
Ripon Street

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been prepared by BDP on behalf of Manchester Science Parks Limited; the report will support a planning application for the construction of temporary car parking on the former Ripon Street depot site to provide car park spaces for Williams and Kilburn House, as well as space for the Hub Building.
- 1.2 The Ripon Street Depot site is located to the south of Manchester City Centre: grid reference SJ84169606. The site is located to the north of Denmark Road and the east of Charles Halle Road. The site comprises predominantly of building and hard standing, with a belt of broad-leaved plantation to the north of the site and smaller areas of amenity grassland, scattered trees, standing water and tall ruderal also present within the site boundary.



Fig 1. The Ripon Street depot site

- 1.3 The survey was commissioned to establish the existing ecological value of the former Ripon Street depot site; to support the planning application for the construction of temporary car parking on the site. The aim of the survey was to:
- describe and map the habitats present on the site
 - assess any potential impact on protected species or sites
 - identify where further survey may be required

2.0 Methodology

Desk Study

- 2.1 A desk study was carried out to obtain and review ecological information held by the Local Records Centre. Greater Manchester Local Record Centre were asked to provide protected and notable habitat and species information for the site and an area within 2km radius of the site.
- 2.2 In addition to the consultation process a review was carried out of the local and national planning framework, including;

National Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework, 27 March 2012
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan, 1994

Local Policy

- Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy, Adopted 11th July 2012
- Biodiversity Validation Checklist for Greater Manchester, February 2008
- Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan 2012-16, 18 January 2012

Phase 1 Habitat Site Survey

- 2.3 A Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental audit, JNCC, updated 2007). Habitats were mapped during the site survey and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 category. A Phase 1 Habitat map was produced showing the habitat types and their boundaries. This report details each habitat category within the Ripon Street depot site. Please see Appendix A for Phase 1 Habitat map.
- 2.4 A site survey was carried out on 8 May 2014 in optimal conditions for botanical survey. Botanical nomenclature follows Stace, C. A., 2010, New Flora of the British Isles, 3rd Ed., Cambridge University Press.
- 2.5 Due to the presence of derelict buildings onsite particular attention was given to bats, and a daytime bat survey was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost to be present within these buildings.
- 2.6 An external inspection of the buildings was carried out, which included, for example, looking for gaps between any soffit boards and walls, gaps between window frames and the walls, and looking for bat droppings on the walls and window ledges.
- 2.7 The buildings were also searched internally (where accessible) for evidence of a bat roost, which included looking for the following signs:
 - live or dead bats
 - bat droppings
 - bat entry/exit points
 - bat urine staining
 - grease marks on any timbers
 - feeding remains such as insect wings
 - areas clear of cobwebs.
- 2.8 A pair of close focussing binoculars, a high-powered torch and an endoscope were used (where required) to search for evidence of bats internally and externally.

- 2.9 An external inspection of all of the trees was also undertaken from ground level using close-focusing binoculars to look for features indicative of bat roosts such as natural holes, hollows/cavities, staining around entry points and smoothing of surfaces around cavities.
- 2.10 Anthony Nickson carried out the survey; Anthony is experienced in Phase 1 Habitat and protected species work; he is an active member of the Merseyside and West Lancashire Bat Group and holds a Natural England Class 2 survey licence (WML-CL18) for bats. He is also a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.
- 2.11 During the site survey evidence and/or potential of any protected species was recorded where it was found. Based on the desk study and habitat types present on the site, particular attention was paid to the following species:

Bats

- 2.12 All British bat species and their roosts are protected under European Law (The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010) and UK Law (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended). As such it is an offence to undertake the following acts;
- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
 - Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

Badger

- 2.13 Badgers *Meles meles* and their setts are protected under UK Law (Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 as amended, and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992). As such it is an offence to either harm Badgers or disturb or damage their setts.

Black Redstart

- 2.14 Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* are protected under UK Law (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended). As such it is an offence to undertake the following acts;
- Intentionally kill, injure or take a Black Redstart
 - Intentionally take, damage or destroy nests in use or being built by a Black Redstart
 - Intentionally take, damage or destroy eggs of a Black Redstart
 - Intentionally disturb at the nest a Black Redstart

Birds

- 2.15 All wild bird species are protected at the nest under UK Law (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended).

3.0 Results

Desk Study

- 3.1 The full list of protected species and BAP species from the data search was analysed and the relevant issues have been detailed below.
- 3.2 Greater Manchester Local Record Centre provided the following information based on the site and a 2km radius of the site;
- Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites
 - Protected and other notable species
- 3.3 See Appendix B for ecological data search records.
- 3.4 It should be noted that the records provided by the local record centre are based on current records but do not represent an exhaustive list of all records.

