

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Land Adjacent to Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe

CCW-EVE-ECO-RP-01

JANUARY 2026

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Executive Summary

Evelyn Ecology Limited was instructed by Gary Walker to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 2SL (hereafter referred to as the Site).

Habitats recorded within the Site comprise a small area of disturbed ground supporting ruderal/ephemeral vegetation with encroaching scrub, together with a log pile and evidence of intermittent vegetation management. A mature oak is present within the north-west corner of the Site. A woodland belt occurs immediately adjacent to the western boundary and forms a linear green corridor connecting to wider green space to the south.

No statutory designated sites were identified within 1 km of the Site. Given the small scale of the proposals and the absence of credible direct or functional hydrological or disturbance pathways, no significant effects on statutory designated sites are anticipated.

One non-statutory designated site (Ponds at Davenport Green SBI) was identified within 1 km. However, this receptor is separated from the Site by intervening residential development and the proposals are confined to the Site, such that no direct or significant indirect effects are expected.

Confirmed ecological considerations relevant to the proposed development at the Site comprise:

- Loss of a small area of ruderal/ephemeral vegetation.
- Limited potential for nesting birds within boundary vegetation and the mature oak, with low suitability for hedgehog and the potential for occasional use (noting connectivity provided by the adjacent woodland corridor).
- The presence of ponds within 500 m. However, taking account of the Site's lack of breeding habitat, constrained accessibility and the surrounding suburban context, great crested newt is considered unlikely to routinely access or make meaningful use of the Site (albeit occasional amphibian presence cannot be entirely ruled out).

The following avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures will be implemented to ensure compliance with the mitigation hierarchy, wildlife legislation and planning policy:

- Protect the adjacent woodland belt (western boundary) through an exclusion zone and protective fencing, preventing construction encroachment, storage, tracking or excavation at the woodland edge.
- Retain and protect the mature oak where feasible. Where works are required near the tree, implement tree protection and working methods in accordance with BS 5837:2012 (e.g. Tree Protection Plan/Arboricultural Method Statement, protective fencing and ground protection).
- Undertake vegetation clearance with potential to support nesting birds outside the main bird breeding season (March–August inclusive) where practicable or following a pre-works nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any active nests will be retained in situ with an appropriate buffer until young have fledged.
- Apply precautionary working measures during vegetation clearance and groundworks to reduce the risk of harm to amphibians, reptiles, hedgehog and other common fauna (e.g. staged strimming to low height, checking refuges/materials, avoiding creation of entrapment hazards, and providing escape from excavations overnight).
- Where landscaping is proposed, incorporate native species planting of local provenance (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, holly and dog rose) to provide nectar, berries and structural cover for birds and invertebrates and to reinforce the woodland-edge character.
- Install at least one bird nest box on a retained tree (e.g. the oak) or suitable new structure, positioned at an appropriate height and orientation.
- Where boundary treatments are altered or replaced, incorporate hedgehog access gaps (c. 130 mm × 130 mm) to improve permeability where practicable, and create a small log/leaf pile from arisings (where feasible and safe) to provide refugia for common fauna.

- If external lighting is required, adopt a sensitive lighting strategy to avoid light spill onto the adjacent woodland commuting corridor for bats (e.g. low-height, fully shielded luminaires, warm colour temperature, and PIR/timers/curfew controls, with lighting directed away from the woodland edge).

Subject to the implementation of the above measures, there are no overriding ecological constraints to the proposed development at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 2SL. The scheme is considered capable of proceeding in compliance with relevant wildlife legislation and national and local planning policy.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Evelyn Ecology Ltd was instructed by Gary Walker to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe, Manchester (hereafter referred to as “the Site”). This report sets out the findings in relation to the proposed development, which comprises the construction of three new residential dwellings. (hereafter referred to as “the Proposed Development”). The Proposed Plan showing the indicative proposed development is provided in Appendix A.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (Evelyn Ecology, 2026) has been undertaken as part of this planning application and should be read in conjunction with this report.

1.2 Site Location and Landscape Context

The Site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 80788 87713 and has an area of approximately 0.05 ha comprising vegetated garden and an ornamental hedgerow.

The wider landscape around the Site at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe comprises an established suburban area characterised by dense residential development with small gardens, tree-lined streets and intermittent pockets of amenity green space and playing fields. Immediately to the north and north-west the landscape becomes more urban in character, influenced by Wythenshawe Hospital and the Roundthorn industrial/commercial area, with associated landscaped grounds, road verges and scattered woodland belts. To the west and south-west the urban edge transitions to larger blocks of open green space and agricultural fields on the urban fringe.

1.3 Scope

This report describes the baseline ecological conditions at the Site and evaluates habitats within the survey area in the context of the wider environment. It also assesses the suitability of those habitats for notable and protected species, identifies potential ecological constraints arising from the proposed development, and summarises requirements for further surveys and mitigation. The report provides recommendations to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation and relevant planning policy, and to inform measures that will avoid, mitigate, or compensate for ecological impacts.

To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:

- A desk study to collate existing ecological information.
- A field survey to record baseline habitats on the Site and assess their suitability for notable and protected species.
- Identification of any invasive plant and animal species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended).
- Consideration of potential impacts of the proposed development on ecological features of value.
- Recommendations for further surveys and mitigation, where required.
- Identification of opportunities to enhance the Site for biodiversity.

2 LEGISLATION, PLANNING POLICY & STANDING ADVICE

2.1 Legislation

Legislation relating to wildlife and biodiversity of particular relevance to this PEA includes:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992

This above legislation has been addressed, as appropriate, in the production of this report. Further information on the above legislation is provided in Appendix D.

2.2 National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning decisions to safeguard and enhance the natural environment, to minimise biodiversity impacts, and to deliver measurable gains in biodiversity (Chapter 15).

From 12 February 2024, the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) regime applies to qualifying development proposals in England. Applicants must submit biodiversity metrics and demonstrate net positive outcomes unless exempt.

2.3 Local Policy

The development plan for the Site comprises the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (PfE) 2022 to 2039 (adopted 21 March 2024), the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 to 2027 (adopted 11 July 2012), and the extant (remaining) Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies, read alongside any made Neighbourhood Plans.

