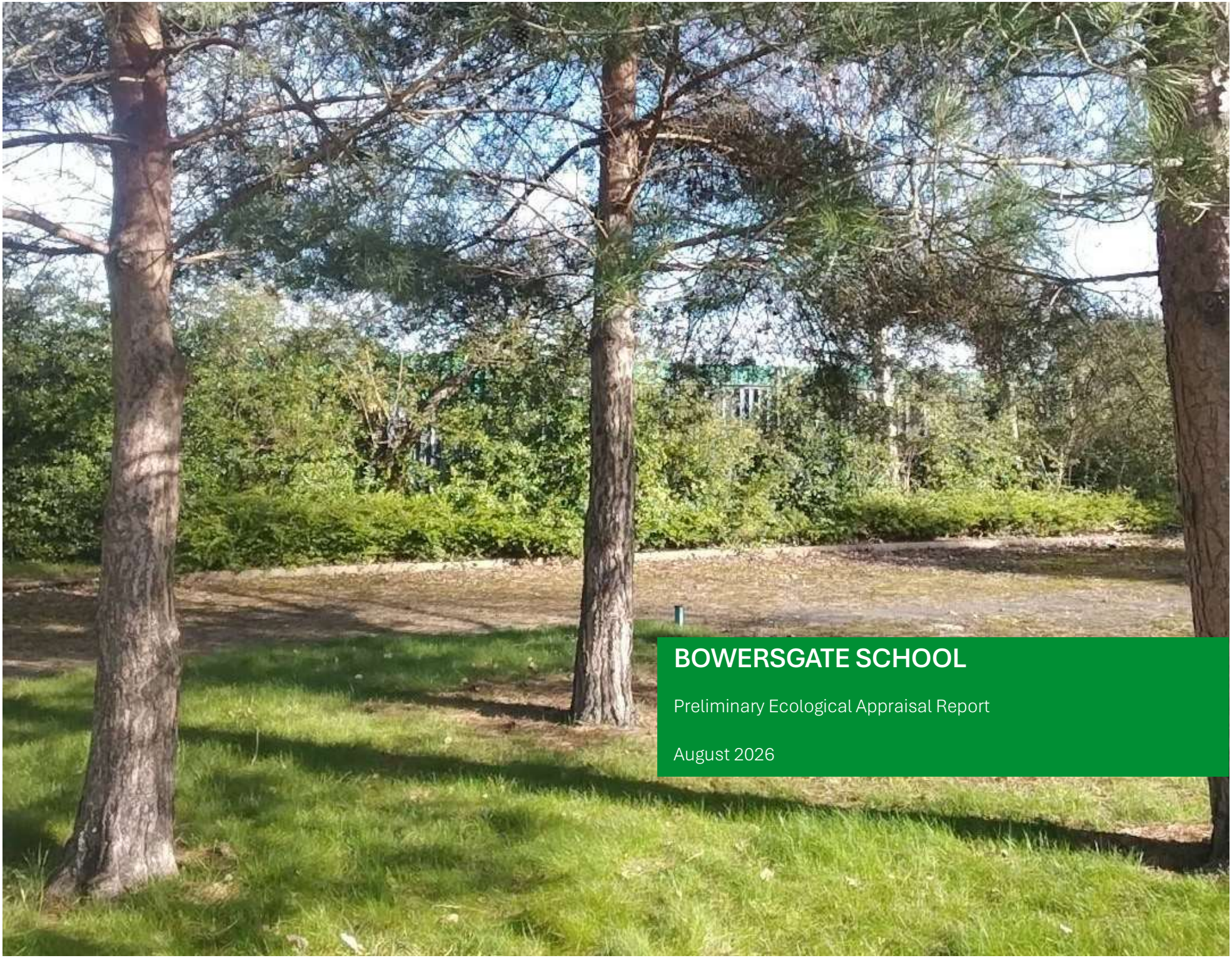
LandStudio



BOWERSGATE SCHOOL

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

August 2026

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This document has been produced by Land Studio on behalf of Witherslack Group Ltd. The contents of the document are intended for submission with a planning application related to the development proposals at Bowersgate School. Land Studio has prepared this report in accordance with the instructions of the above-named client for their sole and specific use. Any third parties who may use the information contained herein do so at their own risk.

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BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **INTRODUCTION**

01

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: INTRODUCTION

Site Context & Development Background

Witherslack Group Ltd (the Client) is seeking planning permission for the installation of a Multi-use Games Area (MUGA). The proposed development is associated with redevelopment of the wider site into a SEN school and will involve removal of vegetated habitats. During the construction phase, land within the wider site will be used for storage of materials and refuse.

The proposals described above are hereafter referred to collectively as 'the development'. The development will be located at the former Land at Vision House, Wythenshawe, Manchester, M23 9PL (central grid reference: SJ 80470 88808).

The area affected by the development is hereafter referred to as 'the Site', see Figure 1.

The approximately 0.057 Ha Site comprises a small area of modified grassland with scattered semi-mature trees, and hardstand access road and area for parking. A non-native hedgerow borders the Site to the east and south. The wider Site is in the process of being converted into a school. The Site is located within an industrial urban area and is bound by built development.

Planning permission for the development is currently being sought by Witherslack Group Ltd from the Manchester City council planning authority.

Brief and Objectives

Witherslack Group Ltd commissioned Land Studio in February 2026 to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) of the Site.

The brief was to:

- Undertake an extended UK Habitat Classification habitat survey of the Site, recording the main habitats present, following UKHab survey methodology (2023) and in line with CIEEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017);
- Carry out an ecological desk study to review relevant local planning policies and obtain records of designated sites, protected and priority habitats and species, and invasive non-native species from third parties;
- Make a preliminary assessment of the potential of the Site to support protected species or species of conservation concern;

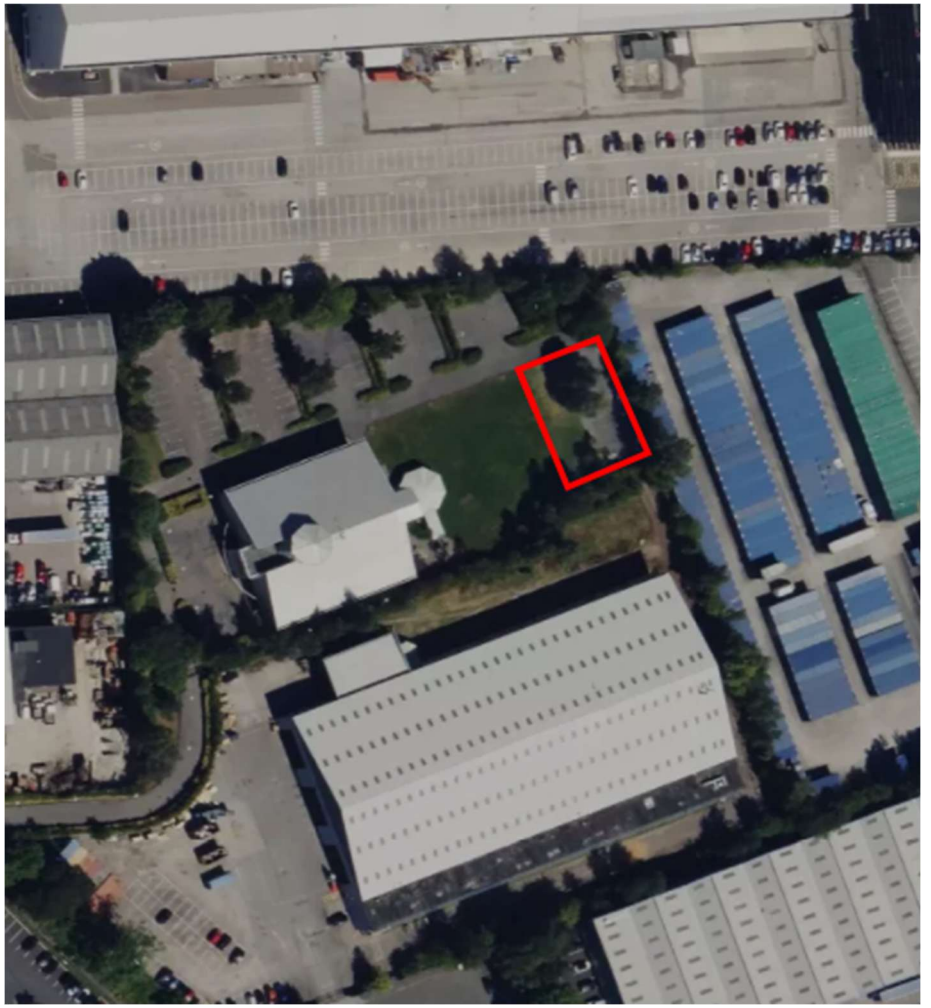


Figure 1. Site layout.

