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**ATRI7 6 LIMITED**

# WHITWORTH STREET WEST

# PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

**APRIL 2026**

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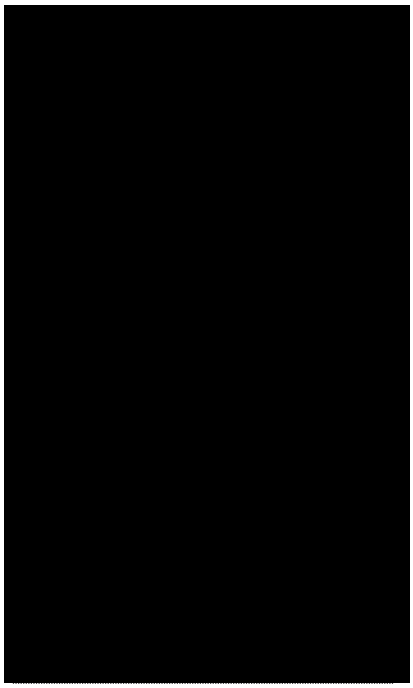
**ATRI7 6 LIMITED**

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# PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

**APRIL 2026**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
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Appendix 2 Preliminary Roost Assessment of Structures

| DRAWINGS | TITLE | SCALE |
|---|---|---|
| ST21315-001 | UKHab Baseline Survey Plan | 1:500@A3 |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong LLP (WA) was commissioned by Atri7 6 Limited to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in support of a proposed change of use and design modifications for an existing 39-storey apartment scheme.

The following conservation sites, habitats, and species (receptors) have been evaluated as being subject to potential adverse effects in the absence of mitigation and/or further survey or assessment:[1]:

- Roosting bats
- Birds

Additional assessments, surveys and pre-construction checks have been recommended as necessary to fully inform the planning application:

- Should the railway bridge wall be impacted, one dusk emergence survey is recommended to establish the status of roosting bats.

Mitigation[2] and compensation[3] are discussed in Section 4 of the report but include the following:

- Construction works undertaken outside of the bird nesting season or an inspection carried out by an appropriately qualified ecologist.
- Provision of a Construction Environmental Management Plan to ensure protective mitigation.

Opportunities for ecological enhancements are set out in Section 5 of this report. This includes a green roof, suitable native planting to be included in the landscape scheme and provision of bat boxes and bird nest boxes.

In conclusion, given the identified evidence of presence and/or likely presence of ecological constraints, further surveys and assessments are required to inform a full evaluation of adverse effects. The results of further protected species surveys and evaluations should be

[1] Note: the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report provides an overview of likely effects and therefore may not be sufficient to support a planning application on its own. Specialist surveys may be required to fully investigate effects and/or to support an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA).

[2] Mitigation are measures required in order to reduce the severity and magnitude of identified effects to an acceptable level.

[3] Compensation is required where effects cannot be fully mitigated.

considered within an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) report, in line with standard industry practice (CIEEM 2018, updated 2022). This report should include a formal assessment of impacts and will be suitable to fully inform the planning application.

***This report is valid for 18 months from the date the habitat survey was undertaken.***

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Terms of Reference

1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong LLP (WA) was commissioned by Atri7 6 Limited in Mach 2026 to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in support of a planning application for the a 39-storey purpose built student apartment scheme. The project is located at 10-12 Whitworth Street West, Manchester centred on approximate National Grid Reference (NGR) SJ 83579 97521.

1.1.2 This report has been produced with reference to current guidelines for UK Habitat (UKHAB) Classification V2.0 (UKHAB, 2023), Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017) and Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development (BSI, 2013).

## 1.2 Scope of Report

1.2.1 The purpose of the PEAR is in broad terms to undertake the following:

- Identify and report to the project team the likely ecological constraints associated with a project, such that the site design can adequately take account of ecological features;
- identify any mitigation measures likely to be required, following the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' (BSI, 2013);
- identify any additional surveys that may be required to inform an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA); and
- Identify the opportunities offered by a project to deliver ecological enhancement.

1.2.2 Certain species, habitats and nature conservation sites receive legislative protection which is detailed fully within Appendix 1. Other species/groups and habitats are notable due to their identification in national and/or local planning policy or via local records. An indicative assessment of potential adverse effects to such receptors is provided, although this is not a substitute for full EcIA (CIEEM 2018) which may be required to fully inform any subsequent planning application along with additional surveys and assessments.

1.2.3 Provisional mitigation and enhancement opportunities are also discussed, where appropriate.

## 1.3 Site Context

1.3.1 The Site is situated in the centre of Manchester in the area known as Deansgate, adjacent to the Deansgate train station.

1.3.2 The planning application area comprises a small area of modified grassland secured by metal railings, covering approximately 0.09 hectares (ha) (henceforth known as the Application Site). The study site (the Site) includes all land within the Application Site plus additional land 30m from the site boundary, where accessible. The Site is along Whitworth Street West with the Rochdale Canal just beyond the northern extent and a railway line to the south. There are buildings to the east and west of the Site. The Site is situated in the centre of Manchester and is surrounded by commercial and residential land uses.

## 1.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

1.4.1 The NPPF (2024) requires the Planning Authority to have a responsibility to promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan. In addition, the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

## 1.5 Local Planning Policy

1.5.1 Relevant current policies are summarised in Box 1, below and are discussed with regard to compliance in the final Discussion section of the report.

| Policy Reference | Policy Summary |
|---|---|
| Policy EN 9: Green Infrastructure | New development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. Where the opportunity arises and in accordance with current Green Infrastructure Strategies the Council will encourage developers to enhance the quality and quantity of green infrastructure, improve the performance of its functions and create and improve linkages to and between areas of green infrastructure. Where the benefits of a proposed development are considered to outweigh the loss of an existing element of green infrastructure, the developer will be required to demonstrate how this loss will be mitigated in terms of quantity, quality, function and future management. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Key features of Manchester's green infrastructure will include:<br>• The continued development of a network of green spaces, water bodies, canals, paths and cycleways, with priority given to those parts of the City where there is an identified existing lack of open space. The Council will seek to protect existing street trees and promote new planting, particularly where this can enhance green links in the urban area.<br>• The continued maintenance and management of the Rivers Mersey and Irwell and their tributaries, for example the River Irk, River Medlock, Chorlton Platt Gore, Gatley Brook, Moston Brook and adjoining land, with regard to their multiple functions including recreation, flood management, and biodiversity.<br>• The provision of new, and improvements to the quality and accessibility of existing green infrastructure assets, to mitigate for any loss of green infrastructure as a result of development such as the Metrolink extension programme.<br>• The encouragement of green roofs, green walls, tree planting and other forms of green infrastructure to allow for the adaption to climate change in heavily urbanised areas.<br>New green infrastructure provision should be an exemplar of best practice and innovation in terms of both its design and management |
| Policy EN 10: Safeguarding Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities | The Council will seek to retain and improve existing open spaces, sport and recreation facilities to the standards set out above and provide a network of diverse, multi-functional open spaces. Proposals will be supported that:<br>• improve the quality and quantity of accessible open space, sport and recreation in the local area<br>• provide innovative solutions to improving the network of existing open spaces, increase accessibility to green corridors, and enhance biodiversity<br>• improve access to open space for disabled people<br>Proposals on existing open spaces and sport and recreation facilities will only be permitted where:<br>• Equivalent or better replacement open space, sport or recreation facilities will be provided in the local area;<br>or<br>• The site has been demonstrated to be surplus for its current open space, sport or recreation function and the City wide standards set out above are maintained, and it could not fulfil other unsatisfied open space, sport or recreation needs, and<br>• a proposed replacement will remedy a deficiency in another type of open space, sport or recreation facility in the local area;<br>or<br>• The development will be ancillary to the open space, sport or recreation facility and complement the use or character. |
| Policy EN 13: Green Belt | The extent of Green Belt in Manchester will be amended in the vicinity of Manchester Airport, in accordance with policy MA1. Otherwise, there are no |

| | |
|---|---|
| | amendments to the Green Belt boundary to be effected through the Core Strategy. This does not preclude further consideration of sites currently within the Green Belt through subsequent Development Plan Documents. |
| Policy EN 15: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation | The Council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the City. Particular consideration will be given to:<br>• sites with international or national designations for their biodiversity value. Manchester contains one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Cotteril Clough); there is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and an SSSI just over the border in Oldham (both on the Rochdale Canal within Oldham);<br>• other sites of biodiversity value, including Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs); Manchester currently has 35 SBIs (including the Rochdale and Ashton Canals) and 7 LNRs; priority habitats found within Manchester, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP);<br>• protected and priority species, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP);<br>• sites that are recognised for their geological importance;<br>• the Council's objective to protect and conserve the City's existing trees and woodlands and the aim for a net increase in trees across the City.<br>Developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate, with reference to:<br>• the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy, which provides further details of priority habitats within Manchester and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement including corridors such as the Mersey, Medlock and Irk river valleys, the canals and disused railway lines and areas of managed greenspace particularly in parks;<br>• the Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester, which encompasses an ecological framework that seeks to guide and inform habitat creation and repair, including identifying large 'biodiversity opportunity areas' including the Moston Brook Corridor and Nutsford Vale;<br>• the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study, which identifies areas where there is a deficit of natural and semi-natural greenspace, opportunities for green corridors and other linkages;<br>• Manchester's Climate Change Action Plan;<br>• the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Manchester;<br>• the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for Manchester, which gives detailed consideration to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), including the Rochdale Canal SAC just outside the district boundary;<br>• the River Basin Management Plan for the North West; |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • the Manchester Tree Strategy.<br>Any adverse impacts on biodiversity will need to be justified against the wider benefits of the proposal, assessed against other LDF policies. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, developers will be required to provide appropriate mitigation and/or compensation.<br>Development should wherever possible seek to maintain, enhance or restore existing geology. |

# 2 METHODOLOGY

## 2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 The desk study was informed by review of existing available information provided by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and from available internet-based resources, such as MAGIC Map (Natural England, 2025) for a 2km search radius from the Site boundary. The search area was extended to 10km for statutory sites designated for bats. Ordnance Survey (OS) and satellite mapping was also used to gain contextual habitat information.

2.1.2 Specific information was sought for:

- Statutory designated sites;
- Locally designated sites;
- Ancient woodland (Natural England, 2025);
- Protected and priority species;
- Priority (s.41) Habitats and Species (NERC, 2006);
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) priority habitats and species.

## 2.2 Extended UKHab Classification Survey

2.2.1 WA carried out a UK Habitat (UKHab) Classification Survey of the Site on 4th March 2026. The survey was carried out by a member of CIEEM who is competent at carrying out ecological habitat surveys.

2.2.2 The survey followed the 'UK Habitat Classification' (UKHab, 2023) methodology with each of the main habitats classified according to the relevant criteria including vegetation composition expressed according to the DAFOR[4] system.

2.2.3 In addition to the mapping and description of habitats, the survey was 'extended' to include the incidental observations of protected and/or notable species and the potential for such species to occur on Site (and in the surrounding landscape where relevant) were also recorded onto secure digital media for mapping and data collection. The extended element of the survey was based on professional judgement.

[4] D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional, R = Rare

2.2.4 Specific habitat features are mapped on Drawing Number ST21315-001 (UKHab Baseline Survey Plan) with appropriate reference numbers identifying features of particular note.

## 2.3 Bats: Preliminary Roost Assessment of Buildings/Structures

2.3.1 An external Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the railway bridge wall bordering the Site to the south was undertaken by an experienced ecologist from WA. The location of this structure is shown in Drawing Number ST21315-001 (UKHab Baseline Survey Plan) and Appendix 2 provides the full PRA results.

2.3.2 The aim of the PRA survey was to assess the suitability of the buildings to support roosting bats, identify any evidence of roosting bats and determine whether there is a requirement for further surveys.

2.3.3 Any features determined to be suitable for roosting bats and the overall condition of the buildings were noted. Field signs such as droppings, feeding remains and dead or living bats were also recorded.

2.3.4 Equipment used for the PRA included binoculars and a high powered torch.

2.3.5 The buildings were categorised using the assessment criteria the 4th ed. of the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Guidelines (Collins, 2023) as set out below:

**High**: Structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitats. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts e.g. maternity or class cool/stable hibernation site;

**Moderate:** Structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by of bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitats, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation concern;

**Low:** Structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on

a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation);

**Negligible:** No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion;

**None:** No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).

## 2.4 Evaluation and Assessment of Features

2.4.1 Evaluation of the importance / likely importance of ecological features and the likelihood of impacts affecting important features was made, where possible, using professional judgement in accordance with published guidance (CIEEM 2017).

2.4.2 Protected and s.41 species were evaluated in order to identify potential adverse effects in Table 2, based on the following criteria:

- Desk study records;
- Evidence found during the survey;
- Presence, extent, quality and viability of suitable on-site habitat;
- Ecological connectivity to viable off-site habitats; and
- Perceived impacts of habitat loss/impact to individuals in relation to proposals.

2.4.3 A 'traffic light' system is used in Tables 1, 2 and 3 to highlight potential constraints and opportunities whereby:

- Green: No constraint or limited constraint unlikely to be of planning and/or legal significance.
- Amber: Potential constraints which require further survey and/or mitigation and may be of planning and/or legal significance depending on the outcome of further survey/assessment.
- Red: Constraints which have already been identified by the PEA survey/desk-based assessment and are likely to be of planning and/or legal significance.

## 2.5 Nomenclature

2.5.1 Vascular plant names follow '*New Flora of the British Isles*' (Stace 2019) with vernacular names as provided in the Botanical Society of the British Isles website (BSBI, 2013). All other flora and fauna names following the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas (NBN Atlas Partnership, 2021). The common and scientific name of species/taxa is provided (if available) when first mentioned in the text, with only the vernacular name referred to thereafter.

## 2.6 Limitations / Deviations

2.6.1 Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect the presence of plants and animals such as time of year, weather, migration patterns and behaviour. The survey was undertaken in March. Although this is outside of the optimum recommended survey period for habitat surveys (April to August)) this still represents a valid sample of ecological evidence present on that date/season as the habitats within the Site are not anticipated to support notable species. The report is not designed, nor is it required to present a complete inventory of flora/fauna.

2.6.2 The absence of desk study records is not relied upon to determine absence of a particular species/habitat. Often, the absence of records is a result of under-recording within the given search area and as such the experience of the ecologist concerned together with a range of additional factors, in particular the presence/absence of potentially supporting habitat; is used to infer likely presence/absence of ecological receptors.

## 2.7 Quality Assurance & Environmental Management

2.7.1 The surveys and assessments have been overseen by and the report checked and verified by an associate member of CIEEM, who is bound by its code of professional conduct. All surveys and assessments have been undertaken with reference to the recommendations given in British Standard BS 42020, and as stated within specialist guidance, as appropriate and referenced separately.

# 3 RESULTS AND EVALUATION

## 3.1 Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites

3.1.1 Desk study results for designated sites are evaluated in Table 1, below.

3.1.2 Designated sites which are considered potentially sensitive to the development proposals by virtue of their supported species or habitat assemblages, the distance/ecological connectivity to the Site and the nature of the perceived impacts are discussed in detail in the final sections of the report.

3.1.3 Designations for which potential adverse effects are not anticipated are excluded from further assessment.

| *Table 1: Designated Sites Evaluation* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Site Name and Status[5]** | **Distance and direction from Site** | **Reason for Designation/identification** | **Potential Constraints** |
| **Rochdale Canal (SAC)** | 6.45km northeast of the Site. | This SAC is designated for supporting a significant population of floating water-plantain *Luronium natans*, an Annex II species. The SAC has a botanically diverse waterplant community which also holds a wide range of pondweeds *Potamogeton* spp. The canal has predominantly mesotrophic water. This population of *Luronium* is representative of the formerly more widespread canal populations of north-west England. | The Site is 40m south of the Rochdale Canal; however, this section of the canal is approximately 6.7km downstream of the section that is a designated SAC. Due to the significant distance between the SAC and the Site, there are no impacts anticipated from the Proposed Development. Any dust pollution that may arise from the development is anticipated to be very minor and would not travel the distance to the SAC. And any run-off would flow downstream away from the SAC. |
| **Ashton Canal West (SBI)** | 1.40km northeast of the Site | This SBI is designated for its submerged aquatic flora. | The Site is in close proximity to the Rochdale Canal; however, this section is downstream of the SAC so there is no hydrological connectivity. There are no direct impacts anticipated from the Proposed Development. There is limited potential for dust pollution that may arise from the development, though this is anticipated to be very minor and have very minor impacts upon SBI if it travels. And any run-off would flow downstream away from the SBI. |
| **Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane to Ducie St Basin (SBI)** | 1.40km northeast of the Site | This SBI is a continuation of the Rochdale Canal SAC and is designated for its regionally important aquatic habitats and flora. | The Site is in close proximity to the Rochdale Canal; however, this section is downstream of the SBI so there is no hydrological connectivity. There are no direct impacts anticipated from the Proposed Development. There is limited potential for dust pollution that may arise from the development, though this is anticipated to be very minor and have very |

[5] **SAC** – Special Area for Conservation, **SBI –** Site of Biological Interest.

.

| *Table 1: Designated Sites Evaluation* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Site Name and Status[5]** | **Distance and direction from Site** | **Reason for Designation/identification** | **Potential Constraints** |
| | | | minor impacts upon SBI if it travels. And any run-off would flow downstream away from the SBI. |
| **River Irwell (SBI)** | 1.55km northwest of the Site | This SBI is designated for its regionally significant numbers of wintering birds, such as tufted duck *Aythya fuligula* and goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* | The Site does not support habitats suitable for these wintering bird species. The Rochdale Canal is in close proximity to the Site; however, it joins the River Irwell downstream of the SBI. Therefore, indirect impacts are unlikely, due to a lack of hydrological connectivity between the two sites. |

3.1.4 The search area is extended to allow for the inclusion of Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for SSSIs (Natural England, 2023). IRZs define areas around SSSIs which could be impacted by development schemes. The zones vary depending on the particular sensitivities of the features for which the SSSI is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.

3.1.5 The desk study shows that the application site falls within an IRZ for several designations, with the following development proposals considered likely to adversely affect the SSSI: air pollution (livestock and poultry units with a floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 4000m²) and combustion (general combustion processes >50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion).

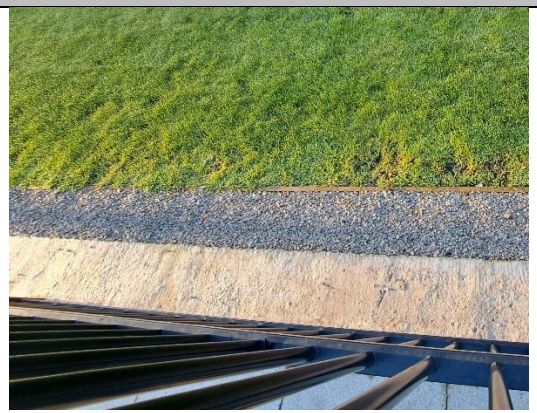
3.1.6 As the proposed development does not meet any of the IRZ's criteria, this potential ecological receptor has been discounted from needing further assessment.

### 3.2 Habitats

3.2.1 All habitats within the Site are described in Table 2, below, together with an indication of their s.41 status and status and reference within the Greater Manchester Local BAP (Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project, 2009).

3.2.2 Habitats which could be subject to adverse effects (amber or red) are discussed in the latter sections of the report. Habitats for which potential adverse effects are not anticipated are excluded from further assessment. The location and extent of habitats are shown on Drawing Number ST21315-001 (UKHab Baseline Survey Plan).

3.2.3 A review of OS data has identified no waterbodies within 500m of the Site.

| *Table 2: Habitat Descriptions and Evaluation* | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Habitat Description** | **UK Hab Classification** | **Photograph** | **Local BAP/s.41** | **Potential Constraints** |
| <u>Developed land; sealed surface</u><br>Around the boundary of the modified grassland is a thing strip of developed land made up of gravel and concrete. The metal railings encompassing the site is installed within this surface. | <u>Primary Code</u><br>Developed land; sealed surface (u1b) |  | N/A | This habitat will be modified by the development proposals but is of no ecological value. |
| <u>Modified grassland</u><br>The site is predominately a patch of very short sward modified grassland in poor condition. Some areas within the grassland are starting to thin out and become bare earth. It is evident the grassland has been created by laying rolls of turf with very minimal floral content. Only a few basal leaves for ribwort plantain *Plantago lancelota* and common daisy *Bellis perennis* were visible. Grass species present | <u>Primary Code</u><br>Modified grassland (g4) |  | N/A | This habitat will be modified by the development proposals but is of negligible intrinsic value. |

| *Table 2: Habitat Descriptions and Evaluation* | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Habitat Description** | **UK Hab Classification** | **Photograph** | **Local BAP/s.41** | **Potential Constraints** |
| were perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* and red fescue *Festuca rubra*. | | | | |
| Built linear feature<br>A railway bridge wall borders the Site to the south. This bridge is comprised of bricks and mortar. | Primary Code<br>Built linear feature (u1e)<br><br>Secondary Code<br>Railway (802)<br>Mortared wall (853) |  | | This habitat may be modified by the development proposals but is of negligible intrinsic value. |

## 3.3 Species

3.3.1 Protected and s.41 species are evaluated in order to identify potential adverse effects in Table 3 below, based on the following criteria:

- Desk study records;
- Evidence found during the survey;
- Presence, extent, quality, and viability of supporting on-site habitat;
- Ecological connectivity to viable off-site habitats; and
- Perceived impacts of habitat loss/impact to individuals in relation to proposals.

3.3.2 Species for which adverse effects are predicted (amber or red) are discussed in more detail in the Discussion and Recommendations section. Species/taxa for which potential adverse effects are not anticipated (green) are excluded from further assessment.

| Receptor (species/taxa) | Desk Study records | Status[6] | Supporting Habitat(s)Present | Potential Constraints |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Badger<br>*Meles meles* | No records were returned within 2km from the last 10 years. | BA | Due to the urban nature of the Site, there is no suitable habitat for foraging or sett creation. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, therefore no impacts are anticipated. |
| Bats<br>*Chiroptera* | There are 15 records of granted European Protected Species Licenses for bats within 2km of the Site. The closest of these is located 170m southeast of the Site and was for common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*.<br><br>There were 48 records of bats within 2km, featuring the following species:<br>• Common Pipistrelle<br>• Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*<br>• *Pipistrellus* sp.<br>• Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*<br>• *Myotis* spp. | EPS, WCA, s.41, LBAP | The Site was assessed as having 'Negligible' suitability for foraging or commuting bats, due to the lack of trees or shrubs. There is some suitable habitat adjacent to the site, in the form of scattered trees and the Rochdale canal.<br>The railway bridge wall to the south of the Site provides suitable roosting opportunities for individual bats. This structure has been assessed as having 'Low' potential for roosting bats as it would not be suitable for larger numbers of bats. See Appendix 2 for further descriptions of roosting features. | No foraging/commuting habitat will be impacted.<br><br>There may be adverse impacts to roosting bats should works be located close to the railway bridge. |

[6] **EPS** – European Protected Species, **WCA** – Wildlife and Countryside Act, **WCA (9)** – species listed under Schedule 9, **A1** – Annex 1 (Birds Directive), **BA** – Protection of Badgers Act, **s.41** – species listed under section 41 of the NERC Act as species of principal importance, **BoCC** – Birds of Conservation Concern.

| Receptor (species/taxa) | Desk Study records | Status[6] | Supporting Habitat(s)Present | Potential Constraints |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | The closest record of a roost was located 780m northwest of the Site. The closest record of a bat was approximately 150m southwest of the Site. | | | |
| Birds | A wide range of BoCC and Red List species and WCA Schedule listed species including:<br>**Schedule 1:**<br>• Black redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* – there are records of this species within 300m of the Site.<br>• Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*<br>• Little ringed plover *Charadrius dubius*<br>• Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*<br>**BoCC/s.41:**<br>• Herring gull *Larus argentatus*<br>• House sparrow *Passer domesticus*<br>• Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* | s.41, WCA BoCC, LBAP | During the survey, feral pigeon *Columba livia* and magpie *Pica pica* were observed within the Site. Suitable nesting habitat is limited to the railway bridge wall, which features a ledge that may be suitable for common urban bird species to nest, e.g. pigeon.<br><br>The railway bridge wall may provide suitable nesting habitat for black redstart, which is a WCA Schedule 1 and LBAP species. However, the current disturbance levels on the Site may reduce the likelihood of this species being present. | Nesting birds may be impacted through disturbance should works be located close to the bridge and nesting birds are present. |

| Receptor (species/taxa) | Desk Study records | Status[6] | Supporting Habitat(s)Present | Potential Constraints |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brown hare *Lepus europaeus* | No records were returned within 2km from the last 10 years. | s.41, LBAP | This species favours open expanses of pastoral farmland and therefore are unlikely to utilise the urban habitats within the Site. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| European hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* | There were 21 records of hedgehog returned within 2km, from the last 10 years. The closest record was located 450m south of the Site. | s.41 | There is no suitable foraging or sheltering habitat due to the lack of vegetation within the Site. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| Great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* | Two records of GCN were returned within 2km, the closest of which was located 1.70km northwest of the Site. | EPS, WCA, s.41, LBAP | There are no waterbodies within 500m and no suitable terrestrial habitat e.g. tall/ tussocky grassland, within the Site. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| Common toad *Bufo bufo* | Two records of common toad were returned within 2km, the closest of which was located 1.70km northwest of the Site. | s.41 | There are no waterbodies within 500m and no suitable terrestrial habitat e.g. tall/ tussocky grassland, within the Site. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| Common Reptiles | No records were returned within 2km from the last 10 years. | WCA, s.41 | There is no suitable habitat for reptiles due to the lack of vegetation, e.g. grassland/scrub, within the Site. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| Hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* | No records were returned within 2km from the last 10 years. | EPS, WCA, s.41 | There is no suitable habitat for this species within the Site e.g. hedgerows and scrub. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| Invertebrates (Protected and notable species) | There were records of white-letter hairstreak *Satyrium w-album* and cinnabar moth *Tyria jacobaeae* | WCA, s.41 | The Site supports limited vegetation and is therefore unlikely to provide | Protected or notable invertebrate species are unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |

| Receptor (species/taxa) | Desk Study records | Status[6] | Supporting Habitat(s)Present | Potential Constraints |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | returned within 2km from the last 10 years. | | habitat for protected or notable invertebrate species. | |
| Otter *Lutra lutra* | There were five records of otter within 2km from the last 10 years, the closest of which was located 500m west of the Site, close to the Rochdale Canal. | EPS, WCA, s.41 | There are no suitable watercourses for otter within the Site. The Rochdale Canal is 40m north of the Site and may provide some commuting habitat for otter. This species is unlikely to utilise the habitats within the Site due to the high levels of disturbance. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| Water vole *Arvicola amphibia* | No records were returned within 2km from the last 10 years. | WCA, s.41, LBAP | There are no suitable watercourses for water vole within the Site. The Rochdale Canal may provide some suboptimal habitat for water vole, however there is no suitable terrestrial habitat within the Site. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| White-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* | No records were returned within 2km from the last 10 years. | EPS, WCA, s.41 | There are no suitable watercourses for white clawed crayfish within, or adjacent to, the Site. | This species is unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |
| Protected and notable plant species | Yes – vascular plant species recorded within 2km of the Site in the last 10 years, including: | WCA, s.41 | No protected or notable plant species were observed during the survey. The Site has limited vegetation and has been subject to high levels of | Protected or notable plant species are unlikely to be present within the Site, so no adverse impacts are anticipated. |

| Receptor (species/taxa) | Desk Study records | Status[6] | Supporting Habitat(s)Present | Potential Constraints |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | • Bee orchid *Ophrys apifera* – closest record located 870m northwest of the Site. | | disturbance so is unlikely to support these plant species. | |
| Non-native invasive species (INNS) | No records were returned within 2km from the last 10 years. | WCA (9) | No INNS were observed within the Site during the survey. | INNS are likely to be absent from the Site. |

# 4 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 4.1 Sensitive Receptors

4.1.1 The following conservation sites, habitats, and species (receptors) have been evaluated as being subject to potential adverse effects and hence can be constraints to the proposals:

- Non-statutory Conservation Sites; Ashton Canal West SBI and Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane to Ducie St Basin SBI
- Roosting bats
- Birds

4.1.2 The nature of potential effects, requirements for further surveys and proposed mitigation/compensation are discussed below for each of the identified receptors.

## 4.2 Non-Statutory Conservation Sites

4.2.1 Ashton Canal West SBI and Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane to Ducie St Basin SBI are both located 1.40km northeast of the Site. These sites are designated for their aquatic flora and habitats.

4.2.2 Although limited, there may be indirect impacts to the habitats within these designations via dust produced during construction works. It is recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is produced detailing pollution prevention measures to remove or minimise the impacts of air and dust pollution upon the SBIs.

## 4.3 Protected Species

*Roosting bats*

4.3.1 The railway bridge wall to the south of the Site has been assessed as having 'Low' potential for roosting bats. There may be adverse impacts to roosting bats should the railway bridge wall be modified as a result of the proposals.

4.3.2 If this structure will be impacted through the development proposals, it is recommended that further surveys are carried out to establish the status of roosting bats. Following current Bat Survey Guidelines (BCT, 2023) for structures with 'Low' roost suitability, it is recommended that one dusk emergence survey is carried out. This survey should be undertaken between May and August.

*Birds*

4.3.3 Black redstart, a WCA Schedule 1 and Greater Manchester BAP species, have been recorded within 300m of the Site in the last 10 years. Any works to the railway bridge wall could impact this species, as this species may utilise this habitat for nesting, although the Site does not provide suitable foraging habitat due to the current levels of disturbance. Therefore, further survey has not been deemed necessary.

4.3.4 In order to avoid works affecting breeding birds, it is recommended that any construction works should be avoided during breeding bird season (generally March-August inclusive). If such timescales cannot be accommodated, it is recommended that a check for the presence of active nests and nesting birds should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 48hrs prior to the commencement of works. Any active nests should be identified and protected subject to the relevant legal provisions until the nesting attempt is complete.

### 4.4 General Recommendations

4.4.1 If the Site boundary alters and any other habitats are identified to be lost or affected by the development, then further surveys for habitats and protected species may be required.

4.4.2 Night-time work should be avoided whenever possible to limit the potential for disturbance to nocturnal animals.

# 5 BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS

## 5.1 Biodiversity Enhancements

5.1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF and BSI 42020:2013 ecological enhancements should be proposed that are over and above measures required to mitigate effects on biodiversity. Such enhancements could include the provision of the following, in addition to any measures required as mitigation (with exact specifications to be determined at the detailed design stage):

- A green roof featuring low nutrient substrate or aggregates could be incorporated into the design, to provide the sparsely vegetated habitat favoured by black redstart.
- Planting of native trees and shrubs of local provenance which naturally occur within the local area. To include berry, pollen and nectar producing species.
- Bird boxes, including a variety of designs, such as 45mm entrance boxes, 32mm entrance boxes, black redstart boxes at roof level, sparrow terraces, and swift boxes/house martin cups and the installation of integrated bird bricks directly into the brickwork of new buildings/structures; and/or
- Bat boxes including for a variety of species and for a variety of seasons, to be integrated directly into the brickwork of new buildings and structures.

# 6 CONCLUSION

## 6.1 Conclusion

6.1.1 Given the identified likely presence of ecological receptors which may be adversely impacted by the development scheme, further surveys and mitigation have been recommended in order to inform a full evaluation of adverse effects. Consequently, additional protected species survey (dusk emergence survey for bats and pre-works check for nesting birds) will be required to compliment the planning application. This report should include formal assessment of impacts and will be suitable to fully inform the planning application.

## 6.2 Report Validity

6.2.1 In general, this report remains valid for a period of 18 months following the date of the habitat survey.

6.2.2 If the Site boundary or layout is subsequently modified and any other habitats are identified to be lost or affected by the development, then further surveys for habitats and protected species may be required.

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# APPENDICES

# Appendix 1
# Legislation and Policy Summary

## Appendix 1 – Legislation and Policy Summary

*Legislation for Habitats/Sites*

| Designated Site/Habitat | Status |
|---|---|
| Ramsar Sites | Ramsar Sites are wetlands of international importance designated following the Ramsar Convention. RAMSAR sites have the same level of protection as SACs and SPAs under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). |
| SPA (Special Protection Areas) | SPAs seek to protect the habitats of rare and vulnerable European and UK birds. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) protect such sites in the UK. |
| SAC (Special Areas for Conservation) | SACs are strictly protected areas which represent important and threatened habitats in Europe and the UK. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) protect such sites in the UK. |
| SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) | SSSIs protect the best examples of the UK's flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features. Originally notified under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, SSSIs were renotified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Modified provisions for the protection and management of SSSIs were introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. |
| NNR (National Nature Reserves) | NNRs are examples of some of the most important natural and semi-natural terrestrial and coastal ecosystems in Great Britain. NNRs are declared by the statutory country conservation agencies under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Legal protection of NNRs is provided under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). |
| Hedgerows | All hedgerows are protected by the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, under which it is an offence to remove or destroy certain hedgerows without planning consent or permission from the Local Planning Authority. These regulations do not apply to any hedgerow within the curtilage of, or marking the boundary of the curtilage of, a dwelling house. |
| LNR (Local Nature Reserves) | Designated by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, LNRs may be declared for nature conservation by local authorities after consultation with the relevant statutory nature conservation agency. Legal protection of LNRs is provided under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). |

*Legislation for Species*

| Species | Legal Status |
|---|---|
| Creeping Marshwort, Early Gentian, Fen Orchid, Floating-leaved Water Plantain, Killarney Fern, Lady's Slipper, Shore Dock, Slender Naiad, Yellow Marsh Saxifrage | Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), it is illegal to deliberately pick, collect, uproot or destroy any such species. |
| Bats, Dormouse, Otter, Wild Cat, Great Crested Newt, Natterjack Toad, Sand Lizard, Smooth Snake, Large Blue Butterfly | These animals and their breeding sites or resting places are protected under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), which makes it illegal to:<br>• Deliberately capture, injure or kill any such animal or to deliberately take or destroy their eggs;<br>• Deliberately disturb[7] such an animal; and<br>• Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.<br>European Protected Species (EPS) licenses can be granted by Natural England in respect of development to permit activities that would otherwise be unlawful under the Conservation Regulations, providing that the following 3 tests (set out in the EC Habitats Directive) are passed, namely:<br>• The development is for reasons of overriding public interest;<br>• There is no satisfactory alternative; and<br>• The favourable conservation status of the species concerned will be maintained and/or enhanced.<br>LPAs must consider the above 3 'tests' when determining whether Planning Permission should be granted for developments likely to cause an offence under the Conservation Regulations. |
| Bats, Dormouse, Great Crested Newt, Heath Fritillary, High Brown Fritillary, Large Blue, Marsh Fritillary, Natterjack Toad, Pine Martin, Otter, Red Squirrel, Sand Lizard, Smooth Snake, Swallowtail, Water Vole, Wildcat | These animals receive full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it illegal (subject to certain exceptions) to:<br>• Intentionally kill, injure or take any such animal;<br>• Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection; and |

Locations of badger activity are confidential due to the sensitivity of this species

ticular any disturbance which is likely to: (i) impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young or to hibernate or migrate; (ii) significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species in question.

| Species | Legal Status |
|---|---|
| | • Intentionally or recklessly disturb such animals while they occupy a place used for shelter or protection. |
| Adder, Common Lizard, Grass Snake, Slow Worm, White-clawed Crayfish | These animals receive partial protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which provide protection against intentional killing or injury of any such animal. |
| Nesting Birds | All wild birds (as defined by the act) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to:<br>• Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;<br>• Take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird. |
| Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 listed Birds | Additional protection is provided to birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In addition to the offences detailed above relating to all wild birds, it is illegal to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bird listed on Schedule 1, or their dependent young while nesting. |
| Badgers | The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it illegal to wilfully kill or injure a Badger, or attempt to do so and to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a Badger sett. This includes:<br>• damaging or destroying an active sett;<br>• obstructing access to a sett; and<br>• disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett.<br>Licences can be granted to permit sett closure and/or disturbance between July and November inclusive (i.e. outside the sow pregnancy/birth period). |
| Wild Mammals | The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 provides legal protection to all wild mammals (as defined by the act) against the following actions: mutilate, kick, beat, nail, or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, drown, crush, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering. |
| Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Schedule 9 listed invasive animals (Part 1) and plants (part 2) | Certain species of plants and animals that do not naturally occur in Great Britain have become established in the wild and represent a threat to the natural fauna and flora. Section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) prohibits the release or allowed escape of animals listed in Schedule 9 to the Act and planting, or allowed growth, of any plant listed in Schedule 9 to the Act. |

*Policy Summary*

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act imposes a legal duty on Planning Authorities to 'have regard' to the conservation of biodiversity when considering planning applications.

Section 41 of the NERC Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of species and habitats of principal importance for conserving biodiversity in the UK. Such Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitats and Species (2007) do not offer the species any specific protection but help to highlight the species importance at a national level. This list is used by Local Planning Authorities to identify the species and habitats that should be afforded priority when applying the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The NPPF underpins the Government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied. The central theme of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This presumption does not apply where development requiring Appropriate Assessment because of its potential impact on a habitats site is being planned or determined.

The NPPF states:

> *When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*
>
> - *If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
> - *Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
> - *Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons[63] and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*

- *Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*
- *The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:*

  *a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;*

  *b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and*

  *c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.*

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

The NPPF requires the Planning Authority to have a responsibility to promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan. In addition, the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

**Appendix 2**
**Preliminary Roost Assessment of Structures**

| Building Name | Description | Photographs | Bat Features Present | Bat Signs | Bat Roost Potential |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Railway bridge wall | The Site is bordered by a raised railway bridge to the south. This bridge is brick-built and features railway arches which have been bricked up. The mortar is in poor condition in some areas, forming several crevices and gaps. |     | Crevices where mortar is absent.<br>Large holes in brickwork (missing bricks). The hole in the bottom-left photo extends approximately 20cm deep and may provide access to an inner cavity. | None | Low |

**DRAWINGS**




KEY

Site Boundary

Habitat Type

g4 - Modified grassland

u1b - Developed land, sealed surface

Secondary Codes:

106- Mown

Notes:

Boundaries are indicative. Aerial imagery shown for context purposes only.

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