Policies of particular relevance to biodiversity, geodiversity and green infrastructure include the Manchester Core Strategy:

- EN 9 (Green Infrastructure),
- EN 15 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation),
- EN 8 (Adaptation to Climate Change),
- EN 14 (Flood Risk), and
- DM 2 (Aerodrome Safeguarding).

Collectively, these policies require development to maintain and, where practicable, enhance green infrastructure and ecological connectivity; protect and conserve biodiversity and geological features; and apply appropriate mitigation and compensation where adverse effects cannot be avoided. The Core Strategy also supports climate-resilient design (including green infrastructure, tree planting and surface water management), and requires development to be directed away from areas at highest flood risk and designed to manage residual risk appropriately.

Core Strategy Policy EN 9 expects new development to maintain existing green infrastructure (quantity, quality and function) and to enhance green infrastructure and linkages where opportunities arise. Separately, extant UDP Policy E3.4 seeks to create and improve linked linear open spaces and to protect and enhance wildlife corridors, supporting habitat connectivity within the urban environment.

With specific regard to trees, woodland and habitat features, Core Strategy Policy EN 15 includes an objective to protect and conserve existing trees and woodlands and aims for a net increase in trees, alongside protecting and enhancing biodiversity interest. Core Strategy Policy EN 9 also seeks to protect existing street trees and promote new planting where this strengthens green links. At a more localised level, extant UDP Policy WW3 safeguards and supports positive management of woodland resources within West Wythenshawe, and Policy WW7 (where applicable) seeks retention of existing mature trees and landscaped character as part of scheme design.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

The desk study included a review of the magic.gov.uk database for statutory designated sites within a 1 km radius of the Site. Landscape value and the presence of notable habitats as well as granted European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) and notable species records held on magic.gov.uk database have also been considered where these are within influencing distance of the Site.

The Greater Manchester, ExploreGM map was reviewed to identify non-statutory designated sites / Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) within 1 km of the Site. Additionally, the Greater Manchester Nature Network Map, which forms the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was reviewed to see where the Site is in relation to 'Nature Recovery Opportunity Areas.

In accordance with Natural England's Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (2001), a desktop search was undertaken to identify ponds within 500m of the Site which may have potential to support breeding great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*, using Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping, the MAGIC database and aerial photography.

3.2 Field Survey

The survey was undertaken by Henry Gunning (2017-28633-CLS-CLS, 2022-10860-CL17-BAT & FISC Level 3) on 05/01/2026. The weather conditions at the time of survey were clear and dry. Snow covered the ground in some areas.

An extended habitat survey was undertaken, following the methodology set out in The UK Habitat Classification Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, July 2023).

Results of the UKHab survey are presented on the Habitats Plan in Appendix B. Photographs of all habitat features are presented in Appendix C.

3.3 Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)

All on-site trees were inspected from ground level using close-focus binoculars and a high-powered torch. Each tree was viewed from all safe, accessible angles to identify potential roost features (PRFs), including cavities, woodpecker holes, knot holes, tear-out wounds, longitudinal cracks/splits, lifted or flaking bark, dense ivy cover, and hazard beams.

For each PRF, the height, aspect/orientation and condition were recorded, together with contextual factors (shelter from weather/predators, shading, and connectivity to foraging/commuting habitat). Photographs were taken of key features.

PRFs were assigned to categories in line with current Bat Conservation Trust guidance, applied using professional judgement as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Ground level tree assessment criteria

Suitability	Description
PRF-I	Feature is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats, typically because of limited size/depth, exposure, or sub-optimal surrounding habitat.
PRF-M	Feature is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony; typically deeper, well-sheltered features offering stable conditions and good landscape connectivity.

3.4 Assessment and Evaluation of Habitats to Support Protected and Notable Species

In addition to establishing the baseline ecological interest within the Site, the survey intended to identify areas where further surveys may be required, during the appropriate season. The potential of the Site habitats to support legally protected or notable species was assessed from field observations carried out during the walkover and combined with the results of the desk study. The Site and adjacent areas were inspected for

indications of the presence of protected species as follows:

- The presence of nesting habitat for breeding birds (such as mature trees, dense scrub, hedgerows, grassland and buildings suitable for tree/ground nesting birds) and evidence of bird nesting including bird song, old nests, faecal marks, etc.
- Evidence of European badger (*Meles meles*), including setts, runs, snuffle holes and hairs.
- Scrub/grassland mosaic and potential hibernation sites for reptiles.
- Assessment of any ponds that have terrestrial habitat connectivity with the Site. Pond assessments included the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) following Amphibian and Reptile Groups (ARG) UK (2010). Additionally, terrestrial habitats were also assessed as to their potential to support great crested newt and other amphibians.
- Assessment of waterbodies, such as ponds, ditches and streams as to their potential to support European water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and/or Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*).

The presence or likelihood of occurrence of any legally protected, noteworthy and/or invasive species was assessed from field observations carried out during the survey and combined with the results of the desk study. This was ranked as follows and relies on habitat suitability, an evaluation of existing data and professional judgement:

- Negligible – while presence cannot be absolutely discounted, habitats are very limited or of poor quality for a particular species or species group. There may be no local returns from a data search and the surrounding habitats are considered unlikely to support wider populations of a species/species group. the Site may also be outside or peripheral to the known natural range for a species/species group.
- Low – habitats are of poor to moderate quality for a given species/species group. There are few or no returns from the data search, but presence cannot be discounted based on national distribution, the nature of surrounding habitats, habitat fragmentation or recent disturbance, etc.
- Medium - habitats are of moderate quality providing opportunities for a given species/species group. Desk study reveals local occurrence, or the area is within the national distribution and with suitable surrounding habitat. Factors limiting the likelihood of occurrence may include small habitat area, habitat isolation, and/or disturbance.
- High – habitats are of high quality for a given species/species group. Desk study provides evidence of local occurrence. The area is within/peripheral to a national or regional stronghold and/or has good quality surrounding habitat and good connectivity.
- Confirmed Presence - presence confirmed from the current survey or by recent, confirmed records.

