
EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY

SHIRLEY ROAD, CHEETHAM HILL,
GREATER MANCHESTER

JULY 2022



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2022 by Euro Garages to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of land at Shirley Road, Cheetham Hill, Greater Manchester. The site is situated off Shirley Road, Cheetham Hill, Greater Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SD 84235 01177 – see Figure 1). The proposed development site currently comprises a patch of amenity grassland, a broadleaved woodland and hardstanding. The site is bordered by residential housing and lies adjacent to Cheetham Hill Road. In a wider context, further residential and commercial areas surround the site in all directions.

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required to provide an overview of the habitats present within the site and to assess any potential protected species issues on the site.

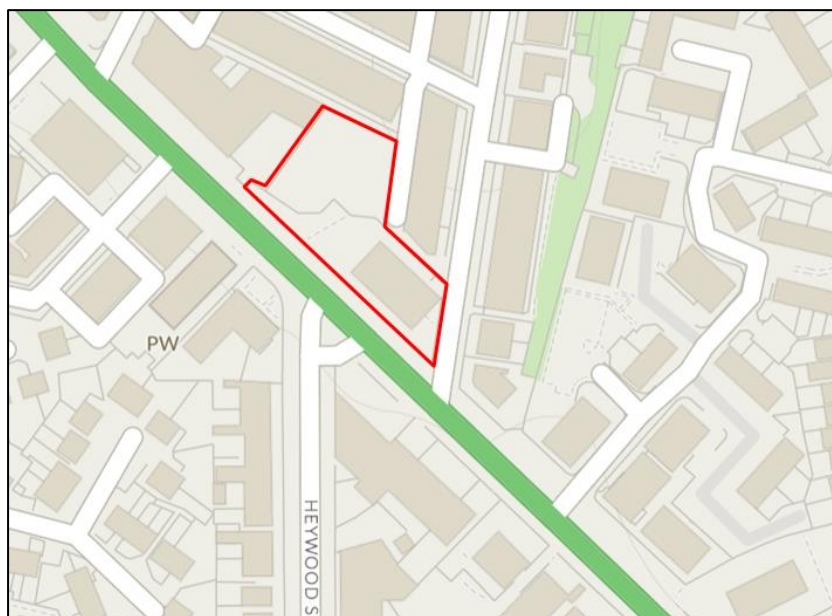


Figure 1 showing the location of the site

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the demolition of the existing buildings on site and construction of petrol filling station with associated retail unit, drive-thru, car parking, associated facilities and landscaping.

Biodiversity in Planning

- 1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) gives specific reference to minimising the impacts of development on biodiversity. Local and Neighbourhood plans also provide guidance towards protecting and enhancing biodiversity, including priority habitats and notable species.



2.0 METHODOLOGY

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.1 A Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2010). The site was walked and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries.
- 2.2 During the Extended Phase 1 survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g. setts, paths, latrines and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt
- 2.3 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

- 2.4 Joe Cooper (Ecologist) carried out the daytime bat survey on the 6th July 2022. Joe is an experienced ecologist and fully trained in botanical surveys, phase 1 habitat assessments and protected species assessments. July is an optimal month for botanical work. The weather at the time of the survey was sunny and dry.

Survey Constraints

- 2.5 The site was fully accessible. There were no constraints to the survey



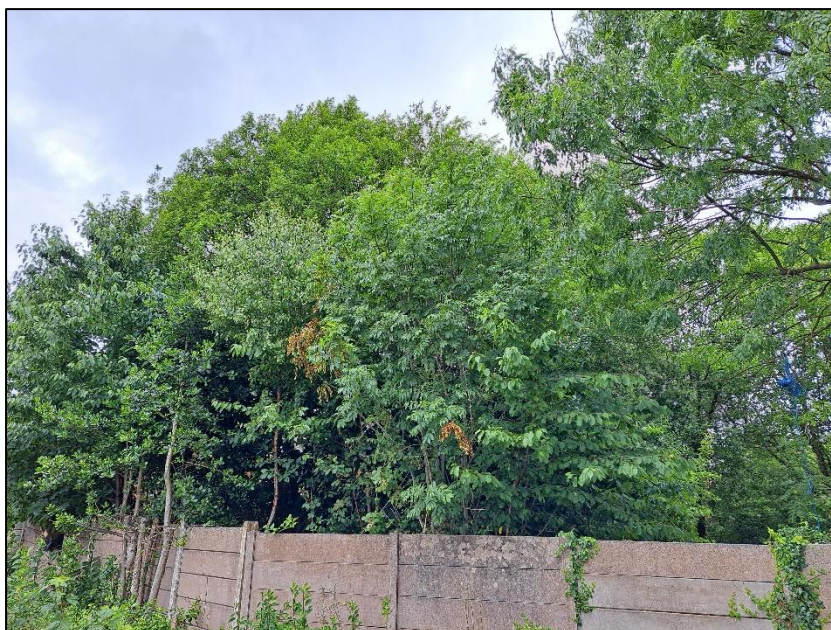
3.0 RESULTS

HABITATS

- 3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map can be found at the back of the report. The habitats on the proposed development site are described below.

