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VAT REGISTRATION NO: 290 0603 30

For: Drees & Sommer

Site: Withington District Library, 410 Wilmslow Road, Old Moat, Manchester, M20 3BD

National Grid Reference: SJ85029323

Project No: PR-0370-24

Date of Issue: 15th November 2024

Re: Biodiversity Statement

Document Context

As part of a proposed planning application involving Withington District Library in Manchester, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd were commissioned by Drees & Sommer to undertake a site visit with the purpose of ascertaining the baseline value of the habitats on-site, to allow for the completion of a 'Biodiversity Statement'.

Proposals entail the decarbonisation of the site through the incorporation of an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) which will be placed within the car park, alongside the replacement of doors and windows.

Assessment Methodology

The site was attended on 30th October 2024 by the following surveyor:

Table 1 – Surveyor Credentials

Name	Description of most relevant credentials
Mr. H. Mulligan Qualifying CIEEM	• Consultant Ecologist with 2 years training and experience, • MBiolSci in Biological Sciences (Zoology), • Accredited agent on the Natural England Great Crested Newt: CL08 Class 1 licence (2022-10604-CL08-GCN) of Mr. D. Burrows Qualifying CIEEM, • Accredited agent on the Natural England Class 2 bat license of Mrs K Wilding CEnv MIEMA ACIEEM (CLS-14227), • Holder of a FISC Level 3 (2023) (Botanical competency), • Meets the requirements of CIEEM's Competency Framework Section S (Surveying) to Capable level.

The survey followed the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHabs, 2023) methodology, which was introduced as the successor to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Phase 1 Habitat Methodology standards (JNCC, 2010) in conjunction with the nationwide roll out of Biodiversity Net Gain. Survey techniques were also carried out with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Technical Guidance Series "Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd Edition" (CIEEM, 2017).

Assessment of baseline Area Habitat / Hedgerow / Watercourse units have been carried out and assessed separately in accordance with the guidance, principles, and rules – where present on site.

Measurement of habitats was carried out using a combination of desktop software – QGIS, Google Earth and MAGiC Maps 2023/24, whilst physical habitat measurements were also taken in the field during ground truthing, where necessary.

The optimal time of the year to carry out a UK Habitats survey is April to October; the survey was therefore carried out within an optimal period.

The Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilot (Draft) provides information pertaining to the application of strategic significance to areas and habitats within Greater Manchester. Based upon this, the site does not appear to fall within any areas designated for nature recovery.

The Manchester City Council 'Interactive Proposals Map', which displays spatial data for policies and land use priorities in accordance with the Core Strategy and Unitary Development Plan, was also accessed and used to assess the strategic significance of habitats present within the site; based upon this data, the site lies within no areas specially designated for nature or biodiversity.

The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GMBAP) was also accessed to assist with determining the strategic significance of on-site habitats, though no priority habitats listed on the GMBAP were recorded within the site.

Based on the combination of the above, all habitats within the site have been considered to fall within the 'Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy' category.

Desk Study

The site of the proposed works is situated at the junction of Wilmslow Road and Wellington Road in south Manchester, approximately 4.8 kilometres south of the city centre. The site broadly comprises a large library building, with associated access and carparking.

The immediate environment is entirely sub-urban in nature, with land use in all directions dominated by business premises alongside terraced and semi-detached dwellings with associated landscaped gardens featuring individual trees. Semi-natural habitats in proximity to the site are limited to these garden habitats alongside scattered areas of urban green space.

Given the habitats surrounding the site, faunal species in the immediate environment are likely limited to those adapted to urbanisation and common garden species, including bird species such as house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), house martin (*Delichon urbicum*) and swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), bat species such as common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), and hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*).

Habitat Survey & BNG Baseline Summary

See **Table 2** (overleaf) for baseline information and habitat descriptions; refer to **Appendix I** for any supporting imagery. Refer to **Appendix II** – UK Habitats Map for the location of described habitats.

Table 2 – UK Habitat types within the survey area

Area habitat	Sec. Codes	Description
u1b5 Buildings Habitat Ref.: 1	-	The library building present within the site boundary.
		Condition: N/A Habitat Area: 0.0684 ha Strategic Significance: Area / compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy
u1b6 Other developed land Habitat Ref.: 2	-	Paved hardstanding is present surrounding the building, alongside a small car park to the rear. This surface is typically non-vegetated with minimal biodiversity value, with only small, scattered areas of ruderal vegetation growing through such as herb-Robert, prickly sow-thistle and perennial ryegrass covering approximately 2% of the parcel.
		Condition: N/A Habitat Area: 0.0230 ha Strategic Significance: Area / compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy

Biodiversity Statement

Based on the information gathered during the diurnal assessment, the site is host to the following biodiversity value:

- Habitat: **0.00**
- Hedgerow: **0.00**
- Watercourse: **0.00**

As such, Withington District Library is likely **exempt** from the Biodiversity Gain Planning Condition under the de minimis exemption; the installation of the ASHP will not impact on any priority habitats, and less than 25m² of area habitat on-site will be affected (no watercourse or hedgerow units are present).

This should be read in conjunction with the hard copy of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric tool – see external Appendix.

In Conclusion

Relative to the above, the protocol has been determined using the collective and long-standing experience of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd and the specific nature of the site. Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd can confirm that the contents of this document have been reviewed and approved by Mrs. K. Wilding, Director of the company and experienced Ecologist of 15 years, and her assessment is consistent with that of Mr. Mulligan.

The contents of this document can be relied upon and have been presented in accordance with best practice guidance, and all available survey data at the site to date.

Kind regards,

H. Mulligan

Mr. H. Mulligan (Consultant Ecologist) (15/11/2024)

Appendix I: Site Photographs



Plate 1 – *Withington Library as seen from the west*



Plate 2 – *Hardstanding rear car park*



Plate 3 – *Example of ruderal vegetation*

Appendix II: UK Habitats Map

