



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

Former Greenfinch Public House, Manchester

Reference:81-565-R1-1

Date: October 2023



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL REPORT

Former Greenfinch Public House
Manchester

Prepared for:
Planning Issues Limited

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Site Address	Former Greenfinch Public House, Lapwing Lane, West Didsbury, Manchester, M20 3ZA
Coordinates	E 384321, N 392081
Site Area	Approximately 0.3 ha
Current Site Use and Adjacent Site Use	The site predominantly comprised hardstanding associated with the former Greenfinch Public House car park. Lapwing Lane and Palatine Road define the site's north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries respectively, residential housing surrounds the site to the west. An active tramline is located approximately 20 m east of the site.
Designated Sites	No statutory or non-statutory designated sites are located within 1 km of the site boundary. The site is also not located within the Impact Risk Zone of any Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). As such, no further action is required in relation to designated sites.
Survey Results	<p>The site was found to comprise hedgerow, amenity grassland, bare ground, dense scrub, hardstanding, introduced shrub, and scattered trees.</p> <p>The site was found to have the following potential ecological constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✿ Potential presence of common amphibians within the hedgerow, dense scrub, and introduced shrub.✿ Some, although limited, foraging opportunities for bats along the scattered trees, dense scrub, introduced shrub and hedgerow.✿ Potential presence of badgers within the local area.✿ Potential presence of hedgehogs within the dense scrub, introduced shrub, amenity grassland, hedgerow, and base of scattered trees.✿ Potential for nesting birds in the hedgerow, scattered trees, dense scrub and introduced shrub.✿ Small-leaved cotoneaster was identified on-site during the survey.



Conclusions

No further surveys are recommended to inform a planning application.

The following mitigation is recommended:

-  Common amphibians are to be removed by hand from the working area during the clearance of any vegetation.
-  Precautionary Working Methods for badger.
-  Vegetation should be retained where possible. If any vegetation requires removal, it should be removed outside of the breeding bird season (March to September inclusive). If this is not possible, a nesting bird check should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist up to 24 hrs before works commence. If a nest, or nest in construction, is located, then a stand-off distance should be maintained until the young have fledged.
-  Vegetation should be retained where possible. If any scrub requires clearance, this should be trimmed to 50 cm and checked for hedgehog prior to clearance to ground level. If trees are removed, their bases should be checked, prior to removal, for sheltering hedgehogs. It is recommended that any vegetation clearance takes place outside of December-March to avoid impacting hibernating hedgehogs.
-  Eradication of invasive species prior to works commencing on-site.

A gain in biodiversity will be required on-site. If this cannot be achieved on-site, a conservation offset payment, or offsite compensation may be required.



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

E3P were commissioned by Planning Issues Limited to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal at the Former Greenfinch Public House, Manchester, hereafter referred to as “the site”.

This report has been prepared by Ciara Bass BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist at E3P. Ciara holds a qualifying CIEEM membership and has experience undertaking Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, protected species surveys and ecological mitigation for a wide variety of projects across the UK.

1.2. PREVIOUS SURVEYS

1.2.1. RACHEL HACKING ECOLOGY (2021)

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Daytime Bat Survey was undertaken at the site by Rachel Hacking Ecology in 2021, based on a larger red-edge application boundary. The site was found to comprise two buildings, bare ground, amenity grassland, introduced shrub, scattered trees and hedgerow, with the potential to support nesting birds and foraging bats. The adjacent public house building, which has since been partially demolished and converted into office space, was assessed as having Negligible bat roosting potential. A structure to the south of the public house, which has since been demolished, was also found to have Negligible bat roosting potential.

1.2.2. TETRA TECH (2023)

A Due Diligence Report was published by Tetra Tech (2023), which comprised a desk study of the site and a review of the results of an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Daytime Bat Survey undertaken by Rachel Hacking Ecology in 2021. The report found that the site may have the potential to support foraging and roosting bats and nesting birds, and recommended that an updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken to assess the suitability of the site for protected species and confirm the suitability of the buildings and trees for roosting bats and nesting birds.

