

Ascerta

Landscape, Arboricultural & Ecological Solutions
for the Built Environment

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Crabtree Lane, Openshaw

Ref: P.1547.21

June 2022

(see revision dates below)

Rev	Date	Details
A	29 th June 2022	Updates following nocturnal bat survey

This document contains sensitive information regarding the location of a badger sett. The report is issued in confidence and on the basis that the material will not enter the public domain

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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Of

Crabtree Lane, Openshaw, Openshaw

For

MCI Developments

30 June 2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out at Crabtree Lane, Openshaw on 29th September 2021 by Liz Kenyon. The assessment comprised a desk study and biological records search, as well as a site walkover survey in order to map habitat types. The survey was extended to assess the potential for protected species to use the site. The assessment provides baseline data as to current site conditions and where appropriate allows recommendations to be made in respect of further potential work in order to satisfy current wildlife legislation.

Assessed against the '*Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*' 2nd edition (2018), the habitats range in ecological value from negligible to within the zone of influence of the site. All habitats are likely to be lost to the proposals. As the habitats to be lost to the proposals are small in area and not of high ecological value it is considered that their loss can be mitigated for and the proposals will not adversely affect the ecological value of the wider area, provided the recommendations detailed below are followed.

A nocturnal survey for bats has been carried out at land at Crabtree Lane at buildings B1, B2 and B3 on 22nd June 2022. A moderate level activity was recorded throughout the survey and no bats were recorded emerging from the buildings. (Ascerta report P.1547.21, Bat Nocturnal Survey).

Bat surveys are conducted in accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines, published 2016 (the Guidelines). Strict adherence to these is not necessary, but where practice deviates from them, clear reasons and rationale are required.

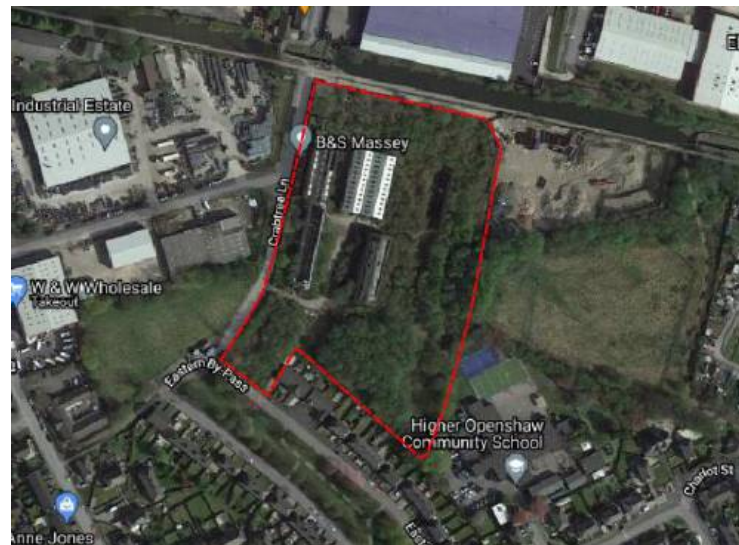
The onsite habitats comprise buildings that were previously occupied for industrial use and are surrounded by hardstanding that has become densely encroached by scrub vegetation and scattered trees.

If the recommendations below are followed these species will not be adversely affected by the proposals.

- If works have not commenced by June 2023, an updated walkover survey and building inspection is recommended to assess the onsite habitats;
- Hand tools only to be used during the demolition of the wall and a Tool Box Talk (TBT) for bats to be given to all construction workers to avoid harm to bats during the works;
- Production and implementation of a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP);
- Production and implementation of a hedgehog RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Implementation of a badger RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works.
- Production and implementation of an amphibian RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Invasive species survey for the extent of the cotoneaster identified with the site;
- Production of an invasive species method statement to avoid the spread of invasive species into the wider landscape during the proposed works; and
- Enhancing the site for species through appropriate landscape planting that includes native, species rich hedgerows, trees and areas of wildflowers plus provision of integrated bat and bird features within newly constructed buildings.
- Production of the Defra Metric Biodiversity Net Gain Calculations to ensure no overall loss of habitat units occur within the site;

1.0 Introduction

Ascerta has been instructed by MCI Developments to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of land at Crabtree Lane, Openshaw (hereafter referred to as the site). The site OS grid reference is SJ 8866 9804 and the What3Words reference is volunteered.crab.boom. The extent of the site is displayed in photograph 1.1 below.



Photograph 1.1: Extent of site

The site was visited on 29th September by Liz Kenyon when a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, which includes an assessment of the potential for protected species to be using the site or surroundings, was carried out in accordance with the *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: a Technique for Environmental Audit* (JNCC, 2010). The report was prepared following methods detailed in the CIEEM 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland' (2018) and 'Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing' (2017). This report presents the results of the survey including evaluation of habitats on site and potential for protected species to be using the site. The report includes recommendations for further actions where applicable in order to satisfy current wildlife legislation and to achieve our client's objectives. Relevant legislation is detailed within Appendix 4.

The onsite habitats comprise buildings that were previously occupied for industrial use and are surrounded by hardstanding that has become densely encroached by scrub vegetation and scattered trees.

A nocturnal survey for bats has been carried out at land at Crabtree Lane at buildings B1, B2 and B3 on 22nd June 2022. A moderate level activity was recorded throughout the survey and no bats were recorded emerging from the buildings. (Ascerta report P.1547.21, Bat Nocturnal Survey).

Our client seeks planning consent to redevelop the site for the construction of residential houses and apartments with associated access roads.

2.0 Objectives

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

Our objectives are as follows:

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

3.0 Survey Methods

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

3.1 Desk Study

A review of the designated sites and habitats within 2km of the site has been undertaken in September 2021 using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) and the Natural England websites.

A review of UK and Local priority species and habitats known to occur within 2km of the site has been undertaken in September 2021, using the Joint Nature Conservation Committee website, Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) and local records from Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) (Appendix 5).

3.2 Field Survey

A walkover survey of the site was conducted on 19th September 2021 by Liz Kenyon, when the habitat types and features of ecological interest were identified and mapped in compliance with the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit (*JNCC, 2010*). The survey methods involve the recording and mapping of all habitat types and ecological features present on site, including the identification of the main species present and examination of the potential for any protected species. Habitats were mapped and target notes made for any interesting features.

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

- Mammals (badgers, bats, otter and water vole);
- Birds;
- Amphibians and reptiles;
- Invertebrates;
- Hedgerows and boundaries;
- Invasive plant species; and
- Plant communities and trees.

Weather conditions during the survey were mild (11°C), dry and sunny (3/8 cloud cover) with a F0 (Beaufort Scale) calm air, therefore appropriate for this type of survey.

