Abby Pidgen BSc (Hons) MSc
Consultant Ecologist
[redacted]
Arbtech Consulting Ltd
arbtech.co.uk

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan / Ecological Enhancement Plan

Survey site: OMYOP Depot, 306a Yew Tree Road, Manchester, M20 3GF

Client: Mr Patrick Barber

Date: 22/10/2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Manchester City Council. The proposal is described as: *Installation of a modular-built youth hub and community facility, including associated landscaping (Class F.2)*

Planning Application Number:

142989/VO/2025

Limitations and Copyright

Arbtech Consulting Limited has prepared this report for the sole use of the above-named client or their agents in accordance with our General Terms and Conditions, under which our services are performed. It is expressly stated that no other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any other services provided by us. This report may not be relied upon by any other party without the prior and express written agreement of Arbtech Consulting Limited. The assessments made assume that the sites and facilities will continue to be used for their current purpose without significant change. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based upon information provided by third parties. Information obtained from third parties has not been independently verified by Arbtech Consulting Limited.

© This report is the copyright of Arbtech Consulting Limited. Any unauthorised reproduction or usage by any person other than the addressee is strictly prohibited.

Guidelines

This assessment has been designed to meet:

- British Standard 42020 (2013) 'Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development'.

Proportionality

> The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.
>
> This approach is enshrined in Government planning guidance, for example, paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework for England.
>
> The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary.
>
> (BS 42020, 2013)

In consequence of the scale and intensity of the proposed development, this plan-led report is considered adequate and proportionate. It communicates all relevant information necessary to determine a planning application or support the recommendations for further surveys.

Contents

1.0 Introduction and Context 4

1.1 Background 4

1.2 Project Description 4

1.3 Site Context 4

1.4 Scope of This Report 4

2.0 Ecological Baseline Conditions Relevant to This Report 6

2.1 Habitats recorded on Site 6

2.2 BNG and Proposed Habitat Creation 6

2.3 Scope for Mitigation and Management 6

3.0 Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan 7

3.1 Persons Responsible 7

3.2 Habitat Creation and Management 8

4.0 Species Specific Enhancements 15

4.0 Bibliography 18

Appendix 1: Site Location Plan 19

Appendix 2: Proposed Layout and Landscaping Plan 20

Appendix 3: Legislation and Planning Policy 21

1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited were commissioned by Lorna Clement (Agent) to produce a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) and Ecological Enhancement Plan for the proposed development at OMYOP Depot, 306a Yew Tree Road, Manchester, M20 3GF (hereafter referred to as the site).

The site has been subject to previous ecological assessments, comprising the following:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (Ascerta, April 2025)
- A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment (Ascerta, April 2025)
- Bat Emergence and Re-entry Surveys (BERS) (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, July 2025)

1.2 Project Description

The planning application pertaining to the site (Manchester City Council Reference: 142989/VO/2025) describes the proposed development as: "*Installation of a modular-built youth hub and community facility, including associated landscaping (Class F.2)".* A proposed site layout plan is provided in **Appendix 2.**

1.3 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 84674 93390 and has an area of approximately 0.06ha. The site consists of three buildings, hardstanding and two small stands of mixed scrub. The site is situated within a highly urbanised location surrounded by residential dwelling with associated gardens in the centre of Withington Borough Manchester. A site location plan is available in **Appendix 1.**

1.4 Scope of This Report

Following the submission of planning application 142989/VO/2025, planning permission was conditionally granted. The decision notice details pre-commencement planning conditions that relate to ecology, of relevance to this report Conditions 24 and 25 state:

Condition 24

"24) Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved and in addition to biodiversity net gain requirements, a scheme for the enhancement of the site for ecological purposes shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. Details should include bat and bird boxes. The agreed scheme shall be implemented in accordance with a timescale to be agreed and retained and maintained thereafter.

Reason -To mitigate the loss of vegetation and to promote biodiversity, pursuant to policy EN15 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).”