- Provide a PEA report covering the following aspects:
  - Identify the likely ecological constraints associated with a project;
  - Identify any mitigation measures likely to be required, following the 'Mitigation Hierarchy';
  - Identify any additional surveys that may be required; and
  - Identify opportunities offered to deliver ecological enhancement.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: INTRODUCTION

Limitations

All areas of the Site were accessible at the time of survey.

The extended UK Habitat survey was carried out in March, which is just within the optimal period (within the main flowering season) for botanical survey. This document does not contain a comprehensive list of botanical species; plant species which are only evident at certain times of year may have gone undetected.

The species data collated during the desk study is mainly derived from records submitted by members of the public and ad hoc surveys undertaken by volunteers. Therefore, it should not be taken as a definitive list of the protected species and other species of conservation concern that occur in the local area.

This report is based on the Site extent (see Figure 1) and the description of the development provided above. Subsequent changes to either may result in a requirement to reassess the potential impacts of the works and the requirements for avoidance, mitigation, and enhancement.

Surveyors

The PEA survey was undertaken by Melissa Finch MSc BSc (Hons) – Consultant Ecologist.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **DESK STUDY METHOD**

02

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: DESK STUDY METHOD

Desk Study

The desk study was undertaken in March 2026 by reviewing records from the sources listed in the Table 1.

Table 1. Desk Study Sources & Search Areas

Information Source	Nature of Information & Search Area Radius
Defra MAGIC Maps	Statutory designated wildlife sites of International and European importance within a 10km radius of the Site. Statutory designated wildlife sites of national importance within a 2km radius of the Site. Non-statutory designated wildlife sites of local importance within a 1km Priority habitats within a 1km radius of the Site. Waterbodies within a 0.25km radius of the Site
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)	Non-statutory designated wildlife sites of local importance within 1km. Ancient Woodland within a 1km radius of the Site. Priority habitats within a 1km radius of the Site. Protected, priority, and invasive species records (from the past 10 years) within a 2km radius of the Site.
Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory	Ancient and Veteran trees within 1km of the Site.

The main study area was defined as an area that encompassed the Site and all land within 2km of the perimeter of the Site, see Figure 2. Records of designated sites, protected species, and priority species were sought for a 2km study area (10km search radius for International/European sites), whereas records for non-statutory sites, priority habitats, ancient woodland, and ancient and veteran trees were sought for within a 1km of the radius of the Site.

The search areas for biological records were deemed to be suitable based on the zone of influence for the works. The zone of influence for a project is defined as the area over which ecological features may be subject to significant effects as a result of the proposed project and associated activities (CIEEM, 2016).

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: DESK STUDY RESULTS

03

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: DESK STUDY RESULTS

Desk Study

The results of the desk study are summarised below. The locations of designated sites, priority habitats and ancient woodlands are shown on Figure 2.

Designated Sites

International and European Designated Sites

Rostherne Mere Ramsar – located approximately 6.95km southwest

The site covers approximately 80 ha and comprises one of the largest and deepest natural meres on the Cheshire Plain, with extensive open water fringed by common reed and associated wetland vegetation. It qualifies under Ramsar Criterion 1, as it contains a representative example of a natural wetland type characteristic of the region — specifically deep standing open water with fringing fen, marsh and swamp habitats.

Midland Meres & Mosses - Phase 1 Ramsar – located approximately 9.14km southwest

The site comprises a series of discrete lowland wetland units (meres and mosses) across the north-west Midlands, including nutrient-rich open water bodies and associated fringing habitats such as reed swamp, fen, carr and damp pasture, together with peatland and floating bog (schwingmoor) features. It qualifies under Ramsar Criterion 1 for containing a diverse and representative range of wetland types characteristic of this biogeographical area, and Criterion 2 for supporting numerous rare wetland plants and invertebrates, including several nationally scarce and British Red Data Book species.

National Designated Sites

No National designated sites were identified within a 2km radius of the Site.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone (IRZ)

The Site falls within the SSSI IRZ and the LPA is advised to consult Natural England if the development matches any of the below descriptions:

- Infrastructure: Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- Minerals, Oil and Gas: Oil & gas exploration/extraction.
- Air Pollution: Livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 750m² & manure stores > 3500 tonnes.
- Combustion: General combustion processes >50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.

The proposals do not meet the criteria for which the LPA should consult with Natural England.

Local and Non-statutory Designated Sites:

Wythenshawe Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) – located approximately 0.97km northeast

Designated in January 2012, Wythenshawe Park in Manchester was declared a LNR in recognition of its wildlife habitats and natural features within an urban setting. The LNR covers approximately 85 ha of the wider parkland, which includes historic and ornamental woodlands, grassland, wildflower meadows and ponds, and incorporates two Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) (Nan Nook Wood and Gib Lane Wood). The designation reflects the value of these semi-natural habitats for local biodiversity and provides statutory recognition for their conservation and public enjoyment.

A number of Site of Biological Interest (SBIs) have been identified within a 2km radius of the Site:

- Princes Spinney SBI – 0.95km east
- Nan Nook Wood SBI - 1.08km north
- Blackcarr Wood and Baguley Bottoms SBI – 1.3km east
- Gib Lane Wood SBI – 1.44km east
- Ponds at Davenport Green SBI– 1.6km south
- Round Wood SBI– 2km northeast

Ancient Woodland

No ancient woodland was identified within a 1km radius of the Site.

Priority Habitats

A total of 7.06 Ha of deciduous woodland priority habitat was identified on Magic Maps within a 1km radius of the Site. The nearest parcel is located approximately 0.35km southwest of the Site.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: DESK STUDY RESULTS

Ancient and Veteran Trees

No ancient trees were identified within a 1km radius of the Site.

Green Infrastructure

The Site is located within a built-up urban area with a limited extent of green infrastructure in the surrounds. There is minor connectivity with boundary trees in the wider industrial estate. The Site is therefore assessed as providing a limited extent of green infrastructure and wildlife corridor function.

Blue Infrastructure

There are no waterbodies or watercourses on the Site. Mill Brook was identified on Magic Maps and appears to run underground beneath the access road to the wider site. No waterbodies were identified within a 250m radius of the Site. The Site is therefore assessed as providing negligible blue infrastructure function.

