

Ryan Macindoe
107 Mere Grange,
Leaside,
St Helens,
WA9 5GG

Date 28 April 2025
Project Ref UG2142

Dear Ryan,

Re: Sandy Brow – Results of 2025 Ecological Walkover

An ecological walkover of land at Sandy Brow Lane, Knowsley, was conducted on 16th April 2025, by Barnaby Indio Gardner, Ecologist, BSc, MEnvSci, PGCert, and Tafara Musonza, Biodiversity Net Gain Consultant, BSc, MSc. The purpose of the survey was to provide an update to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, conducted by Urban Green at the site in August 2023.

The original PEA survey found the site to comprise marshy, cattle-grazed modified grassland, bordered by plantation woodland and minor scrub, with an agricultural ditch lining the south of the site. Noted ecological constraints were:

- Presence of invasive, non-native Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*).
- Suitable habitats for reptiles
- Suitable habitats for commuting and foraging bats
- Potential for overwintering birds
- Potential presence of water vole
- Suitable habitats for common mammals, and amphibians.

A suite of surveys for the above constraints were conducted throughout spring – summer 2024. These surveys assessed an absence of reptiles, overwintering birds, and water voles at the site, and only a minor presence of common bat species foraging.

During the 2025 resurvey, it was noted that the site's grassland parcel has been fenced off from cattle, since the time of the 2024 species surveys. This has allowed lesser disturbance to the grassland and a taller and more complex sward. An updated botanical survey assessed a dominance of Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), cock's foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), and creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) grasses, as well as hard rush (*Juncus inflexus*), with an abundant presence of soft rush (*Juncus effusus*) across much of the site's area. Other species commonly present included common mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*), bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), water dock (*Rumex hydrolapathum*), and broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*). The grassland was still notably poorly drained, marshy and wet, despite a recent extended spell of exceptionally warm and dry weather.

Based on this resurvey, much of the site's area has been reclassified, from formerly modified grassland (g4) to Holcus-Juncus neutral grassland (g3c8). This is excluding the southwest corner of the site, west of the southern woodland, which has been reclassified to other neutral grassland (g3c), owing to its lack of dominant rushes, symptomatic of more effective drainage into the nearby ditch. The site's other minor habitats – mixed scrub, artificially unvegetated land, and southern ditch – have not been reclassified, and were assessed to be the same state. This includes the

continued presence of non-native, invasive Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed, which may be assumed to have spread in their range since the 2023 survey and should require removal by a specialist.

Please see attached Figure 1 for the updated UKHab habitat map.

Despite habitat reclassification, no additional ecological constraints were assessed for the site. As the results 2024 suite of species surveys are considered valid until at least the summer of 2026, no further surveys are recommended, pending that development of the site commences before then. Should no development commence by mid-2026, species surveys for the site may require resurveying.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,



Barnaby Indio Gardner,

Ecologist, BSc, MEnvSci, PGCert



T: +44 (0) 161 312 3131

barnaby.gardner@weareurbangreen.co.uk



U R B A N
G R E E N

Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Rivers and streams
- Mixed scrub
- Artificial unvegetated
- Other neutral grassland
- Rural Tree
- Target note
TN1 - Himalayan balsam
TN2 - Japanese knotweed

N



0 15 30 60 Meters



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