EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY & DAYTIME BAT SURVEY

LAND OFF LANGLEY ROAD, PENDLEBURY, SALFORD

REV.A

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 2
2.0 METHODOLOGY 3
3.0 RESULTS 4
HABITATS 4
PROTECTED SPECIES 9
INVASIVE SPECIES 11
PROTECTED SITES 11
4.0 ASSESSMENT 13
5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS 15
6.0 REFERENCES 16
APPENDIX A – PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2022 by JMC Surveyors and Property Consultants Limited to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Daytime Bat Survey of a piece of land off Langley Road, Pendlebury, Salford, Greater Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SD 80698 01125 – see Figure 1). The site currently comprises a disused commercial yard, which is mostly bare ground with scrub and ruderal vegetation establishing on the peripheries. The site is surrounded by commercial development, with an aggregates business lying directly adjacent to the north and east. The River Irwell lies further to the east. One structure exists on site.

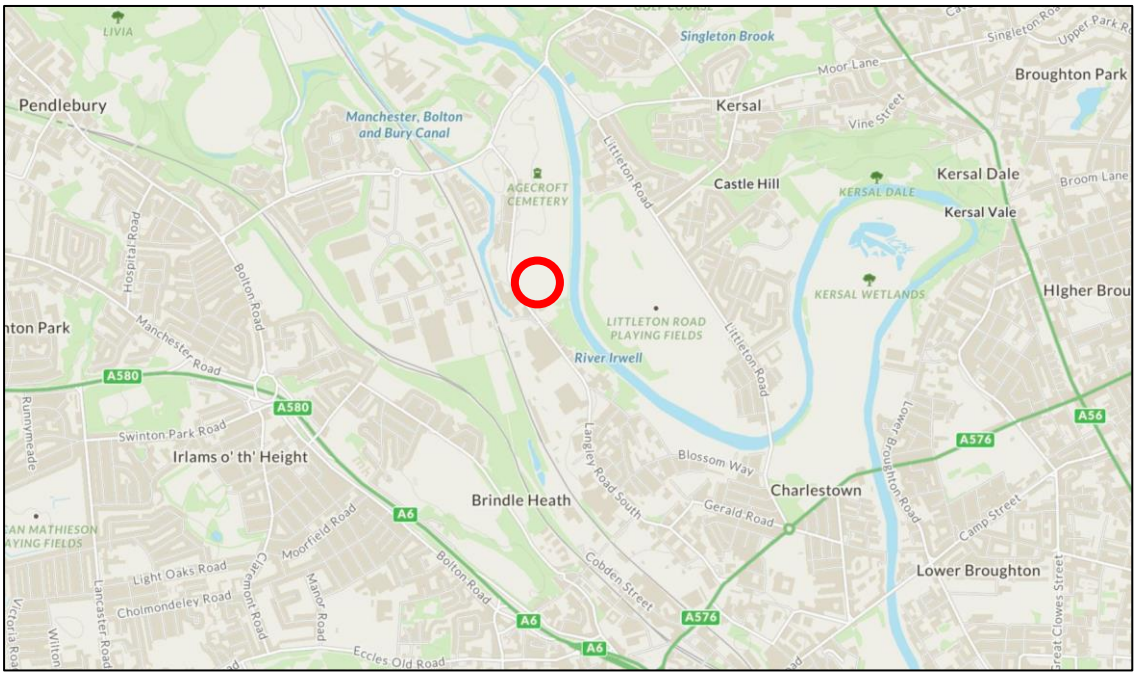

Figure 1 showing the location of the site, circled in red

Description of Development

1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the demolition of the existing structure and the construction of three commercial units, with parking.

Biodiversity in Planning

1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) gives specific reference to minimising the impacts of development on biodiversity. Local and Neighbourhood plans also provide guidance towards protecting and enhancing biodiversity, including priority habitats and notable species.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

2.1 A Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2010). The site was walked, and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries.

2.2 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required to provide an overview of the habitats present within the site and to assess any potential protected species issues on the site.

2.3 During the Extended Phase 1 survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g., setts, paths, latrines, and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt and a ground-level assessment of the trees on site for potential bat roost features.