Protected Species and Species of Conservation Concern

Records of 18 protected species, priority species and species of conservation concern were identified in the desk study within the 2km search area from the past 10 years, comprising 9 bird species, 5 mammal species, and 4 terrestrial invertebrates. Details of the species are given in Table 2 overleaf.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: DESK STUDY RESULTS

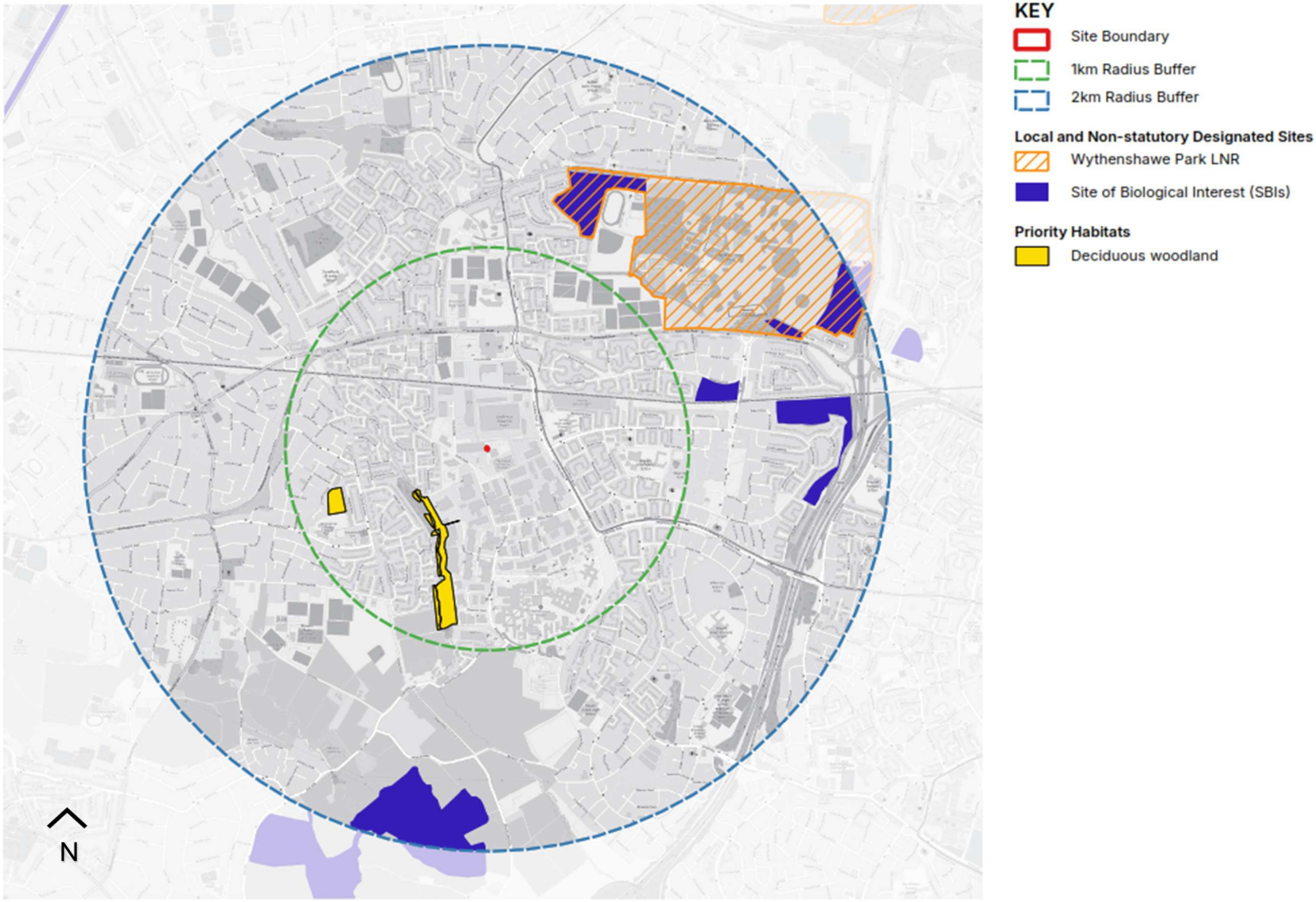


Figure 2: Desk study results for designated sites and priority habitats.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: DESK STUDY RESULTS

Table 2. Species records derived from the desk study.

Common Name	Scientific Name	HSR Sch [1] 2 or 5	WCA [2] Schedule	Priority Species [3]	BoCC [4]	Other [5]	Distance from Site	Source
Birds								
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*			x	Amber		<2km	GMEU
Dunnock	*Prunella modularis*				Amber		<2km	GMEU
House sparrow	*Passer domesticus*			x	Red		<2km	GMEU
Linnet	*Linaria cannabina*			x	Red		<2km	GMEU
Peregrine	*Falco peregrinus*		Schedule 1		Amber		<2km	GMEU
Song thrush	*Turdus philomelos*			x	Amber		<2km	GMEU
Spotted flycatcher	*Muscicapa striata*			x	Red		<2km	GMEU
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*			x	Red		<2km	GMEU
Tree pipit	*Anthus trivialis*			x	Red		<2km	GMEU
Mammals								
Brown long eared	*Plecotus auritus*	Schedule 2	Schedule 5	x			<2km	GMEU
Common pipistrelle	*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*	Schedule 2	Schedule 5	x			<2km	GMEU
Hedgehog	*Erinaceus europaeus*			x			<2km	GMEU
Noctule	*Nyctalus noctula*	Schedule 2	Schedule 5	x			<2km	GMEU
Soprano pipistrelle	*Pygmaeus pipistrellus*	Schedule 2	Schedule 5	x			<2km	GMEU
Terrestrial Invertebrates								
Cinnabar	*Tyria jacobaeae*			x			<2km	GMEU
Small heath	*Coenonympha pamphilus*			x			<2km	GMEU
White ermine	*Spilosoma lubricipeda*			x			<2km	GMEU
White-letter hairstreak	*Satyrium w-album*		Schedule 5	x			<2km	GMEU

[1] Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended
[2] Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
[3] Priority Species listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act
[4] Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (Stanbury et al., 2021)
[5] Other Wildlife Legislation

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **EXTENDED UK HAB SURVEY METHOD**

04

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: EXTENDED UK HAB SURVEY METHOD

Field Survey

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

A survey area was defined as an area that encompassed the area proposed for development. The survey area is shown on Figure 3.

A survey using the UK Habitats Classification system (Butcher *et al.*, 2023) was conducted, to categorise and map the primary habitat types and associated secondary codes (where relevant) within the survey area.

The dominant and readily identified species of higher plant species from each habitat type were recorded and their abundance was assessed using the DAFOR scale (D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional, R = rare). These scores represent the abundance within the defined area only and do not reflect national or regional abundances. Plant species nomenclature follows Stace (2019).

An assessment was undertaken of the potential presence of protected and priority species both within and adjacent to the Site boundary. Any incidental sightings of protected and/or priority species have been recorded and are presented within the report.

Incidental records of fauna were also made during the survey and the habitats identified were evaluated for their potential to support protected species and other species of conservation concern, including priority species.

Dates of Survey

The PEA survey was conducted on the 3rd of March 2026.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **EXTENDED UK HAB SURVEY RESULTS**

05

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: EXTENDED UK HAB SURVEY RESULTS

Habitat Survey

The results of the UK Habitat Classification survey are summarised below.

The following UK Habitat Classification habitat types were identified onsite during the survey:

- Modified Grassland
- Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow
- Built-up Areas and Gardens (Introduced Shrub)
- Developed Land Sealed Surface
- Individual Trees

These habitats are described below, and their distribution is given on Figure 3. A full species list for each applicable habitat is provided in Appendix A.

Although the development is less than 0.2 ha and is therefore exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), condition assessments have been undertaken to establish the baseline condition of the habitats present within the Site. A summary of the results is provided below, with the completed BNG condition assessment sheets included in Appendix C.