3.5 Limitations

The presence of protected / notable species within 1 km cannot be established without biological records data from Greater Manchester Local Record Centre (GMLRC). However, it is considered unlikely that such protected / notable species would be impacted due to the small scale of development and the urban environment within which the Site sits.

Recent snowfall had occurred in the days preceding the survey and residual snow cover was present across parts of the Site at the time of the walkover, although this was in the process of thawing. The snow cover was shallow and patchy and did not materially restrict access or prevent confirmation of the principal habitat types and dominant plant species, which remained readily identifiable (including the ruderal and scrubby components). As the survey objective was to characterise baseline habitats and identify potential constraints/opportunities, the residual snow cover is not considered to represent a substantive limitation to the findings of this PEA.

4 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

4.1 Designated Sites

No statutory designated sites were identified within a 1 km radius of the Site during the review of MAGIC.

The Site falls within Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for the Cotteril Clough SSSI, but the proposal is a small-scale residential development and does not meet any IRZ trigger categories. On this basis, formal consultation with Natural England is not required, although the LPA may consult at its discretion.

4.2 Non-statutory Designated Sites

One SBI Site was identified on the ExploreGM map within 1 km of the Site:

- Ponds at Davenport Green c. 800 m south of the Site.

In broad terms, this local site is characterised by scattered ponds with surrounding grassland and hedgerow/treeline features.

4.3 Ancient Woodland

A review of the MAGIC indicates that there are no parcels of ancient woodland within 1 km of the Site.

4.4 Habitats and Flora

A review of the MAGIC Priority Habitat Inventory (PHI) indicated several areas of deciduous woodland within 1 km of the Site. The closest area is located immediately adjacent to the Site boundary. Additional small and fragmented blocks of deciduous woodland are present elsewhere within the 1 km study area, including within/alongside local parks, landscaped corridors and transport infrastructure.

4.5 Field Survey

The following habitat codes are present within and adjacent to the Site. The habitat parcel reference illustrated in the Baseline Habitats Plan in Appendix B is also provided:

- u1 – Built-up areas and gardens; 81 Ruderal or Ephemeral; 203 Mature Tree

The Site comprises a small parcel of vacant land within a residential setting, bounded by close-boarded fencing to adjoining properties to the north and an access path and wall along the southern boundary. A woodland block borders to western boundary of the Site.

Historical disturbance and subsequent reduced management has resulted in a mosaic of disturbed ground and ruderal/ephemeral vegetation with encroaching scrub developing across parts of the Site. The ground layer is generally open and patchy, with areas of bare or sparsely vegetated substrate and a rank, weedy sward dominated by ruderal species and scattered coarse grasses. Species comprised perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne* and Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* with frequent ruderal species including rosebay willowherb *Chamerion angustifolium*, plantain *Plantago* spp., creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, fleabane *Erigeron* spp. and nettle *Urtica dioica*. Scattered scrub and young trees are present, including willow saplings *Salix* spp. and holly *Ilex aquifolium*. Evidence of intermittent vegetation management was recorded in the north-east corner (including cut/cleared patches), and a large log and brash pile was present. Overall, habitats present are of limited botanical diversity.

A mature oak *Quercus robur* is present within the north-west corner of the Site. Evidence of historical pruning was recorded, likely undertaken to manage overhanging limbs where the canopy previously extended over the residential boundary fence along the northern boundary of the Site.

Invasive Plants

No Schedule 9 invasive plants were recorded within the red line.

4.6 Fauna

Amphibians

The desk study returned no great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* European Protected Species (EPS) licence records within 1 km of the Site.

A review of aerial imagery and Ordnance Survey mapping identified six ponds within 500 m of the Site. The closest pond is situated approximately 218 m south-east of the Site, within the Newhall Green High School grounds. There is a cluster of four ponds to the south-west between 378 m and 470 m from the Site. The remaining pond is approximately 424 m north of the Site on the outskirts of Wythenshawe Hospital.

While the surrounding suburban context is likely to constrain amphibian dispersal (including intervening residential development, roads and extensive boundary treatments), the woodland belt immediately adjacent to the western boundary forms a relatively continuous green corridor which connects the Site to more extensive green space to the south. This feature increases the potential for amphibians to move through the wider landscape relative to more isolated suburban parcels. However, connectivity into the Site itself is still likely to be limited by perimeter fencing/defining boundaries and the absence of any on-site breeding habitat.

Taking account of the absence of EPS licence records within 1 km, the lack of on-site breeding habitat, the constrained permeability into the Site, and the fragmented suburban context (notwithstanding the adjacent woodland corridor), the likelihood of great crested newt being present or routinely using the Site is considered low.

Reptiles

No rare reptile EPSLs were identified within 1km of the Site during the desk study.

The adjacent woodland belt along the western boundary provides a linear green corridor with connectivity to wider green space to the south and therefore offers some potential for reptiles to occur in the local area and to move through the wider landscape. However, the Site itself is small and does not provide the extensive, well-connected habitat mosaic typically associated with regular reptile use. The Site also shows evidence of past disturbance and intermittent management, and access is likely to be constrained by boundary treatments. Consequently, reptiles are considered unlikely to occur within the Site.

Bats

The desk study identified no bat European Protected Species Licence within 1 km of the Site

No buildings are present within the red line boundary.

A mature oak is present within the north-west corner of the Site. The tree has a snapped branch within the crown (south-facing) at approximately 11 m above ground level but appeared exposed to the elements. In addition, relatively recent pruning cuts were noted, none of which were associated with potential roost features. Overall, the mature oak is assessed as not supporting roost potential.

The on-site habitats comprise disturbed ground with ruderal/ephemeral vegetation, providing only low-quality foraging habitat within an otherwise enclosed and suburban setting. Notwithstanding this, a woodland belt is present immediately adjacent to the western boundary, which is likely to function as a local commuting feature and higher quality foraging resource within the wider landscape.

Overall, the Site is assessed as being of negligible value for roosting bats and low value for foraging and commuting bats, reflecting its small size, limited structural diversity and surrounding residential development, albeit with some local connectivity provided by the adjacent woodland corridor.