2.4 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Daytime Bat Survey

2.5 A daytime bat survey of the buildings was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost within the building.

2.6 An external assessment was undertaken, which included, for example, looking for gaps between any soffit boards and walls, gaps between window frames and the walls, and looking for bat droppings on the walls and window ledges. Where possible, an internal assessment was also carried out, with particular focus on gaps in walls, cracks in roof beams, and any evidence of bat activity, such as bat droppings, in the internal spaces.

2.7 A pair of close-focussing binoculars and a high-powered torch were used to search for evidence of bats.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

2.8 Joe Cooper (Ecologist) carried out the survey on the 12th April 2022. Joe is an experienced ecologist and is trained in habitat surveys and protected species assessments. Protected species assessments can be undertaken at any time of the year. The weather at the time of the survey was overcast and calm with light showers.

Survey Constraints

2.9 The structure on site was fully accessible. April is a sub-optimal time of the year for botanical surveys, but given the type of habitats present on site, a thorough assessment could be made.

3.0 RESULTS

HABITATS

3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map can be found at the back of the report. The habitats on the proposed development site are described below.

Bare Ground

3.2 Bare ground is the dominant habitat on site (see Photograph 1). The majority of the bare ground comprises hardstanding, with smaller areas of gravel and rubble which is unvegetated.

Photograph 1 showing the bare ground

Continuous Scrub

3.3 Small pockets of dense scrub exist (see Photograph 2). These comprise self-seeded Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Grey Willow *Salix cinerea* and Butterfly-bush *Buddleja davidii* with Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.

Photograph 2 showing the dense scrub

Continuous Scrub/Introduced Shrub

3.4 Areas of previously managed amenity shrubs exist at the southern end of the site. This habitat is now unmanaged and scrub is establishing within it (see Photograph 3). Species and varieties include Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg, roses, heather *Erica* var., and bulbs such as Daffodil *Narcissus* var.

Photograph 3 showing scrub/introduced shrub habitat

Tall, Ruderal Herb

3.5 Linear swathes of tall, ruderal vegetation exist on the peripheries of the site (see Photograph 4). Species include Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, Rosebay Willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, Broad-leaved Dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, Common Ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, Cleavers *Galium aparine* and Herb-Robert *Geranium robertianum.*

Photograph 4 showing the tall, ruderal vegetation

Ephemeral/Short Perennial

3.6 Low-growing ephemeral vegetation is establishing across parts of the bare ground (see Photograph 5). Species include Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua*, Common Mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum*, Chickweed *Stellaria media* and Bristly Ox-tongue *Helminthotheca echioides.*

Photograph 5 showing the ephemeral/short perennial habitat

Neutral Grassland

3.7 Small areas of rank, neutral grassland exist on site (see Photograph 6). These appear to have once been amenity grassland. The grassland is species-poor and includes Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshore Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, Yarrow *Achillea millefolium* and Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg.

Photograph 6 showing the neutral grassland

Spoil

3.8 Spoil piles exist along the northern boundaries of the site (see Photograph 7).

Photograph 7 showing a spoil pile

Existing Buildings

3.9 A brick kiosk exists on site. This is described in detail within the daytime bat survey results section, below.

Trees

3.10 A small number of immature self-seeded trees exist on site (see Photographs 8 and 9). These include Alder *Alnus glutinosa*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Cherry *Prunus* var. and Ash *Fraxinus excelsior.*

Photograph 8 showing one of the trees

Photograph 9 showing some of the trees

Boundaries

3.11 The boundaries are marked by fencing.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

3.12 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

3.13 No ponds exist on site or within 250m of the site. The site supports limited suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt, with only the scrub, shrubs and tall, ruderal vegetation offering cover and foraging habitat. These habitats are isolated.

Bats

3.14 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Daytime Bat Survey

3.15 A single-story dilapidated kiosk exists on site and this is proposed to be demolished (see Photograph 10). The kiosk is brick-built with wooden panelling. The flat roof comprises bitumen felt (see Photograph 11). The roof is in a poor state of repair. The metal barge boards are weathered.