International/National Protected Sites

- 3.5 The desk study search shows that there are no sites with international or national statutory designation within the 2km search area.

Regional/Local Protected Sites

- 3.6 The desk study search shows that there are no sites with regional or local designated sites within the 2km search area.

Protected Species

- 3.7 There were no records provided of protected species on the site. The following results are of protected species relevant to the local area;

Bats

- 3.8 The local record centre provided 72 Bat records within 2km of the search area; 9 bat roosts and 63 other bat sign records. The closest roost is a Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus spp* roost approximately 1400m north-west of the site boundary.

Badger

- 3.9 The local record centre provided one Badger record within 2km of the search area, the precise location of the record is confidential.

Black Redstart

- 3.10 The local record centre provided two Black Redstart records within 2km of the search area; the closest record is approximately 1480m north-west of the site boundary.

Birds

- 3.11 The local record centre provided bird records for section 41 species within 2km of the search area; the closest is a Dunnock *Prunella modularis* record approximately 1000m south-west of the site boundary.

National Planning Policy

- 3.12 The National Planning Policy Framework replaced Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation on 27 March 2012. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out planning policies on the protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system
- 3.13 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is the UK Government's response to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Convention called for the development and enforcement of national strategies and associated action plans to identify, conserve and protect existing biological diversity, and to enhance it wherever possible. The UK BAP describes the biological resources of the UK and provides detailed plans for conservation of these resources, at national and devolved levels. Action plans for the most threatened species and habitats have been set out to aid recovery, and reporting rounds show how the UK BAP has contributed to the UK's progress towards the significant reduction of biodiversity loss called for by the CBD.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.14 The Manchester Local Development Framework Core Strategy sets out policies which will manage land use and development in Manchester. In particular developments within Manchester will be expected to maintain or enhance biodiversity. Any adverse impacts on biodiversity will need to be justified against the wider benefits of the proposal, assessed against other LDF policies. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, developers will be required to provide appropriate mitigation and/or compensation.
- 3.15 The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Validation Checklist provides ecological survey and assessment triggers for various development proposals. The validation checklist is used to determine the relevant ecological surveys which will be required to be submitted as part of a planning application in Greater Manchester.
- 3.16 The Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan identifies species and habitats most under threat and sets an agenda for action towards conserving and enhancing these species in the region.
- 3.17 Species Action Plans include; Bats, Black Redstart, Farmland Birds, Great Crested Newt, Hares, Native Black Poplar, Twite, Water Voles and Willow Tit.
- 3.18 Habitat Action Plans include; Hedgerows, Lowland Mossland, Reedbeds & Bittern, Ponds & Lodges, Canals, Native Woodlands, Uplands and Urban Managed Greenspace.
- 3.19 See Appendix C for extracts from relevant planning policies.

Phase 1 Habitat Site Survey

Habitat Description

- 3.20 The Ripon Street depot site comprises predominantly of building and hard standing, with a belt of broad-leaved plantation to the north of the site and smaller areas of amenity grassland, scattered trees, standing water and tall ruderal also present within the site boundary.

Hard Standing

- 3.21 Hard standing forms the majority of the site surface, consisting of pavements, roads, car parks and the internal courtyard of the depot.

Buildings

- 3.22 The Ripon Street depot buildings consist of two L-shaped developments set around a central courtyard. All of the buildings are brick external wall and flat bitumen roof construction with wooden bargeboards and modern plastic guttering. The office building at the north-west of the arrangement is a double storey development whilst the other buildings are all single storey. None of the buildings have loft spaces.

Broad leaved-plantation

- 3.23 A belt of broad-leaved plantation exists around the existing car park at the north-west of the site; the tree species include Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Cherry *Prunus* spp., Poplar *Populus* spp., Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* with an understory of ruderal species such as Common Ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, Meadow Foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, Willowherb *Chamerion* spp., Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*.

Amenity grassland

- 3.24 There are two small areas of amenity grassland to the north of the site and to the east of the depot buildings which will not be directly affected by the proposals for the project. The habitat consists primarily of Red Fescue *Festuca rubra*, Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Meadow Buttercup *Ranunculus acris* and Common Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg. The habitat is regularly mown to produce a short sward for amenity use.

Scattered tree

- 3.25 Individual trees have been planted at the entrance to the site on Denmark Road and the entrance on Ripon Street, the predominant species are Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and Elder *Sambucus nigra*.

Standing water

- 3.26 In the south west of the site there is brick bund which has captured rainwater and is filled by stagnant standing water with algae.

Tall Ruderal

- 3.27 There is a small amount of ruderal vegetation at the entrance to the site on Denmark Road, the species include Willowherb *Chamerion* spp., Smooth Sow-thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, Herb-Robert *Geranium robertianum* and Cleavers *Galium aparine*.