1.3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

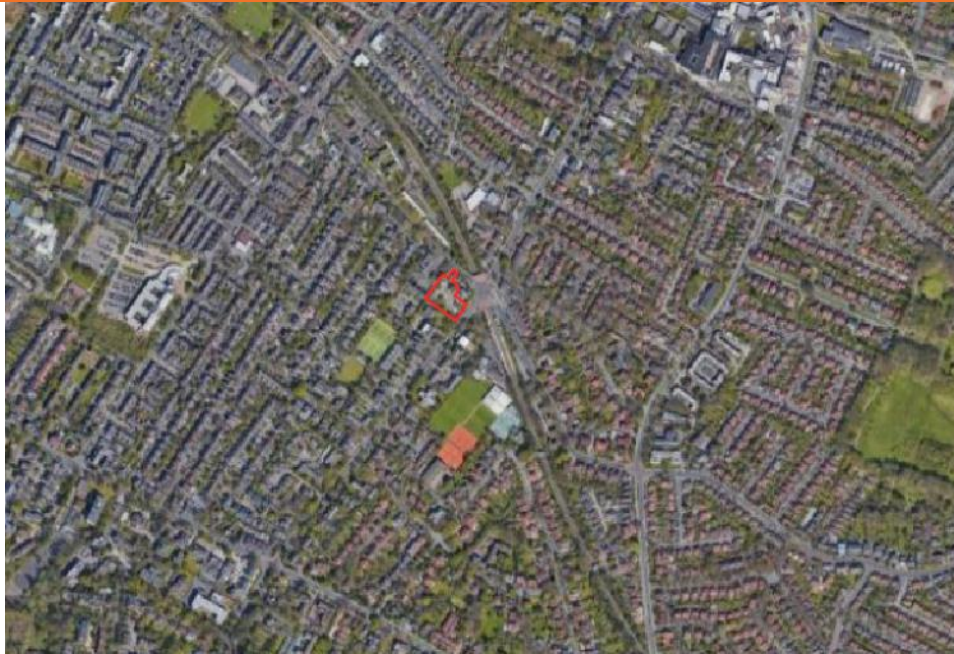
Development proposals were not available at the time of writing. At the time of the site visit, refurbishment works were being undertaken on the adjacent Former Greenfinch Public House.

1.4. SITE LOCATION

The site is located in West Didsbury, within a predominantly urban area. Lapwing Lane and Palatine Road define the site's north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries respectively, whilst residential housing surrounds the site to the west. An active tramline is located approximately 20 m east of the site. The Northern Tennis Club is located approximately 20 m south-east of the site. Fog Lane Park is located approximately 700 m east of the site. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the approximate site location.



FIGURE 1.1 APPROXIMATE SITE LOCATION



1.5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal are as follows:

- ✳ Identify the major habitats present.
- ✳ Ascertain the presence or potential presence of any legally protected species and habitats.
- ✳ Recommend any further surveys or mitigation that may be required.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal comprises a desk study and site walkover. This survey has been completed as a baseline assessment of the site, and as such please see the end of the report for further surveys and mitigation proposed.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. DESKTOP STUDY

The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:

- ✳ MAGIC – A web-based interactive mapping system, on which geographic information regarding key environmental schemes and designations are collated, including details of statutory conservation sites, accessed October 2023.
- ✳ Aerial mapping and ordnance survey maps.
- ✳ Local data records from the past 10 years provided by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) on 24th October 2023.

A 1 km search area was utilised for the data search, with this being deemed an appropriate distance for the Zone of Influence of the site. The 1 km search was selected due to the size of the site and the urban nature of the site and surrounding area.

The data search included the request for details of protected and notable species of flora and fauna within 1 km of the central grid reference of the site. In addition, a request was made for any non-statutory designated sites within 1 km of the site boundary.

Please note that a lack of up-to-date records does not confirm absence of a species from the area. Lack of records may simply be a result of a lack of protected species surveys being undertaken within the local area.

