

ENVIRONMENT

Tilstone Industrial Ltd

Gellings Road

Knowsley

Ecological Impact Assessment:

Addendum Report

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Ecological Impact Assessment: Addendum Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background information

- 1.1 BWB Consulting Ltd (BWB) were previously instructed by Tilstone Industrial Ltd (the Client) to complete an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) (BWB, 2019) on Land off Gellings Road, Knowsley (the Site). Following the issue of the assessment in 2019 outline planning permission was granted (REF:19/00243/OUT) for the creation of industrial/commercial premises at the Site. Since the outline approval, new similar proposals have been created and will be progressed under a new planning application. This addendum report is therefore provided as an ecological update to satisfy any requirements of the planning process for the Site with regards to potential ecological impacts. As such, this report should be read in conjunction with the afore referenced EcIA.
- 1.2 The previous EcIA report focused on two separate land parcels at the Site. However, given the nature of the Proposed Development, this addendum relates only to the eastern parcel of land as illustrated below in **Figure 1.1**

Site Setting

- 1.3 The Site is located off Gellings Road, Knowsley at Central Grid Reference SJ 42110 96351

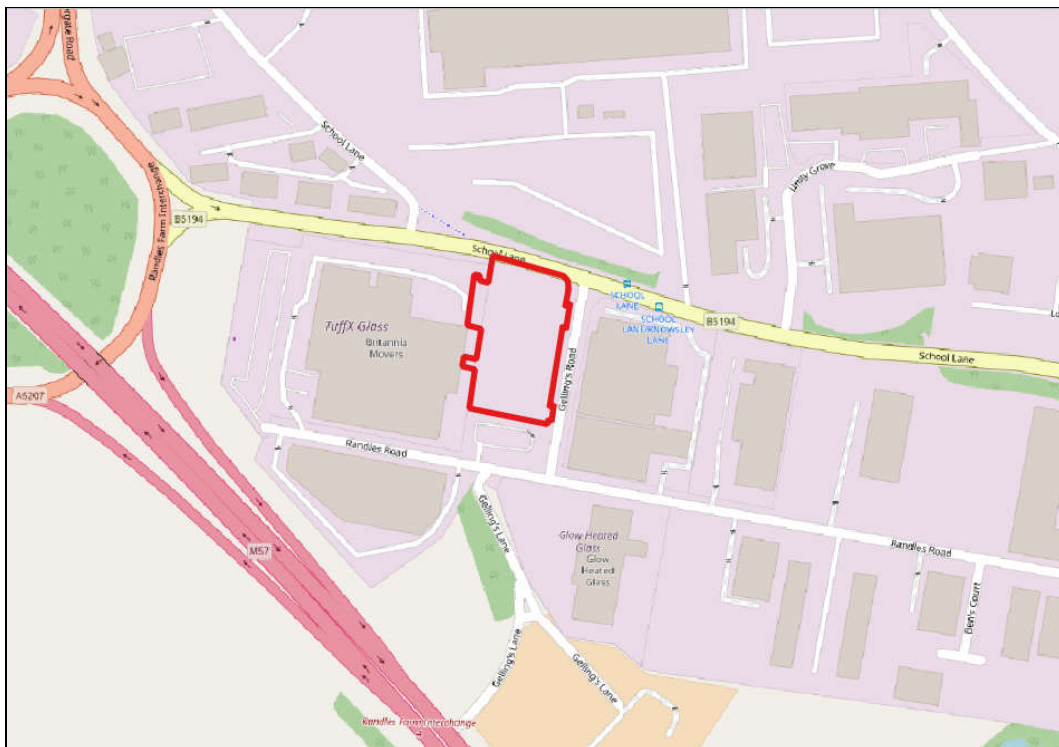


Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan

Scope of Works

- 1.4 This addendum report was informed by an update Site visit comprising an Extended Phase 1 habitat survey and protected species scoping, including a Preliminary Bat Roost

Assessment (PBRA) of the building immediately west of the Site, as well as a review of the proposals, former EcIA and desk study data to determine likely significant effects as a result of the scheme.

2. RESULTS

Desk Study Review

- 2.1 Since the previous EcIA no new designated sites have been identified within the search radius outlined within the former report. Furthermore, the Site is still not located within any Impact Risk Zone for any statutory designated sites.
- 2.2 Additionally, the removal of the western parcel of land from this application stands to benefit conservation interests locally as this parcel of land was particularly close (within 30m) to the River Alt and M57 corridor; as such potential pathways to impacts for these features are reduced as the application Site is now over 50m from both.

Habitats

- 2.3 A site survey was undertaken on 19th August 2021 by Joe McLaughlin BSc (Hons) MCIEEM. Joe has extensive experience in Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey and is appropriately qualified to undertake these types of surveys based on the CIEEM competencies for species surveys (CIEEM, 2017). Joe is also registered to use a Natural England Class Licence to survey for bats (2016-26529-CLS-CLS) and great crested newts (2015-16947-CLS-CLS) (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* and is a registered consultant under Annex B of the Bat Mitigation Class Licence Scheme.
- 2.4 The Site remains relatively unchanged since the previous surveys and EcIA. Most notably, scrub clearance in the northern section of the Site has allowed the coverage of semi-improved grassland previously recorded to extend further. The cleared scrub is however recolonising, with scattered scrub recorded sporadically in the northern portion of the semi-improved grassland. Additionally, since the previous survey two small fruit trees have been removed at the eastern boundary along Gellings Road.
- 2.5 The Extended Phase 1 habitat survey map is provided as in **Appendix 1** of this report. Below is a summary of the habitats found within the site.

Ephemeral/Short perennial

- 2.6 A narrow strip of ephemeral/short perennial vegetation was recorded on a gravel substrate with the species present comprising a mixture of those present within the adjacent tall ruderal and semi-improved grassland (see below). The habitat was small in area, did not contain a rich assemblage of plants that were rare/uncommon and did not have a high level of naturalness.

Scrub

- 2.7 A belt of dense scrub was located within the northern portion of the Site. This was dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. with occasional young emerging gorse

Ulex europaeus and hazel *Corylus avellana*, as well as scattered tree saplings including silver birch *Betula pendula* and oak *Quercus* sp. The habitat was small in area, did not contain a rich assemblage of plants or plants that were rare/uncommon and did not have a high level of naturalness.

Semi-improved Grassland

- 2.8 The grassland comprised rough semi-improved grassland with a sward height of up to 30cm. Species present included cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, meadow grass *Poa* sp., ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., birds' foot-trefoil *Anthyllis vulneraria* and yarrow *Achillea millefolium*. Occasional daisy *Bellis perennis* salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor*, kidney vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria* and mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris* were also present with soft rush *Juncus effusus* scattered throughout. The habitat was considered to be of limited floristic value and lacked natural characteristics; particularly given its urbanised location.
- 2.9 At the northern extent of this habitat scattered emerging scrub was beginning to colonise with species as per those listed above under Section 2.7.

Tall ruderal

- 2.10 An area of raised ground was present which tall ruderal species had colonised. Species included broadleaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, burdock *Arctium* sp., and ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*. The habitat was small in area, did not contain a rich assemblage of plants or plants that were rare/uncommon and did not have a high level of naturalness.

Scattered Trees

- 2.11 The eastern and northern boundary of the Site comprised a row of fruit trees and belt of mature native trees respectively. Species included ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, poplar *Populus* sp., oak and silver birch. The habitat was small in area, did not contain a rich assemblage of plants or plants that were rare/uncommon and did not have a high level of naturalness. All trees were in good health and lacked any deterioration.

Hardstanding

- 2.12 Some small sections of hardstanding were located within the survey boundary; this habitat is of little to no ecological significance.

Protected/Notable Species

Roosting Bats

- 2.13 None of the trees on-site showed any signs of deterioration; as such they were all assessed as providing '**Negligible**' potential to support roosting bats.

- 2.14 The building adjacent to the western boundary of the Site was subject to Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment as it is understood there will be some form of roofline connection (for a pedestrian walkway) between the new structure and the off-site building.
- 2.15 This building was split into two distinctive sections (northern and southern sections); both of which are described below in further detail.
- 2.16 The southern section of the building was a single storey brick-built structure with uPVC double glazed windows and doors, and a flat felt lined roof; all of which was in a good state of repair. Internally, the space was utilised as offices with suspended, false ceilings and a lack of any internal loft void. As no viable roosting features or evidence of bats was found this section of the building was considered to provide '**Negligible**' potential to support roosting bats.
- 2.17 The northern section of this building comprised a single storey, steel framed warehouse with a pitched roof and a brick foundation which was in a good state of repair. No viable ingress/egress features were identified from the building's exterior. Internally this part of the structure was utilised as a glass manufacturing warehouse and housed extremely loud and bright machinery which would likely reduce suitability for bat roosting. Furthermore, the supporting roof steels were exposed and as such no void space or potential hidden crevices were identified with corrugated sheet metal roof and walls visible throughout. In consideration of these factors and as no evidence of bats was recorded it is considered extremely unlikely roosting bats will be present within this structure. As such the northern section has been assessed as providing '**Negligible**' potential.

Foraging bats

- 2.18 Given the urban location and the retention of peripheral linear vegetation features no further bat activity surveys are considered necessary.
- 2.19 Photos of the building are included within an **Appendix 2** at the end of this report.

Amphibians

- 2.20 The habitats present on-site comprised a mosaic of scrub and rough grassland and as such provided suitable foraging and commuting habitat for amphibians including great crested newts (GCN) and common toad *Bufo bufo*. However, no suitable waterbodies were recorded on-site at the time of the survey. A search of OS maps and aerial photography highlighted the presence of several ponds to the southeast of the Site. However, the closest was approximately 0.45km from the Site on the opposite side of an industrial area and associated major roads which were considered to present a suitable barrier to dispersal. Furthermore, there were no records of GCN within 0.5km of the Site. Protected and priority amphibians were therefore considered highly unlikely to be present on-site.

Badger

- 2.21 No confirmed evidence of badgers was found on-site such as setts, hairs, latrines or footprints. Furthermore, the Site was isolated from other areas of suitable habitat by

roads and industrial areas. There were no desk study records of badgers. As such it is considered extremely unlikely the species traverse through the site.

Birds

- 2.22 The habitats on-site were likely to support common foraging and nesting species of birds; however, an important assemblage was considered unlikely given the urban setting. Incidental sightings included wood pigeon *Columba palumbus* only. Alongside this, the historic survey of the Site included incidental sightings of Greenfinch *Chloris chloris* and blackbird *Turdus merula*, both of which are listed as 'Green' on the latest birds of conservation concern list which is the lowest category of concern. As site conditions remain largely the same it is assumed such species will still likely utilise the site.
- 2.23 The range of different bird species identified within the desk study are highlighted within the previous report.

Reptiles

- 2.24 No reptiles or evidence of reptiles was recorded on-site. The habitats were suitable to support common species providing a mosaic of habitats including foraging, vegetative cover and basking areas. However, there were no records of reptiles within 2km of the Site. Furthermore, the Site was isolated from other areas of suitable habitat by roads and industrial areas. Reptiles were considered highly unlikely to be present on-Site.

Other Species

- 2.25 Despite being within their geographical range the Site was not considered to support habitats well suited to red squirrel. Furthermore, as the site was isolated from other areas of suitable habitat by roads and industrial areas
- 2.26 The Site was considered to provide suitable opportunities for foraging, commuting and hibernating hedgehogs. Hedgehogs are listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and are therefore a material planning consideration.

3. IMPACT RISKS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The Site conditions remain largely the same since the previous EcIA was completed. As such, impact risks associated with the revised (but very similar) scheme are considered like for like. As such no further assessment or surveys are considered necessary in support of the proposals. Therefore, recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement outlined in the previous report should be followed as necessary (see Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the previous EcIA for full details) for the following receptors:
- River Alt and M57 Corridor Nature Improvement Area;
 - Knowsley Brook Local Wildlife Site;
 - Foraging Bats;
 - Birds; and
 - Hedgehogs.
- 3.2 To facilitate appropriate design, specification and location of enhancement features recommended for the Site in the former EcIA report a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan should be produced.
- 3.3 As the western parcel of land is not included within the application, prescriptions relating to the semi natural broad-leaved woodland are no longer considered applicable and should not be followed as part of this scheme.

4. REFERENCES

- Bat Conservation Trust (2018) Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK – Guidance Note 08/18.
- BWB (2019) Land off Gellings Road, Ecological Impact Assessment. GRK-BWB-ZZ-XX-RP-EN-0001
- British Standards Institution (2013) BS42020:2013 Biodiversity – code of practice for planning and development. BSI Standards Ltd, London.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2019) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. CIEEM, Winchester.
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- Collins J. (ed) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition). Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2016) Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: a technique for environmental audit. JNCC, Peterborough.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021) National Planning Policy Framework. ISBN: 978-1-4098-5302-2.
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside Website. <http://www.magic.gov.uk/>
- Stace, C.S. (2019) New Flora of the British Isles, 4th edition. University Press, Cambridge.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Phase 1 Habitat Plan



- Notes**
1. Do not scale this drawing. All dimensions must be checked/ verified on site. If in doubt ask.
 2. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant architects, engineers and specialists drawings and specifications.
 3. All dimensions in millimetres unless noted otherwise. All levels in metres unless noted otherwise.
 4. Any discrepancies noted on site are to be reported to the engineer immediately.

- Key**
- Phase 1 Hab styles**
- Dense Scrub
 - Scattered Trees
 - SI Grassland
 - Tall Ruderal
 - Eph/Short Perennial
 - Hard Standing
 - Site Boundary

PM	26.08.21	Phase 1 Habitat Plan	JM JM
Version 1			
Birmingham 0121 233 3322 Leeds 0113 233 0000 London 0207 407 2879 Manchester 0161 233 4260 Nottingham 0115 924 1100 www.bwbconsulting.com			

Client

Tilstone Industrial Ltd.

Project Title

Gellings Road, Knowsley

Drawing Title

Phase 1 Habitat Map

Drawn:	JM	Review:	PM
BWB	MCA2031	Date:	26.08.21
Drawing Status		Scale@	1:1000
Final			
Project - Originator - Zone - Level - Tree - Role -			
GRK-BWB-ZZ-XX-DR-MC-0001			
Status	PM	Rev	02

APPENDIX 2: Site Photographs

Appendix 2: Site Photographs



Photograph 1: Scrub and trees in the northern section of the site



Photograph 2: Semi-improved grassland



Photograph 3: Southern section of offsite building



Photograph 4: Northern Section of off-site building

