair their ability:
 - to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or;
 - in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate, or;
- to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
- Deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal, or;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

In addition, under this legislation there are offences relating to possession, control sale and exchange of an EPS.

Great crested newt, otter and several species of bat are listed as a SoPI under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Legislation for white-clawed crayfish

White-clawed crayfish are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this act it is an offence to:

- Intentionally take white-clawed crayfish from the wild; and,
- Sell or attempt to sell, any part of a white-clawed crayfish, alive or dead, or advertise that one buys or sells, or intends to buy or sell any part of a white-clawed crayfish.

The white-clawed crayfish is listed under Annex II and V of the EC Habitats Directive. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 implements the European Union's 'Habitats Directive' (Council Directive 92/43/EEC (a) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora) in Great Britain. Annex II requires that Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are established specifically to conserve this and other listed species. In a SAC designated for white-clawed crayfish a precautionary principle must be applied when considering the potential impacts of any operations that may affect white-clawed crayfish and their habitat.

White clawed crayfish are listed as a SoPI under Section 41 of NERC Act 2006.

Legislation for amphibians (other than great crested newt)

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) the four widespread amphibian species, smooth newt (*Triturus vulgaris*), palmate newt (*Triturus helveticus*), common toad (*Bufo bufo*) and common frog (*Rana temporaria*) receive limited protection through section 9(5) only which makes selling, offering for sale, possessing or transporting for the purpose of sale (live or dead animal, part or derivative) an offence.

Common toad is listed as a SoPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Legislation relating to reptiles

All native reptile species have some degree of protection in the UK, through section 9(1) and (5) (specified in Schedule 5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). There are two different levels of protection afforded to reptiles through this legislation according to species and this is described in more detail below.

Full Protection

Sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*) and smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*) are afforded protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (are species of European importance) and are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the CRow Act (2000). The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 implements the European Union's 'Habitats Directive' (Council Directive 92/43/EEC (a) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora) in Great Britain. The relevant sections of this legislation make it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or capture or take a reptile;
- Possess or control (live or dead animal, part or derivative);
- Deliberately (intentionally) or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a breeding site or any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a reptile;
- Disturb whilst the reptile is occupying such a structure or place; and

- Sell, offer for sale, possess or transport for the purpose of sale (live or dead animal, part or derivative).

Sand lizard and smooth snake are listed as a SoPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Protection against killing, injuring and trade

This level of protection under section 9 (parts 1 and 5) applies to the four widespread species of reptile, namely the common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*), grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) and adder (*Viper berus*). Only part of sub-section 9(1) applies, which make it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill or injure, and
- Sell, offer for sale, possess or transport for the purpose of sale (live or dead animal, part or derivative).

Grass snake, slow-worm and adder are all listed as SoPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Legislation relating to breeding birds

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building or is in, on or near a nest with eggs or young; or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provides further protection for selected species (including peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), barn owl (*Tyto alba*), little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*) and black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) during the breeding season. If any person intentionally or recklessly disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturb dependent young of such a bird. That person shall be guilty of an offence.

A number of bird species are listed as SoPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Conservation status - Birds of Conservation Concern (Eaton et al. 2015)

The UK's leading bird conservation organisations have worked together on the third quantitative review of the status of the birds that occur regularly in the UK, updating the last review in 2011. The status of birds within the UK have been regularly monitored through a series of surveys, including the national Breeding Bird Survey, Common Bird Census, sea bird monitoring programs and wetland monitoring programs. The result of this review and continued monitoring is The Population Status of Birds in the UK, Birds of Conservation Concern 4: 2015.

Birds are assessed against criteria to place each species on one of three alert lists, red, amber or green. Red list species are considered to be of high conservation concern, being either globally threatened, having historical UK population declines, having a rapid population decline or breeding range contraction of 50% or more in the last 25 years.

Amber list species are considered to be of medium conservation concern as they meet one or more of the following criteria (but none of the red list criteria): Red listed for historical decline in a previous review but with substantial recent recovery (more than doubled in the last 25 years), a UK breeding range contraction of between 25% and 49%, a reduction of breeding or non-breeding population of 25-49% in the last 25 years, a 5-year mean of 1-300 breeding pairs in the UK, an unfavourable European conservation status, at least 50% of the UK breeding population found in 10 or fewer sites, or where the breeding population in the UK represents 20% or more of the European breeding populations.

Green list species are considered to be of low conservation concern. They include all regularly occurring species that do not qualify under any of the red or amber criteria are green listed. The green list also includes those species listed as recovering from Historical Decline in the last review that have continued to recover and do not qualify under any of the other criteria.

Legislation relating to badger

Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended) which makes it an offence to:

- wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or to attempt to do so;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett; and
- disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett.

These provisions have implications for construction or preparation works undertaken in the vicinity of an active sett and may be confounded by distance from the sett entrance. Any works resulting in ground penetration, vibration or noise near an identified badger sett entrance/s have the potential to disturb badgers and advice should be sought from a suitably experienced ecologist under such circumstances. If disturbance to an active sett is probable, then a licence may need to be obtained from Natural England before any works commence.

Legislation relating to water vole

The water vole is fully protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through its inclusion in Schedule 5. The legal protection makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or capture or take a water vole;
- Possess or control (live or dead animal, part or derivative);
- Deliberately (intentionally) or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a breeding site or any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a water vole;
- Deliberately (intentionally) or recklessly disturb a water vole whilst occupying such as structure or place, and
- Sell, offer for sale, possess or transport for the purpose of sale (live or dead animal, part or derivative).

Water vole is listed as a SoPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Legislation relating to invasive plant species

Several non-native invasive plant species such as Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Japanese rose (*Rosa rugosa*), variegated yellow archangel

(*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*), rhododendron and Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) are listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), which makes it an offence to ‘...plant or otherwise cause the species to grow in the wild’. This includes spreading or transferring contaminated soil from one area to another.

Estate Managers and landowners have a duty to pro-actively treat knotweed outbreaks. Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC), subsection 14ZA (1), makes it an offence to sell, offer or expose for sale, or to have in one’s possession or transport for the purpose of sale, any Schedule 9 animal or plant or anything from which such an animal or plant can be propagated, including rhizomes of Japanese knotweed. Under subsection 14ZA (2) it is also an offence to publish or cause to be published any advertisement for the purchase or sale of these animals and plants.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA 1990) contains a number of legal provisions concerning controlled waste. Any Japanese knotweed contaminated soil or plant material that is intended for discard is likely to be classified as controlled waste.

The Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) regulations 1991 also imposes a ‘duty of care’ on persons concerned with controlled waste, which includes any materials incorporating Japanese knotweed including soil, grass cuttings, general wastes and ash arising from the burning of knotweed. The duty applies to any person, who produces, imports, carries, keeps, treats or disposes of controlled waste. Failure to appropriately dispose of any material containing Japanese knotweed may lead to prosecution under Section 33 and 34 of the EPA 1990 and Section 14 (2) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

If knotweed stands are to be treated with herbicides, The Control of Pesticides Regulations (1986) applies. These regulations require any person who uses a pesticide to take all reasonable precautions to protect the health of human beings, creatures and plants, safeguard the environment and in particular avoid the pollution of water. If pesticides are to be used in or near to a watercourse, the Environment Agency should be contacted, and approval must be sought (application to use herbicides in or near water).

Waste leaving the site must be handled responsibly and in accordance with the law at all stages between its production and final recovery or disposal. Waste must be transferred to an authorised person, who is either a registered waste carrier or exempted from registration by the Controlled Waste (Registration of Carriers and Seizure of Vehicles) Regulations 1991.

Additional legislation regarding the transport of Japanese knotweed contaminated materials is covered by the Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005 (HWR 2005). This contains provisions about the handling and movement of hazardous waste. Consignment notes must be completed when any hazardous waste is transferred, which includes details about the hazardous waste properties and any handling requirements. Untreated Japanese knotweed is not classed as hazardous waste, but material containing knotweed which has been treated with certain herbicides, may be classified as hazardous waste.

If any waste soil or knotweed is sent for landfill either before or after treatment, it must go to a landfill that is authorised to receive it.

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 were introduced to protect hedgerows of importance from destruction. However, the legislation does not apply to any hedgerow (even if it is within the list above) which is within or marking the boundary of the curtilage of a dwelling house.

For the Regulations to be applicable, the hedgerow must be at least 20 metres in length or, if less than 20 metres, it must meet another hedgerow at each end. A hedgerow is deemed to be important if it is more than thirty years old and meets at least one of the criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

If a hedgerow which qualifies under the Regulations is to be removed, the landowner must contact the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in writing by submitting a hedgerow removal notice. The LPA then has a period of 42 days to decide whether or not the hedgerow meets the importance criteria of the regulations.

Appendix 2 - UK Habitat Classification Codes

Hierarchical code	Code	Meaning
Primary Code	u1b6	Building
	u1b	Developed land; sealed surface
	s	Sparsely vegetated land
	u	Urban
Secondary Code	11	Scattered Trees
	17	Ephemeral
	8o	Unmanaged