



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Land at Athol Road,
Manchester, M16 8QN

Ref: P.1984.24

Date: July 2024

(See revision dates below)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ascerta has been instructed by **Hassan Giwa** to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Land at Athol Road, Manchester, M16 8QN (hereafter referred to as **the site**).

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal comprised of a desk study and biological records search, as well as a site walkover survey in order to map habitat types. The survey was extended to assess the potential for protected species to use the site. The assessment provides baseline data regarding the current site conditions and where appropriate allows recommendations to be made in respect of further potential work in order to satisfy current UK wildlife legislation.

The site comprises an area of improved grassland, intact species poor hedge, scattered scrub and a mixture of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

Assessed against the '*Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*' 2nd edition (2018), the sites habitats range in ecological value from within the zone of influence to local.

The site provides habitat for nesting birds, reptiles and small mammals (i.e. hedgehog). All habitats assessed are likely to be lost to the proposals. However, as the habitats to be lost to the proposals are small in area and not of high ecological value, it is considered that their loss can be mitigated for and the proposals will not adversely affect the ecological value of the wider area, provided the recommendations detailed below are followed.

- If works have not begun by June 2026, an updated site visit will be required to assess the habitats within the site.
- Production and implementation of small mammal (i.e. hedgehog) RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Production and implementation of a reptile RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works and;
- Two stage cutting regime on the improved grassland.
- Production and implementation of a badger RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Precautionary check for invasive prior to works commencing;
- Precautionary check for bat and birds on the site before works commencing
- Enhancing the site for species through appropriate landscape planting that includes native, species rich hedgerows, trees and areas of wildflowers plus provision of integrated bat and bird features within newly constructed buildings and trees;
- Preservation of trees on the site if possible.
- Vegetation clearance or pruning should be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (1st March to 31st August Inclusive) to avoid any impact on breeding birds. Or a nesting bird check undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist should be undertaken immediately prior to works commencing.

1.0 Introduction

Ascerta has been instructed by **Hassan Giwa** to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the land at the site. The site OS grid reference is SJ 83458 93791 and the What3Words reference is jukebox.harsh.mouse. The extent of the site is displayed in photograph 1.1 below.



Photograph 1.1: Extent of the site.

Our client seeks planning consent to build a detached house.

The site was visited on 24th June 2024 by Kira Lovatt when a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, which includes an assessment of the potential for protected species to be using the site or surroundings, was carried out in accordance with the *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit* (JNCC, 2010). The report was prepared following methods detailed in the CIEEM '*Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*' (2018) and '*Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing*' (2017).

The site comprises an area of improved grassland, intact species poor hedge, scattered scrub and a mixture of broadleaved and coniferous trees. To the north of the site presents residential housing, with a public foot path to the south. Between the footpath and the site boundary is a mixed woodland with a large amount of bramble and ivy ground flora, with larger trees are over hanging the southern site boundary. The wider landscape includes residential houses, parkland trees and amenity grassland.

This report presents the results of the survey including evaluation of habitats on site and potential for protected species to be using the site. The report includes recommendations for further actions where applicable, in order to satisfy current UK wildlife legislation and to achieve our client's objectives. Relevant legislation is detailed within Appendix 4.

Our client's objectives are to assess the potential ecological constraints of the proposed development site.

2.0 Objectives

Our client's objectives are to assess the potential ecological constraints of the proposed development site.

Our objectives are as follows:

- Identify and evaluate any features of ecological value and the potential of the site to support protected species based on the walkover survey and biological records search;
- Identify designated sites within 2km of the site;
- Review protected species records within 2km of the site;
- Map the habitats within the site using JNCC (2010) methods;
- Provide recommendations for further species-specific surveys and mitigation measures where current legislation requires;
- Provide recommendations that seek to enhance the ecological value of the site;
- Provide recommendations to assist our clients in achieving their objectives whilst satisfying current UK wildlife legislation.

3.0 Survey Methods

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal involved the collection and review of data from a desk study and field survey, along with assessment of the value of the habitats following CIEEM guidelines.

3.1 Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken on 24th June 2024 to identify protected and notable habitats and species, and nature conservation designations potentially relevant to the proposed development. The desk study was carried out using the sources detailed in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1. Desk Study Data Information

Source	Date Obtained	Data Obtained
Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)	24 th June 2024	• Statutory designated sites within 2km of the site • Protected and Notable habitats within 2km of the site • Ancient woodlands within 2km of the site • European Protected Species Licenses within 2km of the site
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)	1 st July 2024	• Non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site • Protected and notable species records within 2km of the site
Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan	20 th June 2024	• Additional protections afforded to species/habitat
Biodiversity Strategy 2022-2030: City of Manchester's Nature Recovery	20 th June 2024	• Additional protections afforded to species/habitat

3.2 Field Survey

A walkover survey of the site was conducted on 24th June 2024 by Kira Lovatt. The habitat types and features of ecological interest were identified and mapped in compliance with *the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit* (JNCC, 2010). During the survey, weather conditions were recorded to ensure optimal surveying conditions according to guidelines. Any sub-optimal conditions will be discussed in the limitations.

This includes the identification of the main species present and examination of the potential for any protected species. Habitats were mapped (Appendix 1) and target notes (Appendix 2) made for any interesting features.

The surveys particularly focused on the following species and habitat features:

- Mammals (badgers, bats);

- Birds (including species potentially associated with ‘European Sites’);
- Amphibians and reptiles;
- Hedgerows and boundaries;
- Invasive plant species; and
- Plant communities and trees.

3.3 Bat Survey Methods

The survey methods followed the guidelines set out by the Bat Conservation Trust’s *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 4th Edition* (2023). Habitats, buildings and trees were assessed for suitability for use by bats and categorised independently using table 4.1 page 44 within the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Bats

Habitats on site were assessed for their suitability for bats to use them for roosting, commuting and foraging both on the site and surrounding area. Commuting and foraging habitat suitability was categorised **low** to **high**. Any commuting and foraging habitat valued as **moderate** or above may need further survey effort if lost to the proposals.

Preliminary Roost Assessment Trees

All trees were inspected for Potential Roost Features (PRFs). Features searched for included: Natural or woodpecker holes, cracks/splits in major limbs, loose bark, hollows/cavities, dense epicormic growth, bird and bat boxes. Where such features were found they were investigated for scratches or staining, bat droppings and smoothing of surfaces around entry points. Trees assigned a suitability of **moderate** or above may require further inspection if they are to be lost to the development.

Table 3.2: Guidelines for assessing potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement. Guidelines taken from table 4.1 page 44 of the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 4th Edition (2023).