Condition 25

“25) Prior to above ground works (and excluding demolition), a written 30-year Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP) for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The approved HMMP shall relate to all 'significant' biodiversity gains on site and shall be strictly adhered to and implemented in full for its duration and shall contain:

A) Aims, objectives and targets for management, including habitat target conditions matching the associated Biodiversity Metric submitted with the application.

B) Descriptions of the management operations necessary to achieving aims and objectives.

C) Preparation of a works schedule, including timescales for habitat clearance and habitat creation and/or enhancement.

D) Details of monitoring needed to measure the effectiveness of management.

E) Details of the persons responsible for the implementation and monitoring.

F) Mechanisms of adaptive management and remedial measures to account for changes in the work schedule to achieve required targets.

G) Reporting on years 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 30'.

Reason - In the interests of biodiversity net gain being achieved on site pursuant to Policy EN15 of the Manchester Core Strategy, Policies JP-G8 of Places for Everyone, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)”.

2.0 Ecological Baseline Conditions Relevant to This Report

The baseline ecological conditions of relevance to this report were determined as a result of the previous ecological assessments undertaken at the site including the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ascerta, April 2025) and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Ascerta, April 2025).

2.1 Habitats recorded on Site

The site is characterised by buildings with hardstanding access with two small sections of mixed scrub. Habitats recorded on and directly adjacent to the site comprise:

- Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)
- Buildings (u1b5)
- Mixed Scrub (h3h)

2.2 BNG and Proposed Habitat Creation

Proposals for the site comprise the creation of a replacement building with addition of small sections of modified grassland with mixed scrub. Proposed habitats can be seen on the plans at **Appendix 2**. Proposed compensatory habitat enhancement and target conditions to be achieved during the 30-year management term are detailed below:

Created

- **Developed land; sealed surface** – 0.0542ha (condition N/A)
- **Modified grassland** – 0.0041ha (poor condition)
- **Mixed scrub** – 0.004ha (poor condition)

2.3 Scope for Mitigation and Management

Through the proposed delivery of habitats detailed above, the development will generate 0.02 area-based habitat units, which will result in a 1359.56% net gain.

Section 3 of this report details specific creation / installation and management measures to ensure that the retained and proposed new landscaping is appropriately retained / created / maintained and species-specific enhancement measures are secured for the 30-year management term. Where conditions are applicable to proposed habitats, details on compliance with BNG condition criteria are provided.

3.0 Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

3.1 Persons Responsible

Persons responsible, lines of communication, and remediation implementation detail is provided below in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Persons responsible, lines of communication, and remediation

Mitigation	Specification
Persons Responsible and Lines of Communication	A Development Biodiversity Champion will be selected for the construction phase of the development covering the site and offsite land. The Development Biodiversity Champion will be someone with significant influence during construction/habitat creation, such as the contract/project manager or landowner. The Development Biodiversity Champion will be responsible for ensuring all actions outlined in this document are implemented. Any queries with regards to the mitigation and enhancement prescriptions will be addressed to the project ecologist and communication will be retained between the Development Biodiversity Champion and project ecologist throughout the project. The project ecologist's contact details are located on the title page of this report. The Development Biodiversity Champion will inform the project ecologist of the commencement of enhancement installation works and provide updates where necessary. Once the ecological enhancements have been installed/created, a Post-Development Biodiversity Champion will be allocated who has influence on site once the development is complete, such as a long-term maintenance contractor or landowner. The Post-Development Biodiversity Champion will be responsible for ensuring all recommended management is undertaken within the site and offsite land and that any associated remedial measures are completed where necessary. ***Development Biodiversity Champion Details:*** Land Owner – Manchester City Council Land Manager – Old Moat Youth Outreach Project Following the successful habitat creation and enhancement methods outlined within this report, it will be the sole responsibility of the Old Moat Youth Outreach Project to maintain and manage these habitats for the full 30-year term.
Post-Development Site Visits	A post-development site visit by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) will be undertaken to confirm the successful installation/creation of the biodiversity enhancements no more than one year following installation/creation. A report will be produced by the SQE detailing the results of the site visit and any remediation requirements. Where remediation is necessary, i.e. if the biodiversity enhancements have not been installed to a satisfactory standard,