Protected Species

Bats

- 3.28 All British bat species use buildings or trees to roost throughout the year; notably *Pipistrelle* bats and Brown Long-eared *Plecotus auritus* bats, which have both been recorded within 2km of the site.
- 3.29 The buildings onsite are brick wall, flat roof modern constructions which lack open loft spaces for bats which require uncluttered open areas for flight within a roost such as Brown long-eared. The barge boards are either flush to the external wall or in disrepair and damp, they provide low potential for crevice dwelling bats such as *Pipistrelle* species.
- 3.30 No field signs or evidence of bats were observed during the inspections of the buildings either externally or internally.
- 3.31 No potential roosting features commonly used by bats such as natural holes, woodpecker holes, cracks/splits in major limbs or loose bark were observed in any of the trees onsite during the site survey.

Badger

- 3.32 The majority of the site is hardstanding or buildings and there is only small areas of soft landscaping; therefore there is minimal suitable foraging habitat onsite for badgers.

Black Redstart

- 3.33 Black Redstarts in urban areas favour brownfield sites with areas colonised by ephemeral vegetation and areas of bare soil, they also require cavities for nesting and features to use as song posts. There is minimal suitable habitat for this species at the Ripon Street depot.

Birds

- 3.34 The belt of broad-leaved plantation, scattered trees and buildings within the site provide suitable foraging and nesting habitat for breeding birds during the nesting season (March to September).

4.0 Evaluation

Desk Study

International/National Protected Sites

- 4.1 There are no international or national protected sites within the boundary of the proposed developments, or within 2km of the proposed developments.

Regional/Local Protected Sites

- 4.2 There are no regional or local protected sites within the boundary of the proposed developments, or within 2km of the proposed developments.

Phase 1 Habitat Site Survey

Habitats

- 4.3 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey (Preston et al, 2002).

Bats

- 4.4 No field signs or evidence of roosting was detected during the daytime inspections of the existing Ripon Street depot buildings and due to the lack of roosting features within the buildings and poor foraging habitat for bats within the local environment it is the author's opinion that the buildings only provide low potential for roosting bats.
- 4.5 The trees within these areas do not possess features commonly used by bats for roosting such as natural holes, woodpecker holes, cracks/splits in major limbs or loose bark therefore it is considered the trees have low potential for roosting bats.

Badger

- 4.6 There is minimal suitable terrestrial habitat for badger and no signs of badger were located during the survey, it is considered the site provides low potential for badgers.

Black Redstart

- 4.7 The habitats onsite are not favourable for Black Redstart, and it is considered the site provides low potential for Black Redstart.

Birds

- 4.8 The belt of broad-leaved plantation, scattered trees and buildings within the site provide suitable foraging and nesting habitat for breeding birds during the nesting season.

5.0 Recommendations

Bats

- 5.1 There is low potential for bats within the buildings and trees across the site which suggests there should be no significant concerns or constraints in relation to roosting bats. Therefore the redevelopment of the site should proceed without the requirement for further survey work.
- 5.2 It should be noted that bat absence is very difficult to prove definitively due to their mobility and size, and single or small numbers of bats are able to roost in extremely small spaces, such as between roofing tiles. Therefore it is recommended that all removal of barge boards is to be undertaken by hand, with the features lifted instead of dragged.
- 5.3 If during development works a bat (or an accumulation of bat droppings) is discovered at any time during the removal of any structures, work is to temporarily cease on the roof whilst an experienced bat ecologist is contacted for guidance and assistance. This can be Anthony Nickson (07921 571 823) who undertook the initial survey, any licensed bat worker, or the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) helpline (0845 1300 228).

Badger

- 5.4 There is low potential for badger therefore no further survey work for this species is required.

Black Redstart

- 5.5 There is low potential for Black Redstart therefore no further survey work for this species is required.

Birds

- 5.6 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Due to the suitable habitat on site for breeding birds in the belt of broad-leaved plantation, scattered trees and buildings within the site it is recommended that site works to remove any trees takes place outside the peak bird breeding season (March to September).
- 5.7 If site works will be undertaken within the nesting season then an appropriately qualified ecologist will be required to undertake a site walkover to visually assess potentially suitable nesting habitat for active nests. If active nests are discovered then site works must wait until the nest is deemed inactive.

