
EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY

NEW VICTORIA OFFICE,
CORPORATION STREET,
MANCHESTER

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2022 by Toriview Ltd. to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of land at New Victoria Office. The site is situated on Corporation Street, Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ8408298980 – see Figure 1). The Site is bounded by Manchester Victoria Train Station to the east, the Metrolink tramlines to the south west, Corporation Street to the west and the Phase 1 New Victoria: residential development to the north. The site primarily comprises hardstanding, a small number of temporary cabins are present on the site, supporting Phase 1 of New Victoria. The Site is currently partially fenced off restricting access, as it is located within the boundary of the construction compound for New Victoria Phase 1: residential development and currently accommodates site access, parking and storage facilities. The site benefits from close proximity to a range of amenities including Victoria Train Station. The site has historically been used as a car park.

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.

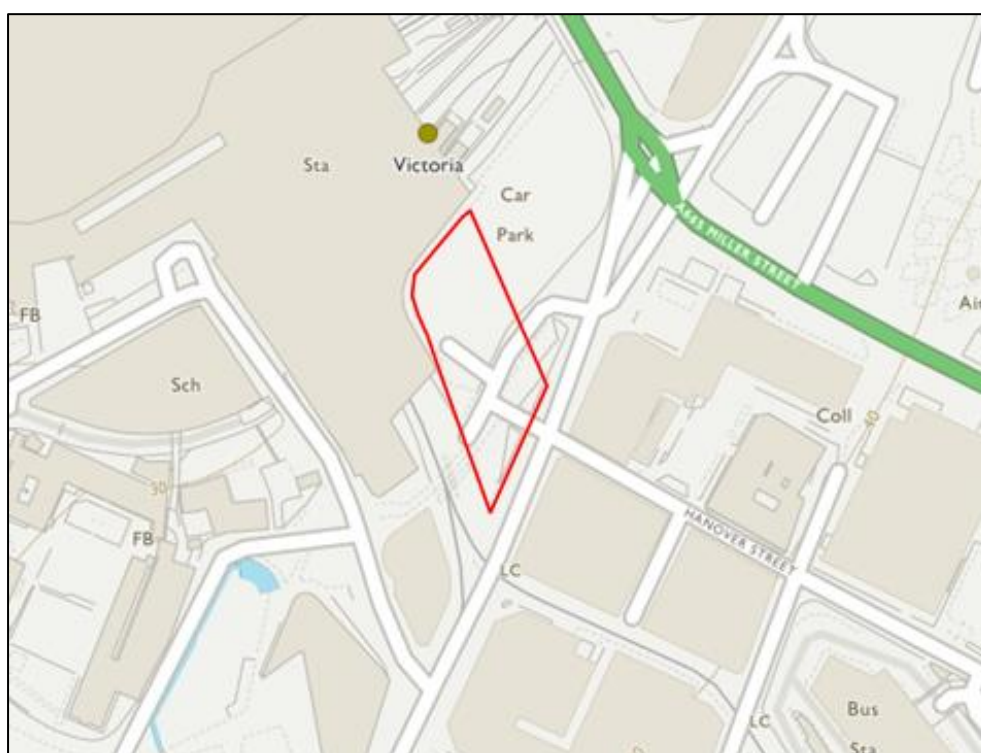


Figure 1 showing the location of the site

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the construction of a 10 Storey office building plus basement, comprising up to 18,101 sq. m. (GEA) of office accommodation, ground floor commercial units, roof terrace, plant, cycle parking, hard and soft landscaping, access and servicing and other associated works.

- 1.3 The Site benefits from a fully implemented, extant planning consent comprising a wider regeneration project adjacent to Victoria Station, known as 'New Victoria' (the 'Extant Consent'). The office element benefits from the extant implemented consent, which remains in perpetuity. This was approved 29 September 2016 (LPA Ref: 111777/FO/2016/C1), Covers site bounded by Manchester Victoria Train Station, Corporation Street and Cheetham Hill Road (A665). Phase 1 of this development is currently under construction, and comprises two residential buildings, along with ground floor commercial space, parking and other associated works. Phase 2 covers this Site, and the consented proposals comprise an 8 storey commercial office development, providing 11,647 sq. m office floorspace. The office building originally proposed as part of the New Victoria development will now be delivered under this separate application, reflecting changes to the design of the office building in order to better address current market requirements.

