Luther King Centre, Rusholme, Manchester M14 5JP

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

June 2026

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd Reference: 2026-039

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Document Control

Survey Type:	**Surveyors**[1]	**Survey Date(s)**
Ecological appraisal surveys	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM Principal Ecologist	23rd March 2026
Daytime Bat Walkover Survey	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM Principal Ecologist	23rd March 2026
Reporting	**Personnel**	**Date**
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[1] *Licence reference number*
Bats
Victoria Burrows, Natural England Class Survey Licence (bats, Level 2) Registration Number 2025-84635-CL18-BAT

SUMMARY

Introduction and Scope

i. ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned to carry out a preliminary ecological appraisal of an area at the Luther King Centre, Rusholme, Manchester M14 5JP. The assessment was requested to inform a planning application proposing the modification of the building entrance and grounds at the Luther King Centre. The works will involve the removal of a single storey lean-to and a Weeping Willow tree (T6).

ii. This report presents the results of a desktop study, a data search, a preliminary ecological appraisal and a licensed daytime bat walkover survey and survey for relevant protected species carried out in March 2026. The survey was carried out by an appropriately licensed, qualified and experienced ecologist and is in accordance with relevant survey guidelines. The scope of survey undertaken is appropriate to identify potential ecological constraints, the remit of mitigation required and opportunities for biodiversity associated with the development proposals.

Results of Survey and Assessment

iii. The approximately 0.0353 hectare (ha) site is located within the grounds of the Luther King Centre in the Rusholme area of Manchester. The site comprises hardstanding, a cycle shelter, a single storey lean-to attached to the main building, beds of introduced shrubs and mown lawns of modified grassland with a mature Weeping Willow tree. Off-site habitats within the wider ground comprise areas of mown amenity / modified grassland, beds of introduced shrubs and scattered mature and semi-mature trees.

iv. The works will have no adverse direct or indirect effect on statutory or non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.

v. No semi-natural habitat, Priority Habitat or irreplaceable habitat are present or will be affected by the proposals. No invasive plant species were detected within the site boundary.

vi. No evidence of use of the buildings by roosting bats was detected by the daytime preliminary roost assessment. All buildings / structures within the proposed working area are assessed to conform to a suitability for use by roosting bats of 'none'. Tree T6 scheduled to be removed is assessed as 'PRF-I'. In accordance with the survey guidelines the tree should be removed in accordance with a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) and further guidance is provided in **Section 5.3**.

vii. Due to the suitability of the habitats for use by nesting birds guidance in relation to measures to be applied for the protection of wildlife and compliance with relevant wildlife legislation during works is provided in **Section 5.3** and compensatory measures for nesting birds are recommended at **Section 5.4**.

viii. Appropriate survey effort and / or assessment has been carried out to reasonably discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species.

Conclusion

ix. It is concluded that the proposals at the Luther King Centre can be achieved in compliance with wildlife legislation, planning policy, Natural England guidance and best practice.

x. In the presence of the mandatory actions and best practice measures described in **Sections 5.2** and **5.3**, adverse effects on protected species are reasonably discounted. The proposals will have no impact on designated sites for nature conservation or ecologically valuable habitats. Compensatory and enhancement measures that aim to maximise the benefits for biodiversity as part of the proposals and comply with the NPPF and *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016) are outlined in **Section 5.4**.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

1.1.1 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned by HPA Architects to carry out a preliminary ecological appraisal of an area at the Luther King Centre, Rusholme, Manchester M14 5JP (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference at the centre of the site is SJ 85558 94830. An aerial image of the site and its surrounding habitats is appended at **Figure 1** (source image: ESRI World Imagery).

1.1.2 The assessment was requested to inform a planning application proposing the modification of the building entrance and grounds at the Luther King Centre. The works will involve the removal of a single storey lean-to and a Weeping Willow tree (T6).

1.2 Scope of Works

1.2.1 The scope of ecological works undertaken in March 2026 comprised:

a. A desktop study and data search for known ecological information at the site and the local area;

b. An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and assessment, and assessment of the habitats present at the site using the UK Habitats Classification;

c. Assessment of the ecological value of the habitats within the site with the use of the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and the Ratcliffe criteria, as presented in *A Nature Conservation Review* (Ratcliffe, 1977);

d. A daytime bat walkover survey for bats, which has comprised an assessment of the suitability of the habitats within the site and the surrounding area for foraging and commuting bats, a licensed preliminary roost assessment of the relevant sections of the building(s) and a ground level tree assessment;

e. Survey and assessment of all habitats for relevant statutorily protected species[1] and other wildlife including badger (*Meles meles*) and bird species;

f. The identification of any potential ecological constraints on the proposals and the specification of the scope of mitigation and ecological enhancement required in accordance with wildlife legislation, planning policy guidance and other relevant guidance; and

g. The identification of any further surveys or precautionary actions that may be required to inform the progression of the site through the planning process or prior to the commencement of demolition and construction activities.

[1] In accordance with *Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and Their Impact on the Planning System* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005) developers should not be required to undertake surveys for protected species unless there is reasonable likelihood of the species being present and affected by the development. In this instance (for example) there are no ponds within an unobstructed radius of 500 metres from the site, and no water bodies or water courses within or adjacent to the site; there has been no requirement to consider great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*), water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) or otter (*Lutra lutra*) as part of this assessment. Due to the urban environment at the site and surrounds the need for survey and assessment for other protected species such as reptiles is reasonably discounted.