Badger

No evidence of badger *Meles meles* (such as setts, latrines, dung pits, hairs, prints, snuffle holes or well-worn paths) was recorded during the survey. A woodland belt immediately adjacent to the western boundary is likely to provide a local commuting feature and could support badger movement along its length. While regular use of the Site itself is considered unlikely due to its small size and suburban nature, occasional opportunistic entry cannot be ruled out (e.g. where boundary permeability exists at the woodland edge). Overall, the Site is assessed as providing negligible suitability for badger, with low potential for occasional use.

Riparian Mammals

The Site provides negligible suitability for otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola amphibius*. No watercourses, ponds, ditches or wetland features are present within the red line boundary, and there are no riparian banks, marginal vegetation or associated habitats that would provide commuting, foraging or sheltering opportunities for either species.

The nearest watercourse is Mill Brook, located approximately 380 m north-east of the Site at its closest point. There are substantial intervening residential development and associated infrastructure between Mill Brook and the Site, and boundary treatments within the surrounding urban fabric are likely to limit functional connectivity between the Site and the riparian corridor.

Given the absence of suitable riparian habitat within the Site, the distance to Mill Brook and the presence of substantial dispersal barriers and limited connectivity, otter and water vole are considered unlikely to occur within the Site and are scoped out of further assessment.

Hedgehog

The Site provides some limited foraging and cover opportunities for hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, principally within the ruderal/ephemeral vegetation and accumulated features such as the log pile. However, the Site is small in extent and is largely enclosed by close-boarded fencing and other hard boundary treatments, which reduces permeability and limits connectivity with surrounding gardens and adjacent green infrastructure. Notwithstanding this, the woodland belt immediately adjacent to the western boundary provides a local green corridor which may facilitate movement through the wider landscape, and any permeability at ground level could allow occasional access. On this basis, any use of the Site is most likely to be limited to occasional foraging or passage by individuals moving through the wider residential/woodland-edge setting. Overall, the Site is assessed as providing low suitability for hedgehog.

Birds

Boundary woodland vegetation, together with the mature oak in the north-west corner, provide opportunities for nesting by common, disturbance-tolerant bird species typical of suburban areas. The ruderal/ephemeral vegetation also offers a limited foraging resource for such species (e.g. seed and invertebrate prey). No buildings are present within the red line boundary and therefore there are no built features that would increase nesting potential (e.g. cavities, soffits or ledges). The adjacent woodland belt along the western boundary is likely to increase local bird activity and may support a wider assemblage in the immediate area, although the Site itself remains small and structurally simple.

Overall, the Site is considered to offer low to moderate suitability for a limited assemblage of common urban and garden birds. Whilst the adjacent woodland corridor may support additional species locally, there was no indication during the survey that the Site supports breeding birds of elevated conservation concern.

Invertebrates

The Site does not fall within a designated Important Invertebrate Area.

Ruderal/ephemeral vegetation provide some nectar, pollen and larval resources for a restricted range of common, generalist invertebrate species typical of disturbed/suburban habitats. The log pile and patches of taller vegetation may also provide limited sheltering and overwintering opportunities. Notwithstanding this, the habitat resource is small in extent and is unlikely to have the botanical diversity, structural complexity or long-term continuity typically required to support notable or specialist invertebrate assemblages. The adjacent woodland belt may support higher invertebrate interest locally, however, the Site itself is assessed as having low invertebrate interest.

5 EVALUATION

5.1 Likelihood of the Presence of Protected Species

Where physical evidence of the presence of protected species is indeterminate during the survey, the habitats on the Site are evaluated as to their likelihood to provide sheltering, roosting, foraging, basking or nesting habitat.

5.2 Evaluation

Considering the findings of the desk study and field survey, Table 2 provides an evaluation of the ecological value of the Site and identifies any ecological constraints relevant to the proposed development. The proposals include the construction of three new residential dwellings..

Table 2: Evaluation of the Site and any ecological constraints

Feature	Impact Assessment	Mitigation and / or Enhancement
Statutory Designated Sites	No statutory designated sites were identified within 1 km of the Site. Given the small scale of the proposals and the absence of any clear impact pathways (e.g. hydrological connectivity or direct disturbance), no impacts are anticipated.	None.
Non-statutory Designated Sites	One non-statutory designated site was identified within 1 km - Ponds at Davenport Green SBI, located c. 800 m south of the Site. Works are confined to the Site within a suburban setting and no direct connectivity exists. Construction disturbance (noise, dust and visual disturbance) is highly unlikely to result in detectable effects at this receptor. Overall effects are assessed as negligible.	None.
Priority / irreplaceable habitats	No priority or irreplaceable habitats are present within the Site boundary. The MAGIC Priority Habitat Inventory indicates areas of deciduous woodland within 1 km, including woodland immediately adjacent to the western boundary which forms a local green corridor. Direct effects are not anticipated (works confined to the Site), however there is potential for minor indirect effects at the woodland edge (e.g. dust deposition, accidental encroachment, lighting spill) if not appropriately controlled.	Protect the adjacent woodland belt through a construction exclusion zone and protective fencing/ground protection, to prevent incursion, storage, tracking or excavation within the protected area, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations). External lighting (if required) should be designed to avoid or minimise light spill onto the woodland corridor (directional, low-level lighting; timers/PIR; no upward light spill), with obtrusive light controlled in accordance with ILP Guidance Note 1 (GN01/21). Good practice dust control measures should be implemented during construction.