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting Habitats in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
None	<i>No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).</i>	<i>No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).</i>
Negligible^a	<i>No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.</i>	<i>No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.</i>

Low	<i>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ^c).</i>	<i>Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.</i>
Moderate	<i>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity or hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).</i>	<i>Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.</i>
High	<i>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 ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.</i>	<i>Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.</i>

^a Negligible is defined as ‘so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant’. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

^b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

^c Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten et al., 2016 and Jansen et al., 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

3.4 Badger Survey Methods

The site was searched for setts and badger field signs including foraging areas, latrines and tracks. Attention was paid to the presence of the following field signs:

- Setts: single holes or a series of holes likely to be interconnected underground;
- Latrines: badgers usually deposit faeces in excavated pits;
- Paths and footprints;
- Scratching posts: at the base of trees;
- Snuffle holes: areas where badgers have searched for insects;
- Day nest: bundles of vegetation where badgers may sleep above ground; and
- Traces of hair.

3.5 Evaluation

Habitats and species on the site were evaluated following the '*Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*' (2018). A geographical frame of reference is assigned to each habitat and species, with **International Value** being most important, then **National, Regional, County, District, Local** and lastly, within the immediate **Zone of Influence (Zoi)** of the proposals only.

Value judgements are based on characteristics that can be used to identify ecological resources or features likely to be important in terms of biodiversity. These include site designations such as SSSIs. For undesignated features, the size, conservation status (locally, nationally or internationally), and the quality of the ecological resource are considered. Ecological resource quality can refer to habitats (for instance if they are particularly diverse, or a good example of a specific habitat type), other features (such as wildlife corridors or mosaics of habitats) or species populations or assemblages.

The recommendations detailed within this report aim to meet requirements of the Environment Act and Statutory Biodiversity Metric as far as possible at this stage.

3.6 Limitations

The site visit was undertaken in June, which is within optimal time of year for phase 1 habitat surveys and the site was fully accessible with sufficient vegetation was present to enable habitat identification. The weather conditions were 18°C with sun 1/8 cloud cover) and no wind, F0 (Beaufort Scale) providing optimal survey conditions.

4.0 Survey Results

4.1 Desk Study

Statutory sites

No statutory designated sites were identified within a 2km radius of the proposed development site.

Non-statutory sites

No non-statutory designated sites were identified within a 2km radius of the proposed development site.

The full designations for each site are listed within Appendix 5.

The site does not lie within a relevant Natural England SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

Priority Habitats

Woodland

One area of Ancient Woodland was returned within 2km of the site, located 140m south.

Several areas of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland were returned within 2km of the site, the closest being located adjacent to the southern site boundary.

Two areas of Priority Habitat Traditional Orchard were returned within 2km of the site, the closest being located 1.9km northeast.

One area of Wood pasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat was returned within 2km of the site, located 920m north.

The site lies within a Conservation Target area for the following Priority Species:

- Lapwing

The site also falls within a breeding area for the following Grassland Assemblage Farmland Birds:

- Grey partridge
- Lapwing
- Snipe
- Tree sparrow

Priority Species

Following a review of records held by GMEU, several priority species that have the potential to occur within the vicinity of the proposed development have been identified. These include birds, bats, badger, hedgehog and amphibians. The species records are summarised below, and the detailed records held by GMEU within 2km of the site are displayed within Appendix 5. Protected species legislation can be found within Appendix 4.

Birds

GMEU returned records for bird species within 2km of the site. Species returned include bullfinch, common redpoll, cuckoo, dunnoek, herring gull, house sparrow, lesser redpoll, linnet, reed bunting, skylark, spotted fly catcher, peregrine, starling and tree sparrow. All species recorded within 2km are displayed within Appendix 5.

Bats

GMEU returned records for bats within the search area. Bat species include common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat, Daubenton's, noctule, whiskered bat. The closest of which was a record of brown long-eared bat located south of the site.

Amphibians

No records for great crested newt were returned within 2km of the site. Common toad has been recorded within 2km south-west of the site.

Reptiles

A record for grass snake was returned within 2km south-east of the site.

Otter

No records for otter were returned within 2km of the site.

Water vole

No records for water vole were returned within 2km of the site.

Badger

Fifty records for badger were returned within 2km of the site. The closest of which is a badger sett located southwest of the site.

Other mammals

No records for other mammals were returned within 2km of the site.

European Protected Species Licences

There were two European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) applications within 2km of the site since 2018. ESPL applications are detailed below (distance and direction from site):

- 2018-38076-EPS-MIT for the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle. Start date: 01/12/2018, end date: 30/09/2019 (1.3km southeast); and
- 2018-35287-EPS-MIT for the damage and destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle. Start date: 05/06/2018, end date: 30/09/2019 (1.4km north)

4.2 Habitat Survey

A habitat survey was conducted on 24th June 2024 by Kira Lovatt for the site. The habitat types and features of ecological interest were identified and mapped in compliance with *The Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit* (JNCC, 2010). A list and a summary description of key habitats identified within the site is tabled below (see Table 3.3). Notes on the presence or potential presence of protected species are provided in Section 4.6. The Phase 1 Habitat map can be found in P.1984.24.E01 *Phase One Habitat Survey*, Appendix 1 and photographs within Appendix 3. The Target Notes (TN) and lists of species recorded during survey are presented in Appendix 2.

The weather conditions were 18°C with sun 1/8 cloud cover) and no wind, F0 (Beaufort Scale) providing optimal survey condition for this type of survey.

To the north of the site presents residential housing, with a public footpath to the south. Between the footpath and the site boundary is a mixed woodland with a large amount of bramble and ivy scrub, some larger trees are over hanging the southern boundary. The wider landscape includes residential houses, parkland trees and amenity grassland.

The site comprises an area of improved grassland, intact species poor hedge, scattered scrub and a mixture of broadleaved and coniferous trees. A concrete/gravel path which appears to previously be a driveway is also located on site with a combination of native and non-native plants. Surrounding the site is a metal fence and a 7ft coniferous intact hedgerow to the north boundary, a concrete wall/fence to the west boundary with oriental garden escapes, ten trees (combination of coniferous and broadleaved) and a wooden fence with scrub predominately consisting of bramble, ivy and nettle to the south-east boundary.

Table 3.3. Habitats present on site including habitat alphanumeric code references from JNCC (2010).

Habitat Description and JNCC Codes	Site Description
<i>Hard standing (J4)</i>	The site has hardstanding, which is predominately gravel. The area of hardstanding runs between the improved grassland and the fence/hedge line to the north of the site and at the back for the site along the fence line along the west boundary. The hardstanding areas have a variety of ground flora including both native and non-native plants, with oriental garden species also present. The hardstanding area towards the west of the site presents a large hole in the concrete (TN-2) (approx. 1m x 0.5m) which may retain water during high rainfall (Appendix 3, photos 1-4).