2.0 METHOD OF SURVEY

2.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

2.1.1 The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:

a. MAGiC Maps: A web-based interactive map which brings together geographic information on key environmental schemes and designations, including details of statutory nature conservation sites;

b. Ancient Tree Inventory (Woodland Trust, 2026): An online database of ancient and veteran trees;

c. Greater Manchester Local Records Centre (GMLRC); and

d. The Greater Manchester Nature Network Map: The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

2.1.2 The Tree Schedule and the Tree Constraints Plan prepared for the site (hereafter collectively referred to as the 'tree report') were also consulted.

2.2 Survey Date, Surveyor and Conditions

2.2.1 The site was surveyed by Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM on 23rd March 2026. The weather conditions were dry and overcast with a light air (Beaufort scale 1) and an air temperature of 12°C.

2.2.2 Victoria holds a Natural England Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), Registration Number 2025-84635-CL18-BAT. The surveyor's qualifications and experience meet the criteria as defined in the *Technical Guidance Series Competencies for Species Survey: Bats* (CIEEM, 2013).

2.3 Vegetation and Habitats

2.3.1 A Phase 1 Habitat Survey map was prepared for the site and the immediate surrounding area and is appended at **Figure 2**. The mapping is based on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC, 2010) with minor adjustments to illustrate and examine the habitats with greater precision.

2.3.2 On site habitat mapping was assisted via use of GPS technology using a the *As Existing Site Plan* (HPA Chartered Architects, 2026) as a baseplan.

2.3.3 The plant species of relevant habitats within the site boundary were determined with estimates of the distribution, ground cover, abundance and constancy of individual species. The estimation of abundance was based on the DAFOR system, where D = Dominant, A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional and R = Rare, this being a widely used and accepted system employed by ecological surveyors. The terms L = Locally and V = Very were additionally used to describe the plant species distributions with greater precision.

2.3.4 Stands of vegetation and habitats were described and evaluated using the National Vegetation Classification (NVC). The NVC provides a systematic and comprehensive analysis of British vegetation and is a reliable framework for nature conservation and land-use planning.

2.3.5 Habitats within the site were assessed in accordance with *The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (UKHab Ltd, 2023). The UK Habitat Classification, or 'UKHab' has been designed to function at two scales of minimum mappable unit (MMU): fine scale (25m^2 or 5 metres length) and large scale (400m^2 or 20 metres

length). It has been considered for the purposes of this survey that the fine scale of 25m^2 or 5 metres length MMU is appropriate.

2.3.6 Searches were made for uncommon, rare and statutorily protected plant species, those species listed as protected in the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and species which are indicators of important and uncommon plant communities. Plant nomenclature follows *New Flora of the British Isles 3rd Edition* (Stace, 2010).

2.3.7 Searches were carried out for the presence of invasive species, including those listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

2.4 Daytime Bat Walkover Survey

Habitat Assessment for Commuting / Foraging Bats

2.4.1 Habitats within and adjacent to the site were assessed for their value and suitability for use by commuting and foraging bats in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023). Reference has been made to the categories, descriptions and examples presented in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Consideration of Suitability of Foraging and Commuting Habitat for Bats

Suitability	Potential Flight Paths and Foraging Habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade / protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible [a]	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.
[a] Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).	

Preliminary Roost Assessment: Buildings

2.4.2 The scope of survey comprised the cycle shelter, lean-to to be demolished and the elevations of the existing buildings which will lie adjacent to / be covered over by the new structures to be constructed at the site.

2.4.3 The survey was carried out in accordance with standard methodology including the *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Mitchell-Jones, 2004), the *Bat Workers' Manual 3rd Edition* (Mitchell-Jones & Mcleish, 2004) and *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023).

2.4.4 An inspection of the external surfaces, walls and roofs of the buildings was carried out to search for bats and potential roost features / roost access features and to assess the suitability of the buildings for use by roosting bats. Searches for evidence of bat presence in the form of droppings, urine stains, feeding signs, grease marks and other evidence were also carried out.

2.4.5 The internal survey involved an examination of the accessible internal and the search for roosting bats and / or evidence of previous use of the buildings by bats such as droppings and prey remains.

2.4.6 The suitability of each building / structure for use by roosting bats has been assessed in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023), reproduced at **Table 2.2**, taking into account any presence of gaps suitable for access by bats, features suitable for use by roosting bats within the building (including crevice dwelling species and species which can roost in the open in roof voids), and the suitability of the surrounding habitats for use by foraging and commuting bats.

Table 2.2: Suitability Categories for Roosting Habitats in Buildings

Suitability	Description
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).
Negligible[a]	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.
Low	A 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[b] 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 and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats[c]).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions[b] and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A 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[b] and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool / stable hibernation site.

Suitability	Description
[a]Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute). [b]For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance. [c]Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al*., 2016 and Jansen *et al*., 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.	

Ground Level Tree Assessment

2.4.7 A preliminary ground level tree assessment (GLTA) was carried out to assess the trees and shrubs within the site for their suitability for use by roosting bats, and to inform whether further surveys or precautionary measures would be required as the proposals progress.