Feature	Impact Assessment	Mitigation and / or Enhancement
Trees	A mature oak is present within the north-west corner of the Site. No bat roost features were identified and evidence of pruning was noted. If tree loss or works within the root protection area are required, there is potential for localised impact.	Retain and protect the oak where feasible. Where works are proposed near the tree, implement tree protection and construction controls in accordance with BS 5837:2012, including preparation of a Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement (protective fencing, ground protection and, where required, no-dig solutions within/adjacent to the root protection area).
Habitats	Habitats within the Site comprise low distinctiveness disturbed ground/ruderal vegetation. Loss or disturbance would represent a minor adverse effect at the Site scale.	None.
Great Crested Newt	No GCN EPS licence records were returned within 1 km. Six ponds were identified within 500 m. The adjacent woodland belt provides a local corridor to wider green space to the south, but dispersal to and into the Site is still constrained by the suburban matrix and boundary treatments, and there is no breeding habitat within the Site. Likely effect on GCN is assessed as low/negligible.	Apply proportionate precautionary working measures during vegetation clearance/groundworks (e.g. staged strimming to low height, tool-box talk, avoiding creation of traps, covering/escape ramps for excavations overnight).
Reptiles	The adjacent woodland belt provides a corridor in the wider landscape. However, the Site is small and does not provide the habitat mosaic typically associated with regular reptile use. Occasional transient use cannot be entirely ruled out. Overall effects are likely negligible, with low likelihood of encounter during works.	Apply proportionate precautionary working measures during clearance/groundworks (directional strimming to encourage animals towards the woodland corridor, checking refuges/materials before movement, avoiding overnight open excavations without escape provision).
Bats	No bat EPS licence records were returned within 1 km. No buildings are present. The on-site mature oak has no bat roost potential. The adjacent woodland belt is likely to function as a commuting/foraging corridor in the local area, but effects arising from works within the Site are expected to be low.	Implement a sensitive lighting strategy for the adjacent woodland commuting corridor in accordance with ILP GN08 (Bats and Artificial Lighting) and ILP GN01 (Reduction of Obtrusive Light): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No luminaires directed toward the woodland edge, use low-height• Fully shielded flat-glass fittings with baffles/cowls,• Minimise lighting levels to the lowest safe requirement• Warm-white LEDs ($\leq 3000\text{K}$); and• Controls such as PIR/timers/curfew to limit duration, with design outputs (e.g. isolux contours) demonstrating no material light spill onto the corridor.
Badgers	No evidence of badger was recorded. The adjacent woodland belt may facilitate commuting in the wider area and occasional entry to the Site cannot be ruled out, but regular use is unlikely. Overall effects are assessed as low.	Good practice during construction, i.e. do not leave excavations open overnight without escape provision, store chemicals securely, keep the Site tidy and avoid creating entrapment hazards.

Feature	Impact Assessment	Mitigation and / or Enhancement
Otter and water vole	The Site contains no aquatic habitat. The nearest watercourse is Mill Brook c. 380 m north-east, separated by substantial residential development with limited functional connectivity. Works are confined to the Site. Overall effects are assessed as negligible.	None.
Hedgehog	The Site provides low suitability overall due to its small size and boundary treatments, although the adjacent woodland corridor may support hedgehog movement locally and occasional access cannot be ruled out. Effects are likely minor at most.	Precautionary working measures during clearance/groundworks (check under materials/log piles, avoid overnight hazards, provide escape from excavations). Where boundary treatments are installed or altered, incorporate hedgehog access gaps to improve permeability. Retain/maintain a log/leaf pile where practicable.
Birds	Boundary vegetation/scrub and the mature oak provide nesting opportunities for common birds and the adjacent woodland corridor increases local bird activity. Impacts would arise if vegetation is cleared during the nesting season. Overall suitability is low to moderate for common species.	Avoid vegetation clearance during the nesting season (March–August inclusive) where practicable. If works must proceed, undertake a pre-clearance nesting check by a competent ecologist and implement buffers to any active nests until fledging. Install bird box and incorporate native berry/nectar planting where practical.
Invertebrates	The Site is not within a designated Important Invertebrate Area. Habitats present could potentially support a restricted range of common, generalist invertebrates. The adjacent woodland is likely to support higher interest locally. Overall invertebrate interest of the Site is low.	Enhance botanical diversity through native/wildflower planting (subject to landscape design).

5.3 Ecological Enhancement Strategy

The Site at Capenhurst Close is small in extent and bounded by residential property boundaries. However, it is immediately adjacent to a woodland belt along the western boundary which functions as a local green corridor. As such, opportunities for large-scale habitat creation within the red line boundary are limited, but there is clear scope for proportionate enhancements that deliver localised benefit and strengthen connectivity at the woodland edge. The following measures are considered appropriate and achievable, and would provide biodiversity gain proportionate to the scale of the proposals:

- Where new or replacement landscaping is proposed, this should prioritise native species of local provenance, focusing on woodland edge and hedgerow species (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, holly and dog rose). This will provide nectar, berries, pollen and structural cover for birds and invertebrates and help to reinforce the adjacent woodland corridor.
- Create or reinforce a small woodland-edge structure where space allows (e.g. a narrow native shrub margin or tussocky grass strip along the interface with the western boundary), avoiding intensive management to provide cover and foraging for common fauna.
- Install at least one bird nest box suitable for common suburban/woodland-edge species (e.g. tit-type box) on a retained tree (such as the mature oak) or a suitable new structure, at an appropriate height and orientation. Where feasible, add a second box (e.g. sparrow terrace or robin/wren open-front box) to diversify nesting opportunities.
- Provide at least one bat box (e.g. a crevice-type suitable for common pipistrelle species), mounted on the mature oak or an appropriate retained tree along the woodland edge, to provide additional roosting resource within the local commuting corridor.

- Where boundary treatments are altered or replaced, incorporate ground-level access gaps (approximately 130 × 130 mm) to facilitate hedgehog movement. Retain and/or create a log/brush pile from arisings in a shaded, undisturbed corner (ideally at the woodland-edge interface) to provide refuge for invertebrates, amphibians and small mammals.

These measures are intended to deliver modest but meaningful on-site biodiversity enhancements and to complement the wider Biodiversity Net Gain approach set out within the accompanying BNG documentation (as applicable). Subject to implementation, the proposals will provide localised enhancement, strengthen the function of the adjacent woodland corridor, and remain consistent with the mitigation hierarchy and relevant national and local planning policy.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Evelyn Ecology Limited was instructed by Gary Walker to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 2SL.