3.3 Bat Survey Methods

The survey methods followed the guidelines set out by the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 3rd Edition (2016). Habitats, buildings and trees were assessed for suitability for use by bats and categorised independently using table 4.1 page 35 within the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2016).

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Bats

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

Preliminary Roost Assessment Trees

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

External Inspection of the Building

A daytime external inspection of the buildings was carried out during the survey by a suitably experienced bat ecologist. The buildings were searched externally looking for signs of bats, including staining on barge boards, soffits and more commonly droppings on flat surfaces i.e. window ledges that would indicate potential roosting sites. Possible bat access points such as loose tiles, cracks and crevices or crawl spaces beneath and/or behind roofing materials such as roofing felt, panelling, soffits and tiles were identified and checked for signs of use by bats, for example droppings, scratch marks and staining.

Due to the openness of the buildings and missing sections of roofing allowing natural light to enter the buildings partial internal inspections of the buildings were also carried out

The buildings were categorised as per Table 4.1 (below). Buildings assigned a suitability of **Low** or above may require further inspection if they are to be lost to the development.

Table 4.1: Guidelines for assessing Potential Roost Features (PRFs), commuting and foraging habitat within a proposed development site. Guidelines taken from table 4.1 page 35 of the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 3rd Edition (2016).

Suitability	Roosting Habitats	Commuting and Foraging Habitats
<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.</i>	<i>Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.</i>
<i>Low</i>	<i>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^a and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation^b).</i> <i>A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential. ^c</i>	<i>Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.</i> <i>Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.</i>
<i>Moderate</i>	<i>A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions^a and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).</i>	<i>Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens.</i> <i>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.</i>
<i>High</i>	<i>A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^a and surrounding habitat.</i>	<i>Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.</i> <i>High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland.</i> <i>Site is close to and connected to known roosts.</i>

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

^b Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten et al., 2015). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in large buildings in highly urbanised environments.

^c This system of categorisation aligns with BS 8596:2015 Surveying for bats in trees and woodland (BSI,2015).

3.4 Badger Survey Methods

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

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

3.5 Water vole and Otter

The Ashton Canal was briefly assessed for use by otters and water vole from the northern bank that is within the site, following methods outlined in *Chanin P (2003). Monitoring the Otter Lutra lutra. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No. 10, English Nature, Peterborough* and Strachan, R., Moorhouse, T., Gelling, M. (2011). *Water Vole Conservation Handbook*, 3rd Edition. Wildlife Conservation Research Unit: Abingdon. The Ashton Canal was also assessed for Great Crested Newt (GCN) from the canal tow path.

3.6 Evaluation

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

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

Although we cannot assess the survey findings fully in relation to the draft Environment Bill and Biodiversity Metric, the recommendations detailed within this report aim to meet requirements of the Environment Bill and Biodiversity Metric 3.0 as far as possible at this stage.

3.7 Limitations

The site visit was undertaken in September, which is within the optimal time of year for phase 1 habitat surveys, sufficient vegetation was present to enable habitat identification. It is not considered a limit to the conclusions of the report based on the habitats found within the site and the works proposed.

The absence of biological records does not necessarily mean the absence of species. This has been taken into account within the report conclusions.

4.0 Survey Results

4.1 Desk Study

One statutory site identified within a 2km radius of the proposed development site and seven non-statutory sites such as Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) /Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) were identified within a 2km radius the proposed development site.

The following statutory sites were identified within the vicinity of the proposals (with approximate distance and direction from the site):

- Clayton Vale Local Nature Reserve (LNR), 1km north;

The following non-statutory sites were identified within the vicinity of the proposals (with distance and direction from the site):

- Bank Bridge Meadow Site of Biological Importance (SBI), 1.7km north-west;
- Ashton Canal West SBI, 300m east;
- Ashton Canal East SBI, 899m east;
- Medlock Vale and Lumb Clough South SBI, 2km north-east;
- Brookdale Clough East SBI, 1.9km north-east;
- Brookdale Clough West SBI, 1.85km north-west; and
- Clayton Vale SBI, 1km north.

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

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

No European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) applications within 2km of the site since 2015 were identified using Magic Maps.

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

Birds

Ninety records were returned for bird species within 2km of the site. Species present include song thrush, starling, peregrine, house sparrow, dunnock, grey heron, kingfisher and bullfinch. All species recorded within 2km are displayed within Appendix 5. The most recent record was in July 2020 for a group of starlings, located approximately 680m south-east from the site close to a retail park. The closest record was for a skylark recorded in 2011, located approximately 645m west of site within an urban area.

Bats

One hundred twenty-six records of bats were returned within 2km of the site. Forty-one records were for roosts and eighty-five were for other signs. Species present include whiskered bat, soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle, pipistrelle species, noctule, daubenton's bat, brown long-eared bat and unidentified bat species. The closest record was for a pipistrelle species bat located approximately 520m north-east of the site close to a residential area. The most recent record was in 2019 for a juvenile common pipistrelle located approximately 1km north of the site close to a residential area.

Amphibians

Five records of amphibians were returned within 2km of the site these records included two for great crested newt and three for common toad. The most recent record was recorded in 2014 for a common toad located approximately 1.9km south of site within allotments close to Gorton Reservoir. The closest record to the site were in 2005 and 2012 for two records of common toad located 1km north of the site within a pond within Clayton Vale.

Reptiles

No records of reptiles were returned within 2km of the site.

Terrestrial mammals

Twenty-one record of badger was returned within 2km of the site. Fifteen records were for sett records and six were for other signs. The closest record was for a sett identified 396m west of the site within an area of open space. The most recent records were in January 2021 for a main sett located approximately 440m west of the site close to Stockport Canal Branch and an outlier sett located approximately 550m south of the site close to Louisa Park.

Seven records for hedgehog were returned within 2km of the site. The most recent record was in November 2020 for an individual located approximately 1.8km east of the site close to a residential area. The closest record was for an individual located approximately

One record for water vole. This record was in 2004 and was located approximately 1km north of the site within a fishing pond within Clayton Vale.

A list of key habitats is shown in table 5.1 below and a summary description of key habitats within the site is provided in Section 5.2. Notes on the presence or potential presence of protected species are provided in Section 5.3. The Phase 1 Habitat map can be found in Appendix 1. The Target Notes (TN) and lists of species recorded during survey are presented in Appendix 2.

4.2 Habitat Survey

The site lies within Openshaw to the east of Manchester and is set in a predominantly residential and industrial area. The north of the site is bound by the Ashton Canal, Crabtree Lane bounds the west of the site with residential dwellings to the south and Higher Openshaw Community School to the east.