6.0 References

Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, 2012

Biodiversity Validation Checklist for Greater Manchester, Manchester City Council, February 2008

Countryside and Wildlife Act, 1981

Ecological Data Search – SJ8431396186 (PP 04-2), Greater Manchester Ecological Unit, 4 March 2014

EU Habitats Directive, 1994

Institute of Environmental Assessment's 'Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment', 1997

Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan 2012-16, Manchester City Council, 18 January 2012

Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy, Manchester City Council, Adopted 11 July 2012

National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, 27 March 2012

New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora. Oxford University Press, Preston, C.D., Pearman, D. & Dines, T. 2002

New Flora of the British Isles, 3rd Ed., Cambridge University Press, Stace, 2010

Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental audit, JNCC, Updated 2007

United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan, JNCC, London, 2006

Appendix A - Phase 1 Habitat Map



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Legend

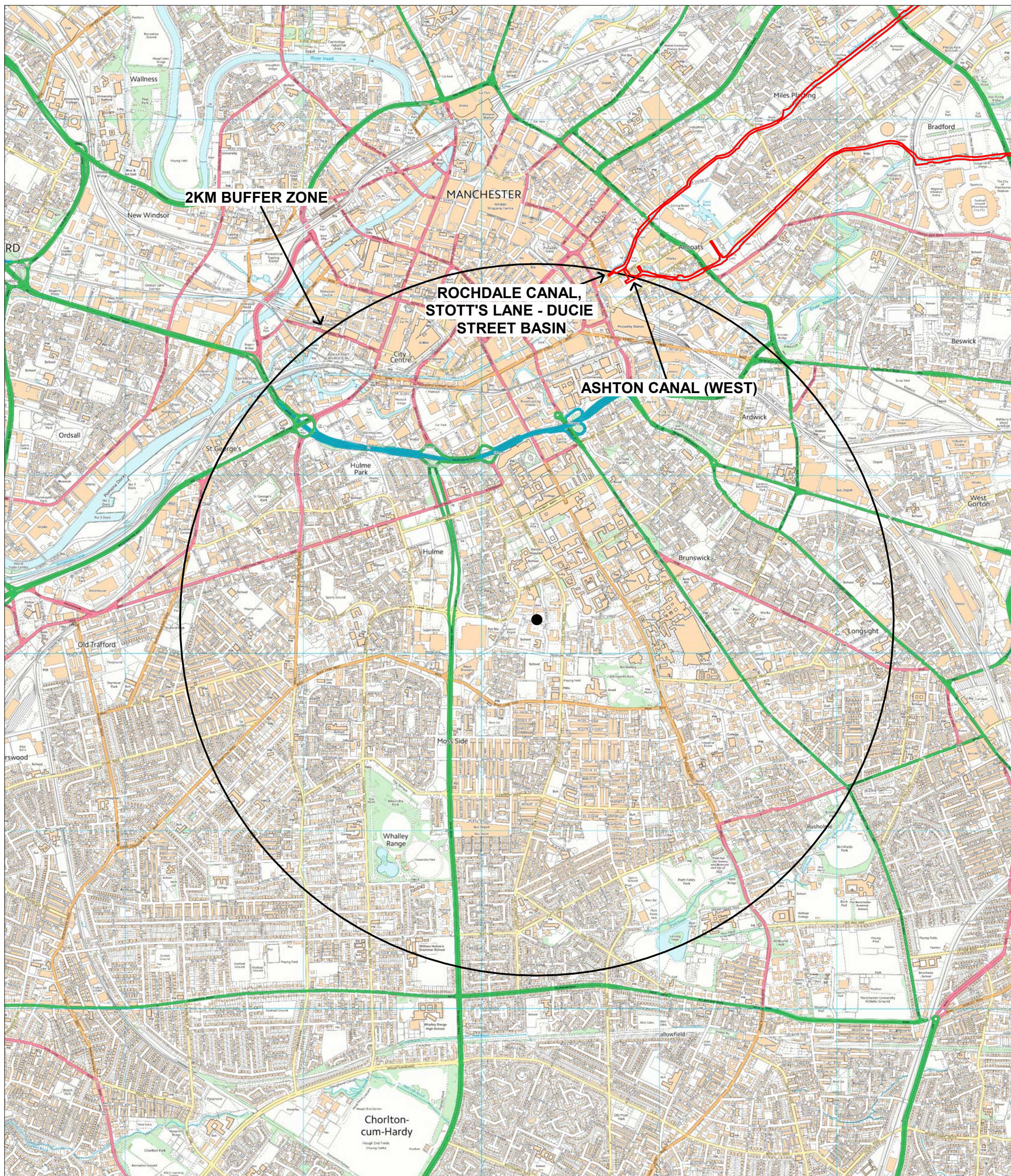
- Amenity grassland
- Broad-leaved plantation
- Scattered tree
- Standing water
- Tall ruderal
- Building
- Hardstanding

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PROJECT Ripon Street		
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Appendix B - Ecological Data Search