Introduced shrub (J1.4)	Areas of introduced shrubs/ornamental planting are present throughout the site, mainly concentrated to the back of the site along the west boundary, with garden escapes including rose bushes and honey suckle from the neighbouring garden, with a large (7ft) cypress hedgerow located along the north boundary (Appendix 3, photos 2&5).
Improved grassland (B4)	An area of improved grassland is located along the south of the site, with a variety of grassland species including Yorkshire fog, sow thistle, cat grass, creeping buttercup, willowherb sp., herb Robert, narrow-leaved meadow grass, perennial rye grass. The sward height is approximately 15-20cm. This area of habitat is currently unmanaged (Appendix 3, photo 2, 3, 7 & 8).
Scattered trees (A3.1)	Scattered trees line the southern site boundary along the fence line. Species present include five spruce sp. trees, all semi-mature, one young horse chestnut and three cypress sp. forming a large hedge along the boundary. All the spruce trees presented high levels of ivy coverage. No indications of bat suitable habitat were identified within the trees during the survey (Appendix 3, photos 1,2,3,7 & 8).
Scattered scrub (A2.2)	Scattered scrub is present along all boundaries of the site, with areas denser than others. The scrub is predominately bramble and ivy, with sycamore, alder, willowherb sp., common nettle and holly present along the north and west boundaries. Some garden escapes such as rhubarb are present from neighbouring garden on the north boundary (Appendix 3, photos 1,2,3,5 & 8).
Fence (J3.4)	A fence runs along the perimeter of the site boundary, with a metal fence on the north boundary separating the site from residential housing. Along this boundary are four tree stumps, felled to approximately 1.5m (TN-1), a concrete fence/wall to the west boundary and a wooden fence running along the south boundary separating the site from the area of mixed woodland. (Appendix 3, Photo 1,4 & 5.)

4.3 Protected and Notable Species

Table 3.4: Habitat suitability for protected and notable species, including evidence, further survey information and reference to photographs/drawings where applicable.

Birds	Habitat suitability
	Scrub, introduced shrub, improved grassland and scattered trees provide suitable foraging and nesting opportunities for bird species.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	During the survey passerine species were identified within the site.
	Further survey required
	For any vegetation removal is to be undertaken, a nesting bird survey will be required (section 5.2).
Bats	Habitat suitability
	Scrub, introduced shrub, improved grassland and scattered trees within the site provide good suitability for commuting and foraging bats, with good connectivity to the surrounding land use.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	All the trees on the site were inspected for bat roosting potential, with no evidence of holes/ cavities or evidence that the trees have supported roosting bats.

	Further survey required If removal of the trees cannot be prevented, pre-works checks will be required prior to works commencing (section 5.2).
Badger	Habitat suitability Scrub habitats within the site provide limited foraging and shelter habitat for badger. The site borders an area of woodland that is suitable habitat for badger. Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified No evidence of badger was identified within the site during the survey. Further survey required Badger will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, badger do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report. No further survey effort of badger will be required; however Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) should be implemented (see section 5.2).
Water vole	Habitat suitability The site and adjacent areas provide no suitable habitats for water vole. Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified No evidence of water vole was identified during the site visit. Further survey required Water vole will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, water vole do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.
Otter	Habitat suitability The site and adjacent areas provide no suitable habitats for otter. Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified No evidence of otter were identified during the site visit Further survey required Otter will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, otter do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.
Amphibians	Habitat suitability Improved grassland, scrub and introduced shrub provide terrestrial habitats for amphibians, however, no water bodies were identified on site or within a 2km radius of the site. Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified No evidence of amphibians was identified within the site during the survey. Further survey required Amphibians will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, amphibians do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.
Reptiles	Habitat suitability The improved grassland and scattered scrub may provide suitable habitat for reptiles such as slow worms. Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified No evidence of reptiles was identified within the site during the survey. Further survey required No further survey effort of reptiles will be required; however Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) should be implemented (see section 5.2).
	Habitat suitability

Invertebrates	The introduced shrub, scattered scrub, and improved grassland provides habitat for invertebrates.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence of invertebrates was identified within the site during the survey.
	Further survey required
	No further survey for invertebrates will be required. Invertebrates do not require consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further.
Small mammals	Habitat suitability
	improved grassland and scattered scrub habitats within the site provide limited foraging and shelter habitat for small mammal species such as hedgehog and mice.
	Species seen / Evidence of presence / Features identified
	No evidence of hedgehog was identified within the site during the survey.
	Further survey required
	No further survey effort of other small mammals will be required; however Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) should be implemented (see section 5.2).

Invasive species

No non-native invasive species were identified within the site during the walkover survey.

5.0 Evaluation and Recommendations

5.1 Designated Sites and Habitats

There are no statutory or non-statutory protected sites within the vicinity of the proposals that are likely to be influenced by the proposals. It is considered that there will be no impact on any statutory or non-statutory sites in the vicinity as a result of the proposals.

The does not lie within a relevant Natural England SSSI Impact Risk Zone, therefore, Natural England will not need to be consulted for this type of planning proposal within the residential area as the proposed development does not fall under the likely impacts for the SSSI as detailed on MAGIC Maps. It is considered that there will be no impact on any SSSIs in the vicinity as a result of the proposals.

Mitigation

The habitats on site comprise hardstanding, bare ground, amenity grassland, introduced shrub, scattered bracken, scattered trees and species poor hedgerow. These habitats are considered to have an ecological value of **within the zone of influence** of the site or lower. The site contains no designated or priority habitats. Overall, the proposals are unlikely to adversely affect the ecological value of the area.

5.2 Protected and Notable Species Recommendations

Birds

The improved grassland, scattered trees, introduced shrub and scrub provide suitable habitat for nesting and foraging bird species. It is recommended that vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (**1st March to 31st August Inclusive**) to avoid any impact on breeding birds. If vegetation clearance cannot be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season, a nesting bird check undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist should be undertaken immediately prior to works commencing. If an active birds' nest is identified a suitable buffer zone should be implemented where no works are to occur within until the young have fledged the nest.

Bats

The habitats on site provide **negligible** suitability for commuting and foraging bats

The habitats on site provide at negligible suitability for commuting and foraging bats and will require pre works checks undertaken by a suitably experience ecologist prior to works commencing.

No buildings are present within the site.

Badger

The site provides limited habitat for badger within the scrub and improved grassland.

As badgers are a mobile species is it recommended an **updated badger check of suitable habitats** (scrub and improved grassland) is undertaken prior to works commencing within the site to avoid harm to badger that may have moved into the habitats within the site. It is recommended that a **Badger**

Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) Method Statement is implemented during the works to avoid harm to this species. The RAMS should include:

- Construction materials stored on pallets so as not to create a badger refuge area; and
- Existing refuge areas (bramble scrub) should be removed by hand so badgers within are not harmed during their removal.

Reptiles

The site provides limited habitat for reptiles within the scrub and improved grassland.