The onsite habitats comprise buildings that were previously occupied for industrial use and are surrounded by hardstanding that has become densely encroached by scrub vegetation and scattered trees.

Within the wider landscape lies residential dwellings, retail premises and pockets of green open space.

The habitat types identified within the site are detailed below and are displayed on drawing P.1547.21.03 *Phase One Habitat Survey* in Appendix 1 and on Photographs within Appendix 3. Species lists and target notes are displayed in Appendix 2.

Hard standing (J4)

The site is dominated by hardstanding (concrete and crushed concrete) that formed the external working areas for the previous industrial use of the site. This habitat is displayed in photograph 2 within Appendix 3.

Buildings (J3.6) and Wall (J2.5)

Three buildings are present within the site. A single remaining wall of a building is also present to the west of the site. The buildings are currently unoccupied and in poor state of repair. The buildings and wall are detailed within section 4.3 below. The buildings are displayed within photographs 4-11 within Appendix 3.

Dense/continuous scrub (A2.1)

Dense scrub dominates the site and has encroached most of the areas of hardstanding. Species present include buddleia, bramble, goat willow, rose sp. and birch. Invasive species cotoneaster has been identified within the areas of dense scrub adjacent to the site entrance (see TN1 on drawing P.1547.21.03). This habitat is displayed in photograph 2,3 & 12 within Appendix 3.

Scattered trees (A3.1)

Scattered trees area present throughout the site with the areas of scrub. Species present are sycamore, cherry and birch. This habitat is displayed in Photograph 12 within Appendix 3.

4.3 Preliminary bat roost assessment of buildings

Building 1-

Building 1 lies adjacent to Crabtree Lane and is of brickwork construction with a corrugated roof. Metal supporting beams are present internally. The brickwork is of a deteriorating condition with missing mortar, predominantly to the western elevation. Some of the brickwork has been skimmed and the paintwork is missing and/or peeling in areas. Windows are present to the western elevation; however the glass is missing and wire mesh has been placed over the window openings. A corrugated roller door is present to the southern boundary. The majority of the roof panels are also missing. Buddleia scrub has colonised within the building.

The building was assessed to have **negligible** hibernation potential for crevice and void dwelling bats and **low** potential for day, satellite and transitional roost for crevice dwelling bats and **negligible** potential for void dwelling bats. Overall, the building is classified as having **low** bat roosting potential.

Building 2 -

Building 2 is a brick-built building with a corrugated metal roof and metal facias. The brickwork is in generally good condition with some areas of missing mortar. New brickwork is present in the areas that were previously windows. Internally the building is divided by blockwork walls and is in a poor state of repair. The roof comprises corrugated panels and skylights which are intact.

A missing metal roller shutter door is present to the southern elevation. Wooden entrance doors are present throughout the building, the wood is in a deteriorating state with splintered areas, the paintwork on the doors is missing and /or flaking in areas. B2 is connected to B3 via an overhead pipe

The building was assessed to have **negligible** hibernation potential for crevice and void dwelling bats and **low** potential for day, satellite and transitional roost for crevice dwelling bats and **low** potential for void dwelling bats. Overall, the building is classified as having **low** bat roosting potential.

Building 3 -

Building 3 is a brick-built building with a corrugated metal and glass panel roof. The majority of the roof is missing. The brickwork is in generally good condition with some areas of missing mortar. New brickwork is present in the areas that were previously windows. Glass windows are also present on the northern elevation, with some areas of missing glass. One window has been covered with metal sheeting.

The building was assessed to have **negligible** hibernation potential for crevice and void dwelling bats and **low** potential for day, satellite and transitional roost for crevice dwelling bats and **negligible** potential for void dwelling bats. Overall, the building is classified as having **low** bat roosting potential.

Wall –

A section of brick wall is present to the west of the site. The wall appears to of formed a previously building and piles of bricks are present following the demolition of the building. Sections of the brickwork has been skimmed and some of the windows have been filled with block bricks.

The wall was assessed to have **negligible** hibernation potential for crevice and void dwelling bats and **low** potential for day, satellite and transitional roost for crevice dwelling bats and **negligible** potential for void dwelling bats. Overall, the wall is classified as having **low** bat roosting potential.

The wall was reassessed prior to the nocturnal survey in June 2022, the area surrounding the wall was very densely overgrown by scrub and no visibility was possible, it is therefore recommended that the wall is dismantles by hand to avoid any harm to bats.

4.4 Protected and Notable Species

Birds

The habitats within the site provide suitable foraging and nesting opportunities for bird species. These habitats include scrub, scattered trees and buildings. During the survey magpie, wood pigeon, common gull, and passerine species were identified within the site. Canadian geese were also present on the canal bank adjacent to the north of the site.

Bats

The buildings on site offer **negligible** to **low** potential to support bat roosts as detailed above in section 4.3. Evidence of bats was not identified within the site during the survey. The trees within the site are not mature enough support roosting bats

The scrub, and scattered trees within the site provide good suitability for commuting and foraging bats, with good connectivity to the surrounding land use.

Badger and other small mammals

The scrub habitats within the site provide limited foraging and shelter habitat for badger and other small mammal species such as hedgehog. No evidence of badger or hedgehog was identified within the site during the survey.

Amphibians, Otter and Water Vole

No ponds are present within the site. The Ashton Canal is located adjacent to the northern site boundary. The canal is not suitable for amphibians due to the construction of the canal banks/edging being from made materials, including concrete and brickwork. The water level was significantly lower than the surrounding areas making it unlikely that amphibians could exit the water body to seek refuge within the onsite terrestrial habitats. No other ponds are present within 500m of the site as mapped on Magic Maps. Otters may use the canal as a commuting route; however, locks are present meaning continuous travel would not be possible, the made walls of the canal do not provide suitable habitat for water vole. Amphibians will not be impacted by the proposals within the site therefore, amphibians do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.

Reptiles

The habitats within the site do not offer suitability to support reptiles. Ecotones are not present within the site and the habitats are scattered across the site with no suitable connectivity. The habitats within the site are prone to high human disturbance. Reptiles do not require further consideration within this planning application and will not be discussed further within this report.

Invasive species

Non-native invasive species cotoneaster (TN1) was identified to the south of B1. The locations of the non-native invasive species identified within the site are displayed on plan P.547.21.03 within Appendix 1.

5.0 Evaluation and Recommendations

5.1 Designated Sites and Habitats

The Ashton Canal (SBI) lies 300m north of the site, however it is unlikely that the water body will be affected during the works and it is recommended that a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) is produced and implemented throughout the works to protect the canal. It is considered that there will be no impact on any statutory or non-statutory sites in the vicinity as a result of the proposals.