2.2. VEGETATION AND HABITATS

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the proposed development site was undertaken by Ciara Bass on 25th October 2023. The weather was dry, still, and sunny.

The walkover survey was undertaken to the standard methodology as detailed by the JNCC Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey, 2010. The assessment follows the methodology as per "Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal" (CIEEM, 2017).

A vegetation and habitat plan has been produced for the proposed development site and the immediate surrounding area (please refer to Appendix I). The mapping is based on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Phase I Habitat Survey Methodology (JNCC 2010).

Searches were made for uncommon, rare, and statutorily protected plant species, those species listed as protected in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and species which are indicators of important and uncommon plant communities. All plant nomenclature follows Stace (2019).

Searches were carried out for the presence of invasive species, including those listed on the revised (April 2010) Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) including Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).



2.3. FAUNA

A thorough search of the site for signs of protected species of fauna was undertaken during the site walkover. These searches considered the following:

- ✦ Suitability of any ponds to support notable 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.
- ✦ Signs of badgers (*Meles meles*), by way of setts, mammal paths, foraging signs or latrines to indicate usage of the site by the species.
- ✦ Search of any watercourses for signs or suitability for water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and otter (*Lutra lutra*) by way of burrows, resting places, holts and foraging signs.
- ✦ Suitability of the site to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.
- ✦ Suitability of the site to support notable bird species.
- ✦ Suitability of the site to support notable invertebrates.
- ✦ Search of the site for any invasive species.

2.4. PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken by Ciara Bass on 25th October 2023.

The survey involved undertaking a systematic search of the trees, searching for signs of bats, or spaces where bats would be able to access. The methodology followed that described in *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, 4th Edition (Collins, 2023)*.

The trees were categorised for their bat roosting potential as described in Table 2.1 in accordance with Collins (2023).

TABLE 2.1 BAT ROOSTING POTENTIAL CLASSIFICATION OF TREES

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

2.5. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal does not constitute a full botanical survey. Instead, key species are identified to give a representative description of each habitat type.



This survey was undertaken in October and as a result of seasonal vegetation die back, it is possible that some species of flora may have been missed or misidentified, including some invasive/non-native species. However, due to the urban nature of the habitats on site and the limited vegetation diversity, this is not considered to be a major constraint.

Access to all areas within 30 m of the site was not possible due to the presence of private residential land to the north and south. However, due to the urban nature of these habitats, this is not considered to be a significant constraint.

These constraints have been taken into consideration during the assessment.



3. SURVEY RESULTS

3.1. SITE CONTEXT

The site, which predominantly comprises hardstanding associated with the Former Greenfinch Public House and an associated car park, is anticipated to provide minimal ecological value. However, trees are present on site, which may offer foraging opportunities for local bat and bird species.

The surrounding area predominantly comprises residential developments, including housing and associated amenities, which due to their urban built-up nature, these areas are anticipated to provide minimal opportunities for local wildlife. However, an active tramline, lined by trees and shrub, is located approximately 20 m east of the site. The tramline and adjacent woodland is anticipated to form a key commuting feature for local fauna, including birds, terrestrial mammals, including bats and badgers, and potentially reptiles, providing connectivity to habitats further afield.

The River Mersey is located approximately 930 m south-west of the site at its closest point. This is likely to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for a variety of local fauna, including those that specialise feeding along aquatic habitats, such as otter and Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*). The river also connects to several Deciduous Woodland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats, which are anticipated to provide valuable foraging, shelter, and commuting opportunities for a range of species, including birds, bats, and terrestrial mammals. A number Deciduous Woodland habitats are located within 1 km of the site, the closest of which is located approximately 730 m east, associated with Fog Lane Park. However, the River Mersey and the areas of Deciduous Woodland within 1 km lack connectivity to the site, due to the lack of habitat corridors within the urban built-up land that separates them from the site. As such, species are unlikely to commute from these areas to the site.

No waterbodies were identified on site or within 250 m of the site boundary.