These habitats are likely to be impacted by the proposals and therefore, it is recommended that a Hedgehog Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) Method Statement is implemented during the works to avoid harm to this species. The RAMS should include:

- Clearance of tall vegetation will be undertaken using a strimmer or brush cutter with all cuttings raked and removed the same day. Cutting will only be undertaken in a phased way which may either include: Cutting vegetation to a height of no less than 30mm, clearing no more than one third of the site in any one day or; Cutting vegetation over three consecutive days to a height of no less than 150mm at the first cut, 75mm at the second cut and 30mm at the third cut
- Any trenches left overnight will be covered to prevent animals falling into the trenches and being trapped. Excavations left overnight should be checked prior to filling. Any open pipes left overnight will be covered.

Invasive species

No non-native invasive species were identified during the walkover survey. As invasive species can colonise very quickly it is recommended that an **updated invasive species check** is undertaken prior to the start of works.

Small mammals

The site provides limited habitat for small mammals within the scrub and improved grassland.

These habitats are likely to be impacted by the proposals and therefore, it is recommended that a Hedgehog Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) Method Statement is implemented during the works to avoid harm to this species. The RAMS should include:

- Construction materials stored on pallets so as not to create a hedgehog refuge area; and
- Existing refuge areas (brash pile and bramble scrub) should be removed by hand so hedgehogs within are not harmed during their removal.
- Any trenches left overnight will be covered or provided with ramps to prevent animals falling into the trenches and being trapped. Excavations left overnight should be checked prior to filling. Any open pipes left overnight will be covered.

To enable hedgehog continued use of the site it is advised that gaps of at least 13cm by 13cm are left under any new garden fences to enable hedgehog to roam freely within the area following development. To mitigate for the loss of habitat that could be used by hibernating hedgehogs it is recommended that a hedgehog hibernaculum is provided within the landscaping.

5.3 Enhancements

In order to meet requirements for biodiversity protection and enhancement outlined within the NPPF, it is recommended that ecological enhancements are included. These could include:

- Retain, if possible, the existing trees to the south boundary;
- Provision of 3 bird boxes (25mm and 32mm entrance hole box, house sparrow terrace, swift box), attached to or integrated within retained or new buildings on site and/or within the existing trees to the south boundary.
- Provision of 2 bat features (e.g. Vivara Pro WoodStone Bat box or similar) attached to a retained or new tree on site or provision of a bat box (e.g. Vivara bat bricks or '*bird brick houses*' bat boxes) integrated within new or retained buildings; and
- Suitable landscaping incorporating species that provide a food or shelter resource to wildlife to include hawthorn, hazel, holly, blackthorn, field maple, dog rose and honeysuckle as hedgerow species and oak, alder, field maple, silver birch, crab apple, rowan and bird cherry as tree species
- Ensure gaps of at least 13cm by 13cm are left under any new garden fences to enable hedgehogs and other small mammals to roam freely within the area following development.

6.0 Conclusions

The site was subject to an extended phase one habitat survey. During the survey and following review of historical species records, it is considered that an impact on birds, reptiles and small mammals (i.e., hedgehog) are likely to occur in relation to the proposals for the site. The following recommendations have been made to avoid an impact on these species:

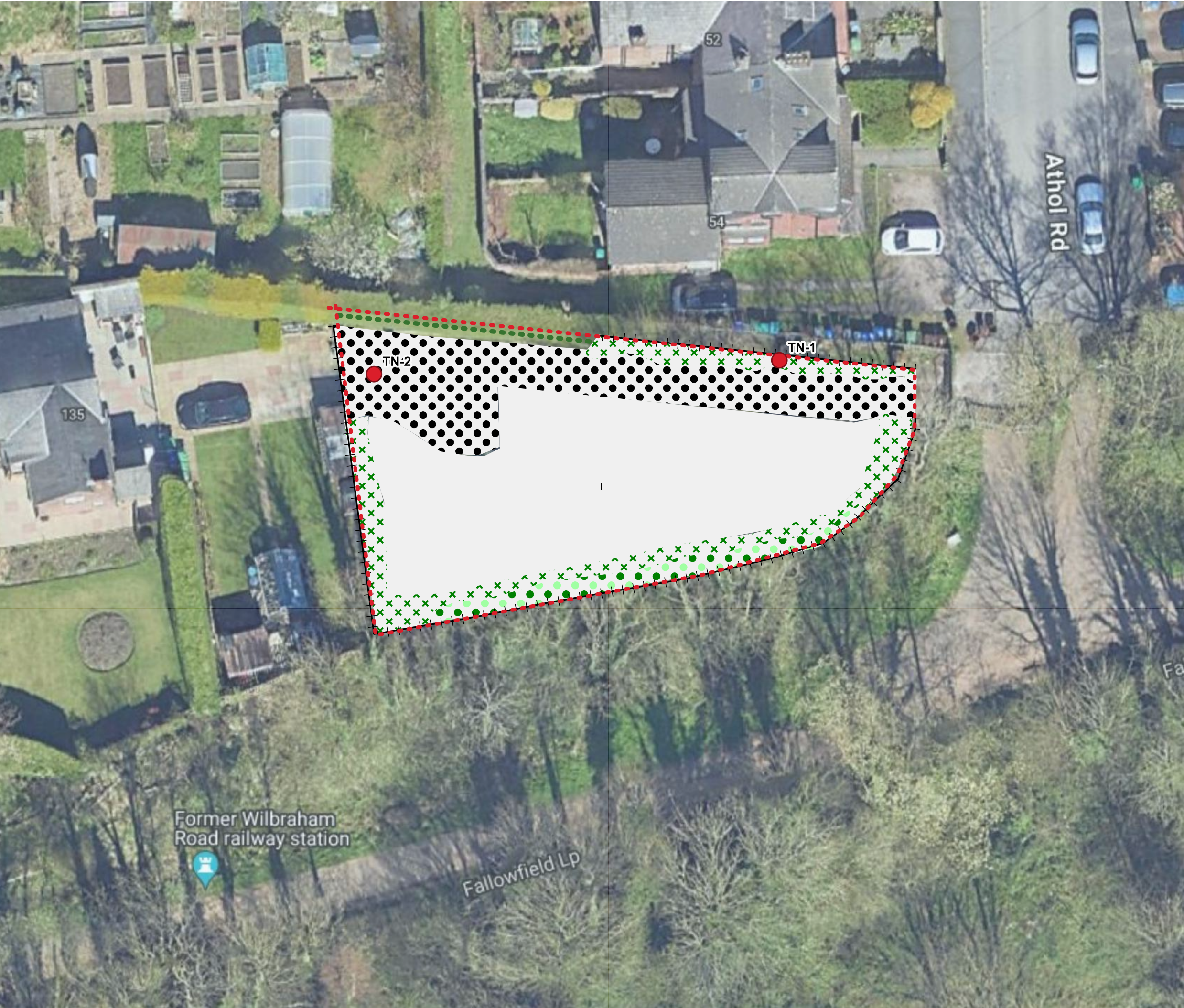
- If works have not begun by June 2026 an updated site visit will be required to assess the habitats within the site;
- Production and implementation of a small mammal (i.e. hedgehog) RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Production and implementation of a badger RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works.
- Production and implementation of an amphibian RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works.
- Precautionary check for badger prior to works commencing to assess if badgers are using the habitats within the site for shelter;
- Precautionary check for reptiles in the grassland and scrub prior to works commencing to assess if reptiles are using the habitats within the site and a;
- Two stage cutting routine when removing the improved grassland and scrub
- Precautionary check for invasive prior to works commencing;
- Retain existing trees on the site if possible
- Enhancing the site for species through appropriate landscape planting that includes native, species rich hedgerows, trees and areas of wildflowers plus provision of integrated bat and bird features within newly constructed buildings and existing trees;
- Vegetation clearance or pruning should be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (1st March to 31st August Inclusive) to avoid any impact on breeding birds. Or a nesting bird check undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist should be undertaken immediately prior to works commencing;