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

The habitats on site comprise hardstanding, buildings, a wall, scattered trees and scrub. These habitats are considered to have an ecological value of **within the zone of influence** of the site or lower. The site contains no designated or priority habitats. Overall, the proposals are unlikely to adversely affect the ecological value of the area.

5.2 Protected and Notable Species

Birds

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

Bats

Bat records were returned within 2km of the site. The closest record was recorded 520m north-east of the site.

The habitats on site provide **low** suitability for commuting and foraging bats. The trees within the site were assessed to provide negligible potential for roosting bats. The buildings and wall on site were assessed to provide **low** potential for bats.

The buildings will be demolished to accommodate the proposals within the site, therefore buildings and wall sections with low bat roost potential will require a minimum of one nocturnal survey undertaken between May and August to assess if bats are using the buildings and wall within the site as a roost and to inform further recommendations if required.

The wall was also assessed to provide low potential to support roosting bats during the daytime inspection. In June 2022, the wall was heavily screened by dense scrub vegetation and no viewpoint of the brickwork was possible. The wall will required to be demolished with hand tools only to avoid any harm to bats. A tool box talk (TBT) will be given to all construction workers prior to the site clearance for if in the event a bat is found and ecological supervision will be carried out if thought to be necessary.

If an opportunist bat is found during the demolishment of the wall, works must stop immediately and Ascerta (0845 463 4404) be contacted.

Badger and other small mammals

The site provides limited habitat for badger and hedgehog within the scrub and scattered trees. These habitats are likely to be impacted by the proposals and therefore, it is recommended that a Hedgehog Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) Method Statement is produced and implemented during the works to avoid harm to this species. The RAMS should include:

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

To enable hedgehog continued use of the site it is advised that gaps of at least 13cm by 13cm are left under any new garden fences to enable hedgehog to roam freely within the area following development. Gaps should be left beneath high board or herras fencing that is in place throughout the development phase to allow hedgehog to move across the site.

As the site is predominantly hardstanding it is unsuitable sett building habitat for badger. However, as badger are a mobile species, it is recommended that badger Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) are implemented during the works to avoid harm to this species. The RAMS should include:

- Construction materials stored on pallets so as not to create a refuge area;
- Existing refuge areas should be removed by hand so badger within are not harmed during their removal;
- Throughout the works all trenches must be covered at night or ramps provided to prevent badger from getting stuck. Large pipes must also be covered to prevent badger access and risk of these species getting stuck;
- Vegetation clearance applies to all habitats cleared in daytime air temperatures above 5°C.
- Works must be avoided in cold temperatures or if prior overnight temperatures have been less than 1°C; and
- The cut material is to be chipped and placed in discrete piles outside the working areas or removed from the site.

Gaps should be left beneath high board or Heras fencing that is in place throughout the development phase to allow hedgehog to move across the site.

Invasive species

Cotoneaster has been identified within the site. To avoid the spread of the species within the site during site clearance it is recommended that an invasive species management plan is produced and adhered to during the works. It is recommended that the management plan details suitable management of these species, biosecurity measures and avoidance measures where possible.

5.3 Enhancements

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

1. Provision of eight bird boxes (25mm and 32mm entrance hole box, house sparrow terrace, swift box), attached to or integrated new buildings on site;
2. Provision of four bat features (e.g. Vivara Pro WoodStone Bat box or similar) attached to a retained or new tree on site or provision of a bat box (e.g. Vivara bat bricks or '*bird brick houses*' bat boxes) integrated within new buildings; and
3. Suitable landscaping incorporating species that provide a food or shelter resource to wildlife to include hawthorn, hazel, holly, blackthorn, dog rose and honeysuckle as hedgerow species and oak, alder, silver birch, crab apple, rowan and bird cherry as tree species together with implementing a relaxed mowing regime and establishing wildflowers in these areas.

6.0 Conclusions

The site was subject to an extended phase one habitat survey and a preliminary bat roost assessment of all buildings. During the survey and following review of historical species records, it is considered that impact on birds, bats, badger and hedgehog are likely to occur in relation to the proposals for the site. In summary, the following recommendations have been made to avoid impact on these species:

- If works have not commenced by June 2023 an updated walkover survey and building inspection is recommended to assess the onsite habitats;
- Hand tools only to be used during the demolition of the wall and a Tool Box Talk (TBT) for bats to be given to all construction workers to avoid harm to bats during the works;
- Production and implementation of a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP);
- Production and implementation of a hedgehog RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Implementation of a badger RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works.
- Production and implementation of an amphibian RAMS to avoid any harm to this species during the proposed works;
- Invasive species survey for the extent of the cotoneaster identified with the site;
- Production of an invasive species method statement to avoid the spread of invasive species into the wider landscape during the proposed works; and
- Enhancing the site for species through appropriate landscape planting that includes native, species rich hedgerows, trees and areas of wildflowers plus provision of integrated bat and bird features within newly constructed buildings.
- Production of the Defra Metric Biodiversity Net Gain Calculations to ensure no overall loss of habitat units occur within the site;

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

7.0 References

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Appendix 1

KEY

- Survey area
- Wall (J2.5)
- Building (J3.6)
- Scattered trees (A3.1)
- Dense scrub (A2.1)
- Hardstanding (J4)
- J4 - Bare ground
- Target note

Target note

TN1 - Location of cotoneaster
TN2- Location of brick piles

DO NOT SCALE.
ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID.
LOCATED TO NG BY BEST FIT TO DETAIL.
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CLIENT:
MCI Developments

PROJECT:
Crabtree Lane, Openshaw

DRAWING TITLE:
Phase 1 Habitat Survey

SCALE: NTS@A3	DRAWN BY: LK	DRAWING No: P.1547.21.03
DATE: 11/10/2021	CHKD BY: LA	REV: -

Appendix 2

Species Lists and Target Notes

Table 1: Flora Species

English Name	Scientific Name
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg</i>
Broadleaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Birch	<i>Betula</i>
Cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>
Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Common daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Common field speedwell	<i>Veronica persica</i>
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Cotoneaster*	<i>Cotoneaster sp.</i>
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Field horsetail	<i>Equisetum arvense</i>
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Greater willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Rose	<i>Rosa sp.</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Sphagnum moss	<i>Sphagnum sp.</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>