	further evidence will need to be provided proving implementation. Depending on the scale of the remediation requirements, this will require an additional site visit by an SQE or photographic evidence to be provided by the Post-Development Biodiversity Champion. This requirement will be defined based on the results of the first site visit by the SQE. Ongoing assessment of the habitat creation and management measures will be undertaken, whereby the site and offsite will both be subject to an inspection by a SQE at years 2, 5, 10, 20, 25 and 30. The inspections should be undertaken during the optimal botanical survey window (May - August) to provide the best assessment of habitat types and conditions. A report will be produced by the SQE after every inspection, detailing the results of the survey and any remediation requirements necessary. Each report will be submitted to the responsible body for monitoring BNG deliverance, which will likely be the LPA. The Post-Development Biodiversity Champion will be responsible for ensuring that the site is inspected by a SQE at the appropriate timings set out above and will also be responsible for implementing any remediation measures identified by the SQE.
Legal Responsibility	It is expected that compliance with this HMMP will be legally enforced through a planning condition or Section (s) 106 agreement. As part of this legal agreement, habitat creation and management detailed within this HMMP will need to be retained and appropriately managed for the entire 30-year term to meet legislative objectives outlined in the Environment Act (2021). Should any future development at the site be proposed that will impact habitats that deliver the required gain as part of the planning condition/s106 agreement, this will need to be considered and suitably compensated for in accordance with any future plans.

3.2 Habitat Creation and Management

Best practice habitat creation and management within the site and offsite land over a 30-year term to ensure a BNG consistent with that reported within the BNG Assessment is provided in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Habitat Creation and Management Prescriptions

Ecological receptor	Specification
Waste Disposal and Materials Storage	A secure area for waste storage should be proposed on site within areas of hardstanding. Storage of waste in such areas will not impact any retained or newly created habitats during the operational phase. All future materials storage will be contained within the designated waste facilities on the site. No materials will be stored over areas of soft landscaping at any time.

Modified Grassland Creation – Poor Condition	***Overview:*** The proposals include the creation of 0.0041ha of modified grassland within the site. The proposed condition of the grassland is poor due to the urban setting and likely shading from surrounding infrastructure and trampling damage from amenity use. However, with good management prescriptions (outlined below) the grassland could achieve a higher condition within the 30-year management period. The proposed location of grassland is shown on the plan in **Appendix 2.** ***Objectives:*** • To create a successful amenity grassland that will provide habitat for pollinating invertebrate species, that will in turn, provide foraging opportunities for notable species groups including amphibians, bats, birds, badgers, hedgehogs, and reptiles; • Ensure that a natural appearance is retained by utilising a seed mix alongside allowing native species of local prevenance to recolonise from the seedbank; • Employ techniques that minimise the use of chemicals wherever possible; • Prevent the spread of invasive, non-native species. ***Creation Method:*** • **Ground preparation** o Remove all surface debris, waste materials, concrete, tarmac, or construction rubble to a designated waste facility/area of the site. o Decompact the soil where necessary to allow for seeding. o Ensure the area is free of any invasive species prior to seeding. o If required, import clean, low-fertile topsoil, ensuring the final surface is level. • **Seeding** To be undertaken in spring or autumn following site clearance. The following seed rates are recommended: 50kg/ha or 5g/m^2 of a grassland seed mix. • **Bedding in of seed:** After sowing, seeds will be 'bedded' in by trampling or light rolling.

- **Recommended seed mix:**

  It is recommended that Emorsgate's EG1 General Purpose Meadow Grass Mixture is used at the site (or similar alternative brand). This seed mix includes 5no. grasses suitable for a range of soils. For exact specifications, please refer to: https://wildseed.co.uk/product/mixtures/grass-only-mixtures/general-purpose-meadow-grass-mixture/

Management prescriptions covering a 30-year term:

Table 2.1: Modified grassland management prescriptions.