Broadleaved Woodland

- 3.2 The north-west area of the site contains an area of broadleaved woodland (see Photograph 1). Dominant tree species include Goat Willow *Salix caprea*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* with occasional Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and Cherry *Prunus sp.* This habitat does not features as part of the local priority habitats.



Photograph 1 showing the broadleaved woodland

Amenity Grassland

- 3.3 This habitat is located in the south-western corner of the site (see Photograph 2). This habitat contains dominant grass species such as Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Sweet Vernal *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and Meadow Foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*. Commonly occurring herbaceous species such as Common Ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, White Clover *Trifolium repens*, Red Clover *Trifolium pratense*, Dandelion *Taraxacum* agg., Common Mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum* and Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* were found here. The invasive species Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* is present at this habitat (see Photograph 3).



Photograph 2 showing the amenity grassland



Photograph 3 showing the Japanese Knotweed

Continuous Scrub

- 3.4 A stand of continuous scrub is located between the broadleaved woodland and the residential housing to the north of the site (see Photograph 4). Species include Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. and Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*.





Photograph 4 showing the continuous scrub

Tall Ruderal

- 3.5 A stand of tall ruderal vegetation lies within the amenity grassland along the border to the broadleaved woodland (see Photograph 5). Species include Red Campion *Silene dioica*, Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense*, Bay *Laurus nobilis* and saplings of Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, suggesting the adjacent woodland is encroaching into this area.



Photograph 5 showing the tall ruderal vegetation

Scattered Trees

- 3.6 Scattered trees are located around the site. The two species present are Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and Holly *Ilex aquifolium* (see Photograph 6).





Photograph 6 showing the scattered trees

Bare Ground

- 3.7 A large area of the site is a hardstanding mix of tarmac and concrete slabs free of any vegetation (see Photograph 7).



Photograph 7 showing the bare ground



Wall

- 3.8 Walls constructed from brick-and-mortar and concrete slabs line the boundaries between the adjacent roads and amenity grassland to the broadleaved woodland (see Photograph 8).



Photograph 8 showing the walls

Buildings

- 3.9 A single building exists on the site which is used for fuel filling activities a full assessment can be found in 3.13.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.10 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)/The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 3.11 No waterbodies exist on the site. No ponds exist within 250metres of the site. The site supports suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat. The tall ruderal and continuous scrub habitats provide cover and foraging opportunities for Great Crested Newts.

Bats

- 3.12 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit). Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

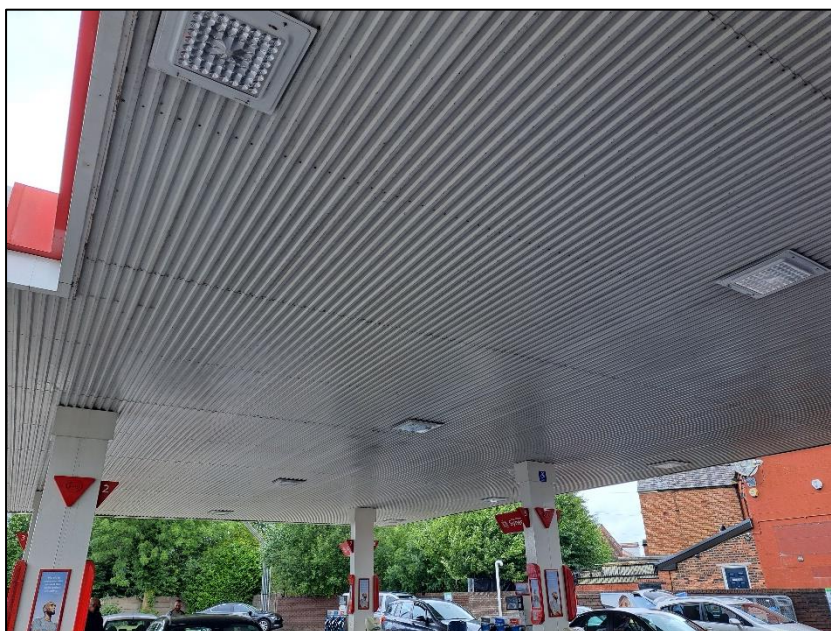


External Assessment

- 3.13 The filling station consists of a fuelling station and pumps as well as a retail unit (see Photograph 9). The fuelling station features a flat roof metal canopy which does not feature a roof void due to its design and therefore offers negligible suitability for a daytime bat roost (see Photograph 10).



Photograph 9 showing the petrol station



Photograph 10 showing the underside of the metal canopy

- 3.14 The retail unit is constructed from brick and mortar with no damage or recessed mortar (see Photograph 11). The complete brickwork offers no gaps or cracks for bats to



exploit. The metal door and windows are well sealed and flush to the brickwork. The flat roof above the retail unit is complete and well-sealed to the brickwork.