2.4.8 Trees / shrubs were assessed from the ground using binoculars and a high-powered torch. Each tree / shrub was searched for the presence of the following features:

Woodpecker holes, rot holes, hazard beams, other vertical or horizontal cracks or splits in stems and branches, partially decayed platey bark, knot holes, man-made holes, tear-outs, cankers in which cavities have developed, other hollows or cavities, including butt-rots, double-leaders forming compression forks with included bark, gaps between overlapping stems or branches, partially detached Ivy (Hedera helix) with stem diameters in excess of 50mm and bat, bird or dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius) boxes.

2.4.9 Trees / shrubs have been assessed and described using the categories presented at Tables 4.2 and 6.2 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn),* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023), as presented in **Table 2.3**.

Table 2.3: Definition of Terms and Suitability Categories Used in Tree Survey for Roosting Bats

Terms and Suitability Categories	Description
PRF	Potential Roost Feature
None	Either no PRFs in the tree(s) or highly unlikely to be any.
FAR	Further Assessment Required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

2.4.10 The requirement for further presence / absence surveys at each tree / shrub was then considered.

Equipment

2.4.11 A list of equipment used is detailed in **Table 2.4**.

Table 2.4: Survey Equipment Used / Available for Use During Daytime Bat Survey

Ladders
LED Lenser P14 torch
Canon Ixus digital camera
8x20 binoculars
Ridgid Micro Inspection Camera Borescope CA-300

2.5 Other Relevant Protected Species and Animal Life

Badger

2.5.1 The survey area for badger covered the site (as annotated on **Figure 2**) and extended to accessible land within a radius of 50 metres from the site boundary. Private gardens / land beyond the Luther King Centre were not accessed but these areas were viewed from the boundaries.

2.5.2 The survey was conducted in accordance with guidance presented within *Badgers and Development* (Natural England, 2007) and Badgers*: advice for making planning decisions* (Natural England, 2022).

2.5.3 The following signs of badger activity were searched for:

a. Sett entrances, e.g. entrances that are normally 25 to 35cm in diameter and shaped like a 'D' on its side;

b. Large spoil heaps outside sett entrances;

c. Bedding outside sett entrances;

d. Badger footprints;

e. Badger paths;

f. Latrines;

g. Badger hairs on fences or bushes;

h. Scratching posts; and

i. Signs of digging for food.

2.5.4 Habitats within and surrounding the site were assessed in terms of their suitability for use by foraging and sheltering badger in accordance with their known habitat preferences as detailed in current guidance and *Badger* (Roper, 2010).

Bird Species

2.5.5 Bird species observed and heard during the survey were recorded.

2.5.6 The buildings / structures within the site were searched for evidence of previous use by other nesting birds and the buildings were assessed for their suitability for use by nesting birds, particularly species typically associated with the built environment such as house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), house martin (*Delichon urbicum*), swift (*Apus apus*) and gull species.

2.5.7 Habitats throughout the site and in the immediate surrounding area were assessed for their value to roosting, feeding and nesting birds, as indicated by the amount of shelter, feeding value, woody vegetation structure and species diversity of tree and shrub species in the site.

Other Wildlife

2.5.8 Evidence of other wildlife, including Priority Species, observed whilst on site, but for which specific surveys were not made, was recorded and has been included in this report where it is considered of relevance to the planning application.

2.5.9 Habitats have been assessed for their suitability for Priority Species identified in the data search results where this is considered relevant to the application.

2.6 Survey and Reporting Limitations

2.6.1 The survey was completed outside of the typical bat activity season, when any field signs of bats from the previous year may have weathered from unprotected / unsheltered external elevations of the buildings. Daytime bat inspections can be completed at any time of year and, if needed, to comply with the guidance as outlined in *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023), further presence / absence surveys are recommended.

2.6.2 No other survey limitations on the intended scope of survey were experienced.

2.6.3 All measurements within this report are approximate only, and have been either estimated whilst on site or calculated using mapping software (QGIS) or internet-based mapping services such as MAGiC Maps and Google Earth.

2.7 Evaluation Methods

2.7.1 The habitats, vegetation and animal life were evaluated with reference to standard nature conservation criteria as described in *A Nature Conservation Review* (Ratcliffe, 1977). These are size (extent), diversity, naturalness, rarity, fragility, typicality, recorded history, position in an ecological or geographical unit, potential value and intrinsic appeal.

2.7.2 Habitats have been assessed to determine whether they meet those described in *UK Biodiversity Action Plan: Priority* Habitat *Descriptions* (Maddock, A (ed), 2008); these lists are used to help draw up the statutory lists of Priority Habitats, as required under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities* (NERC) *Act 2006*. Where suitable, the ecological value of the habitats present has been assessed using the terms outlined in *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018). Each habitat and individual trees have been assessed to determine whether they are 'irreplaceable habitat', defined in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024)[2] as '*Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen*'. The further detail presented in *The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024* (GOV.UK, 2024) has also been referred to.

[2]Hereafter the NPPF

2.7.3 Government advice on wildlife, as set out in the NPPF and associated government circulars has been taken into consideration. Legislation relating to protected species, such as those listed under Schedules 1, 5, 6 and 8 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*, is referenced where applicable, and any impacts to protected species are evaluated in accordance with current guidance.

2.7.4 The presence of any Priority Species, as listed under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006* is noted, and habitats are assessed in terms of their suitability and value for these species. The presence of habitats and / or species listed by the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan and has been taken into account in the evaluation of the site.