It is considered that there would be very limited impacts on the local ecology as a result of the proposals, provided the recommendations detailed within section 5.0 above are followed.

7.0 References

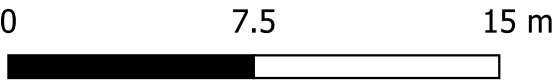
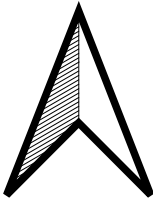
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Appendix 1



- Key
- Boundary
 - +++ J2.4 Fence
 - A3.3 - Mixed Parkland/scattered trees
 - ✕ A2.2 - Scrub - scattered
 - B4 - Improved grassland
 - J4 - Bare ground
 - J2.2 Intact Species Poor Hedge
 - Target Notes

Target Notes:
TN-1: Felled Trees
TN-2: Ditch



DO NOT SCALE.
ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID.
LOCATED TO NG BY BEST FIT TO DETAIL.
EXTRACTED FROM OS DIGITAL DATA.

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CLIENT:
Hassan Giwa

PROJECT:
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Land at Athol Road, Manchester, M16 8QN

DRAWING TITLE:
Phase One Habitat Map of Land at Athol Road

SCALE: NTS@A3	DRAWN BY: KL	DRAWING No: P.1984.24.E01
DATE: 27/06/2024	CHKD BY: AR	REV: -

Appendix 2

Appendix 2: Species Lists and Target Notes

Table 1: Flora Species

English Name	Scientific Name
Bird's-foot trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.
Broadleaved plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Clover	<i>Trifolium</i> sp.
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Cat grass	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Cut leaf cranesbill	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>
Common daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Crested dog's-tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>
Cypress	<i>Cupressus</i> sp.
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum</i> agg.
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>
Ground elder	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>
Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Hairy willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>
Hedgerow cranesbill	<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Leyland cypress	<i>Cupressus × leylandii</i>
Meadow grass	<i>Poa</i> sp.
Moss	<i>Bryophyta</i> sp.
Mugwort	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>
Narrow leaved meadow grass	<i>Poa angustifolia</i>
Pineapple weed	<i>Matricaria discoidea</i>
Perennial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Restharrow	<i>Ononis repens</i>
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Rose	<i>Rosa</i> sp.
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>
Spruce sp.	<i>Picea</i> sp.
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Sow thistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>
Vetch	<i>Vicia</i> sp.
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>

* **invasive species**

Table 2: Target Notes

Target Note Number	Description
TN1	Felled Trees
TN2	Ditch

Appendix 3

Appendix 3: Photographs

Table 3: Photographs of the site

	
Photograph 1: North-western aspect of the site, showing the gravel driveway and scattered scrub with grassland plants. TN-1 felled trees.	Photograph 2: South-west aspect of the site with improved grassland, gravel driveway and mature spruce trees.



Photograph 3: East aspect of the site, with scattered scrub, improved grassland and gravel driveway.



Photograph 4: West aspect of the site with a concrete fence, scattered scrub/ oriental plants and a brick ditch (TN-2)..



Photograph 5: West aspect of site with scattered scrub and wooden fence line.



Photograph 6: Young sycamore along the north boundary of the site with scattered scrub.



Photograph 7: improved grassland and spruce trees along the south boundary of the site.



Photograph 8: Metal fence line and scattered scrub along the north boundary, with entrance to site located to the east.

Appendix 4

Appendix 4: Relevant Legislation

European Legislation

The following Directives have been adopted by the European Union and provide protection for fauna and flora species of European importance and the habitats which support them:

- Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive);
- Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive).

UK Legislation

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into national legislation through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (The Habitats Regulations). This provides for the designation and protection of 'European Sites' (SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites, including proposed or potential European Sites) and the protection of 'European Protected Species'.

The key UK legislation relating to nature conservation is the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (W&C Act). This Act is supplemented, *inter alia*, by provision in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act). Additional species and habitat specific UK legislation includes the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

The Environment Act sets out how the UK will maintain environmental standards following leaving of the EU. The Bill builds on the vision of the 25 Year Environment Plan, with the ambition from the government to leave the environment in a better state than it was when inherited.

The Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric has implemented to work alongside the Environment Act. This tool calculates potential biodiversity impacts as a result of development and identifies mitigation and compensation requirements to ensure no net loss of biodiversity. In addition, it identifies measures that can be implemented in order to meet Biodiversity gain as a result of development. Defra released the Statutory biodiversity metric in November 2023. This metric is likely to be the default metric used by councils, with the most recent version to be submitted to support a planning application.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 has been published to provide further planning guidance. Wildlife, biodiversity and ecological networks are referred to in Section 15 '*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*'. The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and sites of biodiversity value, recognise the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services and minimising impacts on and provided net gains for biodiversity. Further guidance is provided within Government Circular 06/05: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System*.

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance are listed under section 41 of the NERC Act and are a material consideration in planning decisions. Planners require relevant, up to date information from ecological surveys in order to assess the effects of a proposed development on biodiversity as Councils have a statutory obligation under section 40 of the NERC Act to consider biodiversity conservation in the determination of planning applications.

Background information about the lists of priority habitats and species (Species and Habitats of Principal Importance) can be found within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). Although this has been succeeded by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework', many of UK BAP tools are still relevant. BAPs identify habitats and species of nature conservation priority on a UK (UK BAP) and Local (LBAP) scale. Most BAP priority habitats and species have Habitat Action Plans (HAP) and Species Action Plans (SAP) and there are also "grouped action plans" for groups of related species with similar conservation requirements. The LBAP relating to this site is the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan as well as the Biodiversity Strategy 2022-2030: City of Manchester's Nature Recovery.