Biodiversity in Planning

- 1.4 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) 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 Kate Reed (Senior Ecologist) and Jess Rogers (Student Ecologist) carried out the daytime bat survey on the 15th March 2022. Kate is an experienced ecologist and fully trained in botanical surveys and protected species assessments. March is a sub-optimal time of the year for botanical work however due to the habitat types present on the site a throughout assessment could be made at this time. The weather at the time of the survey was cool and dry.

Survey Constraints

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



3.0 RESULTS

Description of 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.

Bare Ground

- 3.2 The site is dominated by bare ground (see Photograph 1). A small amount of ephemeral short perennial has developed on the site edges comprised of Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua*, Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus* and Wavy Bitter-cress *Cardamine flexuosa*.



Photograph 1 showing the bare ground

Building/Structures

- 3.3 A small number of temporary cabins are present on the site (see Photograph 2).



Photograph 2 showing the cabins

Boundaries

- 3.4 The site boundaries are marked with fencing. A small section of brick wall also exists on the site.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 No waterbodies exist on the site. No ponds exist within 500 metres of the site. The site does not support any suitable terrestrial, bare ground is considered a hostile habitat for Great Crested Newt.

Bats

- 3.7 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).
- 3.8 No buildings or trees exist on site. The site does not support any suitable foraging habitats.

Badger

- 3.9 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.

- 3.10 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

- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 The site does not support any habitat suitable for nesting birds.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.13 No non-native, invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are present on or immediately adjacent to the site.

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.14 No statutory protected sites lie on the site or immediately adjacent to the site boundary. The nearest is The Cliff/Kersal Dale Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which lies 2.8km to the north-west of the site. Five other statutory protected sites are located within 5.0km of the site, these are:
- Clayton Vale LNR which lies 3.4km to the east of the site.
 - Bogart Hole Clough LNR which lies 3.4km to the east of the site.
 - Blackley Forest LNR which lies 4.1km to the north of the site.
 - Kersal Moor LNR which lies 4.7km to the north-west of the site.
 - Trafford Ecology Park which lies 5km to the west of the site.
- 3.15 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.
- 3.16 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or adjacent to the site. The nearest is Rochdale Canal Stott's Lane - Ducie Street Basin Site of Biological Importance (SBI) which lies 980m to the south-west of the site at the closest point. No other non-statutory protected sites lie within 1km of 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 an area of bare ground which is being used as a compound for an adjacent development, The habitats offer no cover from predation, no foraging habitat and do not provide a pollen/nectar source for invertebrates.

Development Context

- 4.3 The development proposals effect the whole of the site area. It is recommended a suitable landscaping scheme is created to bring ecological gains to the site.

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, and lack of suitable terrestrial habitat on the site 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 No buildings or trees exist on site. There is limited green space in the wider locality that could offer suitable foraging/community habitat. No further bat survey work is considered necessary.

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 not support suitable nesting habitat for birds. Although should any nesting birds be located during the development phase the nest should be retained with a buffer area of 3m, and a ecologist contacted for advice.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.8 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie within the proposed development site or immediately adjacent. Six statutory protected sites lie within 5km of the site boundary. The closest site is The Cliff/Kersal Dale LNR which lies 2.8km to the north-west of the site. One non-statutory protected site lies within 1km of the site this is Rochdale Canal Stott's Lane - Ducie Street Basin SBI which lies 980m to the south-west of the site at the closest point. 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.

- 4.9 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. At the location of the site, the development site is not listed as a concern and Natural England should not need to be contacted.



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, no further survey works are considered necessary at this time.

Habitat Enhancement

- 5.2 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.
 - Bird boxes and/or bat boxes should be erected on the new buildings where possible.
 - Trees planting of native species where practically possible.

6.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