* invasive species

Table 2: Target Notes

Target Note Number	Description
TN1	Location of cotoneaster
TN2	Brick piles

Appendix 3

Photographs

Table 3: Photographs of the site



Photograph 1: Cotoneaster (TN1) adjacent to the site entrance



Photograph 2: Hardstanding encroached by scrub



Photograph 3: Scrub vegetation



Photograph 4: Southern elevation of B1



Photograph 5: Western elevation of B1



Photograph 6: Internal of B1



Photograph 7: Southern elevation of B2



Photograph 8: Internal of B2



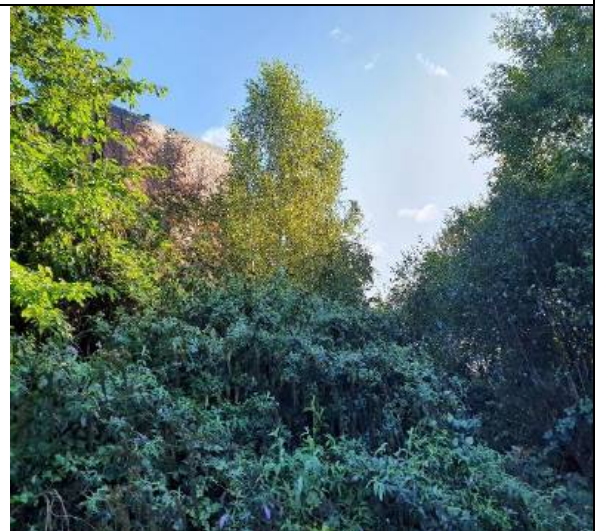
Photograph 9: Northern elevation of B3



Photograph 10: Pipe connecting B2 and B3



Photograph 11: Wall to the west of the site



Photograph 12: Scrub with scattered trees

Appendix 4

Relevant Legislation

European Legislation

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

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

UK Legislation

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

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

The UK legislation is due to be updated, with the publication of The Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill, which is due to be passed through parliament in the 2020. The draft Environment Bill sets out how the UK will maintain environmental standards following leaving of the EU. The Bill builds on the vision of the 25 Year Environment Plan, with the ambition from the government to leave the environment in a better state than it was when inherited.

The Defra Biodiversity Metric is being implemented to work alongside the Environment Bill. This tool calculates potential biodiversity impacts as a result of development and identifies mitigation and compensation requirements to ensure no net loss of biodiversity. In addition, it identifies measures that can be implemented in order to meet Biodiversity gain as a result of development. Defra released a beta version of the biodiversity metric in July 2019 and updated the metric in July 2021 to version 3.0. This metric is likely to be the default metric used by councils once the Environment Bill comes into force.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 has been published to provide further planning guidance. Wildlife, biodiversity and ecological networks are referred to in Section 15 '*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*'. The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services, minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future

pressures. Further guidance is provided within Government Circular *06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System*.

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance

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

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

Badgers

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

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

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

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

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

Bats

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

Under the current legislation as summarised on pages 8 and 9 of the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 3rd Edition (2016) it is a criminal offence to:

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

- *To damage or destroy a place used by a bat for breeding or resting. All offences of this nature are identified within the Habitats Regulations. This offence is unique in that it can be committed accidentally. No element of intentional, reckless or deliberate action needs to be evidenced;*
- *To disturb bats anywhere (roosts, flight lines or foraging areas) if levels of disturbance can be shown to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, to rear or nurture their young, to hibernate or migrate or to affect significantly local distribution or abundance;*
- *To intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat, whilst it is occupying a place of shelter or protection;*

- *To intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by a bat for shelter or protection; and*
- *To be in possession or control of a bat alive or dead (or any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat, although bat droppings are generally considered to be acceptable), or to transport a bat, to sell or exchange a bat or to offer to sell or exchange a bat taken from the wild.”*

Breeding Birds

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

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

Great Crested Newt

The great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) and the Habitats Regulations, 2017. It is also a Species of Principal Importance.

The legislation makes it an offence to:

- *Deliberately (or intentionally) kill, injure or capture (or take) a great crested newt, or great crested newt egg or eft;*
- *Deliberately (intentionally) damage or destroy any breeding site or resting place (i.e. pond, refuge, hibernaculum);*
- *Deliberately or recklessly obstruct access to any breeding site or resting place;*
- *Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a great crested newt, in particular disturbance which is likely to:*
 - *impair the ability of the great crested newt to survive, breed, reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;*
 - *impair the ability of the great crested newt to hibernate or migrate; or significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of great crested newts*

Invasive Species

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

Other Aquatic Species

Water vole (*Arvicola amphibious*) are a Species of Principal Importance and also fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to:

- *intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection;*
- *intentionally or recklessly disturb water voles whilst occupying a structure or place used for that purpose;*
- *intentionally kill, injure or take water voles;*
- *possess or control live or dead water voles or derivatives;*
- *sell water voles or offer or expose for sale or transport for sale; and*
- *publish or cause to be published any advertisement which conveys the buying or selling of water voles.*

Otter (*Lutra Lutra*) are similarly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) and have additional protection as a European Species under The Habitats Regulations 2017.

White clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) are similarly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). They are also a species of Principal Importance. A licence is required in order to sites where these species are suspected to be present.

