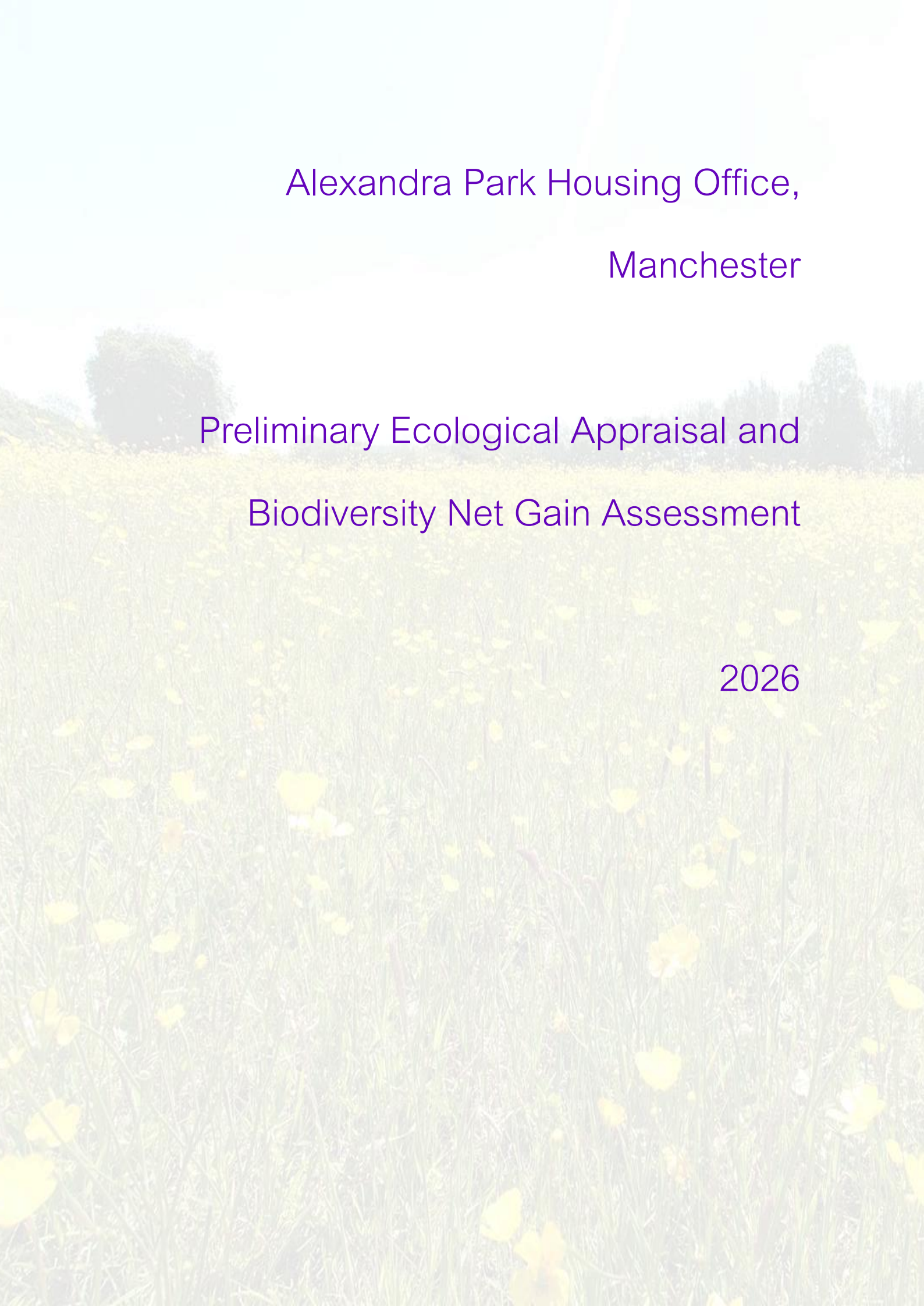




Alexandra Park Housing Office,
Manchester

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

2026

Client Manchester City Council

Project Title Alexandra Park Housing Office

Project Reference RHE.4700

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Executive Summary

Development Details

The client is proposing residential development, including roof repair works at 130 Alexandra Park Housing Office, hereafter referred to as the 'site'.

This report describes the ecological features of the site and its surroundings and assesses the potential impacts of the development on the ecological features. Recommendations are provided so that the development is compliant with biodiversity policy and legislation. The report is updated to include a full assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain including the development impacts.

Ecological Interest

Ecological features are restricted to individual trees. The building on site (B1) is assessed as offering moderate potential to support roosting bats.

Outcomes

Further survey work is being undertaken to establish the status of roosting bats and inform mitigation requirements, this work is reported separately.

Recommendations including enhancement opportunities as well as mitigation measures are identified within this report. Mitigation includes:

- Avoidance of the bird nesting season for clearance of any nesting habitat, or prior checks by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- Measures to prevent incidental entrapment of mammals within deep site excavations.
- Measures to retain tree root zones (to be informed by Tree survey).
- Measures to avoid the risk of spreading invasive species (wall cotoneaster) during the construction.

With regard to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), baseline and post-development assessments have now been completed. The proposed development is expected to result in a 10.41% net loss of habitats (-0.08 habitat units); however, it is proposed that 13 small native individual trees are planted offsite on land within the clients ownership. This would result in 11.18% net gain (+0.08 habitat units) and would satisfy the metric trading rules.



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

- 1.1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited (RHE) was commissioned in 2026 by Manchester City Council (the Client) to carry out an Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of land at 130 Alexandra Road, Manchester, M16 7WD (the 'site'). The site is located at O.S. grid reference: SJ 833 954 (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Map showing the location of the site © Bing Maps

- 1.1.2 The land beyond the site is predominantly features residential areas with Alexandra Park lying approximately 65m southeast of the site.

Description of Development

- 1.1.3 The site will be the subject of a planning application for an extension to the south of the site, roof repairs and associated landscaping.

1.2 Scope of Work

1.2.1 The Client commissioned RHE to carry out the following works:

- Desk-based study to obtain details of designated sites, protected and notable species within a 2km search area.
- Record the extent, type, and condition of habitats within and next to the site.
- Calculate the baseline biodiversity units and the biodiversity net gain outcome based on the provided layout proposals.
- Search for signs of protected species and assessment of the potential of habitats and features to support protected and notable species.

1.3 Site Visit Information

Surveyor Details

1.3.1 Stephen Griffith (Ecologist) and Bethany Halfpenny (Junior Ecologist) visited site on 05 February 2026. Stephen has several years' experience and Bethany is a qualifying member of CIEEM. Both are suitably trained in preliminary ecological appraisals.

Weather

1.3.2 The weather at the time of the survey was overcast with an average temperature of 9°C and adequate for a full assessment to be completed.



2. Methods

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 The Magic website (Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside) was interrogated for the presence of Statutory Designated Sites (and European Protected Species licences) within a 2km radius of the site.
- 2.1.2 The site was checked to determine if it is located within an Impact Risk Zones for any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and if so, whether the Local Planning Authority will need to consult Natural England.
- 2.1.3 Given the limited extent of the proposed development in conjunction with its urban location, it was not considered proportionate to undertake a data search.

2.2 Field Survey

Habitat Survey

- 2.2.1 The site was walked over, and the habitats and features of ecological interest were mapped and described according to the UK Habitat Classification system¹. Habitats and features of particular interest were target noted.

Species Assessment

- 2.2.2 During the walkover habitat and features were assessed for their suitability to support protected and notable species in accordance with CIEEM guidelines². Field signs of protected, notable, and invasive non-native species, if encountered, were mapped, and described.

Bats

- 2.2.3 The exterior of the site was surveyed from the ground using binoculars. Features offering potential access to roosting bats were recorded. Such features may include suitable gaps in roof coverings, gaps behind external cladding/facia and gaps in masonry.
- 2.2.4 Evidence indicating the presence of roosting bats was also searched for. This may include bat droppings on walls, windows or on the ground below roost entrances or staining from fur oil around roost entry points.