Habitats recorded within the Site comprise a small area of disturbed ground supporting ruderal/ephemeral vegetation, together with a log pile and evidence of intermittent vegetation management. A mature oak is present within the north-west corner of the Site. A woodland belt occurs immediately adjacent to the western boundary and forms a linear green corridor connecting to wider green space to the south.

No statutory designated sites were identified within 1 km of the Site. Given the small scale of the proposals and the absence of credible direct or functional hydrological or disturbance pathways, no significant effects on statutory designated sites are anticipated. One non-statutory designated site (Ponds at Davenport Green SBI) was identified within 1 km; however, this receptor is separated from the Site by intervening residential development and the proposals are confined to the Site, such that no direct or significant indirect effects are expected.

Confirmed ecological considerations relevant to the proposed development at the Site comprise:

- Loss of a small area of low distinctiveness ruderal/ephemeral vegetation.
- Limited potential for nesting birds within the boundary vegetation and the mature oak, with low suitability for hedgehog and the potential for occasional use (noting connectivity provided by the adjacent woodland corridor).
- The presence of ponds within 500 m. However, taking account of the Site's lack of breeding habitat, constrained accessibility and the surrounding suburban context, great crested newt is considered unlikely to routinely access or make meaningful use of the Site (albeit occasional amphibian presence cannot be entirely ruled out).

The following avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures will be implemented to ensure compliance with the mitigation hierarchy, wildlife legislation and planning policy:

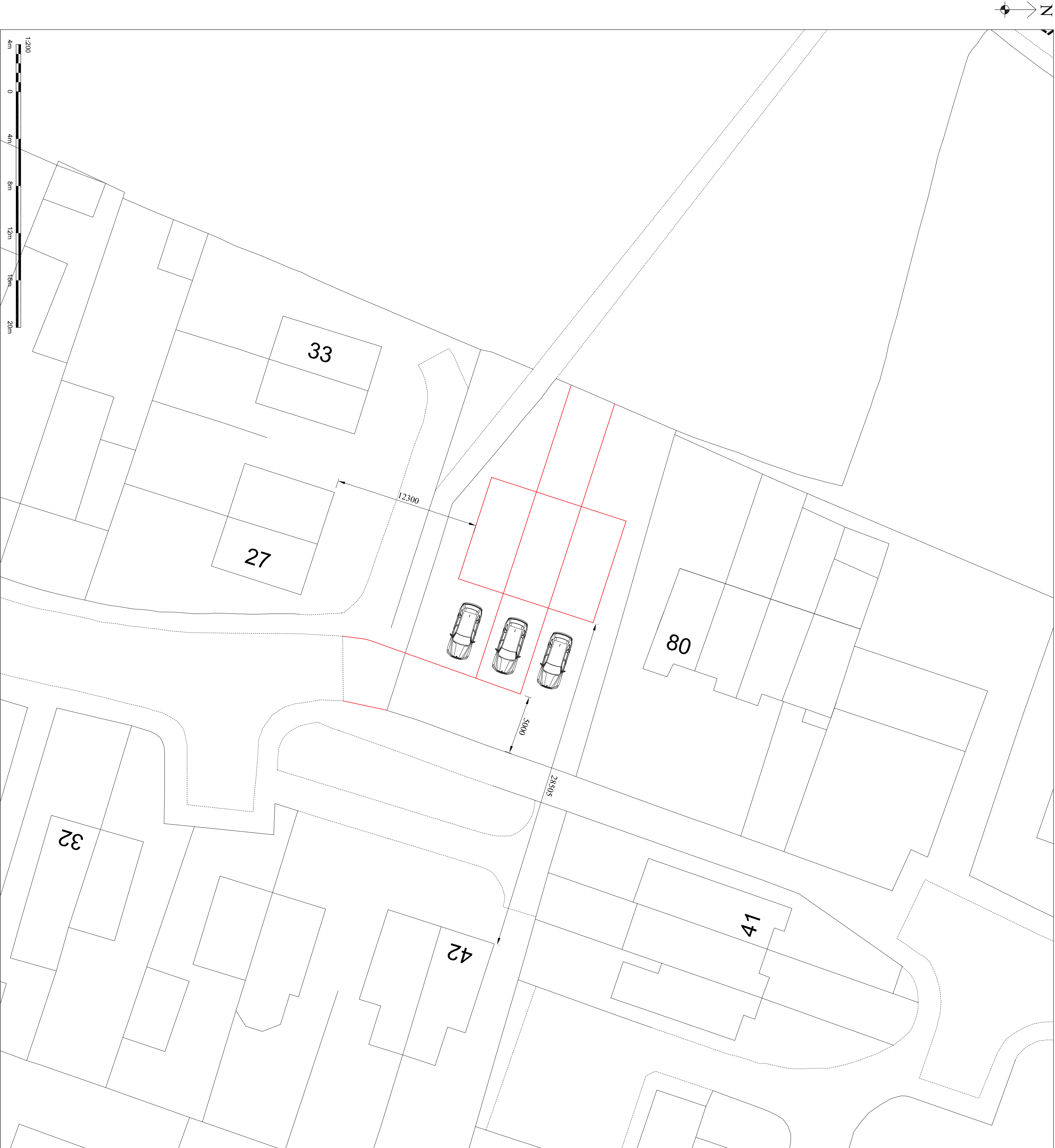
- Protect the adjacent woodland belt (western boundary) through an exclusion zone and protective fencing, preventing construction encroachment, storage, tracking or excavation at the woodland edge.
- Retain and protect the mature oak where feasible. Where works are required near the tree, implement tree protection and working methods in accordance with BS 5837:2012 (e.g. Tree Protection Plan/Arboricultural Method Statement, protective fencing and ground protection).
- Undertake vegetation clearance with potential to support nesting birds outside the main bird breeding season (March–August inclusive) where practicable or following a pre-works nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any active nests will be retained in situ with an appropriate buffer until young have fledged.
- Apply precautionary working measures during vegetation clearance and groundworks to reduce the risk of harm to amphibians, reptiles, hedgehog and other common fauna (e.g. staged strimming to low height, checking refuges/materials, avoiding creation of entrapment hazards, and providing escape from excavations overnight).
- Where landscaping is proposed, incorporate native species planting of local provenance (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, holly and dog rose) to provide nectar, berries and structural cover for birds and invertebrates and to reinforce the woodland-edge character.
- Install at least one bird nest box on a retained tree (e.g. the oak) or suitable new structure, positioned at an appropriate height and orientation.
- Where boundary treatments are altered or replaced, incorporate hedgehog access gaps (c. 130 mm × 130 mm) to improve permeability where practicable, and create a small log/leaf pile from arisings (where feasible and safe) to provide refugia for common fauna.
- If external lighting is required, adopt a sensitive lighting strategy to avoid light spill onto the adjacent woodland commuting corridor for bats (e.g. low-height, fully shielded luminaires, warm colour temperature, and PIR/timers/curfew controls, with lighting directed away from the woodland edge).