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

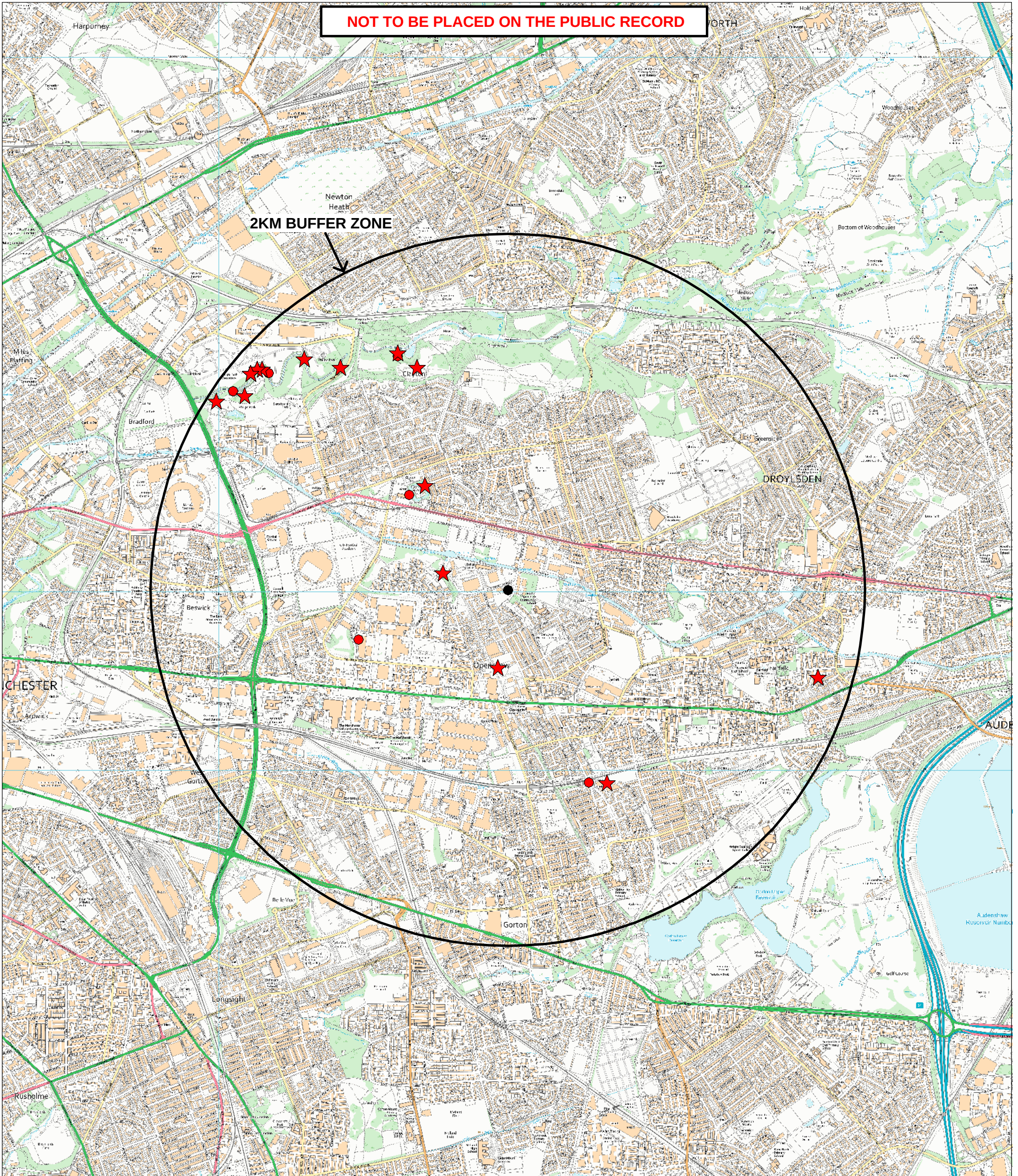
Local Policy

E.G.: Manchester and is covered by Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted 11 July 2012) and extant policies within the Unitary Development Plan. The policy of relevance is EN 15 within the Core Strategy document.

Appendix 5

NOT TO BE PLACED ON THE PUBLIC RECORD

2KM BUFFER ZONE



KEY
BADGERS
★ SETTS
● OTHER SIGNS

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8862 9801
CRABTREE LANE - MAP 3
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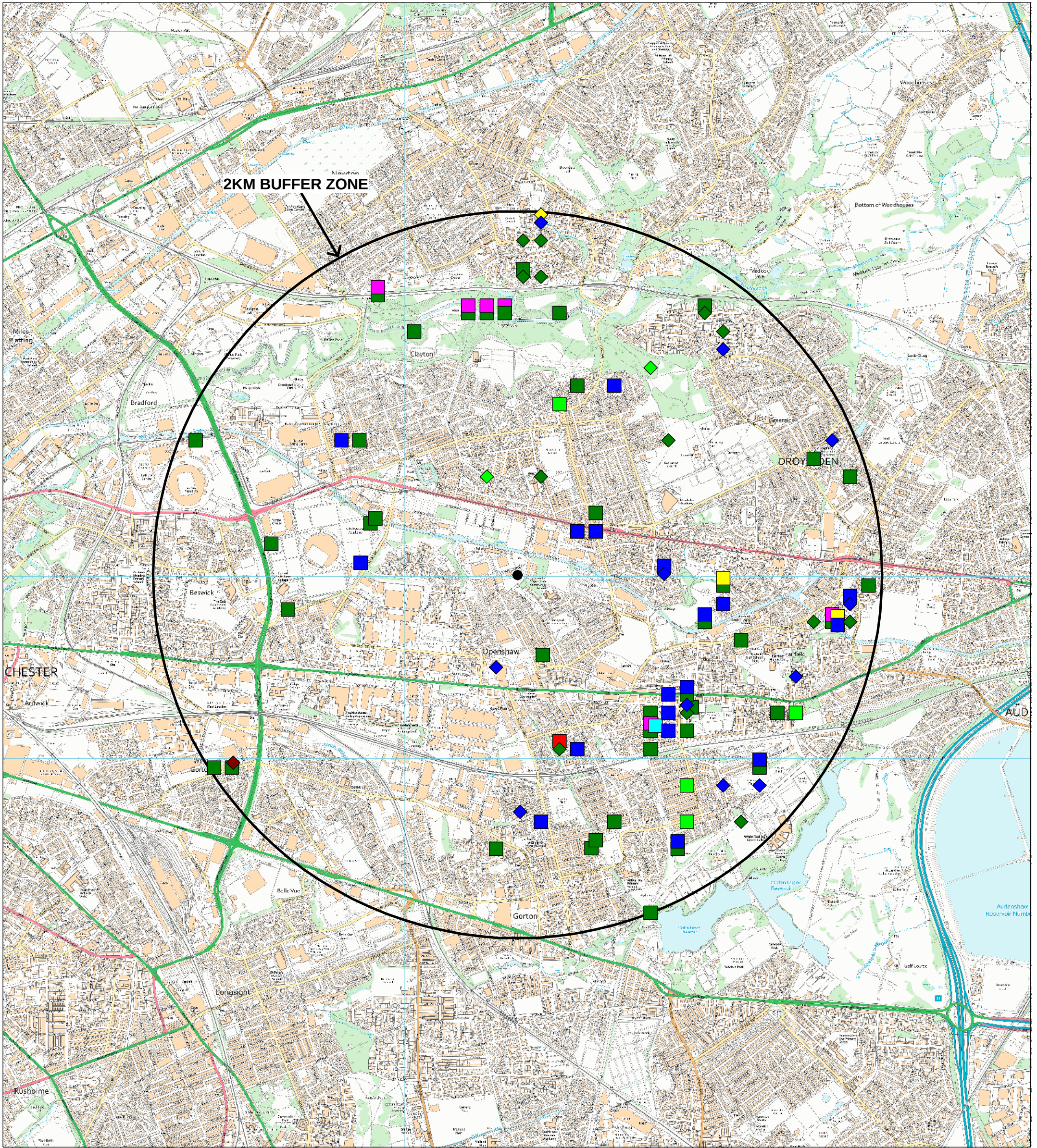
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KEY

BAT ROOSTS

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

BATS OTHER SIGNS

- BAT SP
- COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- DAUBENTON'S BAT
- NOCTULE BAT
- PIPISTRELLE SP
- SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE
- WHISKERED BAT