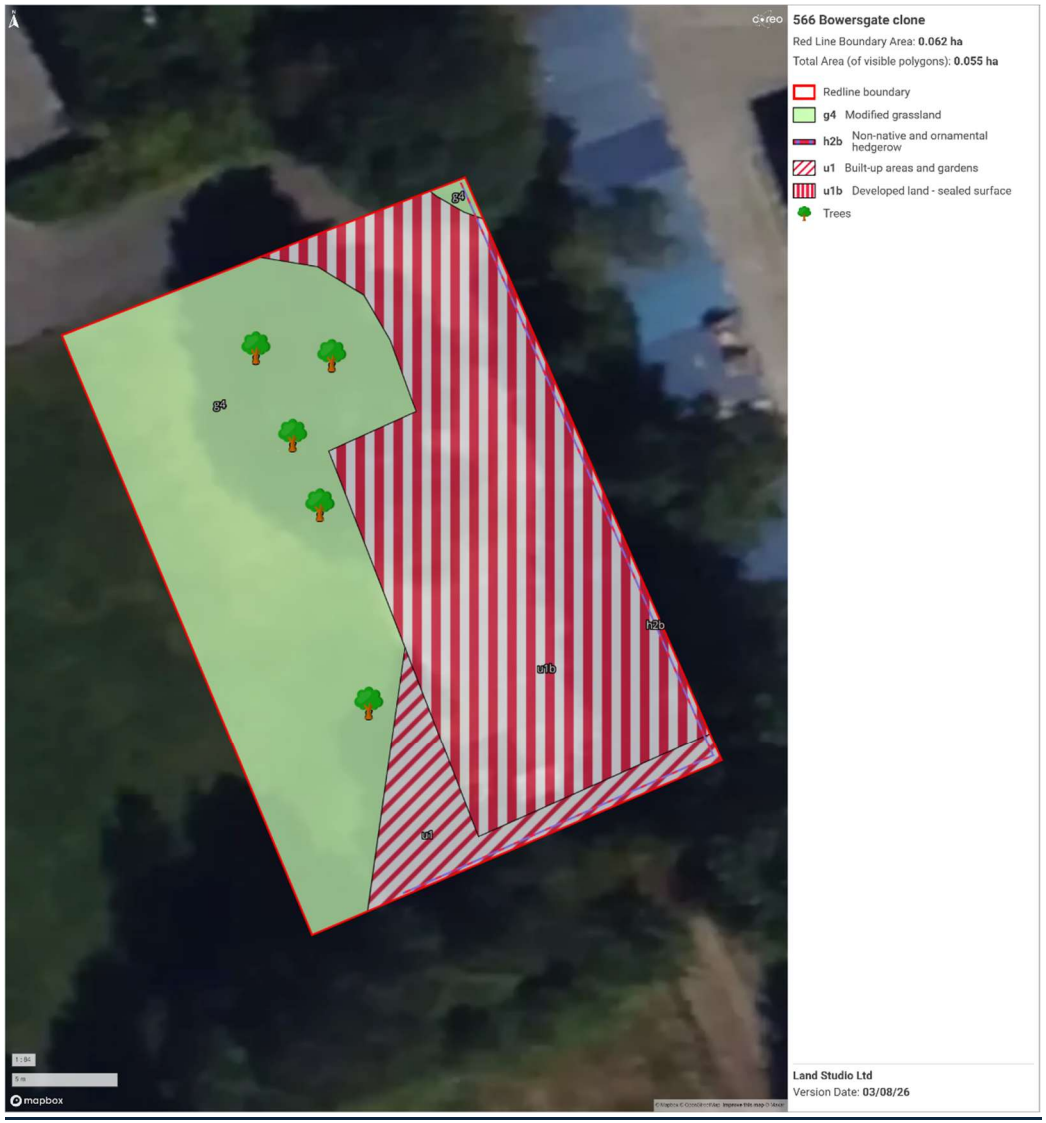


Figure 3. Extended UK Habitat Classification Results (Map. Source: Coreo)

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: EXTENDED UK HAB SURVEY RESULTS

Habitat Types and Condition



Photograph 1. View of the grassland and individual trees.

Modified Grassland – g4

The grassland is close-mown and species-poor, and is characterised by dominant perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne)* with occasional Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), and rare creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), and white clover (*Trifolium repens*).

The grassland is assessed as being in poor condition in accordance with the Condition Assessment criteria, reflecting a low botanical diversity, with fewer than 6-8 species per m^2 and areas of physical damage. Modified grassland does not represent a priority habitat.



Photograph 2. View of the Cherry Laurel dominant introduced shrub and small tree to the southeast.

Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow – h2b

The Site is bordered to the east and south by non-native and ornamental hedgerow with trees, comprising dominant scarlet firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*), abundant box-leaved honeysuckle (*Lonicera pileata*), and occasional cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), garden privet (Ligustrum ovalifolium), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*).

Non-native hedgerow is not considered a habitat type for the purposes of the Condition Assessment and does not represent a priority habitat.

Introduced Shrub

Introduced shrubs are present around the car park to the north and south (see Photograph 2). Species comprised box-leaved honeysuckle, scarlet firethorn, cherry laurel, and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*).

Introduced Shrub is not considered a habitat type for the purposes of the Condition Assessment and does not represent a priority habitat.

Developed Land Sealed Surface

The hardstand within the Site is used for parking and access.

No Condition Assessment is applicable to this habitat type. Developed land sealed surface does not represent a priority habitat.

Urban Trees

Four semi-mature trees and one young tree are present within the Site, located on the grassland to the east (Photograph 1) and adjacent to shrubbery to the southeast (Photograph 2).

The trees are assessed as moderate condition in accordance with the Condition Assessment criteria. The individual trees do not represent a priority habitat.

Fauna

No notable fauna was observed during the PEA survey. A bird nest was observed in a silver birch.

Potential of the Site to Support Protected and Priority Species

The habitats on the Site have the potential to support protected species including foraging and commuting bats and badger (*Meles meles*), nesting birds, and priority species such as hedgehog. A detailed evaluation of the potential of the Site to support protected species is provided in Section 06.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **EVALUATION**

06

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: EVALUATION

The evaluation section sets out the ecological constraints and opportunities that we know are relevant based on this desk study and extended UK Habitat survey. Ecological considerations that might arise following further surveys are excluded. Relevant recommendations are provided in section 07, and legislation and planning policy is provided in Section 08. A detailed description of the method for this section is given in Appendix B.

Designated Sites

The nearest designated site is Rostherne Mere Ramsar, which is located approximately 6.95km southwest of the Site. The proposed development is unlikely to have a significant negative effect on the above listed designated sites because:

- The works are minor in scale and a notable distance from the site;
- The works will be temporary, localised and are restricted to within the Site boundary, see Figure 4 for the proposed layout;
- The development will not result in significant increase in emissions of sediment, dust, air pollution, or chemicals.

No significant negative impacts are anticipated from the development proposal. As such no impacts to designated sites are anticipated and no further action is required.

Non–Statutory Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Ancient Woodland

The closest non-statutory designated sites are Princes Spinney SBI located approximately 0.95km east and Wythenshawe Park LNR approximately 0.97km northeast. The Site has no direct ecological connectivity with either site, and, given the minor scale of the proposed works and limited habitat loss, it is considered unlikely that the proposals would result in significant adverse effects on non-statutory designated sites in the area.

No ancient woodland was identified on Magic Maps within a 1km radius of the Site; therefore, no further mitigation is required.

The closest parcel of priority habitats identified in the desk study are deciduous woodland located approximately 0.35km to the southwest of the Site. Given the notable distance to the site, it is deemed reasonably unlikely that the works will have any significant negative impacts on priority habitats.

Best practice recommendations relating to designated sites and priority habitats are provided in Section 07. If the recommendations are followed, the proposed development will be compliant with the relevant legislation and policy (as set out in Section 08).

