

BIODIVERSITY MITIGATION PLAN

SITE 4 IMAGE BUSINESS PARK, KNOWSLEY INDUSTRIAL EST.

prepared by



commissioned by

HALE ARCHITECTURE

on behalf of

KNOWSLEY (IMAGE BUSINESS PARK) LTD.

AUGUST 2022



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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Clarkson and Woods Ltd. were commissioned by Hale Architecture on behalf of Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. to prepare a Biodiversity Mitigation Plan (BMP) for Site 4 Image Business Park at Knowsley Industrial Estate, Merseyside. This follows a request for further information from Knowsley Council with regards to an application for demolition consent for the onsite building (ref: 22/00389/DEMCON), which states the following:

“Ecology | The following information is required:

Reptiles:

The applicant intends to stockpile demolition material following works before transporting offsite. The demolition material may provide resting places for reptiles, including common lizard (Priority Species) which has been recorded within the wider industrial estate and for which tussocky grassland and hardstanding on site provides suitable habitat.

As a precaution, the applicant must submit a brief statement outlining what Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) they intend to implement during demolition. The statement should include the following:

- *The working area, together with any storage areas, will be kept clear of debris, and any stored materials will be kept off the ground on pallets so as to prevent amphibians / reptiles from seeking shelter or protection within them; and*
- *Any open excavations (e.g. foundations / footings / service trenches etc) will be covered with plywood sheeting (or similar) at the end of each working day. The edges of these sheets will be covered with a thick layer of topsoil or similar) to prevent amphibians / reptiles from seeking shelter beneath them. Any excavation must be in-filled and made good to ground level with compacted stone or similar at the earliest opportunity, so as to remove any hazard to amphibians / reptiles.*

The applicant is advised to note the following:

Amphibians:

The sensitive nature of the demolition methods means impacts beyond the area of works can be discounted. However, the area due for demolition contains a shallow water body which may provide habitat for breeding common amphibians. The demolition of the shallow body of water should be completed outside of the amphibian breeding season to prevent impacts to common amphibians (destruction of the waterbody to take place between July and February inclusive)."

- 1.1.2 In addition to the above, the site was noted to offer some suitability for nesting birds, including within the existing building. A method statement (MS) has therefore also been included for this important ecological feature.
- 1.1.3 This BMP has been informed by an ecological assessment undertaken by Clarkson and Woods on 19th April 2022¹ and refers only to the demolition phase of the development.
- 1.1.4 This BMP has been written in accordance with the pre-app planning response and provides mitigation strategies and schedules for the demolition works, as well as highlighting responsible personnel.
- 1.1.5 Further ecological mitigation and enhancement measures will likely be required as part of any future planning application, which are not covered under the scope of this BMP.
- 1.1.6 This BMP follows the guidelines set out within the Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development, British Standard 42020:2013².

¹ Pre-demolition Ecological Assessment – Site 4, Acomfield Road, Knowsley – Clarkson & Woods, May 2022

² BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity: Code of Practice for Planning and Development. British Standard Institute (2013)



2 RESPONSIBLE PERSONNEL & LINES OF COMMUNICATION

2.1 Asset Owner

- 2.1.1 Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. are to be responsible for the implementation of this BMP during the demolition phase of the scheme, and will ensure that the party responsible for undertaking the works is enacting the measures detailed in this BMP.
- 2.1.2 Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. will pass on this BMP where an outside organisation is contracted to carry out activities on the site.
- 2.1.3 Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. will liaise with the ECoW to commission and arrange an ecologist's input or site attendance, where required.
- 2.1.4 Should management responsibilities of the site change, new personnel will be made aware of and action this BMP.

2.2 Main Contractor

- 2.2.1 Upon appointment of a demolition contractor, all personnel will be made aware of and action this BMP.

2.3 Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW)

- 2.3.1 The ECoW will be a line of enquiry for issues requiring ecological expertise during the demolition phase of works. The ECoW will assist and advise Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. and their appointed demolition company in their adherence to the requirements of this BMP, to ensure legal compliance.
- 2.3.2 Ecological queries should be directed to Clarkson & Woods Ltd. Where another ecological consultancy is employed to fulfil this role, any ecologist must be suitably qualified, have at least two years' experience and be in receipt of suitable training in how the responsibilities of the ECoW are to be discharged.

