# PARRS WOOD HIGH SCHOOL, EAST DIDSBURY

## Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

*May 2026*

Collingtonwinter
environmental

## Report Control Sheet

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

| | |
|---|---|
| **Site Address** | Parrs Wood High School, East Didsbury |
| **Grid Reference** | SJ85719004 |
| **Approximate Site Area** | 5.77 ha |
| **Current Site Use** | The site currently consists of a well-managed sports pitch. The site ownership consists of the Parrs Wood High School. |
| **Designated Sites within Zone of Influence** | The site does not fall within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for any designated statutory sites. Due to the small scale of the proposed development (installation of a fence), a consultation between Natural England and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is not required to facilitate development.<br><br>Several non-statutory sites are located within 1 km. The proposed scheme comprises of an updated fence for the sports pitch, which does not have the potential to increase the number of people visiting the designated sites and increasing damage through recreational pressures. |
| **Notable Habitat Features** | Broadleaved woodland. |
| **Notable Species Applicable to the Assessment** | • Bats (Potential roosting, foraging and commuting)<br>• Reptiles<br>• Breeding birds<br>• Hedgehog<br>• Otters<br>• Water voles<br>• Badgers |
| **Mitigation Recommendations** | • Protection measures for retained habitats.<br>• Retention of suitable habitats where possible for invertebrates, reptiles, birds, bats, and terrestrial mammals.<br>• Lighting considerations for bats<br>• Precautionary Working Methods (PWMs) for reptiles<br>• Considerations for hedgehogs throughout development<br>• Nesting bird check (if required) |
| **Recommended Further Surveys and Assessment** | • Further tree inspections for FAR trees if set to be removed. |
| **Recommended Ecological Enhancements** | Specific enhancement recommendations for the site include the following:<br>• Bat and bird boxes could be placed on retained trees, if any tree are to be removed to assist the development. A plan to show the locations of these boxes and the specifications should be produced by a suitably qualified ecologist once the layout is finalised.<br>• The inclusion of 'hedgehog highways' to facilitate movement across the site. This includes holes of 13 x 13cm at the bases of fence panels, leaving a sufficient gap beneath gates and/or leaving brick spaces at the bases of brick walls. |

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. SCOPE & PURPOSE

1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd was by Parrs Wood High School to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Parrs Wood High School, Wilmslow Road, East Didsbury, Manchester, M20 5PG. This report has been prepared to inform works to install and update fencing on the site.

1.1.2. The author of this report is Georgia Duffy, BSC (Hons), MSc, Graduate Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd and has been overseen by Katie Brewer. Katie, BSc (Hons), is highly experienced in producing ecological reports to inform planning applications for a range of projects.

1.1.3. This report has been prepared in accordance with professional guidelines for preliminary ecological appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).

## 1.2. LOCATION

1.2.1. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the approximate site location. The site is located in East Didsbury, a suburban village in Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, on the north bank of the River Mersey, approximately five miles south of Manchester city centre.



*Figure 1.1 Site Location*

## 1.3. OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. The objectives of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal are as follows:

- Identify the major habitats present
- Ascertain the presence or potential presence of any legally protected or notable species or habitats
- Identify any mitigation or further survey required and opportunities for strategic wildlife enhancements and long-term management.

# 2 METHODOLOGY

## 2.1. DESK STUDY

2.1.1. An initial desk-based assessment of the site was undertaken to collate baseline data. The desk study included:

- Obtaining local records of notable species and locally designated sites within 1 km of the site from the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit obtained on the 22nd of April 2026
- A review of Magic.gov.uk website for details of any designated sites, notable habitats and presence of European Protected Species Licences.
- A review of aerial and OS maps for habitat information, as well as determining locations of potential waterbodies to be considered in the assessment.
- Review of potential habitat links on and off site, to determine the potential zone of influence of the proposed development.
- On-site consultation with the landowner which provided valuable information regarding historic land use and known species and habitats present within the site.

## 2.2. VEGETATION AND HABITAT ASSESSMENT

2.2.1. An Ecological Appraisal of the site was undertaken by Caitlin O'Connor, Senior Ecologist, AMIenvSc and Andrew Taylor, Lead Field Ecologist, MSc (Hons) on the 24th of April 2026. The weather was mostly clear (1/8 oktas) on the date of the survey, with no precipitation, wind speed 3 and temperatures at 10°c at 9am and rising.

2.2.2. An River Condition Assessment (RCA) was deemed unnecessary after the site walkover and therefore, not conducted.

2.2.3. The walkover survey was undertaken broadly in line with standard UK HAB Methodology, Version 2 (2023). The assessment is undertaken with consideration of methodology as per "Preliminary Ecological Appraisal" (CIEEM, 2018).

2.2.4. A UK HAB Plan has been produced and is presented in Appendix 7.1 of this report. Standard methodology has been used, though adjustments have been made based on judgement to demonstrate habitats in a clearer manner, or where standard guidance does not fit the conditions found on site.

2.2.5. Areas of grassland within the site were subject to quadrat sampling to attain measures of species richness and relative diversity.

## 2.3. FAUNA ASSESSMENT

2.3.1. A search for signs of protected and notable species of fauna was undertaken during the site walkover. This included both field signs of species, as well as potential for species to be present based on habitat availability.

2.3.2. The searches broadly included the following:

- Assessment of waterbodies on site and within 250m of the site boundary, and terrestrial habitats for suitability to support notable amphibians.
- Habitat suitability and Ground-Level Tree Assessments (GLTA) for bats.
- Suitability of habitats to support reptiles, and searches for incidental field signs.
- Searches for field signs of badger (*Meles meles*), including setts, mammal paths, snuffle holes, badger hair and latrines to indicate activity.
- Searches of watercourses for signs of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*), white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) and otter (*Lutra lutra*), and assessment of habitat availability for the species.
- Assessment of the suitability of habitats to support notable birds and recording any field sightings of birds during the walkover.
- Assessment of the sites ability to support notable invertebrates and flora.
- Searches for non-native invasive species.

## 2.4. BAT HABITAT SUITABILITY & GROUND LEVEL TREE ASSESSMENT

2.4.1. A review of publicly accessible online maps and habitat survey information from the site was undertaken to assess the suitability of habitats within the site and within the surrounding area to support and provide connectivity for foraging and commuting bats. The assessment was carried out in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust guidelines 4th edition (Collins, 2023) (ref. Figure 2.1).

**Table 4.1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.**

| Potential suitability | Description | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Roosting habitats in structures** | **Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats** |
| 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). | 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 by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion. | 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 | 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]). | 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.<br>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 | 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). | 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.<br>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water. |
| 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. | 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.<br>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.<br>Site is close to and connected to known roosts. |

*Figure 2.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats (BCT, 2023).*

2.4.2. In addition, a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) of on-site trees was undertaken. The GLTA involved a thorough inspection of trees from ground level to search the trunk and canopy for potential roosting features (PRFs). Potential roosting features that may be used by bats include, for example, cavities created by frost cracks, compression forks, knot holes and cankers. The assessment was carried out in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust guidelines 4th edition (Collins, 2023) (ref. Figure 2.2).

*Assessment Criteria for Bat Roosting Potential*

**Table 4.2. Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees on proposed development sites for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.**

| Suitability | Description |
|---|---|
| NONE | Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any |
| FAR | Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree |
| PRF | A tree with at least one PRF present |

**Table 6.2. Guidelines for categorising the potential suitability of PRFs on a proposed development site for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.**

| Suitability | Description |
|---|---|
| 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. |

*Figure 2.2 Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees on proposed development sites for bats and guidelines for categorising the potential suitability of PRFs (BCT, 2023).*

2.4.1. If negative impacts on bat activity is suspected, further surveys may be required. Negative impacts anticipated on bats flights paths and foraging habitats may include:

- Modification of light paths or foraging habitats either physically or through disturbance such as light spill/noise;
- Severance of flight paths (fragmentation); and/or
- Significant loss of foraging habitat.