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

Statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation and SSSI Impact Risk Zones

3.1.1 The site and adjoining land have no statutory designation for nature conservation.

3.1.2 The site lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone for Hollinwood Branch Canal SSSI located 7.12 kilometres to the north-east and the Rochdale Canal SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located 7.02 kilometres to the north. The SSSI Impact Risk Zone requires the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England on likely risks from the following development categories (Natural England, 2026):

Air Pollution: Livestock and poultry units with a floorspace greater than 500m², slurry lagoons greater than 4000m².

Combustion: General combustion processes greater than 50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis / gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration / combustion.

3.1.3 The proposals do not meet any of these criteria and the SSSI impact risk zone advises:

'You do not need to consult Natural England on the proposed development at this location.

The Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI IRZs) indicate that at the location selected, the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites that they underpin.

Therefore, you do not need to consult Natural England on the likely impacts of development on terrestrial SSSIs and the SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites that they underpin.'

Non-statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

3.1.4 The site and adjoining land have no non-statutory designation for nature conservation, called 'Sites of Biological Importance or 'SBIs' in Greater Manchester.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

3.1.5 The site and adjoining land have no allocation on the Greater Manchester Nature Network Map.

Main River Designation

3.1.6 In accordance with *Main River Map* (Environment Agency, 2026) the section of the Gore Brook located within 50 metres of the site forms part of a Main River. It is considered that this lies outside the potential zone of influence of the small scale proposals and no further assessment is required.

Priority Habitats Inventory

3.1.7 The Priority Habitats Inventory[3] was checked via MAGiC Maps. No Priority Habitats are identified at the site by the inventory.

Ancient Tree Inventory

3.1.8 No ancient or veteran trees are identified at the site by the inventory.

Protected and Notable Species

3.1.9 Reported records (GMLRC) of protected and notable species for a 1 kilometre radius from the centre of the site are summarised in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Records of Protected Species Within a 1 Kilometre Radius from the Centre of the Site

Taxon Group	Species Name and Designations[1] and Notes
Birds – Priority Species	Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), herring gull (Larus *argentatus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).
Birds – WCAs1 Species	Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*): WCAs1. 1 record from 2003, located 585 metres to the south-west of the site.
Insects – Moths	Buff ermine (*Spilosoma luteum*): PS. 1 record from 2015, located 365 metres to the east of the site.
	Cinnabar (*Tyria jacobaeae*): PS. 6 records, dated between 2020 and 2024. The closest record is 385 metres to the south of the site, and from 2020.
Terrestrial Mammals	Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*): EPS, WCAs5, PS and GMBAP. 10 records, dated between 2012 and 2021. The closest record is 0 metres to the south-east of the site, and from 2013.
	Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*): EPS, WCAs5, PS and GMBAP. 1 record from 2016, located 605 metres to the north-west of the site.
	Noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctula*): EPS, WCAs5, PS and GMBAP. 7 records, dated between 2012 and 2021. The closest record is 505 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2016.
	Bat sp (*Chiroptera sp.*): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 1 record from 2015, located 460 metres to the north of the site.
	Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 45 records, dated between 2007 and 2021. The closest record is 140 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2009.
	Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 5 records, dated between 2007 and 2021. The closest record is 520 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2013.
	Myotis sp (*Myotis sp.*): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 3 records, dated between 2013 and 2020. The closest record is 410 metres to the north-east of the site, and from 2013.

[3] A spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.

Taxon Group	Species Name and Designations[1] and Notes
	Pipistrelle sp (*Pipistrellus sp*.): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 4 records, dated between 2002 and 2007. The closest record is 5 metres to the east of the site, and from 2002.
	Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*): PS. 22 records, dated between 2014 and 2023. The closest record is 10 metres to the west of the site, and from 2019.
	Badger (*Meles meles*): PBA. 2 records dated between 2012 and 2013.
[1]Key to Designation Codes: EPS = European Protected Species under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. WCAs1 = Species receives full protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). WCAs5 = Species receives full protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). PS = Priority Species listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. PBA = Protection of Badger Act 1992. GMBAP = Species listed on the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.	

3.1.10 The presence of these protected and notable species within the wider area has been taken into account throughout this report.

3.2 Vegetation and Habitats

General Description

3.2.1 The approximately 0.0353 hectare (ha) site is located within the grounds of the Luther King Centre in the Rusholme area of Manchester. The site comprises hardstanding, a cycle shelter, a single storey lean-to attached to the main building, beds of introduced shrubs and mown lawns of modified grassland with a mature Weeping Willow tree. Off-site habitats within the wider ground comprise areas of mown amenity / modified grassland, beds of introduced shrubs and scattered mature and semi-mature trees.

3.2.2 A Phase 1 Habitat survey map is appended at **Figure 2**. Photographs are appended in **Table 8.1** in **Section 8.1**.

Hardstanding

3.2.3 Refer to **Photo 1**. The areas of hardstanding are typically devoid of vegetation with the exception of gaps in the paving which support very locally frequent Procumbent Pearlwort (*Sagina procumbens*) and occasional Prickly Sow-thistle (*Sonchus asper*). The hardstanding is described by the UKHab as u1b6 other developed land.

Buildings

3.2.4 Refer to **Photo 2**. The buildings are described in relation to its suitability for use by roosting bats in **Section 3.3**. The buildings are devoid of vegetation and are described by the UKHab as u1b5 buildings.