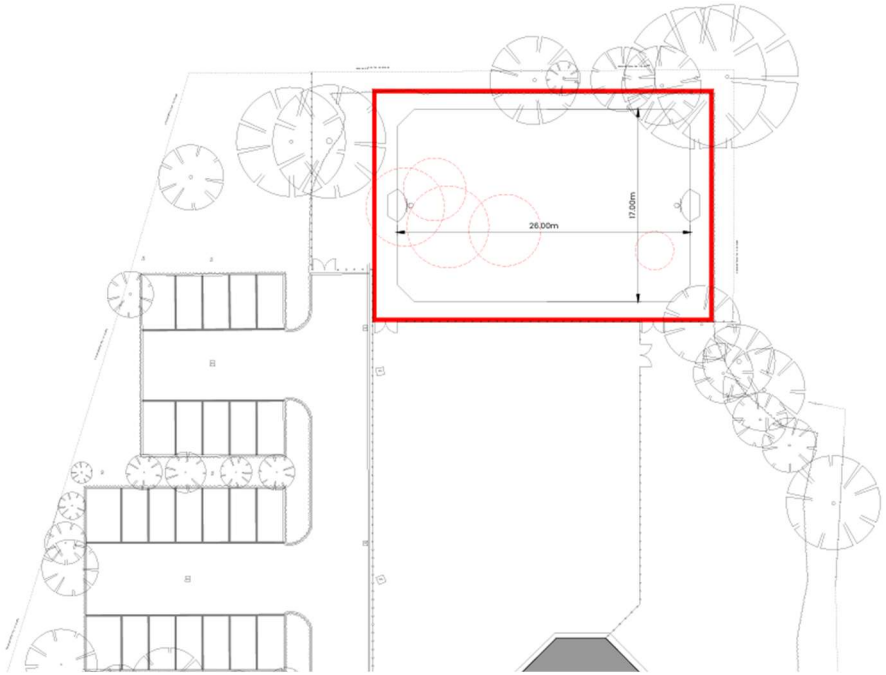


Figure 4. Proposed layout.

Protected Species and Species of Conservation Concern

Bats

The desk study search returned records of brown long eared, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, and noctule from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

Bats - Buildings

There are no buildings on the Site to be assessed for roosting bats.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: EVALUATION

Bats - Trees

The semi-mature trees within the Site were incidentally assessed as having no potential to support roosting bats.

Bats- foraging and commuting

The vegetated areas within and around the Site may provide a limited extent of suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats. Best practice measures should be implemented to avoid disturbance to foraging and commuting bats in the area.

Recommendations relating to bats are made in Section 07. If the recommendations are followed, the proposed development will be compliant with legislation and policy relevant to bats (as set out in Section 08).

Badgers

No records of badger were returned in the desk study from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

No signs of badgers were observed during the survey. The minor area of grassland which is to be impacted by the development does not provide any notable sett creation habitat for badgers; however, the Site may represent a limited extent of foraging/commuting habitat. Badgers are a mobile species and can construct a sett at any time, as such precautionary measures are recommended with respect to badgers.

Recommendations relating to badger are provided in Section 07. If the recommendations are followed, the proposed development will be compliant with legislation and policy relevant to badger (as set out in Section 08).

Birds

The desk study search returned records of 1 Schedule 1 birds within a 2km radius of the Site from the past 10 years (see Table 2). The local desk study also returned 7 records of priority bird species within a 2km radius from the past 10 years.

The Site supports common and widespread habitats, which provide no specific opportunities for Schedule 1, ground-nesting, or wintering bird species. The wider Site is likely utilised by common nesting bird species only, therefore standard mitigation for nesting birds is recommended. A nest was observed in the silver birch tree.

Recommendations relating to birds are provided in Section 07. If the recommendations are followed, the proposed development will be compliant with legislation and policy relevant to birds (as set out in Section 08).

Great Crested Newt (GCN) and Common Amphibians

No records of GCN or common amphibians were returned in the desk study from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

There are no waterbodies onsite to support GCN and other common amphibians during the aquatic phase of their lifecycle, and none were identified within a 250m radius of the Site. It is significantly unlikely that GCN would be affected by the proposals; however, precautionary measures are recommended with respect to common amphibians.

Recommendations relating to common amphibians are provided in Section 07. If the recommendations are followed, the proposed development will be compliant with legislation and policy relevant to common amphibians (as set out in Section 08.

Reptiles

No records of reptiles were returned in the desk study from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

The Site is bound by built development and the vegetated habitats within the Site provide significantly limited opportunities for reptiles. It is therefore considered significantly unlikely that reptiles would be affected by the proposals, and no further action is recommended.

Otter and Water Vole

No records of otter (*Lutra lutra)* or water vole (*Arvicola amphibius)* were returned in the desk study from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

There are no watercourses the Site. The nearest is Mill Brook which appears to run underground beneath the access road, and the Site is situated within a built-up urban area. It is considered significantly unlikely that otters or water vole would be impacted by the proposals, and no further action is recommended.

Protected Invertebrates

Records of white-letter hairstreak were returned in the desk study from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

The Site supports common and widespread habitats, which provide no specific opportunities for protected invertebrates. No further action is recommended in relation to protected invertebrates.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: EVALUATION

Protected Flora

No records of protected flora were returned in the desk study from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

The Site supports common and widespread habitats, which provide no specific opportunities for protected flora. No further action is recommended in relation to protected flora.

Invasive Fauna

No records of invasive fauna were returned in the desk study from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

The Site does not present any specific opportunities for other invasive species of fauna; as such, no further recommendations are required with regards to invasive fauna.

Invasive Flora

No records of invasive flora were returned in the desk study from the past 10 years within a 2km radius of the Site.

No schedule 9 invasive flora was identified at the Site; however, non-native flora is present on-site and therefore further action is recommended in relation to invasive flora.

Recommendations relating to invasive flora are provided in Section 07. If the recommendations are followed, the proposed development will be compliant with legislation and policy relevant to invasive flora (as set out in Section 08).

Priority Species

The desk study returned records of hedgehog, cinnabar, small heath, and white ermine within a 2km radius of the Site from the past 10 years.

The habitats within the Site provide opportunities for priority species such as hedgehog, but no specific opportunities for priority invertebrates. Further mitigation is required for hedgehog to prevent accidental killing and/or injury during the construction phase.

Recommendations relating to priority species are provided in Section 07. If the recommendations are followed, the proposed development will be compliant with legislation and policy relevant to priority species (as set out in Section 08).

Ecological Enhancement

The proposed works will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland..

Ecological enhancement of the Site is recommended in line with national and local planning policy (see Section 08). Recommendations relating to ecological enhancement are provided in Section 07, **Error! Reference source not found.** 4.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **RECOMMENDATIONS**

07

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: RECOMMENDATIONS

Mitigation

The ecological features in Table 3 have been identified as having potential to be impacted by the development proposal and mitigation is proposed where relevant. To clarify, ecological features have been screened out whereby no likely impacts have been identified or where these are of negligible importance.

The relevant legislation and planning policy that underpins our recommendations is provided in Section 08.

Table 3. Ecological Features and Recommendations.