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8862 9801 CRABTREE LANE - MAP 4

SCALE 1:20,000

BAT DATA COURTESY OF SOUTH LANCS BAT GROUP

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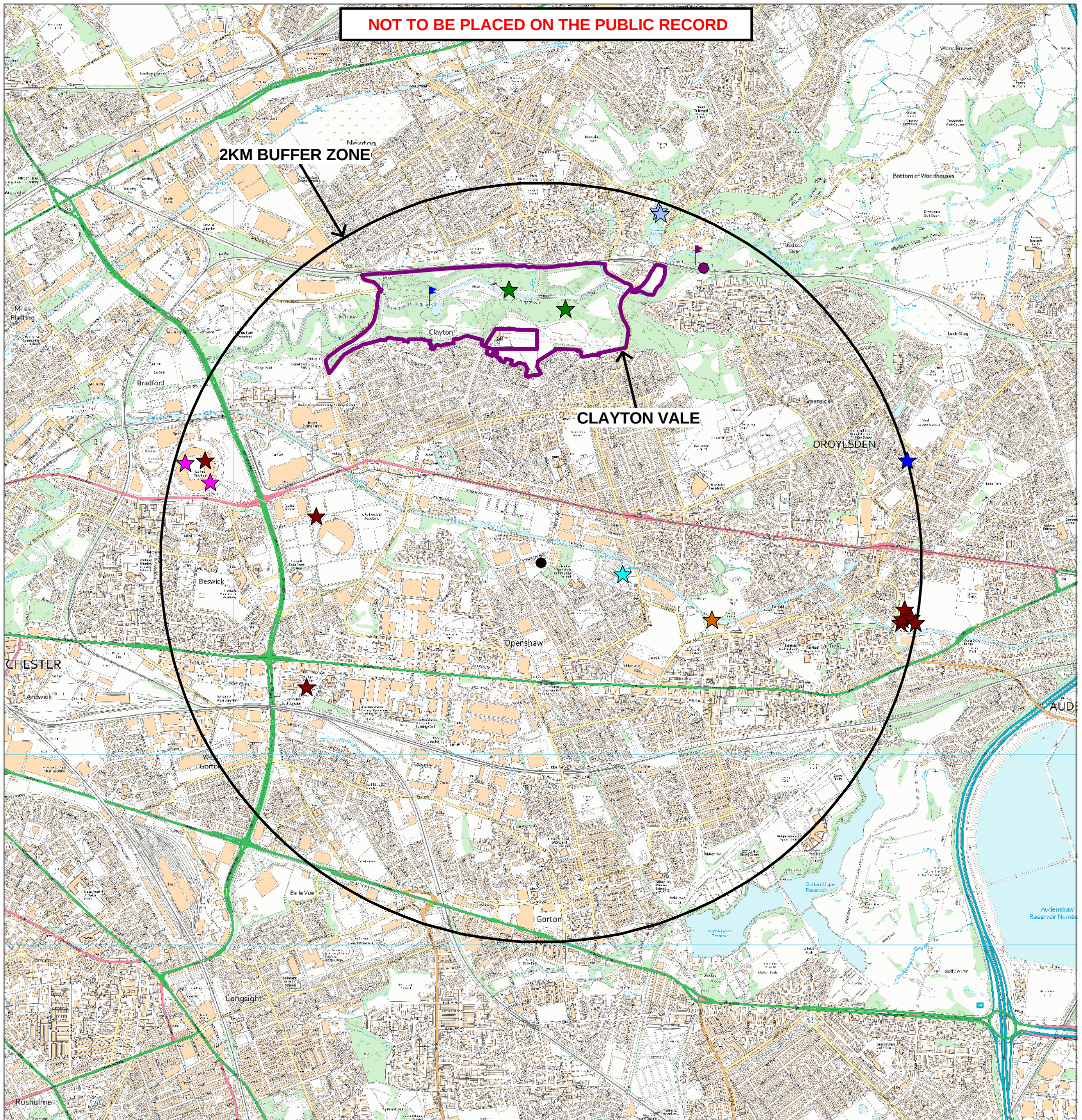


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NOT TO BE PLACED ON THE PUBLIC RECORD



KEY

PROTECTED SPECIES

-  GREAT CRESTED NEWT
-  GREAT CRESTED NEWT ABSENCE
-  EUROPEAN WATER VOLE
-  BLACK REDSTART
-  FLOATING WATER-PLANTAIN
-  GREY HERON
-  KINGFISHER
-  LITTLE RINGED PLOVER
-  PEREGRINE
-  SLOW-WORM