3.2. DESIGNATED SITES

No statutory or non-statutory designated sites are located within 1 km of the site boundary. The site is also not located within the Impact Risk Zone of any Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). As such, no further action is required in relation to designated sites.

3.3. HABITATS

The main habitats encountered during the survey are described in the following subsections. Please refer to Appendix I for the Phase 1 Habitat Plan.

3.3.1. HARDSTANDING

The site predominantly comprised a hardstanding tarmac car park. A gravel area was also present in the north of the site, where part of the Former Greenfinch Public House had previously been located. The hardstanding was generally well sealed, although colonised in places by willowherb species (*Epilobium* sp.), ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), wood avens (*Geum urbanum*), and Canadian fleabane (*Erigeron canadensis*).



PLATE 1 SHOWING AREA OF HARDSTANDING



3.3.2. AMENITY GRASSLAND

Small areas of amenity grassland were identified on site, with species present including smooth sow-thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), false oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Canadian fleabane, herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), ragwort, willowherb species, wood avens, white clover (*Trifolium repens*), and silver birch saplings (*Betula pendula*).

PLATE 2 SHOWING AMENITY GRASSLAND



3.3.3. BARE GROUND

Bare ground was present within the east of the site, comprising disturbed land associated with former hard works. Small areas were also present along the site's southern boundary. The ground was colonised by species including creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), smooth sow-thistle, ivy, bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), ragwort, oak species saplings (*Quercus* sp.), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), evergreen spindle (*Euonymus japonicus*), wood avens, false-oat grass, and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*).

PLATE 3 SHOWING BARE GROUND



3.3.4. INTRODUCED SHRUB

Introduced shrub extended along the site's southern and western boundaries. This was dominated by cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerus*), willow-leaved cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster salicifolius*) and old man's beard (*Clematis vitalba*), with coral berry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*), firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*), bramble, silver birch saplings, sycamore saplings (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*), ash saplings (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Jerusalem sage (*Phlomis fruticosa*), cypress species (*Chamaecyparis/Cupressocyparis* sp.) and spotted laurel (*Aucuba japonica*) also present. Another area of introduced shrub, which was dominated by small-leaved cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster microphyllus*), was located within the centre of the site.



PLATE 4 SHOWING INTRODUCED SHRUB



3.3.5. **DENSE SCRUB**

A small area of dense scrub was present along the site's western boundary, predominantly comprising sycamore, bramble, and ash, with rowan (*Sorbus acuparia*), cherry laurel, and old man's beard also present.

PLATE 4 SHOWING DENSE SCRUB



3.3.6. SCATTERED TREES

A number of scattered trees were present along the site boundaries. Species included weeping willow (*Salix babylonica*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), lime (*Tilia x europaea*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), holly, sycamore, cypress species, ash, silver birch, and whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*).

PLATE 6 SHOWING SCATTERED TREES



3.3.7. HEDGEROW

Two hedgerows were present in the north of the site. Please see Table 3.1 for further detail of these features.

TABLE 3.1 HEDGEROW DESCRIPTIONS

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
H1	Hedgerow 1 (H1) comprised an ornamental hedgerow dominated by cypress species, with ash saplings, willow leaved cotoneaster, cherry laurel and sycamore saplings also present. The hedgerow was approximately 3 m tall and 2 m wide.	



REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
H2	Hedgerow 2 (H2) comprised an ornamental hedgerow dominated by firethorn, with small-leaved cotoneaster, ash saplings, oak saplings, and sycamore saplings also present. The hedgerow was approximately 2 m tall and 0.25 m wide.	

3.4. PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES

3.4.1. AMPHIBIANS

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) with the 1 km search area.

Consultation with MAGIC did not identify any great crested newt European Protected Species Licences within 1 km of the site boundary. The closest licence was located approximately 6.2 km south-east of the site, active between 2014 and 2020 for the damage and destruction of a great crested newt non-breeding site.

Great crested newts' upper dispersal limit is generally considered to be up to 250 m from a waterbody (though occurrence of greater distances does exist where habitat connectivity is of high quality) (English Nature, 2001). No waterbodies were identified on site or within 250 m of the site boundary, and as such great crested newts have been reasonably discounted from further assessment.