Ecological Feature	Type of recommendation	Recommendation
Non-statutory Designated Sites & Priority Habitats	Mitigation (pollution prevention)	Best practice measures should be implemented to minimise the risk of indirect impacts to surrounding land through the contamination of soil, air and water. This includes prevention of emissions of sediment, dust and chemicals. Precautionary measures for pollution prevention should include: • Dust suppression measures for any dust producing activities; • Robust spill control measures should be in place to mitigate against the accidental release of oils and/or chemicals into the wider environment. Measures should include the provision of spill kits, chemical absorbent mats and/or oil booms as appropriate; • The storage of all containers of chemicals, oil and fuel in suitable tightly closed containers, on a secure area on hard standing; and • The disposal of contaminated waste off-site following best practice guidelines.
Bats	Mitigation (sensitive lighting)	To protect the suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat, it is recommended that the lighting scheme for the proposed development be designed in accordance with the recent guidance Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (Institute of Lighting Professionals, 2023). A sympathetic lighting regime should be adopted whereby lighting should be kept to a minimum and positioned downwards to avoid indirect impacts to commuting and foraging bats. Narrow spectrum light sources should be used wherever possible, and lights should only be in operation when necessary. Construction works should be avoided at night to minimise the need for artificial lighting.
Badger	Mitigation (precautionary measures)	Given the limited size of the Site, site clearance and construction works shall be undertaken in accordance with best practice, precautionary, reasonable avoidance measures. If any active badger setts are found on-site during the works, all construction works are to cease, and the ecologist contacted for advice on how to proceed. The following reasonable avoidance measures should be adhered to (with all relevant site contractors informed of these details) throughout the construction phase: • No works will be conducted at night, or dawn/dusk when Badgers are likely to be active. • Any holes, trenches or other excavations in which Badger may fall into and become trapped will be covered overnight, or otherwise a means of escape provided (e.g. a plank of wood as a ramp). • If piles of soil are to be stored within the Site, these will be left un-compacted and not permitted to grass over to reduce the likelihood of Badger using them for new sett creation.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: RECOMMENDATIONS

Ecological Feature	Type of recommendation	Recommendation
		• Any large pipes must be stored with caps on to prevent Badger access; and, • Any chemicals will be stored securely so that they cannot be accessed by inquisitive Badger.
Breeding Birds	Mitigation (precautionary measures)	No further pre-determination surveys are considered proportionate or necessary for birds given the minor scale of the proposed development and limited impacts to suitable habitat. Vegetation clearance should be completed outside of the breeding bird season (September to February inclusive) where possible, to avoid an offence being committed in respect of nesting birds. Where works are required between March to August inclusive, a thorough check for active nests should be undertaken by a suitably qualified Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) prior to building removal and vegetation clearance to ensure no active nests are affected. Where nests are identified these should be protected by at least a 5m exclusion zone until it can be determined by an ecologist that the nest is no longer active.
Priority Species & Common amphibians	Mitigation (precautionary measures)	The precautionary measures outlined below should be implemented: • Any habitat piles which may be suitable for sheltering mammals such as hedgehog or amphibians like common toad, such as piles of refuse, brash or log piles, should be retained in situ where possible. Where removal / disturbance is required, checks for priority species should be undertaken prior to removal, and removal should be undertaken sensitively, with care to avoid killing / injury of hedgehog or other priority species. • Should priority species such as hedgehog be discovered onsite at any time during their active period, they should be allowed to move away on their own volition or if in danger moved carefully with gloved hands to a sheltered area (e.g. offsite grassland, hedgerow or scrub). • In unlikely event that hibernating/resting mammals be discovered onsite within the working area, clearance / construction work shall cease in that area, a suitable buffer established, and an ecologist shall be contacted for guidance on how to proceed. • Any trenches or pits in which wildlife may become trapped should either be covered, infilled, or a suitable means of escape provided (e.g. plank of wood) overnight; and • Safe storage of chemicals (see pollution prevention measures above).
Invasive Flora	Mitigation	If present within the working area, non-native flora should be removed and responsibly disposed of offsite prior to the commencement of the works to prevent the accidental spread of the species.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **LEGISLATION & PLANNING POLICY**

08

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: LEGISLATION & PLANNING POLICY

The following local and national planning policy and legislation relating to nature conservation and biodiversity status are considered of relevance to the current proposal.

Planning and biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan).

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate.

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

188. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework [65]; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

189. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads [66]. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas

190. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development [67] other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

(a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy.

(b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and

(c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

191. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 189), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Habitats and biodiversity

192. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

(a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity [68]; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation [69]; and

(b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

193. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

(a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

(b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

(c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons [70] and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

(d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

194. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

(a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation.

(b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites [71]; and

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

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

UK Wildlife legislation

Relevant legislation and policy relating to ecology and biodiversity is summarised below.

This report refers to ‘ecological features’ which include:

- Statutory designated sites for nature conservation;
- Non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation;
- Priority habitats for nature conservation, including ancient woodland;
- Protected species;
- Species of conservation concern; and
- Invasive non-native species.

Designated Sites

Designated sites for nature conservation are protected under UK legislation. Sites can be classified according to their levels of conservation importance, including international, national, or local conservation significance. Internationally important sites receive the highest level of protection.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: LEGISLATION & PLANNING POLICY

Statutory designated sites of international importance include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Ramsar sites.

International

SACs are protected areas in the UK designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Habitats Regulations) in England and Wales (including the adjacent territorial sea).

SPAs are protected areas for birds in the UK, classified under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA) and the Habitats Regulations in England, Scotland, and Wales.

Ramsar Sites are wetlands of international importance designated under The Ramsar Convention. They have been selected according to the Ramsar Sites Criteria which relates to the presence of representative, rare or unique wetland types or their international importance for conserving biological diversity. Ramsar Sites are afforded the same level of protection as SSSIs under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). UK policy affords the same level of protection to Ramsar Sites as SPAs/SACs in terms of the consideration of impacts on their integrity subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

National

Statutory designated sites of national importance include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), which are protected under the WCA, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CroW Act), and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act). National Nature Reserves (NNRs) are a selection of the very best parts of England's SSSIs, protected under the WCA and CroW Act.

SSSIs are protected by law. Operations that could damage special interests require consent from Natural England. Under the WCA, it is an offence to damage, disturb, or destroy land within an SSSI or disturb wildlife in an SSSI.

Natural England's Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for Sites of Special Scientific Interest is a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks to SSSIs posed by development proposals. These zones reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which the site is notified and indicate the types of development that could potentially have adverse impacts. The IRZs also cover the interest features and sensitivities of European sites, underpinned by the SSSI designation and "Compensation Sites" secured for impacts on European/Ramsar sites.

Development proposals situated within IRZs may require consultation between the statutory undertaker and Natural England to discuss potential impacts on the designated site.

Local Sites

Non-statutory designated sites are defined areas identified and selected for their nature conservation value, based on important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species with a local area. Non-statutory designated sites, such as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), and Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), and B-Lines are of local importance. These sites are not protected under legislation. However, statutory undertakers must consider local sites as part of their Biodiversity Duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act, meaning they are material considerations within UK planning law.

Habitats

Priority habitats for nature conservation include:

- Habitats of Principal Importance listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act;
- Habitats listed under Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs); and
- Ancient woodland.

Priority habitats cover a wide range of semi-natural habitat types and were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action in the UK. In July 2012 the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra) published the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. The framework identifies UK-scale activities and priority works that are required to deliver the EU Biodiversity Strategy. JNCC guidance dictates that UK BAP background information on priority species and habitats still remains relevant, and it now forms the basis of country specific priority lists. Habitats of Principal Importance (also referred to as priority habitats) are listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (the NERC Act) (in England). Under Section 41 of the NERC Act, the Secretary of State must publish a list of habitat types considered to be of Principal Importance for conserving biodiversity.

Section 40 of the NERC Act places a duty on all public bodies, including statutory undertakers, to have regard for biodiversity in exercising their functions.

Some habitats are described as 'irreplaceable habitat'. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) describes these 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. These include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavements, sand dunes, salt marsh, and lowland fen.

Ancient woodland is any area that has been continuously wooded since at least 1600AD. Ancient woodland, as well as ancient and veteran trees, are regarded as 'irreplaceable habitats.'