## 2.5. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

2.5.1. The field survey was carried out in April, which is outside of the optimal period for botanical survey and habitat assessment (typically regarded as May to September). As a result, some plants may be present within the site which were not evident at the time of survey. Seasonality is not, however, considered to have significantly affected the assessment, as existing habitats were able to be characterised using the identification of vegetative perennials still recognisable outside of the main season for plant growth. Where plant identification was tentative due to early developmental stages, species were recorded to genus level or preceded by 'cf.' where features were insufficient for diagnostic identification but bore reasonable resemblance or habitat preferences to a particular species.

2.5.2. It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to record plant occurrences within the site, the survey data should not be treated as a comprehensive botanical list of all species present within the site.

2.5.3. It should be noted that while biological records obtained from the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit based on current records, they do not represent an exhaustive or complete list of species for the defined search area. Records are mostly provided by individuals on an ad hoc basis. Therefore, a negative result does not necessarily indicate the absence of a protected species from the area, since a deficiency of records for less ubiquitous species is likely to be reflected in the returned data.

2.5.4. The site surveyors, Caitlin O'Connor and Andrew Taylor, are not a qualified arborist, therefore additional surveys to confirm species identification and age classes of on-site trees is strongly recommended prior to application submission. In the interim and for the purposes of the PEA and BNG process, trees have been assessed using professional judgement.

2.5.5. The protected species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on the site. This is based on the suitability of the habitat, known distribution of the species in the local area (formed by the data search and desktop study process) and any direct evidence within the survey area.

2.5.6.

2.5.7. The findings of this report represent the professional opinion of qualified ecologists and do not constitute professional legal advice. The client may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the relevant wildlife legislation cited within this document.

## 2.6. PROPORTIONALITY

2.6.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd provide recommendations in line with the British Standard for Biodiversity (BS42020). Within BS42020, proportionality is encouraged for both ecologists and Local Authority Decision Makers and Consultees. Please refer to the below extract from Section 5.5 of BS42020.

*"The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.*

*NOTE 1 This approach is enshrined in Government planning guidance, for example, paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework for England [41].*

*NOTE 2 The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary."*

# 3 SURVEY RESULTS

## 3.1. SITE CONTEXT

3.1.1. The site is situated within the suburb of East Didsbury, in the southern area of Manchester. It is primarily surrounded by residential development interspersed with areas of greenspace and recreational land. Immediately to the south, the site is bordered by recreational fields, with additional patches of woodland located to the south, east, and north-east, contributing to local habitat connectivity. The A34 Kingsway lies to the west and north-west of the site, forming a major transport corridor. The River Mersey is located approximately 260 m to the south, representing a notable ecological feature within the wider landscape.

## 3.2. DESIGNATED SITES

3.2.1. Statutory Designated Sites located within 5km from the site are outlined in Table 3.1.

*Table 3.1. Statutory Designated Sites within 5 km from the development site.*

| Site Name | Distance from site (km) | Direction | Designation | Citation / Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mersey Vale Nature Park | 0.3 | SE | LNR | Mersey Vale Nature Park grew from the rains of a derelict bleach works and railway sidings. The coast to coast Transpennine Trail runs through the centre of the park. The creation of the park included thousands of tonnes of soil. The sowing of wildflowers and the planting of new trees to create the current day wildflower meadows and park. |
| Abney Hall | 0.7 | S | LNR | Abney Hall Park lies on a former floodplain of the River Mersey, which means much of the ground remains naturally damp. These conditions have led to the development of important wetland habitats that support a range of moisture-tolerant plant species, some of which are becoming increasingly rare. The park's landscape includes an orchard and landscape vegetable gardens.<br><br>Abney Hall, built in 1847, sits at the centre of the park and is surrounded by historic landscaping. The site is primarily of cultural significance and features a walled garden. |
| Stenner Woods And Milgate Fields Didsbury | 0.75 | W | LNR | Stenner Woods is an area of wet woodland is dominated by crack willow trees. The majority of the ground is submerged in water throughout most of the year. Site management include leaving dead trees where they stand (if safe to do so), which provide ideal habitat for beetle larvae and other invertebrates. Thus creating a food source to support a wide range of bird species such as the great spotted woodpeckers *(Dendrocopos major)* and tree creepers *(Certhia familiaris).* |
| Heaton Mersey Common | 0.8 | NE | LNR | Heaton Mersey Common is a majority woodland site, but hold an area of grassland type habitats, a pond and stream. The site support various fauna and flora species. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gatley Carrs | 1.55 | SW | LNR | Gatley Carrs is a 19 acre reserve that holds woodland, scrubland and grassland type habitats. Along with 4 acres of Willow swamp and two ponds. The site supports a wide range of birds species, mammals, invertebrates, fungi and various plant species. Notable species present within the reserve include but are not limited to; Northern Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*), Self-heal flower (*Prunella vulgaris*), Ox-eye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*), Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*), and Shaggy Parasol (*Chlorophyllum rhacodes*). |
| Wrights Wood | 3 | SE | LNR | Wrights wood is an ancient broad leaved woodland with a pond located on site. The site is anticipated to support local flora and fauna. |
| Kenworthy Woods | 3.2 | W | LNR | Kenworthy Woods is an urban woodland, located at the edge of the river Mersey. The site includes hedgerows, grasslands (neutral and areas indicative of acid grassland), wetlands, broadleaved woodlands and orchard. The site is anticipated to support local flora and fauna species. |
| Wythenshawe Park | 3.3 | W | LNR | Wythenshawe park holds a variety of Woodland habitats in and around the park, three of which are sites of biological importance. Additionally wildflower meadows and formal beddings are also present on site. The site is anticipated to support local flora and fauna species. |
| Chorlton Water Park | 3.5 | NW | LNR | Chorlton Water Park is a former gravel extraction site that has naturally evolved into a valuable ecological resource, now designated as a Local Nature Reserve. The flooded gravel pit has created an open water habitat of approximately 7 hectares, which is nationally important for wildfowl. This aquatic environment supports a wide range of bird species, alongside aquatic life such as crayfish, indicating good water quality and habitat suitability. The lake is further enhanced by a recently extended wildlife pond, designed with accessibility in mind, which also contributes to habitat diversity and opportunities for aquatic species.<br><br>The site holds a mosaic of woodland and grassland type. The site supports a wide range of breeding birds, mammals, and invertebrates. The grassland habitats support notable plant species such as common spotted orchard *(Dactylorhiza fuchsii)* and marsh orchids (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*).<br><br>Targeted habitat management has been implemented to support specific species, including areas planted with fruit trees and gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) to provide food and cover for bullfinches *(Pyrrhula pyrrhula).* |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Highfield Country Park | 3.8 | NE | LNR | Highfield Country Park comprises of different types of grassland, marshy grassland, scrub, wet woodland, ponds, relict hedges and plantation woodland. The Fallowfield Brook also runs through the site. The site is anticipated to support various flora and fauna species. |
| Reddish Vale | 4 | NE | LNR | Reddish Vale spans 161 hectares along the River Tame. The River Tame is an important habitat to a wide range of plant and wildlife species, such as sand martins (Riparia riparia) and kingfishers (*Alcedo atthis*). There are five ponds present in the Vale, which provide valuable habitats for various species of birds, mammals and insects. |
| Woodbank Park | 4.85 | E | LNR | Woodbank park is a wide opened greenspaces. The park connects with the river Goyt and the Goyt Way. Footpath trails can lead through Poise Brook or towards Otterspool, Bredbury. The site is anticipated to support common wildlife and flora species. |
| **Key:**<br>LNR – Local Nature Reserve | | | | |

3.2.2. The site does not fall within any Impact Risk Zone (IRZ). IRZs are used to assess planning applications for likely impacts on internationally protected sites and identify where activities or developments may pose a risk to the conservation value of those sites. The purpose of IRZs is to guide planning and development by highlighting areas where precautionary measures or further assessment may be required to prevent or mitigate potential harm to these important natural areas.