Subject to the implementation of the above measures, there are no overriding ecological constraints to the proposed development at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 2SL. The scheme is considered capable of proceeding in compliance with relevant wildlife legislation and national and local planning policy.

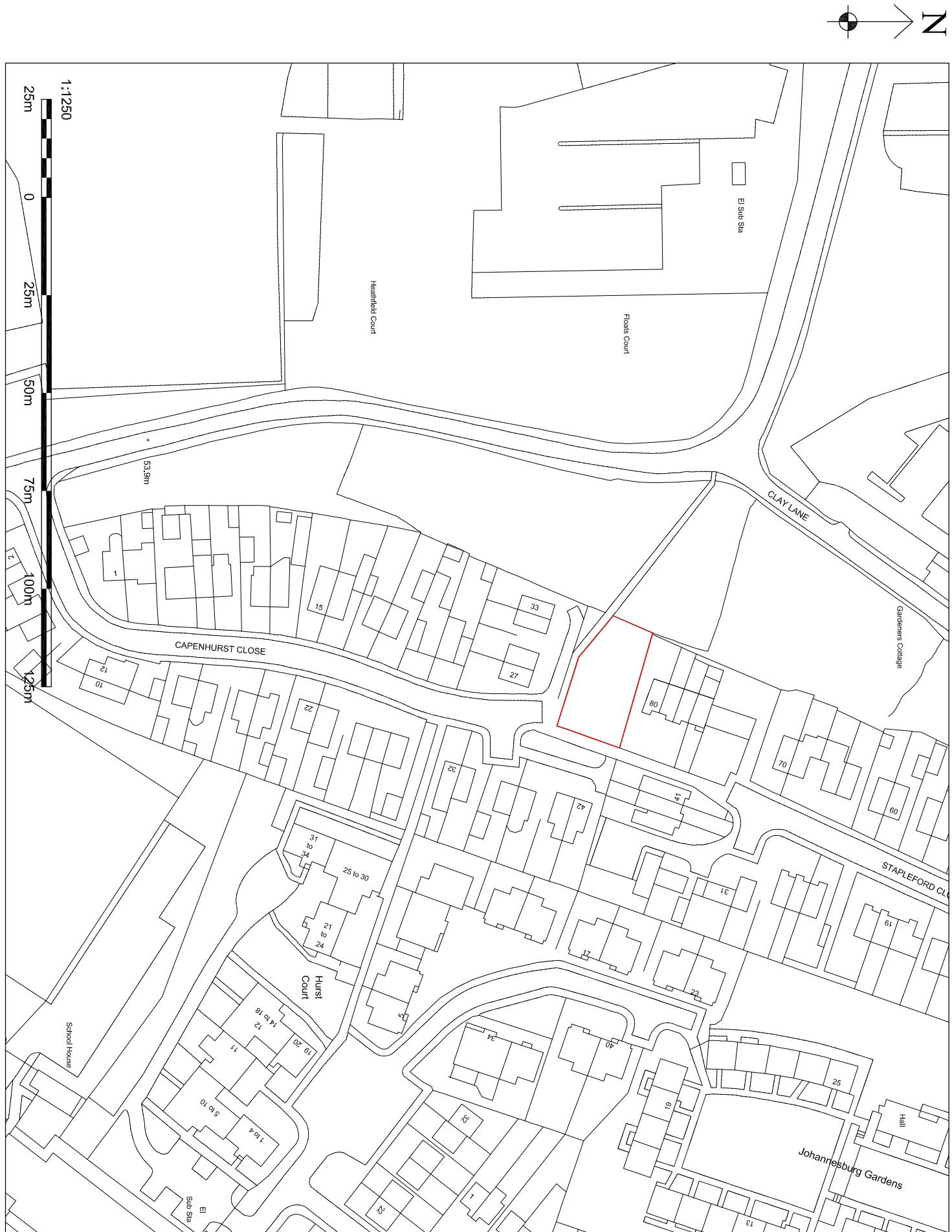
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APPENDIX A – Proposed Development



PROPOSED SITE PLAN
(SCALE 1:200)



LOCATION PLAN
(SCALE 1:1250)

A				14.04.25				ISSUED FOR PRE PLANNING			
DRAWING STATUS				PRE PLANNING							
PROJECT				LAND ADJACENT CAPENHURST CLOSE, WYTHENSHAWE, MANCHESTER							
TITLE				NEW DWELLINGS TO THE LAND ADJACENT TO CAPENHURST CLOSE, WYTHENSHAWE							
SCALE & SIZE		STATUS		DATE		REV					
1:200 @ A1 UNO		PLANNING APP		APR. 25							
PROJECT No.		DRAWING No.									
CH-001		001						A			

APPENDIX B – Baseline Habitats Plan



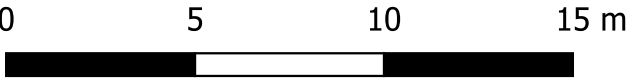
Legend

Red Line Boundary

Developed land; sealed surface

Ruderal/Ephemeral

Existing Large Urban Tree



APPENDIX C – Photographs

Parcel Ref	Photograph
G1	
T1	

APPENDIX D - Legislation and Planning Policy

LEGAL PROTECTION

National and European Legislation Afforded to Habitats

International Statutory Designations

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are sites of European importance and are designated under the EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) and the EC Birds Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Wild Birds Directive) respectively. Both form part of the wider Natura 2000 network across Europe.