Species

Rare and declining plant and animal species in the UK are generally protected under national legislation.

European Protected Species (EPS)

Species protected under the Habitats Regulations[1] receive the highest level of protection in the UK. These species can be considered to be of international importance because they are rare or declining in Europe as well as in the UK. These species are not only protected from killing and injury, but their breeding sites and resting places are also protected. These species include:

- GCN, natterjack toad (*Epidalea calamita*) and pool frog (*Pelophylax lessonae*).
- Sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*) and smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*);
- All bat species;
- Hazel dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) and otter;
- Large blue butterfly (*Phengaris arion*) (eggs, caterpillars, chrysalises and adults);
- Fisher's estuarine moth (*Gortyna borelii*) (eggs, caterpillars, chrysalises and adults); and
- Little ramshorn whirlpool snail (*Anisus vorticulus*).

For the species listed above, the Habitats Regulations make it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture them;
- Deliberately take or destroy their eggs;
- Damage or destroy their breeding sites and resting places2; and
- Possess, control or transport them (alive or dead).

Wildlife and Countryside Act

The WCA also offers protection for protected species. In addition to the species listed above, which also receive some protection under the WCA (Section 9 (1)), protection under this legislation is given to prevent intentional (or reckless in Scotland) killing and injury[3] of:

- Common lizard, slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*), adder (*Vipera berus*) and grass snake (*Natrix natrix*);
- All wild birds; and
- Water vole (Arvicola amphibius).

The WCA also provides additional (partial) protection for some species also protected under the Habitats Regulations. These species include:

- GCN
- Sand lizard
- Smooth snake
- Bats
- Dormouse
- Otter
- Large blue butterfly
- Fisher's estuarine moth

- Little ramshorn whirlpool snail

For these species, it is also an offence under the WCA to intentionally or recklessly:

- Disturb while they occupy a structure or place used for shelter or protection; and
- Obstruct access to a place of shelter or protection.

The WCA also provides full protection for:

- Water vole
- Freshwater pearl mussel
- Invertebrate species listed under Schedule 5
- For these species, protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA, it is an offence to:
- Kill, injure or take them;
- Possess or control them (alive or dead).
- Intentionally or recklessly: damage or destroy a structure or place used for shelter or protection;
- Disturb them in a place used for shelter or protection;
- Obstruct access to a place used for shelter or protection.

White-clawed crayfish is partly protected under the WCA, which makes it an offence to capture this species without a licence and also prohibits trade in this species.

Freshwater and migratory fish and their habitats receive protection under the WCA and under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 and Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009. These species include Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), bullhead, lamprey (brook, river and sea) (*Petromyzontiformes*), spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*) and European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*).

Birds

In the case of birds, as well as birds being protected from killing or injury, it is also an offence to take, damage or destroy a nest that is in use or being built, and to take or destroy eggs.

Additional protection applies to specific birds listed in Schedule 1 of the WCA, meaning it is also an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb these species when:

- on, or near a nest containing eggs or young;
- when it is building a nest;
- or when the nest is active with dependent young.

Badger

Badger receive protection under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Whereby it would be an offence to:

- Take, injure or kill a badger – or attempt these actions;
- Treat a badger cruelly;
- Interfere with a badger sett;
- Possess or control a live badger; or
- Mark or ring a badger.

Other mammals

Other mammal species including rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), fox, and hedgehog are protected under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996, which makes it an offense to inflict any unnecessary suffering, including crushing or asphyxiation of a wild mammal.

Plants

Under the WCA, it is an offence to intentionally uproot any wild plant without the landowner's consent. For plants, fungi and lichen listed on Schedule 8 of the WCA it is

an offence to intentionally pick, uproot or destroy them, unless it could not be reasonably avoided. That means it was an incidental result of a lawful action.

Some plants are listed on Schedule 5 of the Habitats Regulations. For these species it is an offence to deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy them; or possess, control or transport them (alive or dead).

Species of Conservation Concern

Other rare or declining species may not receive strict legal protection but may be recognised on published lists as species of conservation concern that should be protected as a matter of best practice.

Under Section 41 of the NERC Act, the Secretary of State must publish a list of the living organisms which, in the Secretary of State's opinion, are Species of Principal Importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Consideration of species of conservation concern during development projects is a requirement of the NERC Act which states that any "*public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard … to the purpose of conserving biodiversity*" and "*conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat*."

Most legally protected species are also listed as Species of Principal Importance. Species of Principal Importance or species listed on Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) are often referred to as 'priority species'. The NERC Act places a duty on all government departments to have regard or the conservation of these species and on the Secretary of State to further, or promote others to further, the conservation of these species.

The NPPF states that local planning authorities should promote the protection and recovery of priority species populations linked to national and local targets, which presumably means those listed under the Section 41 of the NERC Act, the former UK BAP and on Local or Regional priorities species lists.

Species of amphibian not protected from killing and injury under the WCA but listed as Species of Principal Importance include common toad. All native reptile species in England are Species of Principal Importance. Species of mammal which are not strictly protected under legislation but are listed as priority species include: hedgehog and brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*). Otter, water vole, hazel dormouse and seven species of bats (Barbastelle, Bechstein's, greater and lesser horseshoe, brown long-eared, noctule and soprano pipistrelle) have also been adopted as Species of Principal Importance, under Section 41 of the NERC Act.

Rare or declining bird species are listed as red or amber in Birds of Conservation Concern (BOCC) (Stanbury et al., 2021), a list that is periodically updated. Some wild birds are listed as Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act and species may also be listed in LBAPs.

Many invertebrates and species of fish are listed as Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of NERC Act. White-clawed crayfish is listed as a Species of Principal Importance under Section of the NERC Act.

Rare or declining plant species are listed under a Vascular Plant Red List for England (Stroh et al., 2014). Species considered of local nature conservation importance may also be listed in LBAPs. Many plants, fungi and lichens are listed as Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act.

Invasive Non-Native Plant Species

Invasive non-native plants are those listed as species of special concern because they cause severe problems for native UK plants and the environment.

The relevant legislation on invasive plant species is:

- Schedule 9 of the WCA; and
- Schedule 2 of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019, which gives effect to EU regulations on the prevention and management of the spread of invasive alien species.

Both make it an offence to "plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild" any plant species listed.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In accordance with the Environment Act 2021, it is mandatory for most developments in England to demonstrate a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Environment Act received royal assent and became law on 9th November 2021 and provides a framework to improve and protect the natural environment. Both onsite and offsite enhancements will need to be maintained for a period of at least 30 years following completion of a development. As of 12th February 2024, the Biodiversity Net Gain element of the Environment Act has been enacted.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: LEGISLATION & PLANNING POLICY

New Biodiversity Net Gain rules as of 6th August 2026 introduce a 0.2-hectare site exemption, temporary development exemptions, and the removal of self-build exemptions.

Ecological Enhancement

Public authorities in England have a Biodiversity Duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act which states any "*public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard … to the purpose of conserving biodiversity*" and "*conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat*."

Central and local government policy points towards ecological enhancement on development sites. For example, the NPPF (2024) states that '*development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design…*'.

Ecological enhancement requirements are also supported by local planning policy (see document Local Planning Policy References – Ecology).