No records of other common amphibians were identified within the 1 km search area. Much of the site comprised poor-quality habitat for amphibians, due to the expanse of hardstanding, bare ground and amenity grassland. However, the introduced shrub, dense scrub and hedgerow are expected to provide suitable shelter and protection from predators to support small numbers of the species group within their terrestrial phase. As such, common amphibians may be present on site.

3.4.2. BATS

Consultation with GMEU identified numerous records of bats within 1 km of the site boundary, including common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus sp.*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), and whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*) bat species. The closest record comprised common pipistrelle and pipistrelle species located approximately 290 m south-west of the site within a residential area.

MAGIC Mapping identified the presence of multiple Natural England Bat Mitigation Licences located within 1 km of the site boundary, which are summarised in Table 3.2.



TABLE 3.2 NATURAL ENGLAND BAT MITIGATION LICENSES WITHIN 1 KM OF SITE

LICENCE REFERENCE	PROXIMITY TO SITE	DESCRIPTION
2015-13055-EPS-MIT	Approximately 500 m north-west	Active between 2015 and 2020 for the destruction of a common pipistrelle non-breeding roost.
2015-13055-EPS-MIT-1	Approximately 500 m north	Active between 2015 and 2020 for the destruction of a common pipistrelle non-breeding roost.
2015-18385-EPS-BDX	Approximately 520 m south	Active in 2016 for the damage and destruction of soprano pipistrelle non-breeding and breeding roosts.
2018-38076-EPS-MIT	Approximately 560 m north	Active between 2018 and 2019 for the destruction of a common pipistrelle non-breeding roost.
EPSF2011-2990	Approximately 630 m south-west	Active between 2011 and 2013 for the destruction of common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle non-breeding and breeding roost.
EPSM2010-2649	Approximately 850 m south	Active between 2011 and 2014 for the destruction of common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle non-breeding roost.

A number of trees were located within the site boundary which were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats, as detailed in Collins (2023). All of the trees were assessed as having Negligible bat roosting potential due to a lack of maturity and/or potential roosting features.

Much of the site is anticipated to have limited foraging value for bats due to the large expanse of hardstanding, bare ground and amenity grassland. However, the scattered tress, dense scrub, introduced shrub and hedgerow are likely to attract some invertebrate prey for the species and in turn provide some foraging value. Linear features such as hedgerow can form important commuting features for bats, offering habitat corridors throughout the wider landscape. However, the urban nature of the site and adjacent area limits the commuting value of the hedgerow on site. Local bat species are anticipated to use higher quality foraging and commuting habitat within the wider area, most notably broadleaved woodland associated with an active tramline located approximately 20 m east of the site.

3.4.3. BADGER

Consultation with GMEU identified records of badger within 1 km of the site boundary. No badger setts or field signs of badger were located on-site or within 30 m of the site boundary where access was possible.

The majority of the site comprises poor quality habitat for badgers, due to the expanse of hardstanding. However, the bare ground, amenity grassland, introduced shrub, dense scrub, and hedgerow may offer some foraging opportunities for the species.

3.4.4. OTHER TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS

Numerous records of European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) were located within 1 km of the site boundary. The closest was located approximately 20 m north of the site, associated with the tramline.

The site was assessed as providing suitable refuge and foraging habitat for hedgehogs with the hedgerow, amenity grassland, dense scrub, introduced shrub and the base of scattered trees. The hedgerow, introduced shrub and dense scrub may also offer suitable hibernation opportunities for the species.



3.4.5. OTTER AND WATER VOLE

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of otter or water vole within the 1 km search area.

No watercourses are present within the site boundary. The closest watercourse comprises the River Mersey, located approximately 930 m south-west of the site at its closest point. Due to a lack of suitable aquatic habitat for otter and water vole within and adjacent to the site, both species have been ruled out of further assessment.