SITES

-  LOCAL NATURE RESERVES

**GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8862 9801
CRABTREE LANE - MAP 2**

SCALE 1:20,000



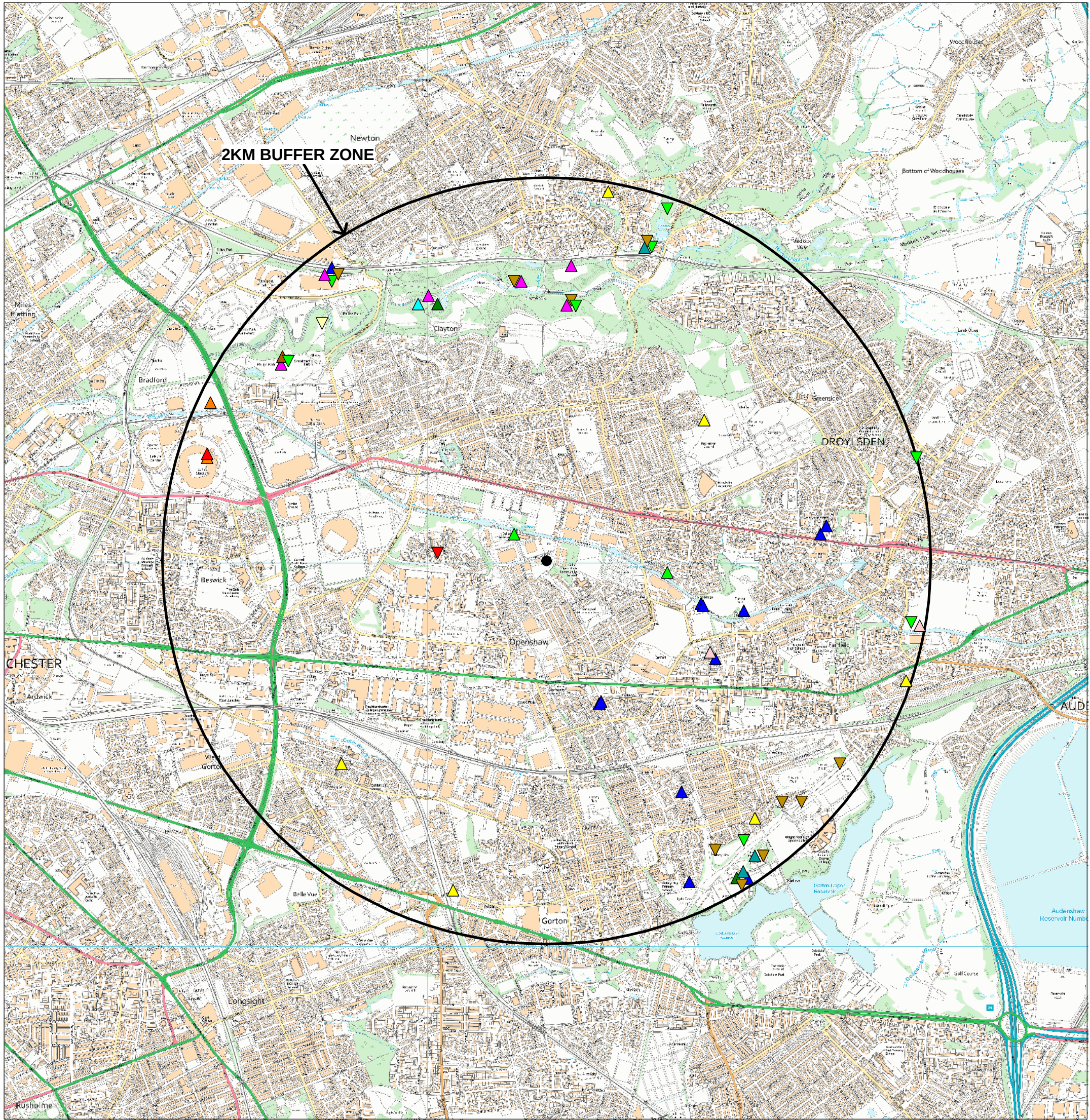
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KEY
SECTION 41 SPECIES

- ▲ BULLFINCH
- ▲ COMMON TOAD
- ▲ CURLEW
- ▲ DUNNOCK
- ▲ GRASS-WRACK PONDWEED
- ▲ HEDGEHOG
- ▲ HOUSE SPARROW
- ▲ LAPWING
- ▲ LESSER REDPOLL
- ▲ LINNET
- ▲ S41 MOTH
- ▲ SKYLARK
- ▲ SONG THRUSH
- ▲ STARLING
- ▲ YELLOW BIRD'S-NEST

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8862 9801
CRABTREE LANE - MAP 5

SCALE 1:20,000



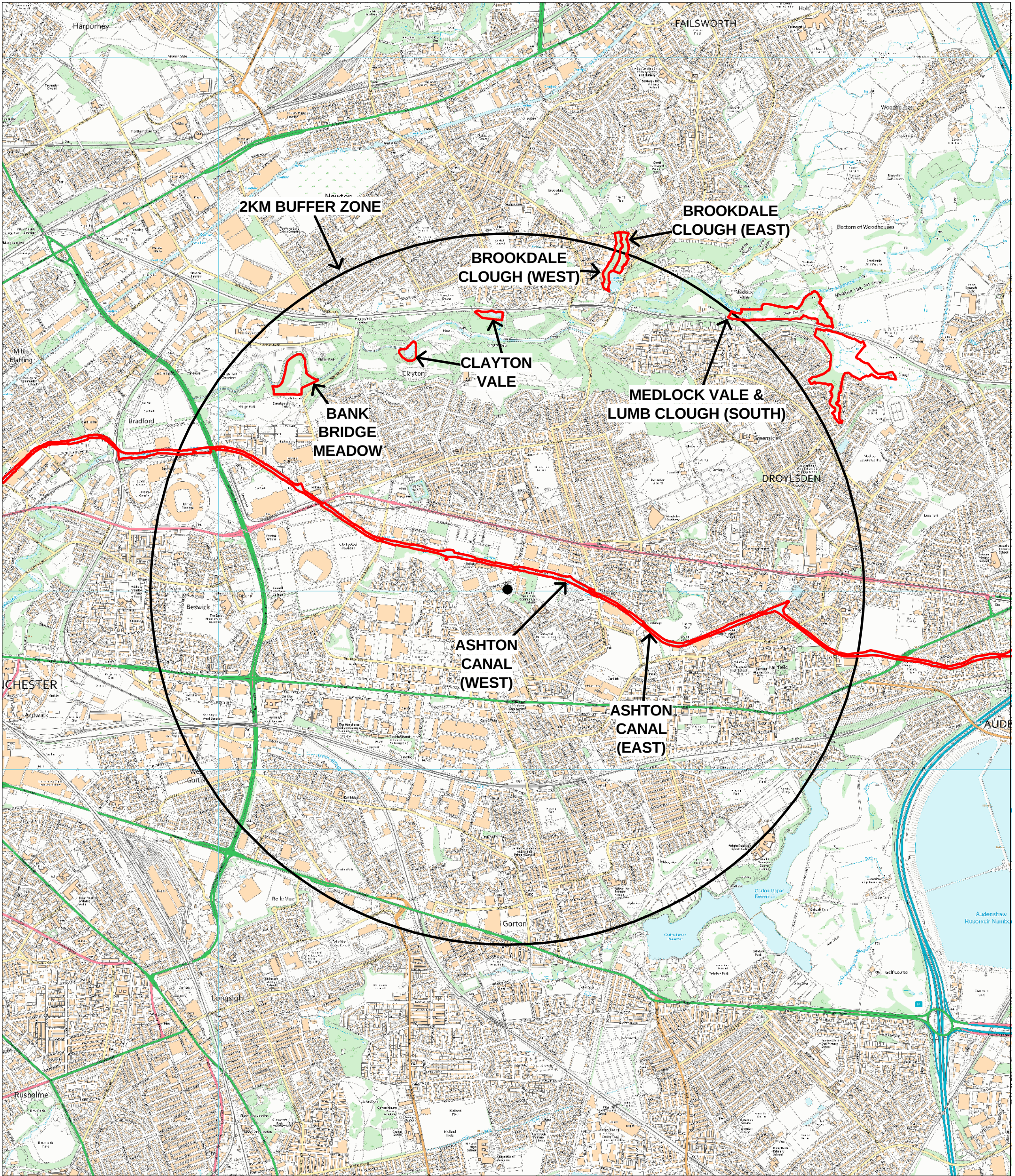
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KEY

SITE OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

 **SBI BOUNDARY**

**GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 8862 9801
CRABTREE LANE - MAP 1**

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