KEY
SITE OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE
 **SBI BOUNDARY**

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH -
GRID REF SJ 843 961 - MAP 1

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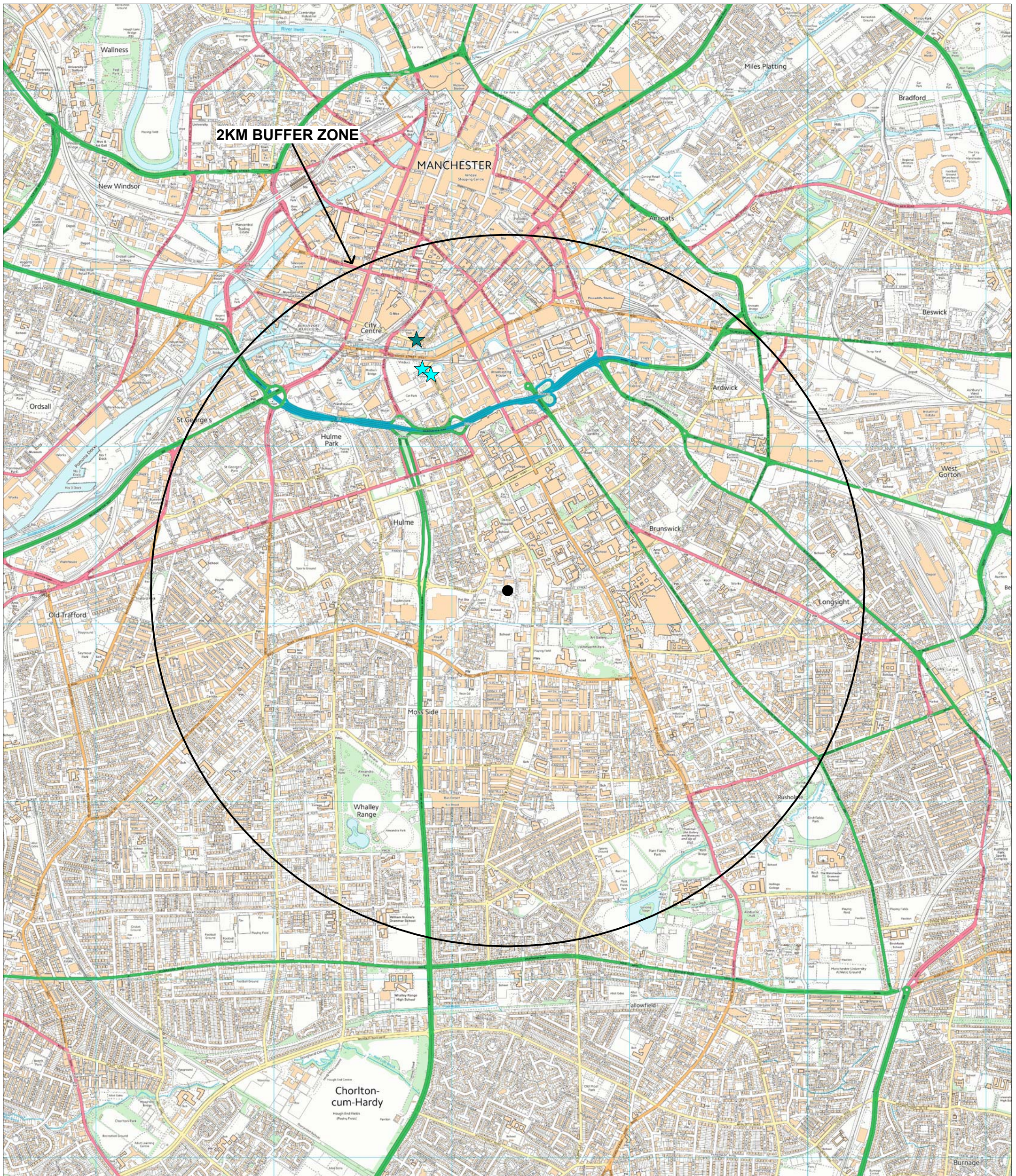
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Date Produced: 04/03/2014