2.4 Contact Details

	Name	Address	Contact Details
Site Owner	Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd.	180 Piccadilly, London W1J 9HF	--
Demolition Contractor	TBC	TBC	TBC
ECoW	Clarkson & Woods Ltd.	Overbrook Business Centre, Poolbridge Road, Blackford, Somerset BS28 4PA	Charlie Durigan charlie.durigan@clarksonwoods.co.uk 01934 712 500



4 OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 The following objectives have been identified which, if met, will ensure that existing wildlife will be protected, habitats are removed sensitively, and other ecological features are safeguarded during the demolition phase of the development.
- 4.1.2 These objectives will be addressed through the Method Statements (MSs) provided in Section 5, along with a timetable of implementation in Appendix A. The method statements will be implemented by the demolition contractors / management personnel, who will action this BMP during the demolition phase of the scheme.

- **Objective 1: To ensure existing habitats are retained and protected during works**

Retained habitats will be protected during works to ensure their ongoing suitability for use by a range of wildlife.

- **Objective 2: To ensure the demolition works are undertaken in accordance with relevant wildlife legislation**

Reasonable Avoidance Method Statements (RAMS) will ensure that wildlife is appropriately considered during works to ensure the demolition remains lawful and in line with relevant legislation.



5 BIODIVERSITY WORKING METHOD STATEMENTS

- 5.1.1 Adherence to the method statements detailed below will ensure that operational activities remain legally compliant and follow best practice measures relating to biodiversity.
- 5.1.2 The method statements below have been set out in discrete sections to allow them to be extracted and passed on to relevant contractors or filed/placed on a notice board on site, if required.
- 5.1.3 A summary of timings for implementation of these method statements is provided in Appendix A.
- 5.1.4 Relevant figures are shown in Appendix B.
- 5.1.5 Periodic review of the Method Statements will be undertaken, informed by monitoring by the management company and the ecologist, to ensure that the recommendations remain relevant, and any required remedial action is taken. Should any changes in management be required, this BMP will be amended.



METHOD STATEMENT No. 1: Delineating Biodiversity Protection Zones

Project Name	Site 4, Image Business Park	Anticipated Start / Finish	Required prior to commencement and maintained throughout demolition
Site Address / Location	Acornfield Road, Knowsley		
Personnel Required	Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. / Demolition Contractors		
Description of Work	Delineating Biodiversity Protection Zones		
Purpose	To ensure impacts on retained habitats and species are avoided as far as possible during construction works		

Heras-type fencing will be installed around the edge of the demolition site (as shown in Appendix B) prior to works commencing. Whilst also providing security, the fencing will act to protect the retained trees, and other habitats beyond the demolition boundary that will not be impacted during the demolition phase of works. Where protecting trees, the fencing will comply with BS5837 (2012): trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

The fencing will be installed prior to works commencing. No demolition vehicles, machinery or site personnel will access, or materials stored within, the area outside of this fencing.

The above Biodiversity Protection Zone fencing will be marked with weather-proof signage (minimum A4 size) stating "Biodiversity Protection Zone – Keep Out".

The fencing will be subject to regular checks by the site manager to ensure it is appropriately maintained throughout the construction phase.

Completion of fencing installation marks completion of works

Fencing Inspection Proforma to be provided by ECoW to Knowsley Ltd as evidence of completion of work. This report is to be retained as evidence of installation of fencing as per the BMP.

It is the responsibility of the demolition contractor manager to monitor and maintain the BPZ during demolition.



METHOD STATEMENT No. 2:

Tool Box Talk



Project Name	Site 4, Image Business Park	Anticipated Start / Finish	Prior to construction commencing and as required
Site Address / Location	Acornfield Road, Knowsley		
Personnel Required	Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. / Demolition Contractors		
Description of Work	Toolbox talk to be delivered regarding ecological constraints within the site		
Purpose	To ensure species and retained habitats are protected during construction and site personnel are aware of their responsibilities in this regard		
Prior to construction activities commencing, a toolbox talk with be delivered by the ECoW to all site personnel. The talk will cover the ecological features present or potentially present within the site (see Figure 1) and the legal and ecological imperatives for their protection. It will also provide an overview of the Method Statements to be implemented. It will be the responsibility of the site manager to relay all of the information within the toolbox talk to all site staff during their inductions. In the event that site management changes, the toolbox talk shall be repeated by the ECoW Delivery of toolbox talk marks completion. A log of when and to whom toolbox talks have been given should be kept. This should be made available as required as evidence of adherence to the requirement for toolbox talks to be delivered to key site personnel. All new site personnel to be given a toolbox talk by site manager. Requirement for repetition of talk by ECoW if site management change.			