Under the Habitats Directive Article 3 requires the establishment of a network of important conservation sites (SACs) across Europe. Over 1000 animal and plant species, as well as 200 habitat types, listed in the directive's annexes are protected in various ways:

Annex II species (about 900): core areas of their habitat are designated as Sites of Community importance (SCIs) and included in the Natura 2000 network. These sites must be managed in accordance with the ecological needs of the species.

Annex IV species (over 400, including many Annex II species): a strict protection regime must be applied across their entire natural range, both within and outside Natura 2000 sites.

Annex V species (over 90): their exploitation and taking in the wild is compatible with maintaining them in a favourable conservation status.

SPAs are classified under Article 2 of the Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds both for rare bird species (as listed on Annex I) and for important migratory species.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) form the legal basis for the implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directives in terrestrial areas and territorial waters out to 12 nautical miles in England and Wales (including the inshore marine area) and to a limited extent in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Ramsar sites are designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, agreed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. The Convention covers all aspects of wetland conservation and recognises the importance of wetland ecosystems in relation to global biodiversity conservation. The Convention refers to wetlands as “*areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres*”. However, they may also include riparian and coastal zones. Ramsar sites are statutorily protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended 01.04.1996) with further protection provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. Policy statements have been issued by the Government in England and Wales highlighting the special status of Ramsar sites. The Government in England and Wales has issued policy statements which ensure that Ramsar sites are afforded the same protection as areas designated under the EC Birds and Habitats Directives as part of the Natura 2000 network (e.g. SACs & SPAs). Further provisions for the protection and management of SSSIs have been introduced by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

National Statutory Designations

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are designated by nature conservation agencies in order to conserve key flora, fauna, geological or physio-geographical features within the UK. The original designations were under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 but SSSIs were then re-designated under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). As well as reinforcing other national designations (including National Nature Reserves), the system also provides statutory protection for terrestrial and coastal sites which are important within the European Natura 2000 network and globally.

Local Statutory Designations

Local authorities in consultation with the relevant nature conservation agency can declare Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. LNRs are designated for flora, fauna or geological interest and are managed locally to retain these features and provide research, education and recreational opportunities.

Non- Statutory Designations

All non-statutorily designated sites are referred to as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and can be designated by the local authority for supporting local conservation interest. Combined with statutory designation, these sites

are considered within Local Development Frameworks under the Town and Country Planning system and are a material consideration during the determination of planning applications. The protection afforded to these sites varies depending on the local authority involved.

Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGs) are the most important geological and geomorphological areas outside of statutory designations. These sites are also a material consideration during the determination of planning applications.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 are designed to protect 'important' countryside hedgerows. Importance is defined by whether the hedgerow (a) has existed for 30 years or more; or (b) satisfies at least one of the criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

Under the Regulations, it is against the law to remove or destroy hedgerows on or adjacent to common land, village greens, SSSIs (including all terrestrial SACs, NNRs and SPAs), LNRs, land used for agriculture or forestry and land used for the keeping or breeding of horses, ponies or donkeys without the permission of the local authority. Hedgerows 'within or marking the boundary of the curtilage of a dwelling-house' are excluded.

National and European Legislation Afforded to Species

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) aim to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring the Secretary of State to take measures to maintain or restore wild species listed within the Regulations at a favourable conservation status.

The Regulations make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade in the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, collect, cut, uproot, destroy, or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 4. However, these actions can be made lawful through the granting of licenses by the appropriate authorities. Licenses may be granted for several purposes (such as science and education, conservation, preserving public health and safety), but only after the appropriate authority is satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternatives and that such actions will have no detrimental effect on wild population of the species concerned.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended) implements the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979, implemented 1982) and implements the species protection requirements of EC Birds Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds in Great Britain (the birds Directive). The WCA 1981 has been subject to several amendments, the most important of which are through the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000).

Other legislative Acts affording protection to wildlife and their habitats include:

- Deer Act 1991
- Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

A development licence will be required from the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England) for any development works likely to affect an active badger sett, or to disturb badgers whilst they occupy a sett. Guidance has been issued by the countryside agencies to define what would constitute a licensable activity. It is no possible to obtain a licence to translocate badgers.

Birds

With certain exceptions, all birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Sections 1-8 of the WCA. Among other things, this makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built
- Intentionally take or destroy an egg of any wild bird

- Sell, offer or expose for sale, have in his possession or transport for the purpose of sale any wild bird (dead or alive) or bird egg or part thereof.

Certain species of bird, for example the barn owl, bittern and kingfisher receive additional protection under Schedule 1 of the WCA and are commonly referred to as “Schedule 1” birds.

This affords them protection against:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young
- Intentional or reckless disturbance of dependent young of such a bird

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

Works should be planned to avoid the possibility of killing or injuring any wild bird or damaging or destroying their nests. The most effective way to reduce the likelihood of nest destruction in particular is to undertake work outside the main bird nesting season which typically runs from March to August. Where this is not feasible, it will be necessary to have any areas of suitable habitat thoroughly checked for nests prior to vegetation clearance.

Schedule 1 birds are additionally protected against disturbance during the nesting season. Thus, it will be necessary to ensure that no potentially disturbing works are undertaken in the vicinity of the nest. The most effective way to avoid disturbance is to postpone works until the young have fledged. If this is not feasible, it may be possible to maintain an appropriate buffer zone or standoff around the nest.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England) will be required for works likely to affect otter breeding or resting places (often referred to as holts, couches or dens) or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, and rear young). The licence is to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficacy to be monitored

Bats

All species are fully protected by Habitats Regulations 2010 as they are listed on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species (e.g. All bats)
- Deliberate disturbance of bat species in such a way as:
 - To impair their ability to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young
 - To impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
 - To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
 - Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

Bats are afforded the following additional protection through the WCA as they are included on Schedule 5:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Biodiversity Duty

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the ‘biodiversity duty’.

Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of ‘principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity’. This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.