PROTECTED SPECIES
★ BLACK REDSTART
★ GRASSWRACK PONDWEED

**GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH -
GRID REF SJ 843 961 - MAP 2**

SCALE 1:20,000

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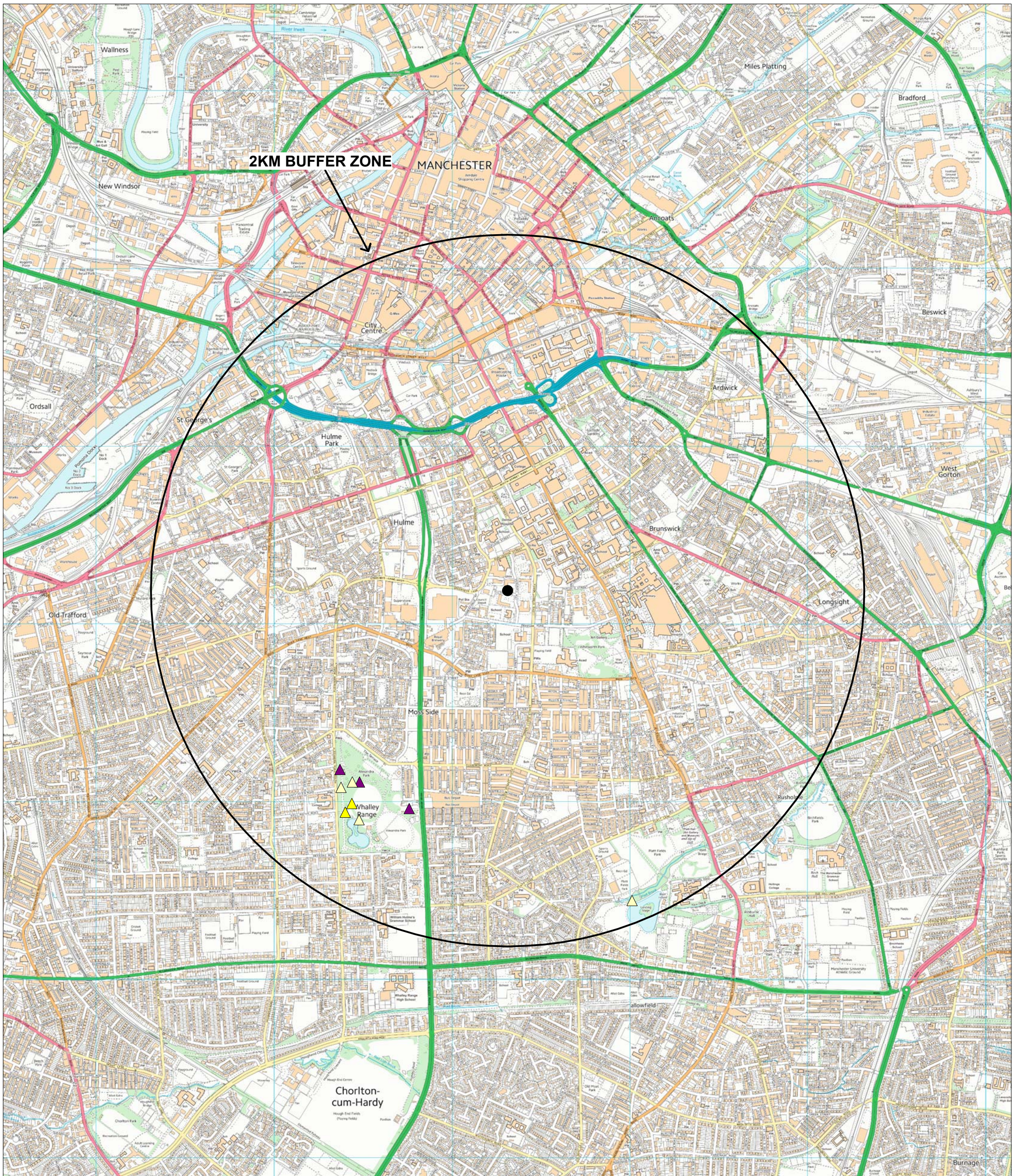
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Date Produced: 04/03/2014



KEY
SECTION 41 SPECIES

- ▲ BULLFINCH
- ▲ DUNNOCK
- ▲ SONG THRUSH

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH
GRID REF SJ 843 961 - MAP 5

SCALE 1:20,000

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Date Produced: 04/03/2014

Appendix C – Planning Policies

The relevant national and local planning policies for the site have been provided in the following extracts:

National Planning Policy Framework

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

1. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils
 - recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services
 - minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures
 - preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability;
 - remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
2. Local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. Distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, so that protection is commensurate with their status and gives appropriate weight to their importance and the contribution that they make to wider ecological networks.
3. Local planning authorities should:
 - set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure; and
 - maintain the character of the undeveloped coast, protecting and enhancing its distinctive landscapes, particularly in areas defined as Heritage Coast, and improve public access to and enjoyment of the coast.
4. To minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should:
 - plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries;
 - identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation;
 - promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan;
 - aim to prevent harm to geological conservation interests; and
 - where Nature Improvement Areas are identified in Local Plans, consider specifying the types of development that may be appropriate in these Areas.
5. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:
 - if significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
 - proposed development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (either individually or in combination with other developments) should not normally be permitted. Where an adverse effect on the site's notified special interest features is likely, an exception should only be made where the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh

both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

- opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged;
- planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss; and
- the following wildlife sites should be given the same protection as European sites:
 - potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
 - listed or proposed Ramsar sites;
 - sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on European sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