Management	When	Rationale	BNG Condition Criteria Compliance (Low Distinctiveness Grassland)
Cut grassland once first year after sowing	First August after sowing	The seeds will germinate and be left to grow freely over the year until late summer, when a cut will be undertaken once initial seeds have established.	A
Any areas of bare ground will be reseeded	Between April and October, as necessary	To ensure no large areas of bare ground exist within the habitat.	D, E
Grassland will be checked for presence of non-native invasive species which will be removed/treated as necessary	Annually during growing season (April – October)	To ensure no non-native species exist within the habitat.	F, G
Grassland will be checked for presence of scrub which will be removed/treated as	Annually during growing season (April – October)	To ensure scrub is kept <20% coverage and prevent the change of grassland structure.	C

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>
<table>
<tr><td>necessary to maintain grassland character</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Do not allow vehicular usage or storage of any materials/machinery within the grassland.</td><td>At all times.</td><td>To avoid potential damage of grassland habitat.</td><td>D</td></tr>
<tr><td>Arisings will be removed from the site</td><td>Post cut</td><td>Removing the arisings is essential to prevent the grass decaying into the soil homogenising nutrient availability.</td><td>A</td></tr>
<tr><td>Do not apply chemical fertilisers</td><td>At all times.</td><td>The use of chemical fertilisers will encourage vigorous grasses and weeds to grow or cause large areas of bare ground due to inhospitable growing conditions</td><td>A, D, E</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mixed Scrub Creation – Poor Condition</td><td>
Overview:
An area of mixed scrub (0.004ha) will be created on the western border of the site. Native shrubs, such as rowan, bramble, blackthorn, hazel and guelder-rose are recommended to be planted. The proposed condition of the scrub is poor due to the urban setting and small size of the scrub parcel. However, with good management prescriptions (outlined below) the scrub could achieve a higher condition within the 30-year management period. The proposed location of the scrub creation is shown on the plan in Appendix 2.

Objectives:
• To create an area of mixed scrub of poor condition, in accordance with the BNG Assessment.
• To plant shrubs that will provide pollinating, foraging, and refuge opportunities for protected and/ or notable species groups including
</td></tr>
</table>

amphibians, bats, birds, hedgehogs, invertebrates, and reptiles.

- Ensure that good horticultural practice is employed to encourage long-term health and vitality of all trees and scrub.
- Ensure well-balanced crowns and/ or natural shape by preventing over competition.

Creation Method:

- **Ground preparation and planting**

  Each shrub should be planted within a hole three times as wide of the supplied pot and of a similar depth. Root balls should be soaked thoroughly in water before planting and root balls should be loosened to expose restricted roots before planting. The shrubs should then be backfilled ensuring there are no air pockets around roots or any roots protruding out of the ground.

- **Timing**

  It is best to prepare the land during the summer ready for planting between November and March. Planting shrubs before the new year helps ensure better rooting and subsequent establishment including faster growth during the first growing season.

Management prescriptions covering 30-year term:

Table 2.2: New shrub planting management prescriptions.

Management	When	Rationale	BNG condition criteria compliance -Mixed scrub
Plant shrub species in dense clusters separated by open glades allowed to naturally colonise within the allocated scrub area. Open areas	When planting only. Open glades to be checked and cleared annually.	To create and maintain structural diversity within the scrub and to allow young specimens to colonise at vegetation edge.	B, E