METHOD STATEMENT No. 3:

Protection of Widespread Reptiles and Amphibians (terrestrial)



Project Name	Site 4, Image Business Park	Anticipated Start / Finish	Duration of demolition phase
Site Address / Location	Acornfield Road, Knowsley		
Personnel Required	Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. / Demolition Contractors		
Description of Work	Precautionary approach to works to avoid impacts on widespread reptile and amphibian species		
Purpose	To ensure demolition works do not result in the killing / injury of widespread reptiles and remain in line with relevant legislation (Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended)		

As shown in Appendix B, an area of rough grass, ephemeral vegetation and scrub was present in the north and east of the site, which offers potential reptile habitat. With the exception of a small area (as shown in Appendix B) these habitats will be fenced off prior to demolition works commencing to ensure habitat suitable for reptiles is protected until appropriate mitigation plans are agreed upon for any future development proposals.

At the outset of works, all vegetation within the demolition footprint outside of the BPZ fencing, particularly the areas of rough grass, scrub and ephemeral vegetation will be cut down to reduce its suitability for use by sheltering reptiles and amphibians and dissuade them from the area. Vegetation will be cut down to a height of 150mm using handheld machinery and arisings must be removed from Site immediately after. Vegetation should not be cut less than 150mm as it risks injury to individual animals (in the event that they are present).

Vegetation cutting will ideally be timed between April and October to dissuade active reptiles out of the area. No hibernation features were noted within the area requiring clearance. The small extent of scattered scrub habitat that is to be removed will also ideally be timed to avoid the nesting season for birds (March to August, inclusive), in accordance with MS5. September/October is the optimal time to remove the habitat and minimise impacts on all such wildlife.

An ECoW will be present at the onset of construction (also required under MS2 and MS4); in the unlikely event any reptiles are encountered during vegetation cutting (when undertaken in the active season) they will be moved by the ECoW into an area of retained habitat to the east away from demolition works.

No breaking of ground is required within the area of cleared vegetation. The area is only being cleared to facilitate material storage and machinery associated with demolition.

Further to the above, the following principles will be adhered to for the duration of the demolition phase:

- The working area, together with any storage areas, will be kept clear of debris;
- Any stored materials will be kept off the ground on pallets or in skips and preferably on an area of hardstanding, so as to prevent amphibians / reptiles from seeking shelter or protection within them; and
- Any open excavations (e.g. foundations / footings / service trenches etc) will be covered with plywood sheeting (or similar) at the end of each working day. The edges of these sheets will be covered with a thick layer of topsoil or similar) to prevent amphibians / reptiles



from seeking shelter beneath them. Any excavation must be in-filled and made good to ground level with compacted stone or similar at the earliest opportunity, so as to remove any hazard to amphibians / reptiles.

The BPZ fencing will be maintained as per MS 1. A log of vegetation cutting dates will be kept.



METHOD STATEMENT No. 4:

Removal of Waterbody

Project Name	Site 4, Image Business Park	Anticipated Start / Finish	Duration of demolition phase
Site Address / Location	Acornfield Road, Knowsley		
Personnel Required	Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. / Demolition Contractors		
Description of Work	Precautionary approach to removal of waterbody on site		
Purpose	To ensure demolition works do not result in the killing / injury of widespread amphibians and remain in line with relevant legislation (Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended)		
The area due for demolition contained a shallow waterbody, which may provide habitat for breeding common amphibians, such as common frog or toad. During demolition this waterbody will be removed. The removal of this shallow body of water must be completed outside of the amphibian breeding season to avoid impacts to common amphibians. <u>Destruction of the waterbody must therefore take place between September and January, inclusive.</u> In some years, amphibians may reach their breeding grounds by January/February; removal of the waterbody should therefore take place at the earliest opportunity following the conclusion of the previous breeding season to avoid this risk. The toolbox talk (see MS2) will outline amphibian identification measures to contractors and protocols to follow should any incidental captures be found. In the highly unlikely event that a great crested newt is discovered, works should immediately cease and the ECoW contacted for advice on how to lawfully proceed. Great crested newt are a European Protected Species and works may require a mitigation licence to be in place to facilitate works if they are found to be present. In the event that it is not possible to avoid impacts through timing and the waterbody needs removing during the breeding season an alternative precautionary approach will be required. In this event an EcoW will be present to check the pond. In the unlikely event that the ECoW can not thoroughly search the waterbody by hand and netting, and, where the waterbody holds water, it may be necessary to pump out the water with a fine mesh filter. The supervising EcoW will regularly inspect the pump, and shallow pool using a net to check for and safely remove any animals present. Any common amphibians, larvae or spawn found within the waterbody will need removing and placing within another nearby retained and suitable waterbody under the discretion of the supervising ECoW. The ponds north of Charley Wood c.250m south of Site 4 within the ownership of Knowsley Ltd would provide suitable refuge for any common amphibians found. Any animals would need to be moved placed within a suitable watertight container filled with water from the waterbody and moved within the same day. Where animals are stored for a small amount of time the container must be stored within a safe shaded area with sufficient water and air holes available.			



METHOD STATEMENT No. 5:

Protection of Nesting Birds

Project Name	Site 4, Image Business Park	Anticipated Start / Finish	Duration of demolition phase
Site Address / Location	Acornfield Road, Knowsley		
Personnel Required	Knowsley (Image Business Park) Ltd. / Demolition Contractors		
Description of Work	Any suitable habitat due to be cleared within the nesting bird season will be checked for nesting birds before any works start, clearance commences or damage to these habitats is sustained		
Purpose	In accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to avoid harm to nesting birds, their eggs or young; to avoid any wildlife offences being committed		

The existing building, scrub habitat and trees within the site offer suitable nesting opportunities for a range of bird species, with some removal proposed to facilitate works (primarily the building).

When impacting these habitats, works will ideally be conducted outside of the bird nesting season (breeding March to August, inclusive). However, in the event that works are required between 01 March and 31 August, an inspection of affected habitat / building to confirm the absence of nesting birds will first be required by the ECoW to ensure that no wildlife offences are committed.

Where demolition/habitat clearance during the nesting season is unavoidable, the extent and scope of clearance will be carefully reviewed so that only the areas of scrub that must be cleared during the nesting season are removed. Failure to adhere to this principle, risks contravening the protection afforded to nesting birds within the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended). A check of habitats suitable for nesting birds by an ECoW must be carried out no more than 48 hours prior to their removal if undertaken between March and August.

If an active nest is found, a suitable exclusion zone (at least 5m, but to be confirmed by the attending ECoW) will be installed around the nest to protect it until all young have fledged. Depending on the location, protection fencing and marking may be appropriate. The ECoW may be able to advise on the anticipated date of fledging, based on species and the status of the nest.

Regular inspections of the nest site by an ECoW will be necessary to monitor the nest and determine when the chicks have fledged so the exclusion zone can be removed. In the highly unlikely event that an active bird nest is identified during site clearance in the absence of an ecologist, activity must cease immediately, and advice sought from the ECoW.

A brief proforma report will be prepared following any visits detailing the findings, any constraints, and confirmation of actions required. These logs may need to be presented to the LPA as evidence of appropriate checks having been completed.



APPENDIX A: SCHEDULE OF WORKS

Activity Timetable														Optimal Timing	
														Sub-optimal Timing	
														Prohibited	
MS	Activity	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Timing Detail	
1	Vegetation Cut													Prior to outset of works. September/October optimal to avoid potentially nesting birds To 150mm, removing cuttings from site to reduce suitability for widespread reptiles / amphibians	
2	Installation of BPZ Fencing													Prior to outset of works	
3	Removal of onsite waterbody													To avoid risk to potentially breeding amphibians	
4	Removal of nesting bird habitat													Outside of nesting season unless preceded by an ecological inspection Includes trees, dense scrub & building	



APPENDIX B: BIODIVERSITY MITIGATION PLAN



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