Introduced Shrubs

3.2.5 Refer to **Photo 3**. The northern area of the site supports beds of introduced shrubs with planted small Pine (*Pinus* sp.) shrubs and ornamental shrub species such as *Viburnum* species and an understorey of an ornamental Crane's-bill (*Geranium* species). The introduced shrubs are not indicative of an NVC community and are described by the UKHab as u1 urban with the secondary code 847 introduced shrubs.

Amenity / Modified Grassland

3.2.6 Refer to **Photos 4** and **5**. The areas of mown amenity / modified grassland are characterised by constant and abundant Perennial Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) with frequent Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), Daisy (*Bellis perennis*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), and Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*). Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) is very locally frequent, White Clover (*Trifolium repens*) is very locally abundant and Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*) is occasional. A plant species list is appended at **Table 8.2**.

3.2.7 The amenity / modified grassland is characteristic of an MG7 *Lolium perenne* grassland community of the NVC and is described by the UKHab as g4 modified grassland with the secondary codes 107 mown and collected and 200 tree.

Individual Tree

3.2.8 Refer to **Photo 6**. One tree a mature Weeping Willow (T6 on the tree report) lies within the south-eastern corner of the site.

Invasive Plant Species

3.2.9 No Japanese Knotweed is present at the site.

3.2.10 No other invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) lie within the site boundary. As shown on **Figure 2**, shrubs of Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) lie within the wider grounds of the Luther King Centre.

3.3 Daytime Bat Walkover Survey

Habitat Assessment for Commuting / Foraging Bats

3.3.1 The greenspace at the site and the wider grounds which includes grassland with scattered trees provides an area of habitat likely to contribute to the wider foraging area of common species of edge-feeding bats associated with urban areas, such as common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*).

3.3.2 Overall, the given its small size, the site is assessed to be of 'negligible' suitability for use by foraging bats and the site lies within grounds / habitats assessed to be of 'low' suitability in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023), as presented at **Table 2.1**.

Preliminary Roost Assessment: Buildings

Cycle Shelter

3.3.3 Refer to **Photo 7**. The cycle shelter is an open-sided, metal framed and Perspex structure which provides no opportunities for use by roosting bats. The cycle shelter is assessed to conform to a suitability criteria for use by roosting bats of 'none'.

Single-storey Lean-to and Concrete Tile Roof

3.3.4 Refer to **Photos 8** to **15**. The works propose the removal of the single storey lean-to at the reception of the main building. The timber framed structure as a sloping glass and fibreglass sheet covered roof and lower sections of brick wall with glass elevations.

3.3.5 All areas of brickwork both at the lean-to and at the elevations of the building where the lean-to attaches are well-pointed; no gaps or opportunities for bat access were found. The lead flashing at the point where the lean-to attaches to the brick elevation walls is sealed and no potential roost features were found.

3.3.6 A gap at the northern end of the lean-to (**Photo 12**) has a minor lifted section; inspection of this area with an endoscope did not detect any bats or droppings; the feature is shallow (0.20m) and considered to be too wide to be suitable for use by roosting bats.

3.3.7 Further north is a section of concrete tile covered roof that extends over the toilets and the canteen area (which has a vaulted ceiling (**Photo 16**)). The concrete tiles are all intact and tightly fitted; no gaps or lifted tiles which may provide an opportunity for bat access were found.

3.3.8 Based on the ability to carry out a detailed inspection and in consideration of the absence of suitable potential roost features, the single storey lean-to and concrete tile roof section that will be impacted by the proposals are assessed to conform to a suitability criteria for use by roosting bats of 'none'.

Elevation Walls of the Main Building

3.3.9 Examination of the elevation walls of the main building which will be disturbed by the proposals confirmed that all brick work is well-pointed; no gaps or potential roost features were found. The window frames are sealed; no gaps suitable for bat and bird access were noted around the window frames.

3.3.10 No gaps were noted at the eaves of the building (i.e. where the soffits meet the brick elevation walls). For completeness the roof void above the section of building to the immediate north of the site boundary was accessed (**Photo 17**). No bats or evidence of a roost was detected.

Ground Level Tree Assessment

3.3.11 Refer to **Photo 6**. T6, a mature Weeping Willow, lies within the site and will be removed by the proposals. The tree supports a knothole which is reported to be used by a greater spotted woodpecker. No other potential roost features were found at the tree. In consideration of the location of the tree in the urban area and its presence within a busy car park area, T6 is assessed as PRF-I[4].

3.3.12 No other shrubs within the site boundary support potential roost features; all other trees and shrubs are assessed to conform to the suitability criteria of 'none'.

[4] PRF- I: PRF is suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats

3.4 Other Relevant Protected Species and Animal Life

Badger

3.4.1 The majority of the site is occupied by buildings and hardstanding which are assessed to be unsuitable for use by visiting badger. No setts or evidence of badger activity was detected at the site or the surveyed area extending 50 metres from the site boundary.

Bird Species

3.4.2 No evidence of current or previous use of the buildings by nesting birds was found.

3.4.3 The mature Weeping Willow within the site boundary supports a knothole at a height of approximately 3 metres above ground on the main stem. The is suitable for use nesting greater spotted woodpecker, ring-necked parakeet and possibly grey squirrel.

3.4.4 The other limited areas of vegetation at the site provide limited opportunities for use by nesting birds. Bird species recorded in the wider grounds comprised blackbird, wood pigeon, great tit, wren, nuthatch, carrion crow and ring-necked parakeet. The habitats in the wider grounds provide suitable nesting opportunities for these species.