¹ UKHab-v2.01-July-2023-Final-2.pdf. at <http://UKHab.org>

² CIEEM (2017). *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

- 2.2.5 The interior of the site, including the roof void, was surveyed to identify any evidence indicating use by roosting bats. Such evidence may include bat droppings, feeding remains, urine splashes, live or dead bats and staining from fur oil on timbers.
- 2.2.6 Any trees on the site that are to be affected by the proposals were given a ground-level assessment, searching for Potential Roosting Features (PRF's), such as flaking bark, woodpecker holes, knot holes and limb splits.

2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 2.3.1 During the site walkover the ecological condition of each habitat was assessed in accordance with the Defra (2025) guidelines³.
- 2.3.2 Habitat data including type, area (or length), condition and strategic significance were uploaded to the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator spreadsheet to determine the baseline value of the site. The extent of any habitats to be retained or enhanced was also entered into baseline worksheets. The pre- and post-development values were then compared to determine whether the yield of biodiversity units achieved a deficit or gain.

Post-development

- 2.3.3 The post-development masterplan (APH-MCC-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0011 - Proposed Site) was interrogated to determine areas of landscaping, hard standing and buildings. New, retained and enhanced habitats were classified and allocated a target condition, based on habitat type, location and management input. This information was uploaded to the metric spreadsheet to obtain a post-development value.

2.4 Mitigation Hierarchy

- 2.4.1 Mitigation measures should be embedded within the masterplan design and planning application process. Measures during the construction phases should be included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan: Biodiversity (CEMP). This process from proposal to implementation needs to consider the 'mitigation hierarchy' of avoid, reduce, compensate, and enhance:
 - Aim to avoid negative effects through the design process.
 - Mitigate if negative effects cannot be avoided.
 - Use compensation measures to offset residual impacts.
 - Identify and implement opportunities to enhance biodiversity

³ The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_User_Guide_.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

2.5 Survey Constraints

- 2.5.1 Field survey results are valid for a limited duration, and no investigation can provide a complete description and characterisation of a site. The composition of habitats and species can change depending on environmental variables and the mobility of species, so the results of a study become less reliable over time. In some cases, surveys that are 3 years old may be acceptable for a project assuming that habitats have not significantly changed in the intervening period, but for protected species it is likely that survey data will need to be no more than 18 months old.
- 2.5.2 The roof void could not be accessed fully due to health and safety reasons. However, beams, lining and gable ends were inspected from the loft hatch/void entrance. This limitation has been taken into consideration, and the potential presence of bats has been accordingly considered.

3. Results

3.1 Designated Sites

- 3.1.1 The desk study identified that no statutory or non-statutory designated sites lie within the search radius.
- 3.1.2 The desk study identified that the site is not located within the Impact Risk Zones of any Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The proposed development will not require the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England and the area is not within the Greater Manchester Nature Network⁴

3.2 Habitats

- 3.2.1 Target Notes and photographs are contained in Appendix 2 and the habitats survey plan is contained in Appendix 3. Condition Assessments are supplied as a separate spreadsheet.

Developed Land, Sealed Surface

- 3.2.2 The majority of the site is comprised of developed land, sealed surface (1). This area includes car parking areas and access paths around the side of the building (B1).
- 3.2.3 Developed land, sealed surface is of very low distinctiveness and does not qualify for a condition assessment. This area extends to 0.066ha and contributes zero habitat units.

Buildings

- 3.2.4 Building on site (B1) is a former office space. To the west of B1 there is a small built structure (S1). Both B1 and S1 are described in relation to bat roost potential in Section 3 – Bats.
- 3.2.5 Buildings on site are of very low distinctiveness, extend to an area of 0.033ha and score zero habitat units.

Modified Grassland

- 3.2.6 Modified grassland (2) surrounds B1 to the north of the site. Species present include Creeping Bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Common Sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, Common Ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, Tufted Hairgrass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, Cleavers *Galium aparine*, Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and Wood Avens *Geum urbanum*.
- 3.2.7 Despite the presence of some flowering species in the grassland namely Sorrel, Tufted Hairgrass & Wood Avens the site is still considered to meet the UK habitat description⁵ for modified grassland due

⁴ [GMLRC Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

⁵ UK-Habitat-Classification-Habitat-Definitions-V1.0-May-2018-1

to dominant Yorkshire Fog and higher abundance of species Creeping Thistle, Creeping Buttercup and Ribwort Plantain.

- 3.2.8 Modified grassland is of low distinctiveness and has been condition assessed using Condition Assessment spreadsheet 5A. GRASSLAND LOW. Due to species diversity and a lack of physical damage the grassland on site is condition assessed as good. The total area of modified grassland present on site extends to 0.038ha and contributes 0.23 habitat units.

Individual Trees

- 3.2.9 Three individual trees are present on site. Trees on site have been condition assessed using Condition Assessment spreadsheet 9B. INDIVIDUAL TREES. Further details including trees condition assessment, reference, species and size are detailed below:

- T1 – Poplar *Populus spp.*, large, moderate condition.
- T2 – Cherry *Prunus avium*, medium, good condition.
- T3 – Hazel *Corylus avellana*, small, moderate condition.

- 3.2.10 Collectively, individual trees on site account for 0.057ha and contribute 0.53 habitat units.

Introduced Shrub

- 3.2.11 Along the site western and southern boundaries, encroaching introduced shrub is present from land adjacent to the site. Although this habitat is not included within the red line boundary it is included in this assessment in terms of its potential to support notable species.

3.3 Species

Badger

- 3.3.1 No setts or signs of Badger *Meles meles* were recorded during the field survey.
- 3.3.2 Habitats on site are unsuitable to support Badger sett creation and offer limited foraging opportunities.

Bats

- 3.3.3 A search on the DEFRA Magic website showed no records of granted European Protected Species Licenses for bats within the 2km search radius.
- 3.3.4 The site is located close to good quality bat foraging habitat with Alexandra Park situated adjacent to the southeastern corner of the site.
- 3.3.5 B1 is the main building present on site. The walls are made of brick, and the building has a gable ended, slate tiled roof.



Photograph 1 (top left), 2 (top right), 3 (bottom left) & 4 (bottom right) showing the exterior of B1

- 3.3.6 No suitable access or Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) were identified within the slate tiles on the roof, including any lifted tiles, cracked or damage tiles.
- 3.3.7 Two large gaps were recorded in the soffit boards of the northern elevation of B1 (Photographs 5 & 6, red circles). Gaps were also recorded between soffit boards and brickwork (Photograph one, yellow circle) at several points around B1.



Photograph 5 (left) & 6 (right) showing gaps in soffit boards in northern elevation

- 3.3.8 Gaps at soffit board edges at the southwestern (Photograph 7) and southeastern (Photograph 8) corners of B1 were also recorded.



Photograph 7 (left) & 8 (right) showing gaps in soffit boards in southwestern and southeastern corners

- 3.3.9 The roof of B1 is supported on modern gang nailed roof trusses which present a cluttered loft space, which is unfavourable for many species of bat (Photograph 9). A draft and daylight (Photograph 10) from the northern elevation where large gaps in the soffit boards were recorded externally was also noted. The void had fibre glass insulation and a bituminous felt lining (Photographs 11 & 12) which appeared to be in good condition.



Photograph 9 (top left), 10 (top right), 11 (bottom left) & 12 (bottom right) showing the internal roof void

- 3.3.10 No evidence indicating use by bats was recorded during the survey, however B1 offers multiple PRFs and suitable access points including large gaps in soffit boards and between soffit boards and brickwork. B1 is assessed as offering **moderate** potential to support roosting bats.
- 3.3.11 Building S1 (see Photograph 13) to the west of B1 is presumably used for storage and has a flat roof. This structure offers a **negligible** potential to support roosting bats due to a lack of suitable PRFs – no cracks were found in the brickwork or other access points.



Photograph 13 showing S1.

- 3.3.12 No trees on site were recorded as being suitable for bats due to their young age and lack of Potential Roosting Features (PRFs).

Hedgehog

- 3.3.13 No signs of Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* were recorded during the field survey.
- 3.3.14 Grassland on site provides suitable foraging and dispersal opportunities for Hedgehog. The site does not offer suitable refugia or hibernation opportunities for Hedgehog, but the shrubbery and tree cover adjacent to the site offer suitable sheltering opportunities.

Nesting Birds

- 3.3.15 Individual trees on site and encroaching shrub from adjacent land offer suitable nesting opportunities for widespread birds which are typically associated with urban/sub-urban areas. The site is not suitable to support ground nesting or aquatic birds.

Reptiles

- 3.3.16 No evidence of reptiles was recorded during the field survey.
- 3.3.17 Reptiles are very scarcely distributed in the Greater Manchester area, and it is unlikely that any reptiles are present on site due to a lack of foraging and basking habitats present or further connectivity with other suitable habitats. Reptiles are not considered further within this report.

Great Crested Newt and Other Amphibians

- 3.3.18 A search on the DEFRA Magic website showed no protected species licenses for Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN) within a 2km radius and there are no ponds within 250m of the site.

- 3.3.19 No ponds or breeding habitat for GCN exist on site. This, in combination with the lack of suitable habitat for GCN around the site provide a negligible likelihood of GCN presence and therefore GCN is not considered further within this report.

Invertebrates

- 3.3.20 Habitats present on site are not suitable or likely to support rare species or important assemblages of invertebrates and therefore invertebrates are not discussed further in this report.

3.4 Invasive Species

Plants

- 3.4.1 Wall Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis* (TN1) as recorded along the southern boundary of the site, encroaching from adjacent land.



4. Assessment

4.1 Development Context

- 4.1.1 Landscaping proposals are now finalised, and the post-development assessment is based on the approved proposals as shown in Appendix 4. At present, no tree removal is anticipated.

4.2 Impacts on Designated Sites

- 4.2.1 Given the small scale of the proposed development the potential impacts of the development are restricted to the red line boundary. Given this and the site lying within no impact risk zones of designated sites, no impacts from the development are anticipated to statutory or non-statutory sites.

4.3 Impacts on Habitats

- 4.3.1 Habitats on site are common and widespread, and any habitat loss would be significant at the site level only. Habitats of ecological value on site are limited to individual trees. Current outline proposals show that the proposed development's impact will be restricted to already developed (sealed surface).
- 4.3.2 Retained trees may be damaged during the construction phases through soil compaction or direct impacts to the root zone in the absence of mitigation.

4.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.4.1 Achieving 10% Biodiversity Net Gain is now a mandatory requirement for major developments in England under the Environment Act 2021, subject to a number of potential exceptions.
- 4.4.2 There are no irreplaceable habitats on site, and the site has not been subject to any prior degradation.
- 4.4.3 The baseline habitats on site account for a total of 0.75 habitat units. Table 1 below summarises the baseline area habitat value for the site.

Table 1. Baseline Area Habitat Values			
Habitat	Area (ha)	Condition	Habitat Units
Developed Land; Sealed Surface (Buildings)	0.033	N/A	0.00
Developed Land; Sealed Surface (Hardstanding)	0.066	N/A	0.00
Modified Grassland	0.038	Good	0.23
Individual trees (1 small, 1 medium, 1 large)	0.057	Moderate-Good	0.53
Total (area excl. individual trees)	0.14	-	0.75

- 4.4.4 Table 2 below provides a summary of the post-development habitat area value.



Table 5: Summary of Post-development BNG Area Values				
Habitat	Action	Area (ha)	Condition	Habitat Units
Developed Land; Sealed Surface (Buildings)	Retained	0.033	N/A	0.00
Developed Land; Sealed Surface (Buildings)	Created	0.014	N/A	0.00
Developed Land; Sealed Surface (Hardstanding)	Retained	0.065	N/A	0.00
Modified grassland	Retained	0.025	Good	0.15
Individual trees (1 small, 1 medium, 1 large)	Retained	0.057	Moderate-Good	0.53
Totals (area excl. individual trees)		0.14	-	0.67

- 4.4.5 Without further mitigation the proposed development is expected to result in a 10.41% net loss of habitats (-0.08 habitat units). There is no feasibility to create additional landscaping onsite due to the size of the site and existing vegetation, therefore it is proposed that 13 small native individual trees are planted offsite on land within the clients ownership.
- 4.4.6 With the addition of 13 small individual trees in moderate condition (0.0529ha), the proposed development would result in 11.18% net gain (+0.08 habitat units) and would satisfy Trading Rules.

4.5 Impacts on Species

Badger, Hedgehog and Other Small Mammals

- 4.5.1 No Badger setts will be impacted by the proposals, based on the current survey evidence. However, Badgers are highly mobile and may forage within the site. There is a low risk of harm through entrapment should Badger, Hedgehog or other small mammals access a construction site. Mitigation is recommended (see Section 5).

Bats

- 4.5.2 B1 offers suitable roosting habitat for bats, therefore roof repairs and/or the construction of an extension to the building could cause the harm/killing of bats should they be present. Given that the current status of roosting bats at the site is unknown, impacts on bats cannot be fully ascertained and therefore further targeted surveys are required (see Section 5).

Nesting Birds

- 4.5.3 Removal of habitats suitable for nesting birds encroaching from adjacent land (shrub) including any pruning works and pruning works to individual trees on site could result in nesting birds being harmed/disturbed, should these be present. Mitigation is recommended (see Section 5).



4.6 Invasive Species

Plants

- 4.6.1 Wall Cotoneaster is as an invasive non-native species, listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. While its presence on site is not an offence, it is an offence to cause or allow the species to spread into the wild. Appropriate measures will therefore be required during development to prevent inadvertent spread



5. Recommendations

5.1 Further Surveys

Bats

- 5.1.1 Further surveys are required to confirm the status of roosting bats on site and inform mitigation requirements. These surveys are underway at the time of writing this report, and will be reported separately.
- 5.1.2 In accordance with current guidelines⁶ it is recommended that buildings offering moderate roosting potential are subject to at least two dusk emergence surveys between May to August.

5.2 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

- 5.2.1 Protection of ecological features (habitats and species) during the construction phase will be described in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Mitigation measures to protect, maintain and enhance ecological features during the operational phase of development will be described in a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP). Management Plans will contain Operational Aims and Objectives, Rationale for management, Prescriptions and schedules detailing the timing and responsibility for delivering the prescriptions. It is anticipated that the CEMP and HMMP will be provided as a planning condition in advance of the commencement of the proposed development.

Habitats

- 5.2.2 In order to protect and prevent any damage to retained trees on site, including through soil compaction that may occur during the development, it is recommended that a tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment is carried out by a suitably qualified arboriculturist to provide details regarding root protection zones and other mitigation requirements.
- 5.2.3 A BNG assessment should be undertaken once development and landscape plans are available to consider how 10% BNG enhancement can be delivered. New and retained habitats would be subject to a 30-year management plan in accordance with standard BNG requirements. This would be secured as a planning condition.

⁶ Collins, J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Badger, Hedgehog and Other Small Mammals.

- 5.2.4 To ensure that badger and any other mammals are not trapped or harmed during the construction work, smaller excavations should be covered if left overnight. Larger excavations, if left overnight or for longer periods, should be ramped to enable animals to escape (or fenced to prevent access).

Bats

- 5.2.5 Mitigation measures will be considered following the results of the further surveys recommended.

Nesting Birds

- 5.2.6 Impacts on nesting birds should be avoided by any clearance of nesting habitat outside of the bird breeding season (March- August inclusive). Construction activities that might directly impact upon nesting birds should hence be limited to September-February inclusive. If vegetation has to be cleared during the bird breeding season prior checks, within 48hrs by a suitably qualified ecologist will be required. If active nests are present any works which may result in damage, destruction or abandonment of the nest should cease until the nesting attempt is complete. A protective buffer zone may need to be established to prevent encroachment of machinery, the extent of which will depend on the sensitivity of the bird species concerned and the nature/duration of the works.
- 5.2.7 It is recommended that bird nesting boxes/bricks are installed on suitable retained trees/building to provide further nesting opportunities.