3.2.3. The 1km data search returned the following non-statutory designated sites of biological importance within 1 km from the site boundary:

- Parrs Wood is designated as a Site of Biological Importance. This site is located approximately 150m east of the application boundary and is associated with priority deciduous woodland habitat.
- Mersey Valley Nature Park is a site of biological importance and is located approximately 600m southeast from the site boundary. The site is associated with various types of grasslands, wetland and woodlands type habitats.
- Abney Hall Park is located approximately 660m south from the site boundary, at the closet point and is partially located within the 1km buffer zone.
- Fletcher moss is a designated site of biological importance that is partially located within the buffer zone. The site is located approximately 850m west from the site boundary.
- A disused railway line in Mersey Valley has been designated and is partially located within the 1km buffer zone. It is located approximately 930m east from the site boundary.
- Reservoir and scrub at Heaton Mersey is partially located within the 1km buffer zone, with the closest point approximately 970m east from the site boundary.

## 3.3. PRIORITY HABITATS

3.3.1. Consultation with Magic.gov.uk highlighted the presence of the following Priority Habitats within 1km of the site boundary (Figure 3.1):

- Deciduous woodland is located in several areas within a 1km radius of the site, with the closet parcel located

approximately 0.1km north of the site boundary.

- Ancient Woodland located in several small area within the 1km radius of the site, with the closest parcel located approximately 0.1km north of the site boundary.
- Traditional Orchard is located in several small area within the 1km radius of the site, with the closest parcel located approximately 0.26km north of the site boundary.
- Lowland Fens are located in two areas within the 1km radius of the site, with the closest parcel located approximately 0.8km west of the site boundary.

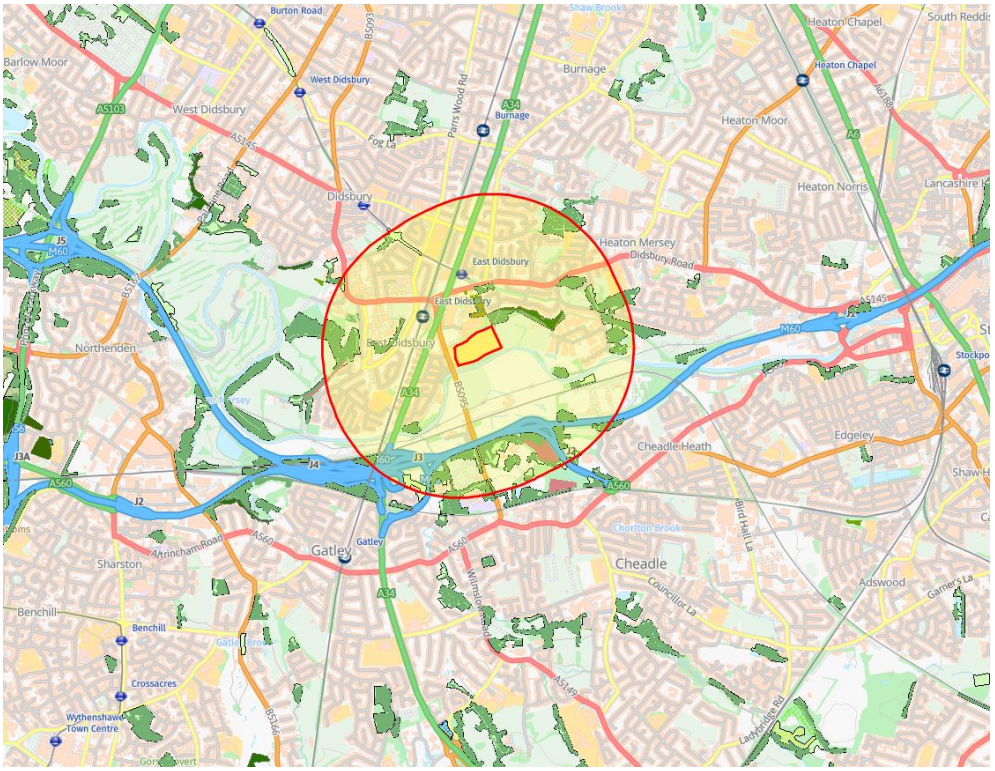



*Figure 3.3.1 Priority Habitats within a 1km radius of the site (Magic.gov.uk, 2025)*

## 3.4. HABITATS

3.4.1. The application site is approximately 5.77 ha in area. Please refer to Appendix 7.1 of this report for the UK Habitat map of the site, which illustrates the habitats identified during the survey and their boundaries. Photographs of the site are presented in Appendix 7.2.

*g4 MODIFIED GRASSLAND*
*Corresponding Biodiversity Metric Habitat: Grassland - Modified grassland*
*Secondary codes: 820 – Natural sports pitches*

3.4.2. Grassland forms the predominant habitat within the site and is characterised by a natural forming sports pitch that is used for recreational purposes. The grassland is well maintained to a short sward length through ground maintained and contains limited species. The grassland is dominated by annual meadow grass *(Poa annua)* but also contains Red fescue *(Festuca rubra*), Daisy *(Bellis perennis),* dandelions *(Taraxacum spp.).*

*w1g OTHER BROADLEAVED WOODLAND*
*Corresponding Biodiversity Metric Habitat: Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved*
*Secondary codes: w1g*

3.4.3. The woodland parcels are spilt into three areas and surround the site boundary on the western, southern and eastern aspects.

3.4.4. The eastern parcel of woodland contains a range of tree species, including, ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), silver lime (*Tilia tomentosa*), and willow (*Salix* sp.), along with a dense understory dominated by Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*). The woodland parcel is separated from the grassland area by a ditch. A band of holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) lines the edge of the woodland, separating it from the road. Other species present include bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), field horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), and lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*).

3.4.5. The southern parcel of the woodland lines the boundary of the site and contains a range of trees species and a wide variety of tree ages. The tree species dominating the woodland include sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and common lime (*Tilia* × *europaea*). Other tree species include grey willow (*Salix cinerea*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), and holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). Multiple trees located within the woodland contained pruning wounds, but these were not occluded and did not provide roosting opportunities for bats. Throughout the site deadwood and brash are abundant, providing value habitat for various species.

3.4.6. Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) is scattered throughout the woodland and is congregated within a small clearing along the western aspect of this woodland parcel. The understorey is dominated by couch grass (*Elymus repens*) and wild garlic (*Allium ursinum*), along with lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*). The woodland does contain several woodland indicator species but these are not widespread. Other species present include bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), wood avens (*Geum urbanum*), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), ivy-leaved speedwell (*Veronica hederifolia*), perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), dandelions (*Taraxacum* spp.), hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), rape (*Brassica napus*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), colt's-foot (*Tussilago farfara*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), pick-a-back-plant (*Tolmiea menziesii*), wood speedwell (*Veronica montana*), red campion (*Silene dioica*), cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), and wood forget-me-not (*Myosotis sylvatica*).

3.4.7. The eastern parcel of woodland mainly consists of ash, hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), and small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*). Other species present include pedunculate oak *(Quercus robur)*, and elder *(Sambucus nigra).* The understory of the woodland is dominated by wild garlic but does hold several indicator species such as green alkanet (*Pentaglottis sempervirens*). Other understory species present include garlic mustard, cleavers, common nettle, broad-leaved dock, green alkanet, bluebell, holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), bramble, dewberry (*Rubus caesius*), cow parsley, wood avens, dandelion, cock's-foot, ivy-leaved speedwell, ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), cow parsnip, and sweet rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*).

3.4.8. Towards the south end of this woodland parcel, towards the River Mersey, a section of Himalayan Balsam is present.

*r2b OTHER RIVERS AND STREAMS*
*Corresponding Biodiversity Metric Habitat: Watercourses - Ditches*
*Secondary codes: r2b*

3.4.9. The River Mersey is located adjacent to the site boundary on the southern aspect. The banks of the river are steep and earthy, with parcels of grassland nettles and other herb species present. The southern bank has extensive sections of bare ground with burrows present.

3.4.10. The bank top has been assessed to be the southern edge of the public footpath and is approximately 10m from the bank top to the centre of the southern parcel of woodland. This does not extend into the playing field and is not anticipated to be impacted by the development.