Other Wildlife

3.4.5 The habitats at the site provide limited opportunities for hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), this Priority Species is reported to be present in neighbouring gardens (refer to **Table 3.1**) and may access the site and wider grounds to feed.

4.0 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction and Description of Proposals

4.1.1 The planning application proposes the modification of the building entrance and grounds at the Luther King Centre. The works will involve the removal of a single storey lean-to and a Weeping Willow tree (T6).

4.1.2 The proposals are shown on the *Proposed Landscaping Plan* (HPA Chartered Architects, 2026).

4.1.3 **Section 4.2** provides an assessment of any impacts of the proposed development on the designated sites for nature conservation present in the wider area. The ecological value of habitats within the site is evaluated at **Section 4.3**, and protected and notable species are considered at **Section 4.4**.

4.2 Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

4.2.1 It is considered that the site is sufficiently small and distant from all statutory and non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation that the proposed development will have no direct or indirect impact on the designated sites and their features of special interest.

4.3 Vegetation and Habitats

4.3.1 The majority of the site is occupied by buildings (0.0071ha) and hardstanding (0.0209ha) i.e. 79% of the site boundary. The vegetated areas of the site comprise the 0.0016ha area of introduced shrub and the 0.0057ha area of amenity / modified grassland with one large[5] Weeping Willow tree.

4.3.2 None of the habitats in the site are semi-natural habitat or Priority Habitat, or are classed as irreplaceable habitat.

4.3.3 No invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) were detected in the site boundary.

4.3.4 In terms of each habitat's importance in a geographical context[6], the large Weeping Willow tree (T6) is considered to be of value at the site level as it supports habitats of value to nesting and will contribute as wildlife links across the wider area. The areas of buildings, hardstanding, introduced shrubs and amenity / modified grassland are not considered to hold any importance on a geographical scale.

4.4 Protected Species and Other Wildlife

Bat Species

4.4.1 No evidence of use of the buildings to be affected by the proposals by roosting bats was detected by the daytime survey. All affected buildings / structures are assessed to conform to a suitability for use by roosting bats of 'none'.

4.4.2 T6 is assessed as PRF-I. In accordance with the survey guidelines the tree should be removed in accordance with a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS); further guidance is provided in **Section 5.3**.

4.4.3 In accordance with the results of the surveys and assessment it is considered that appropriate and proportionate survey effort has been carried out to determine the absence of roosting bats and to demonstrate compliance with the survey guidelines. No further bat surveys are required to inform the planning application.

4.4.4 Habitats adjacent to the site and within the wider grounds are suitable for foraging and commuting bats. Recommendations relating to the avoidance of adverse impacts on features suitable for use by foraging and commuting bats are presented at **Section 5.2**.

Bird Species

4.4.5 The opportunities for nesting birds at the site are minimal and limited to the Weeping Willow tree only. Consideration of birds (including protection of breeding birds and recommended compensatory measures and enhancements for Priority Species) are presented at **Section 5.3** and **5.4**.

[5] T6 has a diameter at breast height of 720mm which is between 600mm and 900mm and is a large tree in accordance with *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. User Guide* (Defra, July 2024)

[6] Using the terms presented at Section 4.7 of *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018), i.e. International and European, National, Regional, Local Authority-wide area, River Basin District, Estuarine system / Coastal cell or Local. The term 'site' value is additionally used to highlight ecological features considered to be of importance in the context of the wider site habitats, but which are of negligible value in the context of the local area.

Other Protected Species and Animal Life

4.4.6 The site may be visited by hedgehog, a Priority Species, and the best practice measures as outlined in **Section 5.3** are of relevance.

4.4.7 Appropriate survey effort and / or assessment in accordance with standard guidance, has been carried out to reasonably discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The recommendations described below are appropriate and proportionate to the scale of the proposals and aim to ensure that the works are implemented in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy, relevant wildlife legislation, Natural England guidance, the principles of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024), local planning policy and best practice.

5.1.2 In addition, the recommendations aim to ensure compliance with Chapter 15, paragraph 193(d) of the NPPF which states:

'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'.

5.2 Recommendations in Relation to Site Design

Lighting

5.2.1 Paragraph 191(c) in Chapter 15 (conserving and enhancing the natural environment) of the NPPF states that development should:

'limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.'

5.2.2 Any external lighting to be installed at the buildings must involve the use of appropriate products and screening, where necessary, to ensure no excessive artificial lighting shines over the adjacent off-site habitats, particularly trees, as lighting overspill may deter use by wildlife such as foraging bats.

5.2.3 The lighting scheme will be designed with reference to current guidance, namely:

a. *Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night* (Institution of Lighting Professionals & Bat Conservation Trust, 2023); and

b. *Bats and lighting: Overview of current evidence and mitigation guidance* (Stone, 2014).

5.3 Actions to be Applied Prior to / During Demolition and Site Clearance and Construction Operations

Protection of Habitats to be Retained / Enhanced

5.3.1 During the construction phase, temporary protective demarcation fencing will be used to protect the vegetation and habitats to be retained and enhanced including tree T7 which lies immediately south of the site boundary. The fencing must remain in position until all works are completed to ensure protection is provided throughout the construction phase.

Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) in Relation to Bats: Tree T6

5.3.2 The PWMS outlined below has been prepared in accordance with best practice, practicable guidance and Chapter 6 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn),* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023).

Tree with Potential Roost Features Identified as PRF-I

5.3.3 T6 is assessed to conform to a suitability for use by roosting bats of PRF-I and is scheduled for removal. No roost has been detected.

5.3.1 The following methods must be applied:

a. Immediately prior to felling / arboricultural works, an updated inspection of the potential roost features at the trees will be carried out by a licensed bat surveyor; and

b. Provided no current or previous evidence of use by roosting bats is found (i.e. the status quo) then tree must be section / soft felled under the supervision of a licensed bat surveyor. The licensed bat surveyor will be present to supervise the following works:

- Careful section-felling of the tree(s). The sectioning must avoid cutting through or close to any cavities / dead wood, this is likely to involve climbing the tree;
- Cut sections will be lowered to the ground with the use of ropes;
- Once on the ground, any cavities, if present, will be re-inspected by the licensed bat surveyor and guidance issued; and
- Where relevant, allow all felled sections to lie on the ground for 24 hours before snedding (removing side branches).

Discovery of a Bat

5.3.2 If at any time during the works a bat is discovered or suspected all contractors must withdraw from the area and ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd (01772 750502) or the Bat Conservation Trust must be contacted for further guidance.

Nesting Birds

5.3.3 All wild birds are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) while they are nesting. All contractors must be advised on the possible future use of the site by nesting birds and the protection afforded to nesting birds. The bird breeding season typically extends between March to August inclusive.

5.3.4 If breeding birds are detected / present it is recommended that the area is left undisturbed until it is confirmed that the young birds have fledged / the nest is no longer active. Guidance from an ecologist should be sought, as needed.

Best Practice for the Protection of Wildlife

5.3.5 During the site preparation and construction operations, for the protection of wildlife, including hedgehog it is essential that the following best practice is applied:

a. No trenches must be left open overnight. Trenches or holes must be properly covered with a board or fitted with a means of escape (such as ramped edge or a sloping plank of timber). This will ensure that any inquisitive wildlife do not become trapped;

b. To avoid the creation of suitable habitat for the attraction of sheltering hedgehog and other wildlife, construction materials must not be accumulated on site and all waste must be transferred to skips;

c. During construction, bricks etc. must be stored on pallets or raised from the ground in another suitable manner in order that no suitable habitat for sheltering animals is created;

d. Any pipes must be stored with caps on (to prevent entry by wildlife);

e. No fires must be lit at the site;

f. Any chemicals or harmful materials must be safely and correctly stored so that they cannot be accessed by inquisitive wildlife; and

g. Any queries / issues in relation to wildlife on site must be directed to ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd (01772 750502).

5.4 Compensatory Habitats and Ecological Enhancement

Opportunities for Nesting Birds and Roosting Bats

5.4.1 To compensate for the loss of the bat roosting and bird nesting opportunity at the Weeping Willow tree it is recommended that the following are installed on suitable trees within the grounds of the Luther King Centre:

- 1No. Greenwood's Ecohabitats single crevice bat box. The box should be installed a height of 4 metres above ground and away from branches / potential cat access;

- 2No. Schwegler 2M bird boxes to be installed at a height of at least 2.5 metres above ground and away from cat access. Directly south facing boxes to be avoided.

5.4.2 An ecologist can advise on the siting of the boxes as required.



Insert 1: Greenwood's Ecohabitat's single crevice bat box and Schwegler 2M bird box

Replacement Tree

5.4.3 To compensate for the loss of T6 it is recommended that a suitable location within the Luther King Centre for a replacement tree is determined.

Landscape Planting

5.4.4 It is recommended that the landscape planting within the site is composed from native species and species known to be of value for the attraction of wildlife. Planting schemes that include flowering species such as *Viburnum, Ceanothus, Hebe*, *Lavandula*, *Lonicera, Potentilla, Rosmarinus* and *Vinca* can maximise opportunities for feeding invertebrates and for the attraction of foraging bats and birds.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 It is concluded that the proposals at the Luther King Centre can be achieved in compliance with wildlife legislation, planning policy, Natural England guidance and best practice.

6.2 In the presence of the mandatory actions and best practice measures described in **Sections 5.2** and **5.3**, adverse effects on protected species are reasonably discounted. The proposals will have no impact on designated sites for nature conservation or ecologically valuable habitats. Compensatory and enhancement measures that aim to maximise the benefits for biodiversity as part of the proposals and comply with the NPPF and *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016) are outlined in **Section 5.3**.

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8.0 APPENDIX 1: TABLES AND FIGURES

8.1 Photographs

Table 8.1: Photographs



Photo 1: Hardstanding



Photo 2: Buildings to be impacted by the works



Photo 3: Introduced shrub



Photo 4: Amenity / modified grassland



Photo 5: Amenity / modified grassland



Photo 6: Tree T6 (Weeping Willow)



Photo 7: Cycle shelter



Photo 8: Single-storey lean-to



Photo 9: Single-storey lean-to



Photo 10: Sealed brick elevation walls and lead flashing at lean-to and adjacent building



Photo 11: Sealed brick elevation walls and lead flashing at lean-to and adjacent building



Photo 12: Minor section of lifted flashing; inspection with an endoscope did not detect any bats or droppings. Gap considered to be sub-optimal for use by roosting bats.