Local Planning Policy

The following policies of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 to 2039 (adopted March 2024) (Manchester City Council, 2024) are applicable to biodiversity and conservation (provided in summary format only):

- Policy JP-G2 Green Infrastructure Network: Green infrastructure is a natural capital asset that provides multiple benefits, at a range of scales. Wherever practicable, opportunities to integrate new and existing green infrastructure into new development will be taken to protect, enhance and expand the green infrastructure network. Where new or improved green infrastructure is delivered as part of a development, the developer should make appropriate provision for its long-term management and maintenance
- Policy JP-G7: Trees and Woodland: Where development would result in the loss of existing trees, replacement is required on the basis of two new trees for each tree lost, or other measures that would also result in a net enhancement in the character and quality of the treescape and biodiversity value in the local area, with a preference for on-site provision; and Protect trees and woodland during the construction phase of development.
- Policy JP-G8: A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity: Development will be expected to: Follow the mitigation hierarchy; avoid fragmenting connectivity between habitats; achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of 10%; inform development proposals using ecological assessment.

The following policies of the Manchester Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD (adopted July 2012) (Manchester City Council, 2012) are applicable to biodiversity and conservation (provided in summary format only):

- Policy EN9: Green Infrastructure: New development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. Where the benefits of a proposed development are considered to outweigh the loss of an existing element of green infrastructure, the developer will be required to demonstrate how this loss will be mitigated in terms of quantity, quality, function and future management.
- Policy EN15: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Developers will need to demonstrate how they have assessed and taken full account of the potential effect of their proposed development on biodiversity or geodiversity. When considering the potential impact of a development, the construction phase should be included in this consideration. Development should wherever possible seek to maintain, enhance or restore existing geology.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **CONCLUSION**

09

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: CONCLUSION

A PEA, comprising an ecological desk study and an extended UK Habitat survey, was conducted to assess the ecological constraints of the works associated with the proposed development.

The Site is located within an industrial estate and comprises a small area of modified grassland with scattered semi-mature trees, and a hardstand access road and area for parking. A non-native hedgerow borders the Site to the east and south. The wider Site is in the process of being converted into a school. No major ecological constraints were identified during the PEA. The Site provides a very limited extent of suitable habitat for protected and priority species, including foraging and commuting bats and badgers, common nesting birds, and hedgehog. Non-native flora such as cherry laurel were recorded on site, however no Schedule 9 species were identified.

Recommendations have been provided to address designated sites, priority habitats, protected and priority species, and invasive flora, ensuring that the proposed works take account of planning policy aimed at conserving and enhancing biodiversity and comply with relevant national legislation.

Provided that the mitigation and enhancement measures outlined in this report are implemented, the proposed works are expected to comply with relevant ecological legislation and planning policy.

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **REFERENCES**

10

BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: REFERENCES

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BOWERSGATE SCHOOL: **APPENDICIES**

11

Appendix A: Plant Species and Abundance

Appendix A: Plant Species and Abundance

Table 5. Modified Grassland

Common Name	Scientific Name	Abundance
Perennial ryegrass	*Lolium perenne*	D
Yorkshire-fog	*Holcus lanatus*	O
Red fescue	*Festuca rubra*	O
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*	R
White clover	*Trifolium repens*	R
Common daisy	*Bellis perennis*	R
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*	R
Dandelion	*Taraxacum spp.*	R

Table 6. Non-native and ornamental hedgerow

Common Name	Scientific Name
Scarlet firethorn	*Pyracantha coccinea*
Box-leaved honeysuckle	*Lonicera pileata*
Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*
Garden privet	Ligustrum ovalifolium
Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus*
Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*

Table 7. Introduced Shrub

Common Name	Scientific Name
Box-leaved honeysuckle	*Lonicera pileata*
Scarlet firethorn	*Pyracantha coccinea*
Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*
Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus*

Table 8. Urban trees

Common Name	Scientific Name
Scots pine	*Pinus sylvestris*
Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*

Appendix B: Evaluation Assessment Methodology

Appendix B: Evaluation Assessment Methodology

Scope of Assessment

The evaluation and recommendations of this report have been produced following an assessment of legal and planning policy issues in England. The methodology for this process is set out below.

The first step is to identify any biodiversity features present on the site that are subject to legal or policy controls, as outlined below:

Designated Sites

The location of the site is compared to the distribution of sites with statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations, using data from the desk study. Consideration is given to designated sites that could be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed development.

Habitats outside Designated Sites

The habitats known to occur on the site as a result of the desk study or extended UK Habitat survey are compared to those that receive legal or policy protection outside designated sites, such as hedgerows, uncultivated land, semi-natural areas, habitats listed as priorities in national biodiversity strategies, Habitats of Principal Importance for Biodiversity as designated by the Secretary of State, and local priority habitats requiring action (formerly under Local Biodiversity Action Plans).

Ancient Woodland

The ancient woodland inventory is consulted to check whether any known ancient woodland is present on or near the site.

Protected Species

The species known to occur on the site as a result of the desk study or extended UK Habitat survey are compared with those listed under nature conservation legislation (e.g., the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, and the Conservation of habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended).

Additionally, species identified on the site are compared with those protected under animal welfare legislation, such as the Badgers Act 1992 and the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

Priority Species

The species known to occur on the site as a result of the desk study or extended UK Habitat survey are compared to those listed as priority species (i.e., Species of Principal Importance for Biodiversity in the relevant country) or those identified for action in local priority species lists (Local Biodiversity Action Plans).

Other Species of Conservation Concern

The species known to occur on the site as a result of the desk study or extended UK Habitat survey are compared with other conservation listings, such as red data books or other conservation priority lists.

Invasive Plant Species

The species known to occur on the site as a result of the desk study or extended UK Habitat survey are compared to those identified by government agencies as invasive non-natives, with particular attention paid to species listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended.

Review of Legislation and Policy

If any of the above features are present on or near the site and may be affected by the proposed development, the relevant legislation and planning policies (including national, regional, and local) are reviewed to determine whether the development complies with these requirements.

Ecological Enhancement

Planning policies generally require new developments to enhance biodiversity. The existing proposals are evaluated to determine whether they provide sufficient biodiversity enhancements to meet policy requirements. National, regional, and local policies are considered in this assessment.

Identification of Ecological Recommendations

Further ecological issues arise when they cannot be addressed during the preliminary ecological appraisal, including the following scenarios:

- The development is near a designated site, and consultation with the relevant regulator is necessary to determine if further assessment is required;
- Suitable habitat for a protected species or species of conservation concern is present on or near the site, requiring specialist survey methods for detection;
- Suitable habitat for a protected species or species of conservation concern is present on or near the site, but the survey was conducted outside the optimal season for detecting such species;
- A protected species or species of conservation concern was found on or near the site, but additional information on population size or distribution is needed to resolve legal and planning policy issues (e.g., obtaining necessary licenses).

Issues raised by third parties, such as reports from local residents about protected species on the site, may also be addressed through recommendations.

The desk study serves as a guide to identifying protected species and species of conservation concern in the local area, but the list should not be considered exhaustive, and some species may no longer be present in the locality.

No attempt is made to assess the importance of the site for species that have not yet been confirmed to be present on or near the site, nor to discuss the implications for the development if such species are later discovered.

Appendix C: Biodiversity Net Gain Condition Assessment Sheets

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Condition Sheet: Modified Grassland

Condition Assessment Criteria		SJ 80463 88805									
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)									
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m^2 present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.** Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m^2 (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	No									
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Yes									
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes									
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	No									
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2].	No									
F	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%.	Yes									
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]).	Yes									
	Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)	No									
	Number of criteria passed	4									
Condition Assessment	**Condition Assessment Score**	**Score Achieved ×/✓**									

Result (out of 7 criteria)												
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)											
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)											
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	Yes										

Condition Sheet: Individual Trees

Condition Assessment Criteria		SJ 80466 88807	SJ 80464 88811	SJ 80463 88815	SJ 80466 88814	SJ 80468 88798					
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)									
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1].	No	No	No	No	No					
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	No	No	No	No					
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
	Number of criteria passed	4	4	4	4	4					
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	**Condition Assessment Score**	**Score Achieved ×/✓**									
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)										
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)										