Badgers

The legislation protecting badgers in England and Wales is the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 it is an offence *inter alia* to:

- Wilfully kill, injure or take a badger, or to attempt to do so;
- Cruelly ill-treat a badger; or
- Intentionally or recklessly interfere with a badger sett by (a) damaging a sett or any part of one; (b) destroying a sett; (c) obstructing access to or any entrance of a sett; (d) causing a dog to enter a sett; or (e) disturbing a badger when it is occupying a sett.

The Badger Act 1992 defines a badger's sett as "*any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger*"

Natural England can issue licences to enable works to continue that may affect a protected species. In relation to disturbance of badgers, Natural England (2009) gives guidelines on disturbance which will require a licence. These includes: "*using very heavy machinery (generally tracked vehicles) within 30 metres of any entrance to an active sett; using lighter machinery (generally wheeled vehicles), particularly for any digging operation, within 20 metres; light work such as hand digging or scrub clearance within 10 metres. There are some activities which may cause disturbance at greater distances (such as using explosives or pile driving) and these should be given individual consideration.*"

Bats

In England, all bats and their roosts are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Several species of bat are also highlighted as Priority Species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and within the Local BAP.

Under the current legislation as summarised on pages 9 and 10 of the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 4th Edition (2023) it is a criminal offence to:

“To kill, capture, injure or take a wild bat;

- To damage or destroy a place used by a bat for breeding or resting. All offences of this nature are identified within the Habitats Regulations. This offence is unique in that it can be committed accidentally. No element of intentional, reckless or deliberate action needs to be evidenced;*
- To disturb bats anywhere (roosts, flight lines or foraging areas) if levels of disturbance can be shown to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, to rear or nurture their young, to hibernate or migrate or to affect significantly local distribution or abundance;*
- To intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat, whilst it is occupying a place of shelter or protection;*
- To intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by a bat for shelter or protection; and*
- To be in possession or control of a bat alive or dead (or any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat, although bat droppings are generally considered to be acceptable), or to transport a bat, to sell or exchange a bat or to offer to sell or exchange a bat taken from the wild.”*

Breeding Birds

Breeding Birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act which make it an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built;*
- intentionally take or 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 (including eggs), which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954;*
- intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.*

Invasive Species

It is an offence under Section 14(2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to ‘plant or otherwise cause to grow’ in the wild any plant in Schedule 9 Part II.

Invertebrates

The site's suitability for supporting invertebrates was assessed during the site visit. This included making note of key plant species that could be used by notable invertebrates, together with incidental invertebrates recorded on the day.

It is a criminal offence to intentionally, wilfully kill, injure or take any of the aforementioned protected species or to destroy or disturb its habitat.

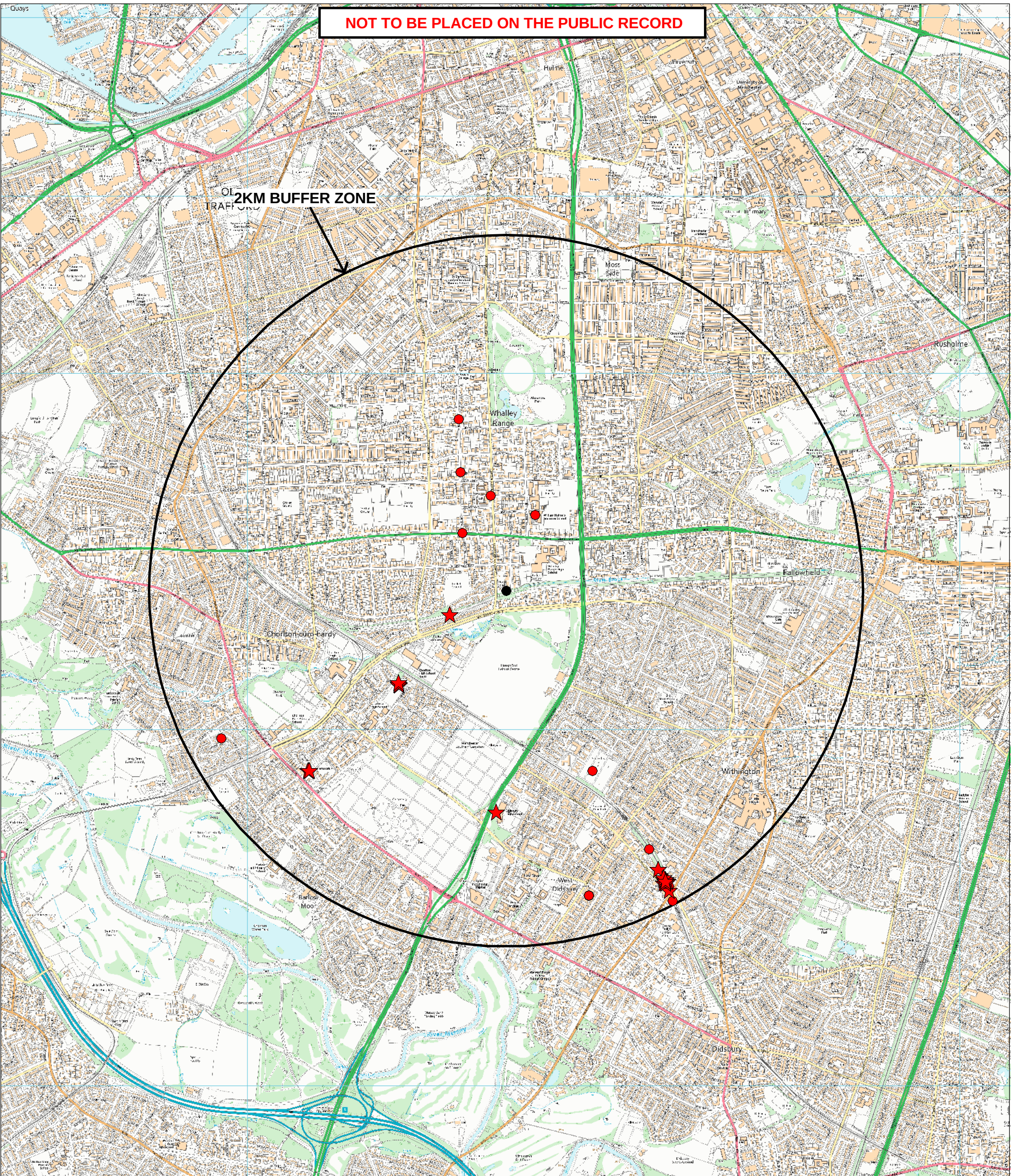
Local Policy

The site lies within Manchester and is covered by the Manchester Local Plan 2012-2027 (adopted 11 July 2012) and extant policies within the Unitary Development Plan. The policy of relevance is EN 15 within the Core Strategy document.

The site is also covered by the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 to 2039 (adopted March 2024). The policy of relevance is JP-G8 regarding Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

Appendix 5

NOT TO BE PLACED ON THE PUBLIC RECORD



KEY
BADGERS
★ SETTS
● OTHER SIGNS

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ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8345 9378
ATHOL ROAD - MAP 2
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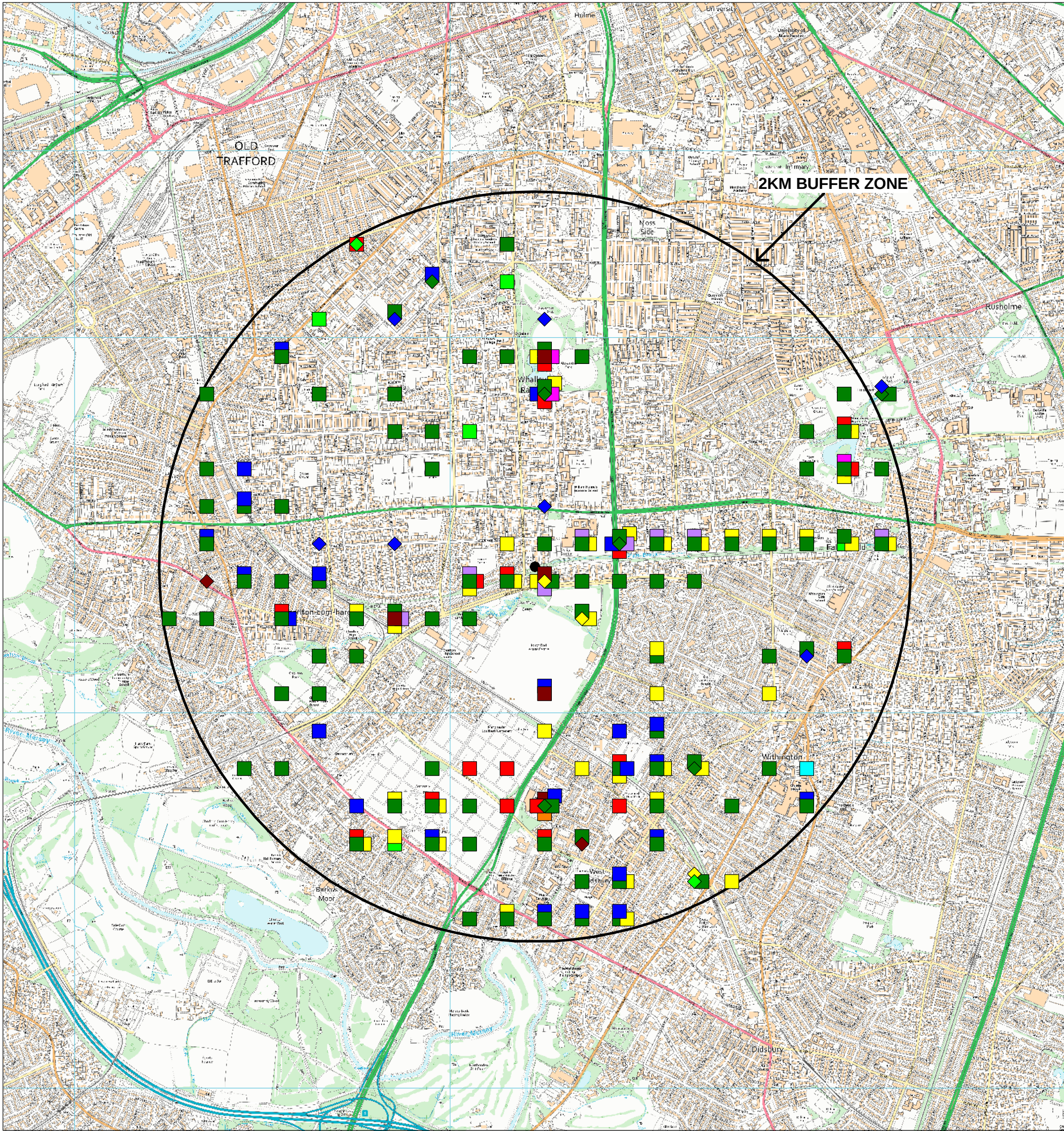
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KEY

BAT ROOSTS

- ◆ BAT SP
- ◆ BROWN LONG-EARED BAT
- ◆ COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- ◆ PIPISTRELLE SP
- ◆ SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE

BATS OTHER SIGNS

- BAT SP
- BROWN LONG-EARED BAT
- COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- DAUBENTON'S BAT
- MYOTIS SP
- NATTERER'S BAT
- NOCTULE BAT
- PIPISTRELLE SP
- SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE
- WHISKERED BAT

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8345 9378
ATHOL ROAD - MAP 3

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BAT DATA COURTESY OF SOUTH LANCS BAT GROUP

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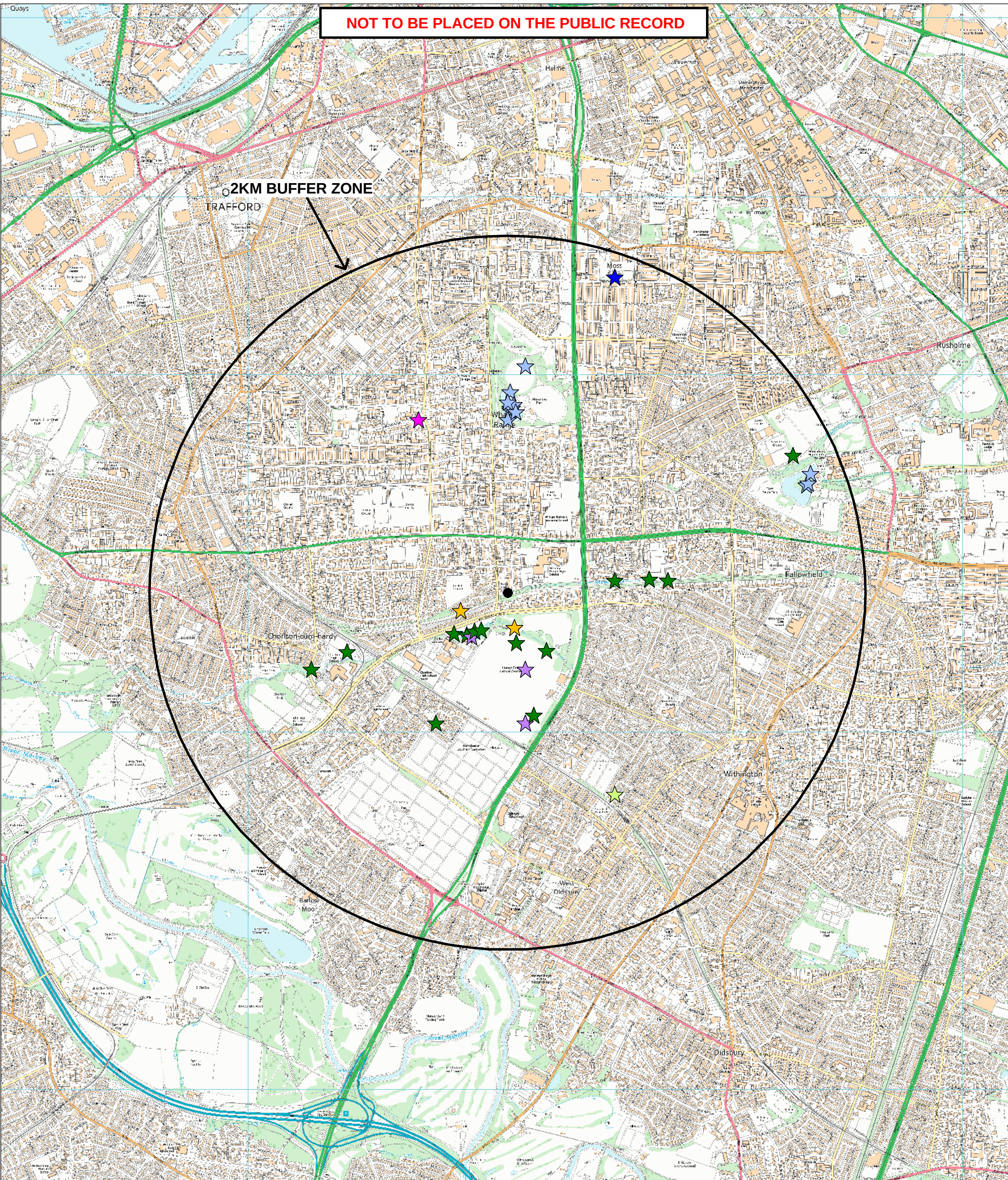