3.4.11. A watercourse is located on the western aspect of the site and does not appear to extend eastwards. However, dense bramble scrub was present on the northern aspect where the watercourse has been historically mapped. Therefore the watercourse could not be fully surveyed. A culvert is present, beneath a soil mound, which drains directly into the watercourse on the northwestern aspect. Currently the water quality is quite poor and stagnant water is present. It is anticipated at higher flow conditions the watercourse would drain towards the River Mersey.

3.4.12. The watercourse is mainly dry along much of its length and contains Himalayan balsam on the bank face and bank tops. A dense band of bramble scrub is present on the eastern aspect of this watercourse, which prevents full visual confirmation of the extent of the fence line.

*u1c URBAN*
*Corresponding Biodiversity Metric Habitat: Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface*
*Secondary codes: 821 – Artificial sport pitches*

3.4.13. Located to the most north eastern corner of the site is an artificial multi use astroturf sport pitch. No flora was present.

*u1f SPARSELTY VEGEATED URBAN LAND*
*Corresponding Biodiversity Metric Habitat: Urban*
*Secondary codes: 839 - Track*

3.4.14. Located on the western aspect of the site a used track is present. No flora was present.

## 3.5. SPECIES

*FLORA*

3.5.1. The data search returned no records of notable vascular plant species within the local area.

3.5.2. No notable vascular plant species were recorded during the survey of the grassland habitat on site. All species observed were common and widespread, comprising species considered ubiquitous at both a local and national scale. The presence of these generalist species reflects the modified and disturbed nature of the site's habitats. The absence of notable or specialist flora suggests that the site holds limited botanical interest in its current condition.

3.5.3. During the survey it was noted that the woodland habitats were dominated by common species such as couch grass and wild garlic but did contain notable indicator species.

*INVERTEBRATES*

3.5.4. The data search returned four records of one notable invertebrate relating to blood-vein moth *(Timandra comae).*

3.5.5. The onsite woodland habitats provides a mosaic of microhabitats that may be valuable to terrestrial invertebrates. The presence of mature trees and deadwood provide ideal habitats for saproxylic invertebrates such as beetles. The understory of the woodland is beneficial for pollinators such as bees, hoverflies and butterflies.

3.5.6. The onsite watercourse may support a small assemblage of aquatic invertebrates, due to the presence of stagnant water and surrounding vegetation.

3.5.7. The offsite watercourse, the River Mersey is a highly ecologically valuable habitat for aquatic invertebrates. The river channel is anticipated to support a wide range of species including mayflies *(Ephemeroptera),* and caddisflies *(Trichoptera).*

3.5.8. Overall the site may provide suitable habitat for notable flora, mainly in association with the woodland.

*AMPHIBIANS*

3.5.9. The data search returned fifteen records of common toad. The majority of the record relating to Parrs Wood Centre.

3.5.10. A review on Magic Map identified no European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for Great Crested Newts (GCN) within the site or within a 1km radius thereof.

3.5.11. An examination of publicly available Ordnance Survey mapping identified two drains within the radius of the 250m buffer zone (refer to Figure 3.1). The River Mersey is located within the 250m buffer zone, however, GCN are not anticipated to be present due to its fast flowing water.

3.5.12. Additionally, a small stream/river is located on the western aspect of the site. GCN are not anticipated to be present within the onsite watercourse due to lack of records and EPSL, and its poor suitability. As such, GCN are deemed vacant from site.

3.5.13. The woodland habitats will likely provide suitable foraging, shelter and commuting for common amphibians.

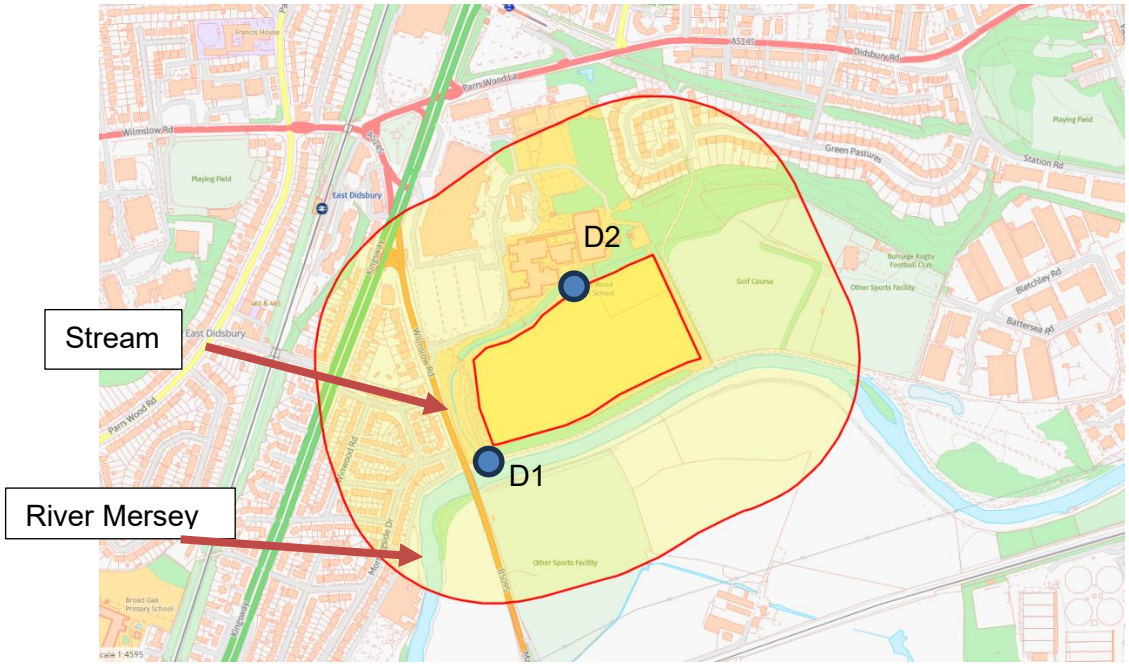



*Figure 3.1 Drains and water courses within 250m radius of the application site.*

*REPTILES*

3.5.14. The data search returned zero records of reptiles within a 1km radius of the site.

3.5.15. The site is predominantly characterised by modified grassland, which is well maintained and cut short. This does not provide refuge or foraging opportunities for reptiles on site. The edges of the woodland parcels may provide basking opportunities for reptiles.

3.5.16. The site hold a high disturbance level due to the recreational use of the sports pitch and recreational dog walking access onto the pitch and woodland area. The path between the River Mersey and woodland parcels is also anticipated to have high levels of recreational disturbance, decreasing the likelihood of the species on site.

3.5.17. As such, reptiles are deemed absent from site.

*BIRDS*

3.5.18. The data search retuned a total of 626 bird records within a 1km radius of the site. Notable species recorded locally but not limited to, include the Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), curlew (*Numenius arquata*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), lesser spotted woodpecker (*Dryobates minor*), reed bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), hobby falcon (*Falco subbuteo*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), willow tit (*Poecile montanus*), barn owl (*Tyto alba*), and yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*).

3.5.19. The site contains woodland parcels that may support nesting birds, and likely to support urban notable bird species. During the site visits, nesting bird were noted to be present within the woodland parcels.

3.5.20. Due to the site's location within an urban fringe context and given the regular use of the sports pitch, it is considered highly unlikely for the site to support ground-nesting bird species.

3.5.21. The River Mersey, while off site, is anticipated to support Kingfishers *(Alcedo atthis)* and was identified as providing valuable habitats for sand martins (*Riparia riparia*) and waterfowl during the site visit. Sand martins

were recorded within earth embankments in association with the River Mersey.

*BATS*

3.5.22. The data search returned 63 records relating to various bat species. A total of 15 records related to roosting bat species. The closeted known roost was located approximately 280 north from the site boundary. The remaining 48 record related to sightings of bat species within a 1km radius of the site. Species included common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), brown long-eared *(Plecotus auritus*), Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) and Brown Long-eared *(Plecotus auritus).*

3.5.23. A review of Magic Map (DEFRA, 2025) located 20 European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for bats within a 5km radius of the site. These records are summarised below in Table 3.1.