	should comprise approximately 25% of the scrub coverage.			
	At the end of each growing season all plant failures are to be 100% replaced	When required; checked annually in Autumn.	To maintain amenity and wildlife value.	A
	If required, provision of stakes and guards. Guards to be left on for a minimum of 5 years	During planting.	Protect from damage	A
	Stakes should be checked and any broken or damaged stakes during this time would be removed (as above) and replaced with ties re-fixed	When required; checked annually in Autumn.	Maintain protection	A
	Remove weeds	When required; checked twice annually in early spring and in Autumn.	Reduce competition for resources nutrients etc.by weeds	C
	Application of bark mulch at a depth of 50 mm	Immediately after planting and then when required; checked annually in Autumn.	Reduce competition for resources nutrients etc.by weeds	A, C
	Do not apply chemical	At all times.	The use of chemical fertilisers will	A

	fertilisers		encourage vigorous grasses and weeds to grow	
	Apply a light dressing of well-rotted manure	Annually in the winter	Note the overuse of manure fertilisers will encourage vigorous grasses and weeds to grow.	A
	Removal of spent flowers from perennial plants should be removed through 'deadheading'	Twice annually, late spring and in the Autumn.	Allows plants to place more energy into re-growth.	A
	Watering should be undertaken before and after planting out and as necessary for the continued thriving of all planting.	When required; provide more water during periods of draught and less water during times of prolonged rain.	Ensures plants do not dry out and subsequently fail.	A
Habitats with N/A Conditions	Habitats such as buildings and hardstanding with a condition of N/A do not require long term management and monitoring as they contain no or very little biodiversity value.			

4.0 Species Specific Enhancements

Ecological Enhancement	Specification
Provision of bat boxes	A total of 2no. bat boxes will be erected on the site and will be incorporated into the fabric of the new building. The boxes will be suitable for crevice dwelling bat species as observed during the recent surveys (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, 2025). The approximate bat box installation locations are shown on the plan in **Appendix 2.** Details of the bat boxes to be installed are as follows: • 2no. crevice dwelling boxes (as shown in **Figure 1**) will be installed. The recommended bat boxes will be constructed of woodcrete/ woodstone. A box of this construction is known to require minimal maintenance and have a lifespan of 25 years plus. The Valencia Double Crevice Bat Box is recommend: https://www.wildcare.co.uk/valencia-double-crevice-woodstone-bat-box.html The bat box will be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light and facing vegetated habitats. ***Figure 1:*** *The double crevice bat box (image credit: https://www.wildcare.co.uk/)* ***Recommended management:***