3.4.6. BREEDING BIRDS

Consultation with GMEU identified records of barn owl (*Tyto alba*), kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), dunnoek (*Prunella modularis*), grey-headed wagtail (*Motacilla flava*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), lesser redpoll (*Acanthis cabaret*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), and starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) within the search area.

Common and notable bird species are anticipated to be present within the scattered trees, dense scrub, introduced shrub and hedgerow on-site. The site is assessed as having negligible value for ground nesting birds due to the poor quality and exposed nature of the hardstanding, bare ground and amenity grassland habitats that dominate the site. Additionally, hedgerow and scattered trees present on and adjacent to the site could support perching predators, further reducing the site's suitability for ground-nesting bird species.

3.4.7. REPTILES

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any recent records of reptiles within the search area.

The introduced shrub, dense scrub, and hedgerow understory may provide some shelter for reptiles. However, the site lacks the habitat structure and quality to support a high number of the species group. Additionally, the land adjacent to the site on all aspects comprises poor quality habitat for the species group due to its urban, built-up nature. Reptiles may be present along the tramline and associated broadleaved woodland approximately 20 m east of the site, which connect to allotments approximately 620 m north-west of the site. However, it is unlikely that they would disperse from the tramline to the site, due to the presence of the busy Lapwing Lane, which separates the tramline from the site. Considering this, as well as the lack of records within 1 km of the site, reptiles are not considered to be present on site and have been reasonably discounted from further assessment.

3.4.8. INVERTEBRATES

The data search identified records of cinnabar (*Tyria jacobaea*) within the 1 km search area. The closest of these was located approximately 620 m north-west of the site, associated with an allotment.

The site is unlikely to support notable invertebrates due to its urban setting and the lack of floristic diversity.

3.5. INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of invasive plant species within the 1 km search area.

Small-leaved cotoneaster was identified on-site during the survey.



4. ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATION

4.1. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Development proposals were not available at the time of writing. At the time of the site visit, refurbishment works were being undertaken on the adjacent Former Greenfinch Public House.

4.2. HABITATS

The site comprises habitats that were found to be widespread within the local area; however, they did contain value for wildlife such as common amphibians, bats, birds, and terrestrial mammals. The hardstanding is of lowest value for wildlife, with the hedgerow, scattered trees, introduced shrub and dense scrub comprising the areas of highest value.

4.2.1. HEDGEROW AND SCATTERED TREES

It is recommended that, where possible, the scattered trees and hedgerow are retained and protected throughout development. If any of these habitats are removed, they should be replaced as soon as practicable. Any replacement planting should endeavour to be on the same aspect as that lost. If the hedgerow is to be removed, it should be replaced as soon as practicable using lengths of more valuable hedgerow.

It is recommended that the landscape planting comprises native species and species known to be of value for the attraction of wildlife. This will include fruiting and flowering species. Species deemed suitable for this development could include berry-bearing native species such as:

-  Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).
-  Rowan.
-  Holly.
-  Whitebeam.
-  Spindle (*Euonymus europaea*).
-  Dog rose (*Rosa canina*).
-  Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*).
-  Elder (*Sambucus nigra*).

All planting should be from a trusted pest-free source and, where possible, be of local provenance.

Any trees or shrubs within the site or boundary, to be retained, are to be appropriately protected during the construction phase. Temporary protective demarcation fencing will be used 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.

The fencing will be in accordance with BS 5837:2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations*.



4.3. PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES

4.3.1. AMPHIBIANS

The site may support small numbers of common amphibians within the introduced shrub, dense scrub, and hedgerow habitats on-site. It is recommended that during the clearance phase of works, any common amphibians encountered be moved by hand, away from construction activities.

4.3.2. BREEDING BIRDS

The site was assessed as having value for birds within the introduced shrub, dense scrub, scattered trees and hedgerow on-site. It is recommended that these areas are retained and enhanced where possible.

Should any vegetation require removal, it should be removed outside of the breeding bird season (March to September inclusive). If this is not possible, a nesting bird check will be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 24 hours before works commence. If a nest, or nest in construction, is located then a stand-off distance will be maintained until the young have fledged. The ecologist will advise on suitable stand-off and provide a toolbox talk to all site contractors regarding their working limits and legal implications.

Post-development, bird boxes should be installed throughout the development to enhance the site's value for the species group.

4.3.3. BATS

The site was also found to have some, although limited, foraging value for bats amongst the introduced shrub, dense scrub, scattered trees and hedgerow.

It is recommended that any planting within the site be of native fruiting/flowering species in order to enhance the site for foraging bats post-completion. Bat boxes could be installed throughout the site post-construction to enhance the site for the species group.

4.3.4. BADGERS

No badger setts were located during the survey, though the habitats were identified as being suitable for the species and records were present within the local area. The following precautionary working methods should be adhered to during construction phase to ensure that no badgers within the local area are impacted by the proposed development:

-  All site operatives will be inducted to the presence of the species and their working limits and legal responsibilities.
-  All site operatives will be inducted as to identifying potential badger setts and should be vigilant if they suspect they locate a new sett during works and inform the project ecologist immediately.
-  All excavations will be battened at a 45-degree angle to allow escape should animals become trapped. Alternatively, they will be covered, or a ramp installed.
-  All site machinery and materials will be appropriately stored to avoid harm to the species, notably between July and November each year when extra care is needed to avoid potential impacts on pregnant females.



It is not anticipated that the development will have a significant negative impact on badgers within the local area.

4.3.5. HEDGEHOGS

The site was assessed as providing suitable refuge, foraging opportunities within hedgerow, amenity grassland, dense scrub, introduced shrub and the base of scattered trees, with hibernation opportunities also within the introduced shrub, dense scrub, and hedgerow. These habitats should be retained where possible. If any vegetation requires clearance, it should be strimmed to 50 cm and checked for hedgehog prior to clearance to ground level. If trees are removed, their bases should be checked, prior to removal, for sheltering hedgehogs. It is recommended that any clearance takes place outside of December-March to avoid impacting hibernating hedgehogs.

4.4. INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

Small-leaved cotoneaster was identified on site during the survey. It is recommended, prior to the development, that this is eradicated following the most current guidance set out by the Environment Agency by a qualified contractor.



5. FURTHER SURVEYS

No further surveys are recommended to inform a planning application.



6. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The scheme should strive to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity. In line with The Environment Act 2021, this will be a mandatory requirement from January 2024. However, should the proposals outline the development of 9 or less residential dwellings, or comprise a non-residential scheme, it will qualify as a 'small site' and fall below the threshold for mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain as effective from January 2024. The mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain is expected to be introduced for small sites in April 2024. The development should nevertheless aim to enhance existing biodiversity in line with local plan policy. Full details of this and a calculation of net gain could be finalised after detailed landscape plans have been prepared, or a draft could be produced to inform landscaping. It is recommended that an ecologist is consulted during the design stage to ensure, where possible, biodiversity net gain can be achieved. The following habitat measures will increase the on-site biodiversity:

-  Retaining the on-site hedgerow
-  Native hedgerow planting
-  Retaining the dense scrub on site
-  Native scrub planting
-  Retaining the scattered trees
-  Native tree planting

Habitat measures should be provided within areas of open space or designated wildlife zones. A 30-year management plan should be produced to ensure biodiversity is secured on-site.



7. REFERENCES

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END OF REPORT



APPENDIX I

PHASE 1 HABITAT PLAN

Key:

— Site boundary

— Hedgerow

A Amenity grassland

• Bare ground

▤ Dense scrub

■ Hardstanding

▨ Introduced shrub

● Scattered trees

✕ Small-leaved cotoneaster

Notes

Issue: 1	Revision: 1	Date: 25/10/2023	Drawn: CB2	Authorised: CK
Client: Planning Issues Limited			Job No. 81-565	Date: 25/10/2023
			Drawing No. 81-56-001	Scale: 1:900 @ A4
Job title: Former Greenfinch Public House, Manchester			Drawing title: Phase 1 Habitat Plan	



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