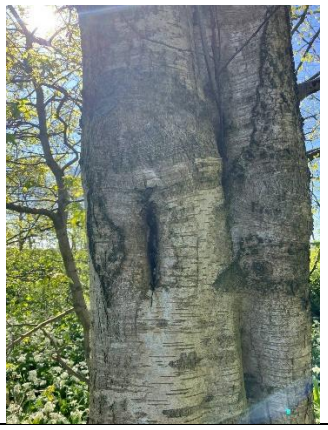
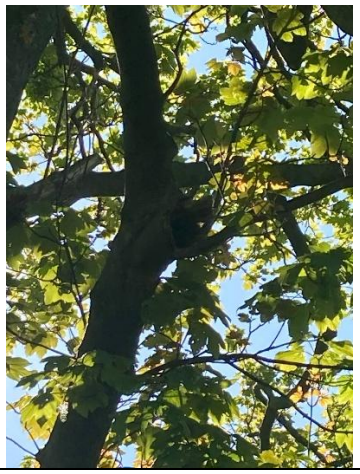
*Table 3.1 Granted EPSLs for bats within a 5km radius of the application site.*

| | | | | | Permitted activities under licence: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Case reference of granted application** | **Species on the licence*** | **Distance from site (KM)** | **Licence Start Date** | **Licence End Date** | impact on a breeding site? | **Impact on a breeding site** | **Impact on a breeding site** | **Impact on a breeding site** | **Impact on a breeding site** |
| EPSM2009-609 | DAUB | 3.7 E | 22/02/2011 | 01/03/2013 | Y | - | - | Y | Y |
| EPSM2013-6224 | DAUB | 3.7 E | 11/09/2013 | 01/10/2019 | Y | - | - | Y | Y |
| 2015-18385-EPS-BDX | S-PIP | 2.3 NW | 01/04/2016 | 30/04/2016 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| EPSM2010-2098 | C-PIP | 2.05 NW | 25/10/2010 | 31/08/2012 | N | - | - | N | Y |
| 2016-23000-EPS-MIT | DAUB | 3.7 E | 27/06/2016 | 01/10/2019 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| EPSM2010-2649 | C-PIP;S-PIP | 1.5 NW | 19/10/2011 | 30/09/2014 | N | - | - | N | Y |
| EPSM2013-6104 | C-PIP;S-PIP | 4.25 S | 23/08/2013 | 01/10/2016 | N | - | - | N | Y |
| 2016-25864-EPS-BDX | C-PIP S-PIP | 2.2 S | 01/10/2016 | 31/10/2016 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| EPSM2013-6730 | C-PIP;S-PIP | 2.9 SE | 09/12/2013 | 01/10/2014 | N | - | - | N | Y |
| 2017-30722-EPS-MIT | C-PIP S-PIP | 2.4 W | 22/08/2017 | 15/08/2022 | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 2018-38076-EPS-MIT | C-PIP | 2.9 NW | 01/12/2018 | 30/09/2019 | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 2019-39813-EPS-MIT | DAUB | 0.8 S | 01/04/2019 | 31/05/2024 | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 2019-39813-EPS-MIT-1 | DAUB | 0.8 S | 25/04/2019 | 31/05/2024 | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 2019-43659-EPS-MIT | DAUB | 3.7 E | 22/11/2019 | 31/12/2021 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| 2019-39459-EPS-MIT | WHISK | 4.85 E | 07/03/2019 | 31/12/2024 | N | N | N | N | N |
| 2020-50519-EPS-MIT | BLE C-PIP | 0.7 W | 01/02/2021 | 31/12/2031 | Y | N | N | Y | Y |
| 2015-13055-EPS-MIT | C-PIP | 2.9 SW | 01/08/2015 | 01/09/2020 | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 2015-13055-EPS-MIT-1 | C-PIP | 2.9 SW | 07/10/2015 | 01/09/2020 | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 2014-1987-EPS-MIT | DAUB | 3.7 E | Null | Null | N | N | N | N | N |
| EPSF2011-2990 | C-PIP;S-PIP | 2.4 NW | 18/04/2011 | 31/07/2013 | Y | - | - | Y | Y |

| **Species on the licence*** | **Species name** | **Latin** |
|---|---|---|
| C-PIP | Common pipistrelle | *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* |
| S-PIP | Soprano pipistrelle | *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* |
| WHISK | Whiskered bat | *Myotis mystacinus* |
| DAUB | Doubleton's bat | *Myotis daubentonii* |
| BLE | Brown Long Eared bat | *Plecotus auritus* |

3.5.24. Individual trees within the site, including those within woodland blocks, underwent a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) to ascertain their potential value for roosting bats, the results of which are summarised in Table 3.2. Please refer to the Target Note Map in Appendix 7.3 for the locations of trees with bat roosting suitability.

*Table 3.2 GLTA Summary*

| Target Note Ref | Description | Photos |
|---|---|---|
| (T1)<br>PRF 1 - I | Located on the southern boundary of the site, is a crevice with a silver birch tree located within the southern parcel of woodland. This holds potential for roosting bats. |  |
| (T2)<br>PRF 2 - I | Located on the southern eastern corner of the site, within the woodland, is a wound on the primary limb of a mature sycamore tree. This may provide crevice dwelling bats roosting opportunities. |  |
| (T3)<br>PRF - FAR | Located on the eastern aspect of the site, an ash tree, suffering from ash dieback is present. The tree contains two knot holes towards the top of the and is heavily pruned of limbs, with only the main trunk remaining. The knot holes may provide access for roosting bats. |  |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | |  |

**Summary**

Within the woodland areas, only three trees were identified as holding some level of bat roosting potential. T1 and T2 were identfiied as PRF-1, suitable for individual or small numbe rof bats to roost. T3 was deemed as PRF-FAR, where a further assessment of the bat roosting potential is required to determine suitability. Due to the location of the woodland parcels and the scope of the development, the woodland is not anticipated to be impacted by the development.

3.5.25. The site holds habitat features which offer suitable foraging opportunities for local bat populations. These include woodland edges, bramble-dominated margins and water course, which may support an assemblage of invertebrates. In contrast, the central grassland area consists of a species-poor, and frequently mown amenity sward, which is of relatively low ecological value for foraging bats. This habitat type is unlikely to support the abundant and diverse invertebrate prey typically associated with high-quality foraging habitats which are selected by many bat species, though it may have some intermittent foraging value for a small number of bats.

3.5.26. The River Mersey, while located off site, is anticipated to support foraging opportunities for water associated bat, such as Daubentons *(Myotis daubentoniid),* which are present within the local area.

3.5.27. The onsite water course may provide foraging opportunities for Daubentons *(Myotis daubentoniid)* due to the presence of stagnant water.

3.5.28. Overall the site holds moderate value for bat activity, due to the onsite habitats. The woodland is likely to provide foraging and roosting potential, while the watercourses will provide foraging and commuting opportunities.

### *BADGER*

3.5.29. The presence of badger (*Meles meles*) within a 1km radius of the site was confirmed by the data search. The data search returned multiple records of individuals and active sett activity. Due to the sensitivity of these records, specific locations are withheld to protect the species.

3.5.30. No evidence of badger activity (such as setts, latrines, foraging signs, or snuffle holes) was recorded during the survey. The woodland present on site was identified as holding ideal habitat for badgers; however, it is suggested that the River Mersey may act as a dispersal barrier.

### *OTTER*

3.5.31. The data search returned ten records of otter (*Lutra lutra*) within a 1km radius of the site, the majority of the record relating to the River Mersey.

3.5.32. The onsite watercourse is likely utilised for foraging and commuting otters due to its proximity to the River Mersey, which has confirm presence for the species. The River Mersey is anticipated to support otters and provide high value habitat and hunting opportunities.

3.5.33. No potential otter sites were identified during the PEA with the surrounding habitats to the water courses.

### *WATER VOLES*

3.5.34. The data search returned one confirmed record of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius)* within a 1km radius of the site, with the record relating to the Abney Hall Park.

3.5.35. The onsite watercourse was deemed as poor habitat suitability for water voles due to poor water quality, seasonal drying of the watercourse and proximity to the road, therefore, they are not anticipated to be present on site.

3.5.36. The River Mersey is anticipated to support water voles and provide high value habitat and foraging opportunities for the species.

### *HEDGEHOGS*

3.5.37. The data search returned eight records of hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within a 1km radius of the site.

3.5.38. Hedgehogs are anticipated to be present within the woodland and woodland edges that are present on site. These areas provide ideal foraging and sheltering habitats for the species.

### *WHITE-CLAWED CRAYFISH*

3.5.39. While the species has not been recorded on site or within the data search, the White-clawed crayfish *(Austropotamobius pallipes)* cannot be reasonably discounted due to the presence of the River Mersey, which is classed as ideal habitat for the species and due to its proximity to the site.

### *SPECIES DISCOUNTED FROM ASSESSMENT*

3.5.40. Hazel Dormouse *(Muscardinus avellanarius)* mainly occur in southern counties, especially in Devon, Somerset, Sussex and Kent. There are few recorded localities north of the Midlands, though they are present in parts of the Lake District and in scattered Welsh localities (Matthews et al, 2018). The species are not generally known to be present within the Stoke-on-Trent area (Wembridge et al., 2016. The habitats on site are of limited value due to limited areas of extensive woodland and scrub. As such, the species are reasonably discounted from site

3.5.41. Red squirrel (Sciurus vulgaris) has been discounted from the assessment. Red squirrel populations are limited to small areas of northern England and are not known to be present in the Manchester area; with no previous records returned in the data search. It is likely that high abundances of grey squirrel are present within this region. This species will displace red squirrel through competition as well as cause increased red squirrel mortality through the spread of squirrel pox (The Mammal Society, 2020).

### *INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANT SPECIES*

3.5.42. Himalayan balsam was recorded within all woodland parcels and along the onsite watercourse. This species is listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it an offence to plant or otherwise cause its spread into the wild. Himalayan balsam is a highly invasive, non-native species that typically colonises damp, shaded habitats such as riverbanks, woodland edges, and riparian corridors, where it can form dense stands that outcompete native vegetation and reduce biodiversity through shading and seasonal dieback.

# 4 MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

## 4.1. DESIGNATED SITES

4.1.1. The site does not fall within the Impact Risk Zone for any sites. Due to the small nature of the proposed development, a consultation between Natural England and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is not required to facilitate development (ref. Figure 4.1).

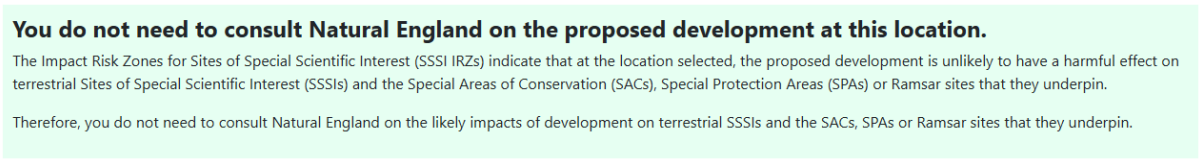



*Figure 4.1. Natural England's Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest*

4.1.2. Other statutory and non-statutory sites identified in the wider landscape are considered to be at a sufficient distance from the development site or are separated by anthropogenic barriers, such as existing development and roads, such that no direct adverse impacts on their habitats, species or ecological connectivity are anticipated as a result of the proposed development. The small scale of the proposed works will not cause any indirect impacts to the onsite and surrounding habitats and landscape.

## 4.2. HABITATS

*INDIVIDUAL TREES, WOODLAND*

4.1.3. Generally, the protection measures of retained trees will be through use of temporary protective demarcation fencing to protect the trees and shrubs. The fencing must extend outside the canopy of the retained trees and must remain in position until all plots have been developed to ensure protection is provided throughout the construction phase.

4.1.4. The fencing will be in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations.

4.1.5. In accordance with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) principles, the removal of any trees with a diameter greater than 7.5 cm will require appropriate compensation measures to address the associated biodiversity loss. Replacement planting should prioritise native species, in addition to those known to provide ecological benefits for wildlife, such as fruiting and flowering varieties.

4.1.6. The proposed work are set to occur approximately 20m at the closest point to the River Mersery. All works to facilitate the construction of the fence line, including the removal of established vegetative cover that may lead to the loss of large quantities of soil particles and suspended silt to watercourses, along with the use of potential construction materials e.g. concrete, can cause significant pollution of water. Therefore, any earth moving works or other similar operations giving rise to contaminated drainage must be carried out in accordance with BSI Code of Practice for Earth Works, BS6031: 2009.

## 4.3. SPECIES

*AMPHIBIANS*

4.1.7. The presence of great crested newts on site is unlikely, as no known populations are known to be present within the local area.

4.1.8. As such, it is deemed appropriate to adhere to the following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs). The following RAMs will also protect common amphibians potentially present on site. Pre-commencement works are as follows:

- A designated working area will be maintained to minimise total working area, which will be marked out

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by the ecologist (where necessary). A fence and/or sign will be situated to mark the working areas to ensure no contractors and vehicles do not enter areas which have not been checked for great crested newts.

- Any vegetation on site to be cleared should first be strimmed to approximately 15 cm and left overnight, allowing any animals the chance to naturally disperse from site. A fingertip search of any vegetated areas should then be undertaken to check for the presence of great crested newts.
- Once the ecologist has declared all areas of potential for amphibians, have been checked, the proposed works can continue unsupervised.
- Storage of materials is to be on pallets i.e. raised off the ground and on areas of hard standing or tarmac. No materials to be stored on vegetation.
- All working areas are to be maintained as bare ground or hardstanding throughout the construction phase.
- All open pits and pipes are to be covered during the night, with a check for presence of amphibians conducted prior to covering.
- If excavations are exposed and/or created, a slope will be positioned within the excavation to allow amphibians and mammals to escape should they fall in.
- Under no circumstances should site contractors attempt to handle great crested newt.
- Ecologist to undertake a site visit upon completion of works to confirm that the works have been undertaken using the above risk avoidance measures and that habitats have been restored.
- In the unlikely chance, a great crested newt is located during the RAM's, all works must cease immediately, and Natural England contacted for advice. No great crested newt is to be handled and the refugia is to be placed back to provide suitable cover.

*REPTILES*

4.1.9. The habitat suitability of the site is low, and there are no key reptile features present on the site. Therefore, it is unlikely to be actively and regularly used by local reptile populations. Given that the proposed development will not impact any habitats on site, a reptile survey is not considered necessary for the scheme. However, it is deemed appropriate that RAMs recommended for amphibians, would also consider reptiles.

4.1.10. In the event reptiles are discovered, works will halt immediately and an ecologist will be contacted for advice. Contractors are not to handle reptiles unless informed to do so by the ecologist.

*BREEDING BIRDS*

4.1.11. The site supports a range of habitats known to be suitable for nesting birds. The presence of multiple bird nests, and the availability of woodland habitats, indicates that nesting birds may be present (March to September inclusive).

4.1.12. As such, any vegetation clearance or works to trees or scrub should be avoided during this period unless a pre-works nesting bird check is carried out by a qualified ecologist to prevent disturbance or destruction of active nests, in line with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. If this is not possible, a suitably qualified ecologist should undertake a nesting bird check no more than 48 hours prior to any clearance works or vegetation removal. If nesting activity is observed, the nest(s) should be left in situ until the young have fledged. In this instance, a suitable buffer will be determined and maintained by the appointed ecologist.

4.1.13. Due to the presence of Sand Martins on the River Mersey, noted during the site walkover, a no works buffer of 10m should be adhered to from the closets point of the River Mersey to any proposed works on site. As the proposed works are set to occur approximately 20m from the River Mersey, the species should not be impacted.

*BATS*

4.1.14. Three trees within the site were identified as containing PRFs with one tree identified as PRF-FAR requiring further assessment to determine the presence and suitability of potential roost features. Should any of these trees be subject to direct impacts from the proposed development (e.g. through removal or significant pruning), further survey efforts will be required prior to the commencement of works (refer to Section 5.1). Where trees with roost potential are to be retained, no further surveys are necessary; however, consideration should be



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given to the retention of bat flight lines and foraging routes in the design and implementation of the development.

4.1.15. To guide appropriate action, Figure 4.2 (extracted from the Bat Mitigation Guidelines) should be followed. No further action is required in relation to trees excluded from Table 3.2, which can be felled without the need for additional surveys or a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL), subject to standard good practice measures.

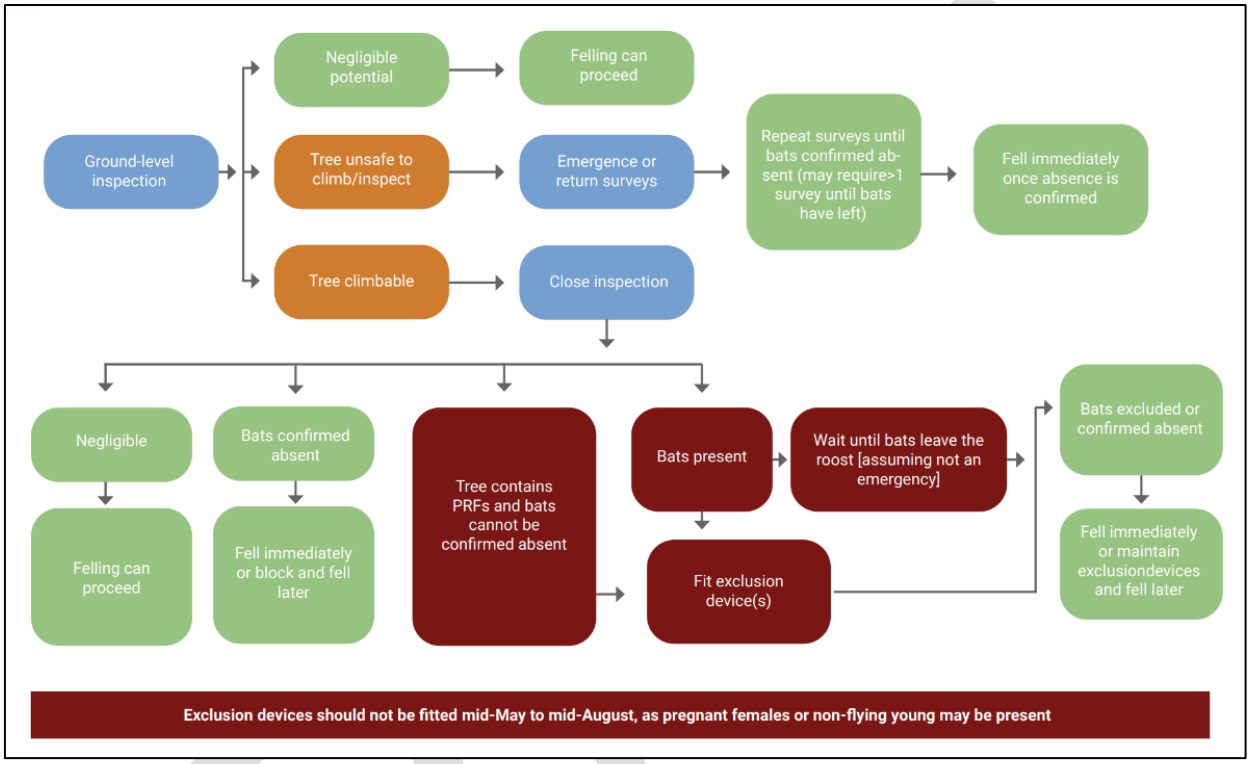



*Figure 4.2. Decision making flow chart for assessing bat roost potential in trees prior to felling*

4.1.16. While the site is not considered to form a key commuting network, enhancing and maintaining its local ecological functionality will support the resilience of urban bat populations and maintain minor urban routes to higher-quality habitats in the wider landscape. The proposed fencing does not impact habitats of value, such as the woodlands and the watercourse and is anticipated to cause minimal impact to the grassland located on site.

4.1.17. To minimise disturbance to bats during and post-construction it is recommended that external lighting should not installed along the fence line or directed at the woodland/watercourse habitats. Any proposed and existing lighting should follow the guidance outlined in the Institute for Lighting Engineers document “Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting” (2005) and BCT’s “Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night” (2023).

4.1.18. The following recommendations are to be considered within the scheme to minimise impacts of lighting on bats:

- Keep site lighting to minimum levels.
- Luminaries should lack UV elements and preferably LED lighting with a warm white light should be used over cool white light (ideally <2700Kelvin).
- Lighting should feature peak wavelengths greater than 550nm.
- Light placement should be downward facing to prevent excess horizontal or vertical light spill.
- The use of integrated fittings such as cowls, shields, louvres and hoods, that effectively contain light spill from unintended areas.
- The use of hard landscaping features to block light and create dark corridors.

- Avoid illuminating habitats of value.
- Use of timed security lights should be set on motion-sensors and using short, 1-minute timers, to minimise light use.
- Column heights of lighting can be considered to minimise light spill.

*BADGERS*

4.1.19. Badgers have not been recorded during the data search and while no field signs were located during the site walkover, there is a possibility they may be present on site due to ideal habitat being present within the woodland areas. As such, the following Precautionary Working Methods will be adhered to during the construction phase to ensure that no badgers are impacted by the proposed development (Badger Trust, 2023):

- All site personnel should be fully briefed concerning the method statement, the presence of badgers, the mitigation measures to be followed, the relevant legislation, the penalties imposed and who to contact should they need to.
- Trees and shrubs should be felled so that they fall away from the direction of a sett and outside exclusion zones.
- Ensure excavations or trenches left overnight are covered or have an escape route such as a shallow gradient at one or both ends.
- Ensure excavations or trenches are inspected each morning and evening to ensure no badgers have become trapped.
- Open pipework with a diameter of more than 120mm should be properly covered or capped at the end of the working day to prevent badgers from entering and becoming trapped.
- During the work, the storage of any chemicals should be contained in such a way that they cannot be accessed or knocked over by any roaming badgers.
- The storage of topsoil or other “soft” building materials within the site should be given careful consideration. Badgers will readily adopt such mounds and dig setts which would then be afforded the same protection as established setts. To avoid the adoption of such mounds, they should be subject to daily inspections before work commences or alternative measures put in place, such as being fenced off for higher-risk areas.
- Litter, tools and potentially dangerous materials on site should be cleared at the end of the working day. Care should be taken that there are no sharp metal objects or pointed protrusions on the ground which could seriously injure a badger due to their poor eyesight.
- Ensure no dogs are brought to the work site.
- Security lighting should be kept to a minimum and away from setts to avoid disturbance to any badgers on site.
- Fires should be lit only in secure compounds away from areas of badger activity and should be fully extinguished at the end of the working day.
- Badger paths must not be blocked to ensure access to foraging areas is maintained.

4.1.20. Adherence to these measures should be confirmed to planners at regular intervals by the project ecologist.

*TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS*

4.1.21. European Hedgehog may be present within the site. Whilst no records were returned by the local record centre, hedgehogs are increasingly associated with suburban environments. Given the suitable habitat and proximity to residential areas, measures should be considered that will reduce the risk of harm to hedgehogs during construction and ensure safe passageways for them throughout the development process. These measures should include:

- Prior to habitat clearance, a hand search of suitable hedgehog habitat (such as areas of rank grassland and woodland) should be conducted to ensure no hedgehogs are present. If any hedgehogs are discovered, they should be safely relocated to a suitable nearby area away from the works.
- To allow hedgehogs to safely move through the site after development, hedgehog highways should be incorporated into boundary fences. These are small gaps or tunnels that enable hedgehogs to pass freely between garden areas, green spaces, or other habitats. The recommended dimensions for a hedgehog

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highway are at least 13 cm x 13 cm in size (5 inches x 5 inches). These gaps can be created by leaving a space at the base of fences or installing purpose-built tunnels.

- Consideration should also be given to maintaining or creating additional hedgehog-friendly habitats within the development, such as wildlife corridors, log piles, brush piles, and hedgerows. These features will support hedgehog foraging and nesting opportunities.

### *NON-NATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES*

4.1.22. Himalayan balsam was identified during the survey and is present in various locations throughout the site, mainly concerted in the woodland and watercourse habitats. The species should be appropriately eradicated under a non-native invasive species method statement produced by a qualified contractor.

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# 5 FURTHER SURVEYS AND CONCLUSION

## 5.1. FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF TREES WITH FAR

5.1.1. Trees identified as having potential features suitable for bat roosting (FAR) that are proposed for removal or significant disturbance (including felling or pruning works) will require further assessment to determine their suitability for roosting bats.

5.1.2. This should include updated ground-level inspections supported by visual aids, and where suitable potential roost features are identified, aerial tree inspections must be undertaken by a licensed bat ecologist to assess their suitability in more detail.

5.1.3. If bats or evidence of bat roosting (e.g. droppings, staining, live or dead bats) are discovered during inspections, or if aerial inspections cannot be safely completed, further activity surveys will be required in accordance with guidance in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023). These surveys may include a minimum of three survey visits—either tree inspections or dusk emergence/re-entry surveys—conducted between May and September, with at least two of these visits occurring between May and August.

5.1.4. The findings from these further surveys will determine whether mitigation measures are required. If roosting bats are confirmed in any trees scheduled for removal or impact, a mitigation license from Natural England will be required before works can proceed. This licence can only be obtained after full planning permission has been granted and any relevant planning conditions discharged. However, emergence/re-entry surveys must be completed prior to submission of a planning application, as the results are considered a material consideration in the planning process.

## 5.2. OTHER MITIGATION MEASURES

5.2.1. The woodland areas of the site are set to be retained. However, any tree that are to be removed that contain potential bat roosting feature or nesting opportunities for birds should compensated. Therefore, bat and bird boxes should be installed on retained trees. These boxes should be placed in suitable locations that provide safe and accessible roosting opportunities for bats and birds. A detailed plan indicating the exact locations and specifications of these boxes should be developed by a suitably qualified ecologist once the final site layout is determined.

5.2.2. A network of “hedgehog highways” will be incorporated within the site to facilitate the movement of hedgehogs within the site and to adjacent habitats. The hedgehog highways are 13cm x 13cm holes at the base of fences to allow hedgehogs to move between fenced off areas

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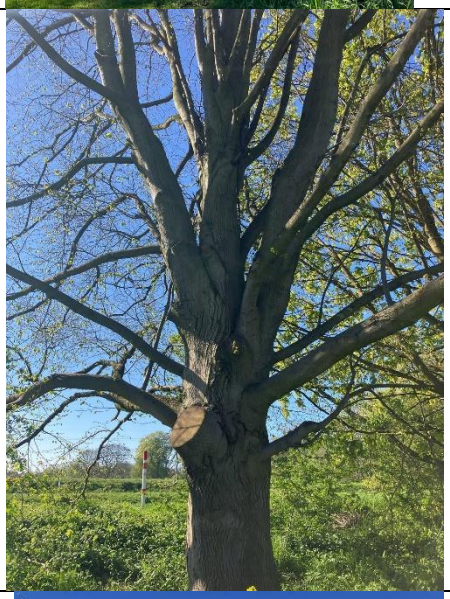
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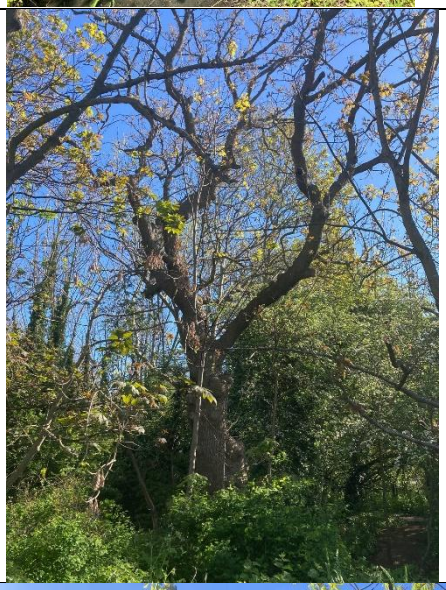
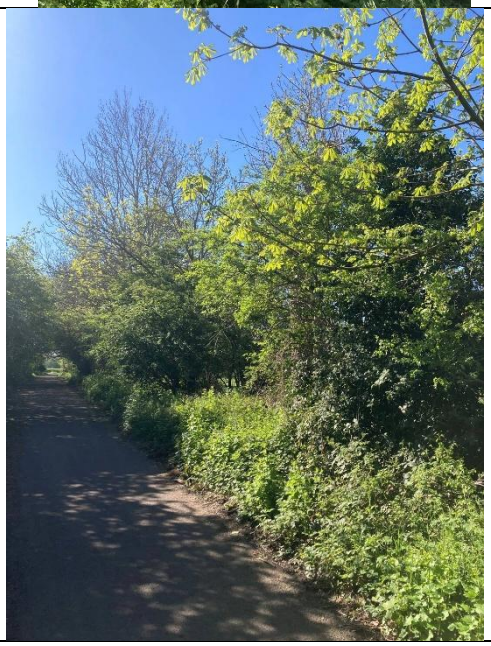
# 7 APPENDIX

## 7.1. UK HABITAT MAP

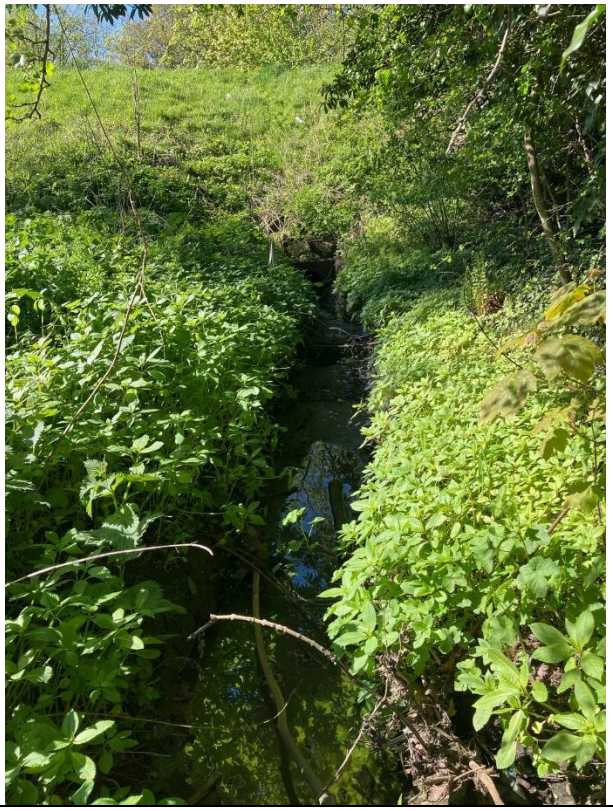
## 7.2. PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SITE

| Description | Photographs |
|---|---|
| Modified Grassland Habitat – Natural sports pitch |  |
| Modified Grassland Habitat |  |
| Astroturf Sport Pitch |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| Southern Woodland Parcel |  |
| Southern Woodland Parcel |  |
| Western Woodland Parcel |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| Western Woodland Parcel |  |
| Eastern Woodland Parcel |  |
| Eastern Woodland Parcel |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| Track located on western aspect of the site |  |
| Watercourse/drain located on the western to the northwestern aspect of the site. |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| Watercourse/drain located on the western to the northwestern aspect of the site. |  |
| River Mersey |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| River Mersey |  |

## 7.3. TARGET NOTE MAP




*Figure 7.3 PRFs located within the site ownership boundary.*

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## Parrs Wood High School

- **g4** Modified grassland
- **r2b** Other rivers and streams
- **u1c** Artificial unvegetated - unsealed surface
- **u1f** Sparsely vegetated urban land
- **w1g** Other broadleaved woodland

1 : 1,067

50 m

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**Collington Winter Environmental**

Version Date: **11/05/26**