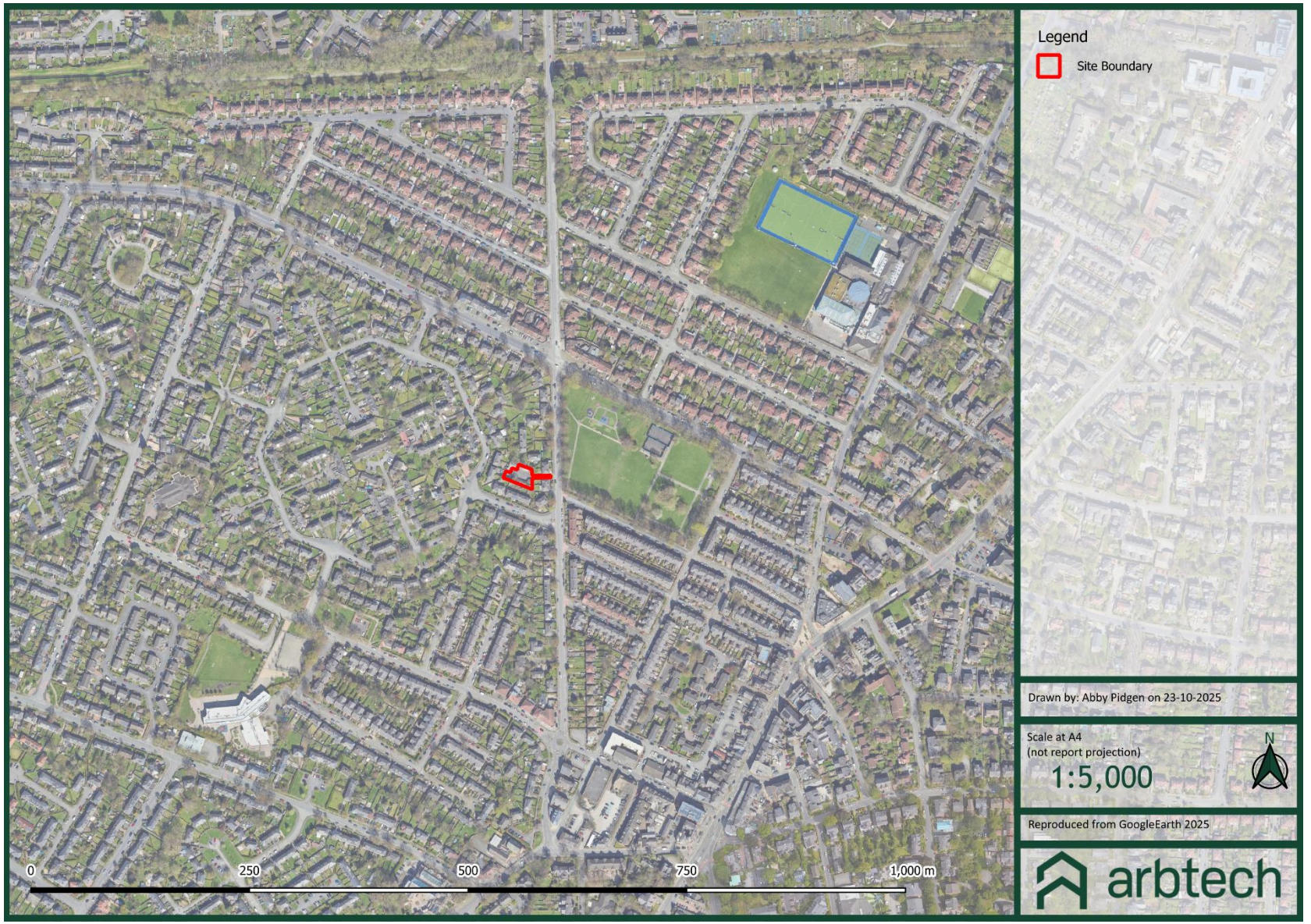
	The proposed bat boxes are designed to require no management or maintenance. Furthermore, preventing physical disturbance to the bat boxes will increase the chances of occupation by roosting bats. However, it is recommended that the bat boxes are inspected annually for the first five years outside of the typical active season for bats (May to September inclusive) following installation. The bat boxes must be replaced if it is damaged, removed, or have fallen from its recommended location.
Provision of bird boxes	A total of 2no. bird boxes will be erected onto the side of the new building. The approximate bird box installation locations are shown on the plan in **Appendix 2.** Details of the bird boxes to be installed are as follows:. • 2No. Woodstone Nest Boxes (as shown in **Figure 2**) will be installed. These bird box types are suitable to support a wide range of species likely to be present in the local area and may represent Species of Principal Importance as listed on Schedule 41 of the NERC Act (see **Appendix 3**). The bird boxes will be positioned approximately 3-5m above ground level facing a northern/eastern direction where they will be sheltered from strong sunlight. ***Figure 5:*** *The Vivara Pro Seville 32mm Woodstone Nest Box https://www.nhbs.com/).* ***Recommended Management:***

	It is recommended that the bird boxes are inspected annually between December-January for at least the first five years following completion of the development. Any old nesting material will be removed and the boxes interiors should be cleaned using boiling water, avoiding the use of chemical disinfectants. The boxes will be visually inspected by the Post-Development Biodiversity Champion for signs of damage. The boxes will be replaced if they appear damaged, have been removed, or have fallen from their proposed location. Any maintenance or replacement works required will take place outside of the typical breeding bird season when birds a most likely to use the boxes for nesting, which is between March and September inclusive, i.e. remediation works must take place between October and February where necessary.