1. Manchester as a City recognises the importance placed on biodiversity and its role in delivering urban renaissance. The conservation and enhancement of our natural resources is a key factor in the building and delivery of safe and sustainable communities. Manchester seeks to protect, enhance and manage existing identified biodiversity resources. PPS9 and the accompanying Good Practice Guide set out national policy in relation to planning for Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

Policy EN 15 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

The Council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the City. Particular consideration will be given to:

- sites with international or national designations for their biodiversity value. Manchester contains one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Cotteril Clough); there is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and an SSSI just over the border in Oldham (both on the Rochdale Canal within Oldham);
- other sites of biodiversity value, including Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs); Manchester currently has 35 SBIs (including the Rochdale and Ashton Canals) and 7 LNRs; priority habitats found within Manchester, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP);
- protected and priority species, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP);
- sites that are recognised for their geological importance;
- the Council's objective to protect and conserve the City's existing trees and woodlands and the aim for a net increase in trees across the City.

Developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate, with reference to:

- the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy, which provides further details of priority habitats within Manchester and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement including corridors such as the Mersey, Medlock and Irk river valleys, the canals and disused railway lines and areas of managed greenspace particularly in parks;
- the Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester, which encompasses an ecological framework that seeks to guide and inform habitat creation and repair, including identifying large 'biodiversity opportunity areas' including the Moston Brook Corridor and Nutsford Vale;
- the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study, which identifies areas where there is a deficit of natural and semi-natural greenspace, opportunities for green corridors and other linkages;
- Manchester's Climate Change Action Plan;
- the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Manchester;
- the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for Manchester, which gives detailed consideration to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), including the Rochdale Canal SAC just outside the district boundary;
- the River Basin Management Plan for the North West;
- the Manchester Tree Strategy.

Any adverse impacts on biodiversity will need to be justified against the wider benefits of the proposal, assessed against other LDF policies. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, developers will be required to provide appropriate mitigation and/or compensation.

Development should wherever possible seek to maintain, enhance or restore existing geology.

2. Developers will need to demonstrate how they have assessed and taken full account of the potential effect of their proposed development on biodiversity or geodiversity. When considering the potential impact of a development, the construction phase should be included in this consideration. It is important to recognise that brownfield sites often contain diverse and valuable biodiversity.
3. Priority habitats found within Manchester, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP), include various types of grassland, ancient/species-rich hedgerows, woodlands, lowland heath, managed greenspace, reedbeds, rivers, canals and ponds.
4. In addition to the priority species protected through European or national legislation, local priority species are identified by the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP); the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy lists those that occur in the City of Manchester, including the great crested newt, water vole, brown hare, pipistrelle bats, 8 protected bird species, floating water plantain, grass-wrack pondweed, and the black poplar.

Biodiversity Validation Checklist for Greater Manchester

The following validation checklist is used to determine the relevant ecological surveys which will be required to be submitted as part of a planning application in Greater Manchester;

Part 1 Local Requirements for Protected & Priority Species

If the application involves any of the development proposals shown in Table 1 (Column 1), a protected species survey and assessment must be submitted with the application. Exceptions to when a survey and assessment may not be required are also explained below. The Survey should be undertaken and prepared by competent persons with suitable qualifications and experience and must be carried out at an appropriate time and month of year (see Table 3) in suitable weather conditions and using nationally recognised survey guidelines/methods where available. The survey may be informed by the results of a search for ecological data from a local environmental records centre/Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). The survey must be to an appropriate level of scope and detail and must:

- Record which species are present and identify their numbers (may be approximate);
- Map their distribution and use of the area, site, structure or feature (e.g. for feeding, shelter, breeding).

The **Assessment** must identify and describe potential development impacts likely to harm the protected species and/or their habitats identified by the survey (these should include both direct and indirect effects both during construction and afterwards). Where harm is likely, evidence must be submitted to show:

- How alternative designs or locations have been considered;
- How adverse effects will be avoided wherever possible;
- How unavoidable impacts will be mitigated or reduced;
- How impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated will be compensated.

In addition, proposals are to be encouraged that will enhance, restore or add to features or habitats used by protected species, even where there are currently no such species present on the site. The Assessment should also give an indication of how species numbers are likely to change, if at all, after development e.g. whether there will be a net loss or gain.