Photograph 11 showing the retail unit brickwork

- 3.15 The sheet-metal capping at the roof edges of the retail unit is firmly attached to the brick work (see Photograph 12). A small gap between the brickwork and the metal capping is present to the rear of the retail unit however this does not appear to extend into any internal voids.



Photograph 12 showing a small gap between the capping and brickwork

Internal Assessment

- 3.16 The interior of the retail unit offers no roof voids above and is vaulted in places (see Photograph 13). The shop floor features a false ceiling with office roof tiles with nothing behind (see Photograph 14).



Photograph 13 showing the ceiling of the building from the interior



Photograph 14 showing the ceiling tiles

Badger

- 3.17 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)/The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011. These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.
- 3.18 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity such as latrines or snuffle holes was located on site.

Nesting Birds

- 3.19 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 3.20 The grassland habitats across the site are sub-optimal for ground-nesting birds. The proximity to elevated perches for predatory birds such as the surrounding woodland, fencing and streetlights and use from walkers (including dog walkers) reduce the suitability for ground-nesting birds.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.21 Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* is present as a non-native, invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and is included on The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (Non-native Species)

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.22 No statutory protected sites lie on the site or immediately adjacent to the site boundary. Four statutory protected sites are located within 2.5km of the site:
- Kersal Wood Local Nature Reserve (LNR) – 2.4 km west of site
 - Blackley Forest LNR – 1.9 km north of site
 - Boggart Hole Clough LNR – 2.1 km north-east of site
 - Kersal Dale LNR – 1.5 km west of site
- 3.23 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may have a deleterious impact on protected sites nearby. The LPA may consult Natural England for advice on any potential impacts the proposed development may have on the nearby protected sites.
- 3.24 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or adjacent to the site

4.0 ASSESSMENT

Habitats

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 The site comprises amenity grassland, broadleaved woodland and tall ruderal vegetation. The habitats offer cover from predation, foraging habitat and a limited pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.

Development Context

- 4.3 The development proposals involve the loss of all the habitats on site. Given the site currently offers low ecological value, no specific habitat mitigation is considered necessary. The trees should be retained where possible. A landscape scheme should include the creation of a variety of species-rich habitats, including enhancement to existing woodlands and the planting of native hedgerows and shrub planting, as well as a high ecological value mixture of ornamental planting where appropriate and possible. Bird and bat boxes will be erected where possible, onto the façades of the building.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 4.4 No ponds exist on the site. No waterbodies exist within 250m of the site. Given the lack of breeding habitat in the locality, no further survey work is required, and Great Crested Newt is not considered to be a constraint on development at this time.

Bats

- 4.5 A buildings and woodland exist on site. The broadleaved woodland on site offers some suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat and it is recommended that part of the woodland remains to act as a buffer to the surrounding residential area and to maintain some habitat for potential bats. It is also recommended a soft lighting scheme is produced to help protect this habitat.

Badger

- 4.6 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity was located. Badgers are not considered to be a constraint on development.

Nesting Birds

- 4.7 The site does support suitable nesting habitat for birds in the woodland. The urban setting and small size of the woodland reduce the suitability for nesting birds. However, if any work to the broadleaved woodland will proceed within the bird nesting season (which is generally March-August), then a nesting bird check will be required immediately prior to any work.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 4.8 Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*, an invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and is included on The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (Non-native Species) is present on the site.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.9 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie within the proposed development site or immediately adjacent. Four statutory protected sites lie within 2.5km of the site boundary. The closest site is Kersal Dale LNR which is located approximately 1.9 km west of site. At these distances, and with barrier habitats between the surrounding sites and the proposed development site, there is expected to be no deleterious impact on the protected sites from the development.
- 4.10 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may have a deleterious impact on protected sites nearby. The LPA may consult Natural England for advice on any potential impacts the proposed development may have on the nearby protected sites.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

- 5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. The presence of protected species, the effect of the proposed development and suitable mitigation, if required, must be established before planning permission can be granted. Following the findings from the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, the following survey may be required:

- **Nesting Birds** - If any work to the broadleaved woodland needs to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March to August), then a nesting bird survey will be required immediately prior to work commencing.
- **Static Bat Survey** – a static detector should be left in the small patch of woodland to assess the suitability of the woodland as a foraging and commuting habitat for bats.

Invasive Species

- 5.2 The Japanese Knotweed should be carefully removed from site using a recognised methodology. This should be either long-term herbicide application or short-term digging out and removal off-site to a licensed landfill or digging out and deep burial with a suitable barrier membrane on-site.

Habitat Enhancement

- 5.3 General recommendations to bring biodiversity gain to the site are:
- Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.
 - Tree and shrub planting – where practical, native tree and shrub species should be retained or supplemented by planting.
 - Bird and/or bat boxes could be erected onto the new dwelling and/or retained trees.
 - ‘Hedgehog holes’ to be incorporated into the fencing of the private garden space.

6.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