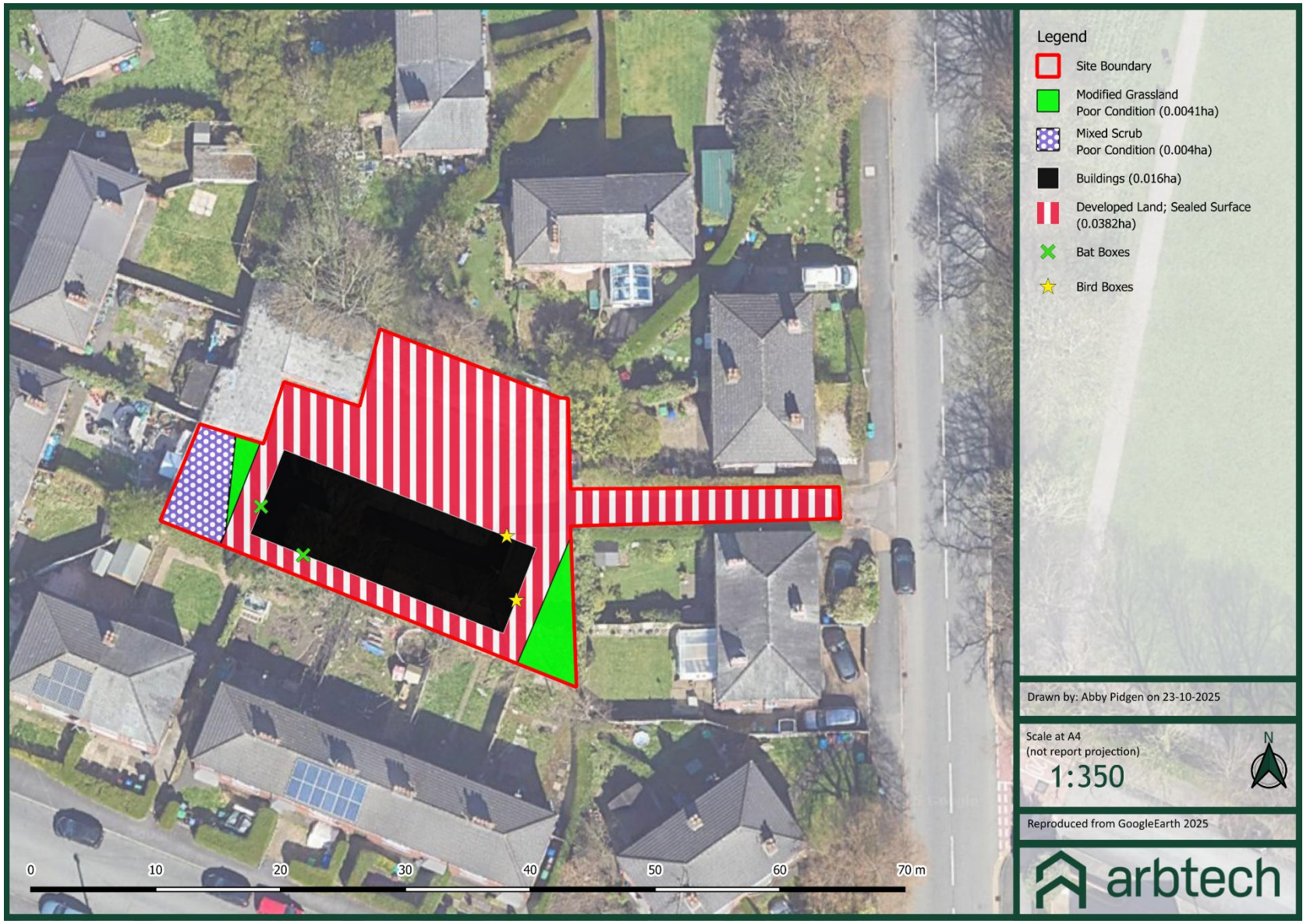
4.0 Bibliography

- Bat Emergence and Re-entry Survey. OMYOP Depot, 306a Yew Tree Road, Manchester, M20 3GF. Arbtech Consulting Ltd, 2025.
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. OMYOP Depot, 306a Yew Tree Road, Manchester, M20 3GF. Ascerta Ecology, April 2025.
- British Standards Institute. (1989). BS 4428, Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations. https://www.bsigroup.com/
- British Standards Institute. (2013). BS 42020, Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development. https://www.bsigroup.com/
- British Standards Institute. (2014). BS 5228-1, Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction Sites. https://www.bsigroup.com/
- British Standards Institute. (2015). BS 3882, British Standard Topsoil. https://www.bsigroup.com/
- CIEEM. (2016). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester. http://www.cieem.net/data/files/Publications/EcIA_Guidelines_Terrestrial_Freshwater_and_Coastal_Jan_2016.pdf
- CIEEM. (2013). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management http://www.cieem.net/data/files/Resource_Library/Technical_Guidance_Series/GPEA/GPEA_April_2013.pdf
- HMSO: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1377
- HMSO: Countryside & Rights of Way Act (2000) http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1378
- HMSO: Natural Environmental and Rural Communities Act (2006) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents
- HMSO: The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made
- National Planning Policy Framework. (2023). https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. OMYOP Depot, 306a Yew Tree Road, Manchester, M20 3GF. Ascerta Ecology, April 2025.

Appendix 1: Site Location Plan



Appendix 2: Proposed Layout and Landscaping Plan



Appendix 3: 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 respectively. Both form part of the wider Natura 2000 network across Europe.

Under the Habitats Directive the, Article 3 requires the establishment of a network of important conservation sites (SACs) across Europe in order to conserve the 189 habitats and 788 species (non- bird) identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive (as amended).

SPAs are classified under Article 2 of the EC Birds Directive both for rare bird species (as listed on Annex I) and for important migratory species.
SACs and SPAs up to 12 nautical miles (nm) from the coast are afforded protection in the UK under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which consolidate all amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. In Scotland, the requirements of Habitats Directive are implemented through a combination of the 1994 and the 2010 (reserved matters) Regulations. The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended) provide a means for designating and protecting SACs in UK offshore waters (from 12-200 nm).

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) 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).