Where species reports are submitted for badgers these should be marked as confidential and not placed on the public record. Badgers are subject to unlawful persecution and the release of locational information may lead to further damage to this species.

Exceptions for When a Full Species Survey and Assessment may not be Required

- Following consultation by the applicant at the pre-application stage, the LPA has stated in writing that no protected species surveys and assessments are required.
- If it is clear that no protected species are present, despite the guidance in the table below indicating that they are likely, the applicant should provide evidence with the planning application to demonstrate that such species are absent (e.g. this might be in the form of a letter or brief report from a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist, or a relevant local nature conservation organisation).
- If it is clear that the development proposal will not affect any protected species present, then only limited information needs to be submitted. This information should, however, (i) demonstrate that there will be no significant affect on any protected species present and (ii) include a statement acknowledging that the applicant is aware that it is a criminal offence to disturb or harm protected species should they subsequently be found or disturbed.

In some situations, it may be appropriate for an applicant to provide a protected species survey and report for **only one or a few** of the species shown in the Table below e.g. those that are likely to be affected by a particular activity. Applicants should make clear which species are included in the report and which are not because exceptions apply.

Local Requirement for Protected Species: Criteria and Indicative Thresholds (Trigger List) for when a Survey and Assessment is Required

Proposals for Development That Will Trigger a Protected Species Survey	Species Likely To Be Affected And For Which A Survey Will Be Required											
	Bats	Barn Owls	Breeding Birds	Wintering Birds	Gt. Crested Newts	Otters	Black redstart	Little ringed plover	Water Vole	Badger	Reptiles	White-clawed crayfish
Proposed development which includes the modification conversion, demolition or removal of buildings and structures (especially roof voids) involving the following: - All agricultural buildings (e.g. farmhouses and barns), whatever their condition, particularly of traditional brick or stone construction and/or with exposed wooden beams greater than 20cm thick. The only exception is modern agricultural buildings of prefabricated construction with steel/sheet materials. - all other buildings of any type of construction except for those either of prefabricated construction with steel/sheet materials (such as modern warehouses) or flat roof structures with no roof voids, soffit or barge boards. - All unused industrial chimneys, which are unlined and of brick or stone construction - All tunnels, culverts, mines, kilns, ice-houses, adits, military fortifications, air raid shelters, cellars and similar underground ducts and structures; - All bridge structures, aqueducts and viaducts (especially over water and wet ground). - buildings within the city/town centre	•	•	•									
	•											
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Proposals involving lighting of churches and listed buildings or flood lighting of green space within 50m of woodland, water, field hedgerows or lines of trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water.	•		•										
Proposals affecting woodland, or field hedgerows and/or lines of trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water bodies.	•		•							•			
Proposed tree work (felling or lopping) and/or development affecting: - old and veteran trees that are older than 100 years; - trees with obvious holes, cracks or cavities, - trees with a girth greater than 50cm at chest height;	• • •		• • •										
Proposals affecting gravel pits or quarries and natural cliff faces and rock outcrops with crevices, or caves.	•	•	•								•		
Major proposals within 250m of a pond/ lodge or Minor proposals within 100m of pond Where known records for great crested newt occur this should be 500m & 250m respectively. (Note: A major proposals is one that is more than 10 dwellings or more than 0.5 hectares or for non-residential development is more than 1000m ² floor area or more than 1 hectare)					•								
Proposals affecting or within 50m of rivers, streams, lakes, or other aquatic habitats (including ponds and lodges).	•		•	•**		•			•			•	
Proposals affecting or within 100m of a canal	•		•			•			•			•	•***

Proposals affecting 'derelict' land (brownfield sites), allotments and railway land.			•		•					•	•		
Proposals affecting bare ground and/or sparsely vegetated sites, wherever they are located							•	•					
Proposals on upland/moorland sites (e.g. wind farms)	•	•	•			•			•	•	•	•	
Proposed development affecting any buildings, structures, feature or locations where <u>protected species are known to be present</u> *.	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•***
* Confirmed as present by either a data search (for instance via GMEU/local environmental records centre) or as notified to the developer by the local planning authority or GMEU and/or by Natural England, the Environment Agency or other nature conservation organisation. ** Advice should be sought from GMEU on when wintering bird surveys will be required. Not all lakes or rivers will require this survey. *** Additional surveys such as shading studies will also be required where floating water plantain is confirmed (see GMEU website for further information (http://www.tameside.gov.uk/ecologyunit)).	Bats	Barn Owls	Breeding Birds	Wintering Birds	Great Crested Newt	Otters	Black redstart	Little ringed plover	Water Vole	Badgers	Reptiles	White-clawed crayfish	Aquatic plants incl. Floating water plantain, Grasswack pondweed & Freiberg's screw-moss