Photograph 10 showing the kiosk

Photograph 11 showing the kiosk roof

3.16 Internally, kiosk is open, well-lit and cool. The wooden roofing panels are dilapidated and have been removed in places (see Photograph 12). This allowed a view into the void between the roof and ceiling. This was found to be damp. The brick walls provide no cavities suitable for bats. No evidence of bat activity was found within the kiosk.

Photograph 12 showing the ceiling of the kiosk

Badger

3.17 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.

3.18 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity such as latrines or snuffle holes was located on site.

Nesting Birds

3.19 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

3.20 Limited suitable bird nesting habitat exists on site. The scrub and trees are open and isolated. The kiosk is also open but has the potential to support passerines.

INVASIVE SPECIES

3.21 No invasive, non-native species, as listed on Schedule 9 Part II (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), were found on site.

PROTECTED SITES

3.22 No statutory protected sites exist on the site or adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory protected site is The Cliff/Kersal Dale Local Nature Reserve (LNR), which lies 770 metres to the north-east. Kersal Moor LNR lies 1.2km to the north-east.

3.23 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may have a deleterious impact on protected sites nearby. The type of development proposed is not listed as a concern at this location.

3.24 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or adjacent to the site. The nearest non-statutory protected site is Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal at Agecroft Site of Biological Importance (SBI), which lies 100 metres to the west of the site, across Langley Road.

4.0 ASSESSMENT

HABITATS

4.1 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.

4.2 The site offers very limited ecological value. The bare ground offers no ecological value. The tall, ruderal vegetation, scrub and shrubs provide a limited source of nectar and pollen for invertebrates. The scattered trees are open and offer sub-optimal nesting habitat for birds.

Development Context

4.3 The proposed development will cause the loss of all habitats on site, including the buildings. Given the poor ecological value of the site, no specific habitat mitigation is required. However, where possible, the implementation of soft landscaping and the provision of bird and bat boxes would enhance the ecological value of the site.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

4.4 No ponds exist on site or within 250m of the site boundaries. The site supports limited suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat. Due to the lack of suitable breeding habitat in the locality and limited suitable terrestrial habitat, it is considered Great Crested Newt is unlikely to be present on site and is not considered to be a constraint on the development.

Bats

4.5 The building on site (a kiosk) has been the subject of a daytime bat survey. No evidence of bat activity was found during the survey. The kiosk on site is in a poor state of repair and is open and well-lit. The kiosk is considered to offer negligible suitability for a bat roost. The trees on site are semi-mature and offer no potential bat roosting features. The trees are considered to offer negligible suitability for a bat roost. No suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat is present on site.

Badger

4.6 No Badger sett of evidence of Badger activity was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. Badger is not considered to be a constraint on the development at this time.

Nesting Birds

4.7 The site supports very limited suitable bird nesting habitat. The kiosk offers low suitability for nesting birds. The trees and scrub are open. However, it is recommended that the buildings and vegetation are removed outside of the bird nesting season (the

nesting season in generally March to August) or a bird nesting survey is undertaken first.

PROTECTED SITES

4.8 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie within the proposed development site or immediately adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory protected site is The Cliff/Kersal Dale LNR, which lies 770 metres to the north-east. There is no habitat connectivity between the site and the LNR, with the River Irwell lying inbetween. The nearest non-statutory protected site is Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal at Agecroft SBI, which lies 100 metres to the west of the site, across Langley Road. Given the distances involved and the fact that the site is isolated within a built-up area, it is considered that the proposed development will have no deleterious effect on protected sites.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Further Surveys

5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. The presence of protected species, the effect of the proposed development and suitable mitigation, if required, must be established before planning permission can be granted. From the results of the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, no further surveys are required.

5.2 Depending on the timings of the site clearance and demolition, a precautionary approach should be taken regarding nesting birds. The building and vegetation should be removed outside of the bird nesting season (the nesting season in generally March to August) or a bird nesting survey be undertaken first.

Protected Species

5.3 If any protected species, such as bats or evidence of bat activity, is found during the development works, then work must stop, and an ecologist be contacted for advice.

5.4 If the building is not demolished within two years of the date of the daytime bat survey, then a further bat survey will be required to update the findings.