Invasive Species

- 5.2.8 Measures to avoid the risk of spreading invasive species during the construction should be detailed within a CEMP.

Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2025) describes the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. Within this framework, the requirements in relation to biodiversity are included within several policies. The two most relevant to individual planning decisions are Paragraphs 187, 192 and 193, shown below:

- 187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
- 192. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
 - b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- 193. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) 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;
- b) 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;
- c) 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 and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) 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.

Legislation

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000) includes the notification and confirmation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). SSSIs can be notified for their floral, faunal, geological, or physiographical features. Protection against damaging operations and management of SSSIs is also included within the Act. Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are zones around an SSSI account for the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and identify development proposal which could have adverse impacts.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000) protects native animals, plants and habitats. Under the Act it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5 and it is an offence to interfere with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturb animals occupying such places. The Act prohibits picking, uprooting or destroy any wild plant (or any attached seed or spore) listed in Schedule 8.

European Protected Species (EPS) such as bats, Hazel Dormouse, Otter, Natterjack Toad, Smooth Snake, Sand Lizard and Great Crested Newt are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The Acts make it an offence to:

- a) Deliberately capture, injure or kill an EPS;
- b) Deliberately impair an EPS's ability to survive, breed, reproduce, rear or nurture young; to hibernate or migrate; or significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the EPS.
- c) Possess or control live or dead EPS or any part of, or anything derived from a EPS;
- d) Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an EPS;
- e) Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place that is used for shelter or protection by an EPS;
- f) Intentionally or recklessly disturb a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection that is occupied by an EPS.

All common herptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000). Grass Snake, Slow Worm, Common Lizard, Adder are protected against intentional killing or injury. Common Frog, Common Toad, Smooth Newt and Palmate Newt is protected against sale. In addition, all British reptiles, Common toad and Great Crested Newt are listed as Species of Principal Importance.

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage, or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act while they are nest building or at or near a nest with eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young.

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it an offence to wilfully, or to attempt to kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a Badger, or intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett. Interference of a sett includes disturbing Badgers during occupation of a sett, or damaging or destroying a sett, or obstructing access to the sett.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on every public authority to have regard to conserving biodiversity. Section 41 of the same Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitats that are of 'Principal Importance' for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Secretary of State must take steps, as appear reasonably practicable, to further the conservation of those living organisms and habitats in any list published under this section. The list of species and habitats of principal importance currently includes 943 species and 56 habitats. These are the species and habitats found in England which are regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 protect 'important' hedgerows from destruction or damage. A hedgerow is 'important' if it (a) has existed for 30 years or more; and (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 'important' hedgerows unless permitted by the local planning authority.

The Environment Act 2021 makes it mandatory for housing and development, subject to some narrow exemptions, to achieve at least a 10% net gain in value for biodiversity – a requirement that habitats for wildlife must be left in a measurably better state than before the development. Developers must submit a 'biodiversity gain plan' alongside usual planning application documents. The local authority must assess whether the 10% net gain requirement is met in order to approve the biodiversity gain plan.

The Environment Act 2021 strengthens the duty on public authorities (NERC Act, 2006) to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity.

The Environment Act 2021 amends the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to introduce an additional purpose for granting a protected species licence in relation to development, 'for reasons of overriding public interest', and two additional tests for the granting of such licences: that there is 'no other satisfactory solution' and that granting the licence is 'not detrimental to the survival of any the population of the species concerned'. These changes will reduce the scope for unlicensed activities to provide clear safeguards before licences can be granted, providing legal certainty and clarity to developers about their environmental obligations.

Appendix 2: Habitat and Target Notes

Photographs

Reference No.	Habitat	Photograph
1	Developed Land, Sealed Surface	
2	Modified Grassland	 
	Individual Trees	 

TN1			
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Appendix 3: Baseline Habitat Plan



Appendix 4: Post-Development Habitat Plan