Photo 13: No gaps where different materials meet at single-storey lean-to



Photo 14: No gaps at the eaves



Photo 15: Tightly sealed concrete roof tiles over section of toilets and canteen with a vaulted ceiling



Photo 16: Vaulted ceiling above canteen



Photo 17: Roof void above building adjacent to the northern edge of the site

8.2 Plant Species Lists

Table 8.2: Plant Species List for Areas of Amenity / Modified Grassland

Scientific Name	Common Name	DAFOR[1]	Cover
Woody Species			
Salix x chrysocoma	Weeping Willow	R	10%
Herb Species			
Agrostis capillaris	Common Bent	F	10%
Cardamine pratensis	Cuckooflower	F	1%
Festuca rubra	Red Fescue	F	10%
Ficaria verna	Lesser Celandine	F	10%
Geum urbanum	Wood Avens	O	<1%
Lolium perenne	Perennial Rye-grass	A*	80%
Prunella vulgaris	Self-heal	VLF	<1%
Ranunculus repens	Creeping Buttercup	F	1%
Taraxacum officinale agg.	Dandelion	F	5%
Trifolium repens	White Clover	VLA	<1%
[1]Key to DAFOR: D=Dominant, A=Abundant, F=Frequent, O=Occasional, R=Rare, V=Very, L=Local and *denotes a constant species			

8.3 Figures

Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Site and Surrounds

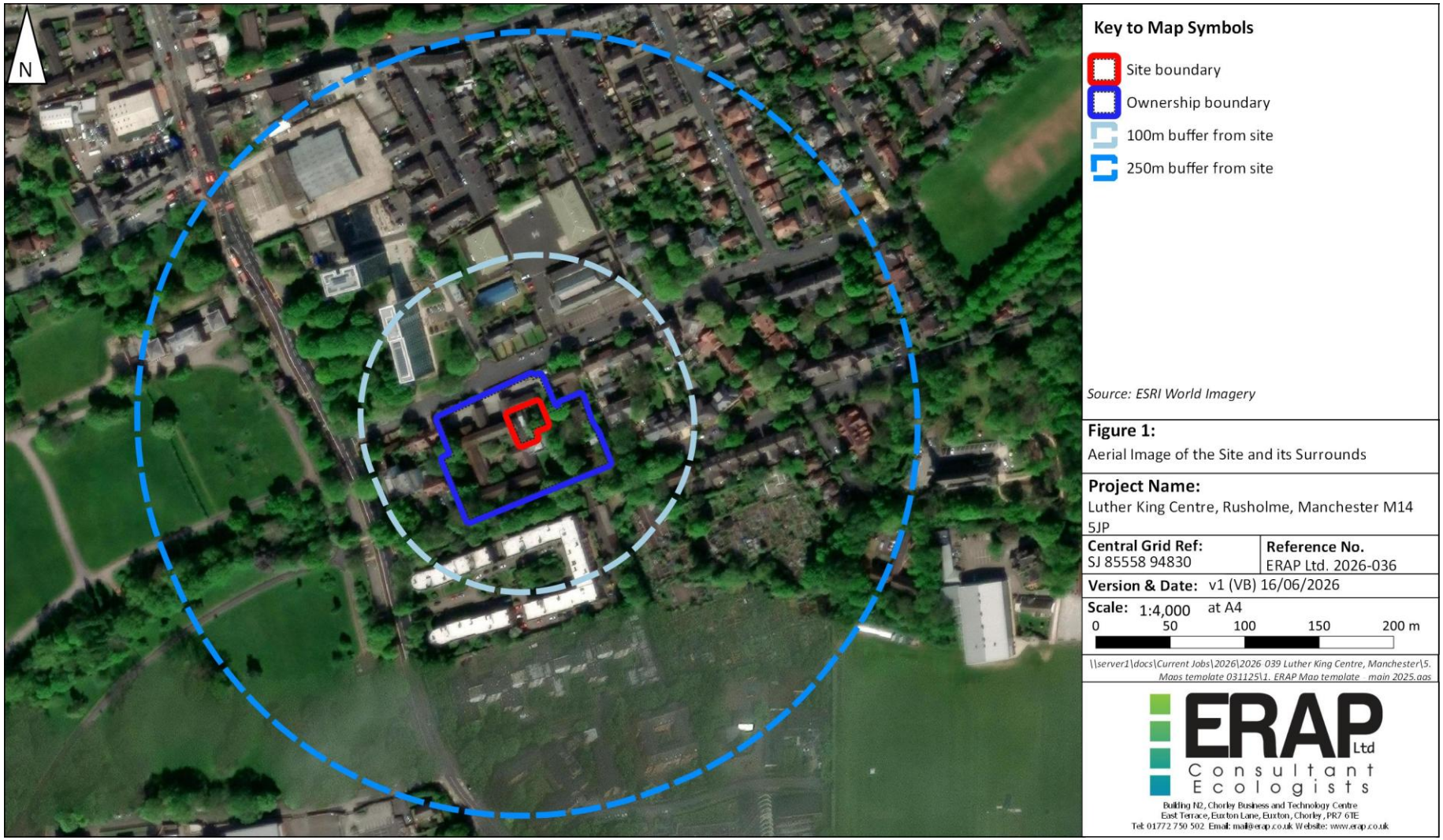


Figure 2: Phase 1 Habitat Survey