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. Further provisions for the protection and management of SSSIs have been introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (in England and Wales) and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

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 Habitats Directive

The EC Habitats Directive aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring Member States to take measures to maintain or restore wild species listed on the Annexes to the Directive at a favourable conservation status, introducing robust protection for those species of European importance. The Directive is transposed into UK law by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Conservation Regulations) and the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended). The following notes are relevant for all species protected under the EC Habitats Directive:

In the Directive, the term 'deliberate' is interpreted as being somewhat wider than intentional and may be thought of as including an element of recklessness.

The Habitats Regulations do not define the act of 'migration' and, therefore, as a precaution, it is recommended that short distance movement of animals for e.g. foraging, breeding or dispersal purposes are also considered.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (ENGLAND)

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and species. An emphasis is also made on the need for ecological infrastructure through protection, restoration and re-creation. The protection and recovery of priority species (considered likely to be those listed as UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species) is also listed as a requirement of planning policy.

In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from harm; there is appropriate mitigation or compensation where significant harm cannot be avoided; opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments are encouraged; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

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 (Section 42 in Wales) 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.

Limitations and Copyright

Arbtech Consulting Limited has prepared this report for the sole use of the above-named client or their agents in accordance with our General Terms and Conditions, under which our services are performed. It is expressly stated that no other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any other services provided by us. This report may not be relied upon by any other party without the prior and express written agreement of Arbtech Consulting Limited. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based upon information provided by third parties. Information obtained from third parties has not been independently verified by Arbtech Consulting Limited.

© This report is the copyright of Arbtech Consulting Limited. Any unauthorised reproduction or usage by any person other than the addressee is strictly prohibited.

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Abby Pidgen BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist	22/10/2025
Final	1.0	Abby Pidgen BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist	23/10/2025