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KEY
PROTECTED SPECIES

- ★ BARN OWL
- ★ BLACK REDSTART
- ★ GRASS SNAKE
- ★ GREY HERON
- ★ HOBBY
- ★ KINGFISHER
- ★ PEREGRINE

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ATHOL ROAD - MAP 1

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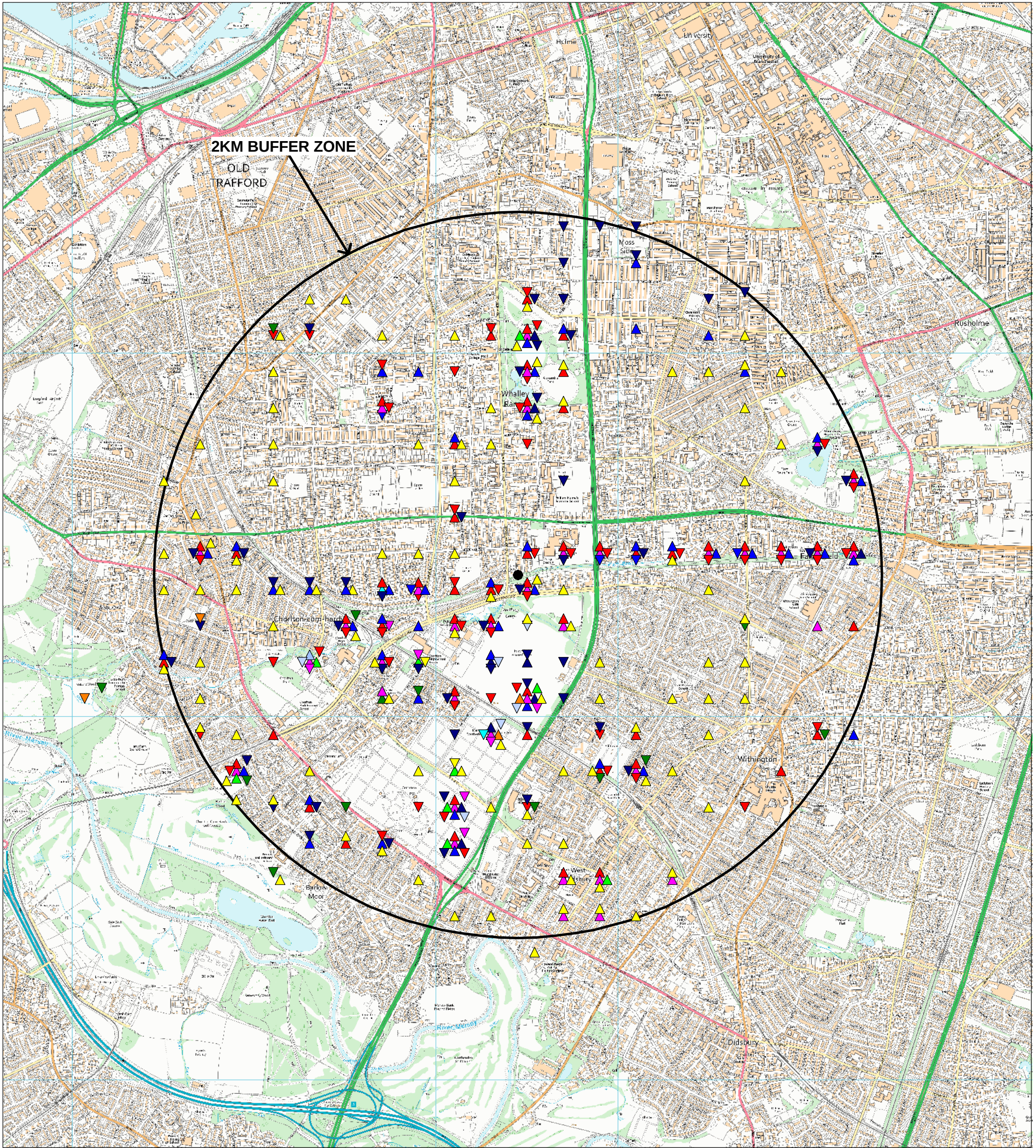
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GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8345 9378
ATHOL ROAD - MAP 4

SCALE 1:20,000



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Ecology Unit

KEY
SECTION 41 SPECIES

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| ▲ BULLFINCH | ▼ LINNET |
| ▲ COMMON REDPOLL | ▼ REED BUNTING |
| ▲ COMMON TOAD | ▼ S41 MOTH |
| ▲ CUCKOO | ▼ SKYLARK |
| ▲ DUNNOCK | ▼ SONG THRUSH |
| ▲ HEDGEHOG | ▼ SPOTTED FLYCATCHER |
| ▲ HERRING GULL | ▼ STARLING |
| ▲ HOUSE SPARROW | ▼ TREE SPARROW |
| ▲ LAPWING | ▼ WHITE-LETTER HAIRSTREAK |
| ▲ LESSER REDPOLL | |

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