Biodiversity Enhancement

5.5 During soft landscaping design, the following measures should be implemented to increase the biodiversity value of the site:

- Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.

- Bird boxes and bat boxes should be erected/incorporated onto the new buildings.

6.0 REFERENCES

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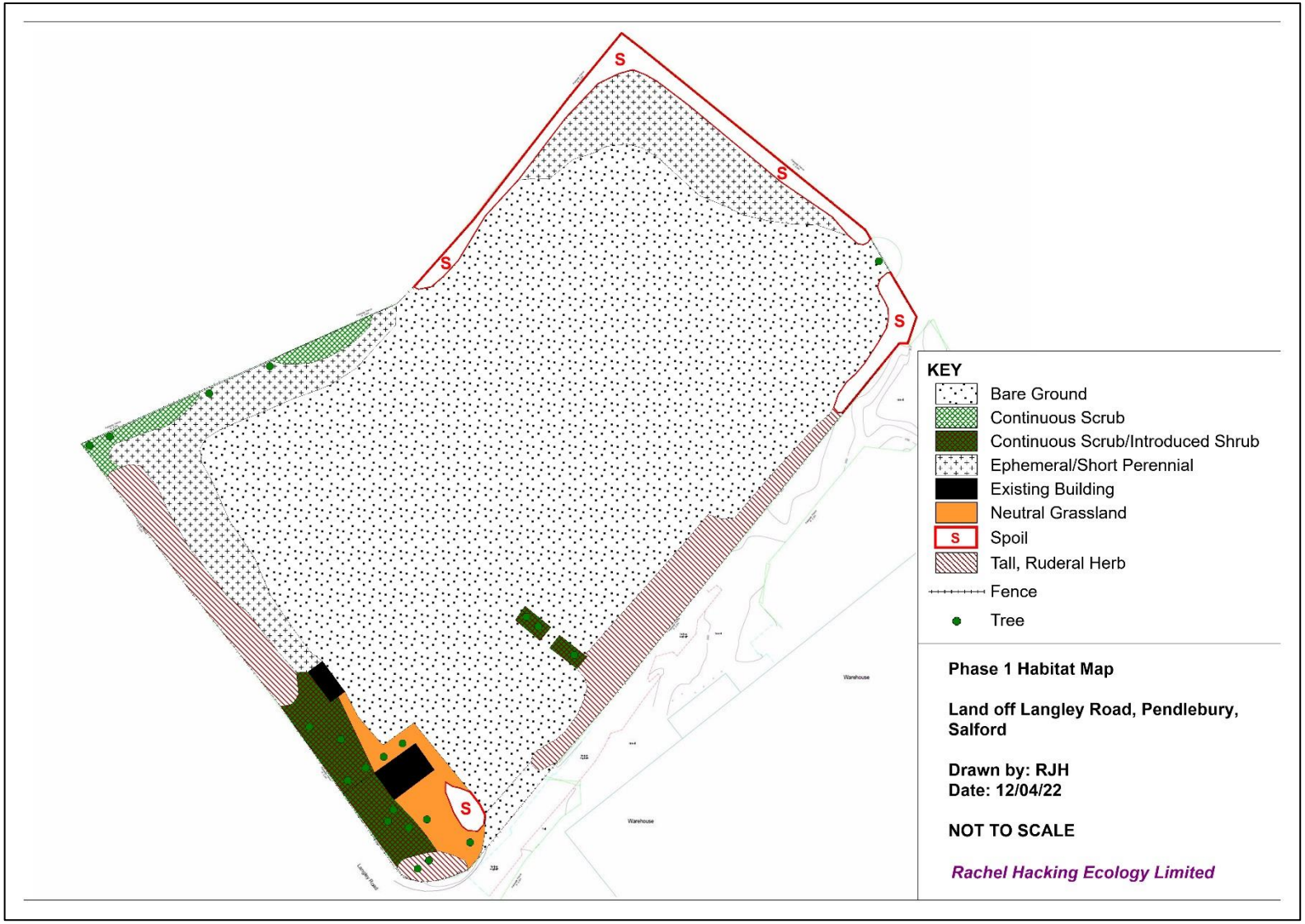
APPENDIX A – PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP