Nesting Bird Method Statement

Pitsford Road, Miles Platting
Reference: 80-901-R5
Date: February 25



e3p

E3P

Taylor Road
Trafford Park
Urmston
Manchester
M41 7JQ

+ 44 (0) 161 707 9612
https://e3p.co.uk

Registered in England
CRN: 08725262

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WRITTEN BY	QUALIFICATIONS	POSITION
Samantha Pritchard	BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM	Principal Ecologist

REVIEWED BY	QUALIFICATIONS	POSITION
Huw Morgan	BSc (Hons), MIEnvSc, CEnv, MCIEEM	Principal Ecologist

AUTHORISED BY	QUALIFICATIONS	POSITION
Celia Kenyon	BSc (Hons), MSc, MIEnvSc, CEnv, MCIEEM	Associate Director

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

E3P has been instructed by Bellway Homes Manchester to produce a Nesting Bird Method Statement at Pitsford Road, Miles Platting, hereafter referred to as "the site".

This report has been prepared by Samantha Pritchard BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM, Principal Ecologist. Samantha has extensive experience undertaking protected species surveys and Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) and producing of method statements.

1.2. PREVIOUS SURVEYS

E3P carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site in July 2022 (report reference: 80-901-R1). The data search undertaken with Greater Manchester Ecology Unit identified numerous records of notable records of notable birds within the search areas, including bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), dunnock (*Prunella modularis)*, herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), lesser redpoll (*Acanthis cabaret*), linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris),* kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*) and peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*).

During the site walkover in July 2022, song thrush, black bird (*Turdus merula*), wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) and carrion crow (*Corvus corone*) were noted within the broadleaved woodland.

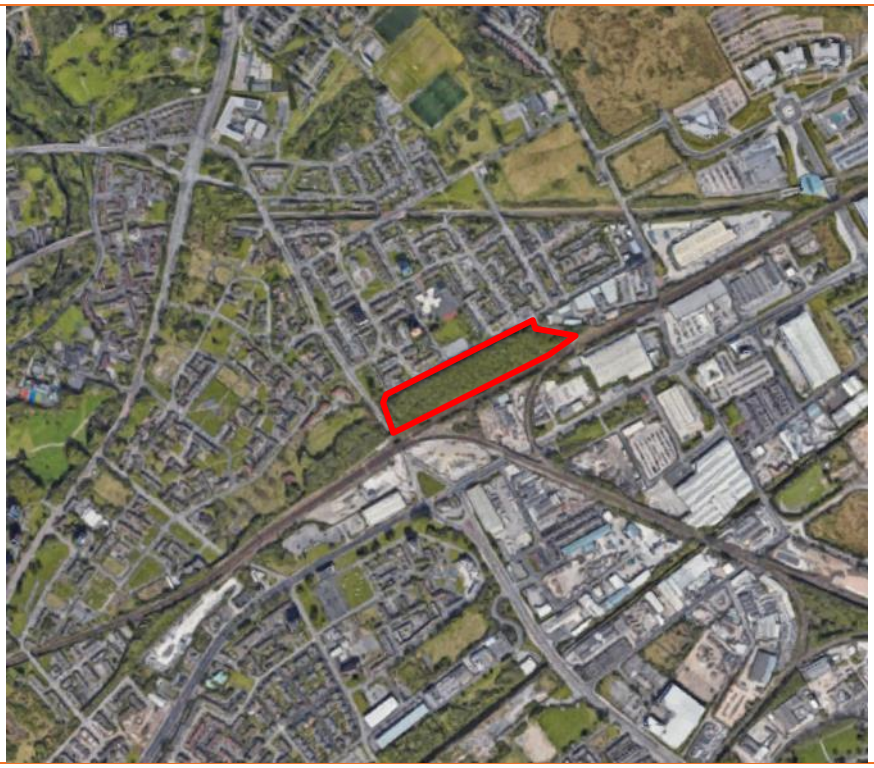
The habitats within the site were found to be common within the local area and were anticipated to support common bird species. The dense scrub, broadleaved woodland, scattered trees and tall ruderal, offer nesting and foraging opportunities. Notable birds identified in the data search were considered to potentially utilise the site, including bullfinch, dunnock, house sparrow and starling.

1.3. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprised an area of broadleaved woodland located in the northeast of Miles Platting, Manchester. The site is accessed via Pitsford Road which defines the northern boundary. An active railway line defines the site's southern boundary and separates the site from industrial units to the south. The site is surrounded by a residential development to the north, with St. Augustine's Primary School approximately 20 m to the north. Village Park is located approximately 10 m south-west of the site which extends westward from Queens Road for approximately 380 m.

Please refer to **Figure 1** for the approximate site location.

Figure 1 Site Location



1.4. PROPOSED WORKINGS

The proposed works includes the clearance of the broadleaved woodland on site to facilitate the creation of a residential development upon the site.

1.5. OBJECTIVES

This document has been produced to ensure the proposed works do not commit an illegal activity, ensure no harm or disturbance to nesting birds occurs within the vegetation on site, and meet the requirements outlined with planning condition of the approved planning permission.

2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

2.1. NESTING BIRDS

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence to "take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built" and to "take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird". Under The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law, with some rare species afforded special protection. There are, however, obvious exceptions for wildfowl, game birds and some pest species. Though these laws were originally developed to prevent egg stealing and cruelty to wild birds, its modern interpretation also relates to the activities of land managers and developers.

In summary, it is an offence to:

- Recklessly kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Take or recklessly damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or is being built;
- Take or recklessly destroy the egg of any wild bird;
- Have in one's possession or control any wild bird, dead or alive, or any part of a wild bird, which has been taken in contravention of the act;
- Have in one's possession or control any egg or part of an egg which has been taken in contravention of the act;
- Use traps or similar items to kill, injure or take wild birds; and
- Recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 of the Act whilst it is nest building or is at (or near) a nest with eggs or young or disturb the young of such a bird.

3. PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHODS

3.1. NESTING BIRDS

Where works can not be undertaken outside breeding birds' season (March – September) the following actions should be undertaken to ensure an offence under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is not committed.

A nesting bird check is to be carried out by the appointed suitably qualified ECOW on the morning prior to removal of vegetation clearance on site, or within 48 hours of its removal. Due to the level of clearance required on site, the checks should be undertaken in a staggered process to allow a systematic check of each section due for clearance.

The nesting check would include a ECOW surveying the area identified for clearance, undertaking a visual check for active birds nesting, individual bird behaviour such as carrying nesting material or food to an area of vegetation and removal of faecal sacks. Where an active nest is suspected, the ECOW will monitor the suspected area / bird for a period of time to confirm the presence of an active nest. Each check will be fully recorded by the ECOW to inform the client and provide evidence of the check, where required.

If the ecologist is not confident the initial check is sufficiently thorough due to difficulty in viewing, the ecologist should be present during the removal to continue to check for nesting birds.

Should any nests or nests in construction be located, a suitable stand-off distance / exclusion zone will be maintained until the young have fledged. This will be initially marked out by the ecologist using marker posts and / or hazard tape. The onsite ecologist will advise but for most species a 5 m buffer of retained vegetation will be sufficient. The time will depend on the stage of the nest at the time of discovery. Future checks will be conducted by the appointed ECoW, before it can be fully removed.

The contractors conducting the removal will be prepared with both hand tools and an excavator. The former may be required in sections that are too dense to easily observe.

4. REFERENCES

- E3P (2022). Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report. 80-901-R1.
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (2010) Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

END OF REPORT