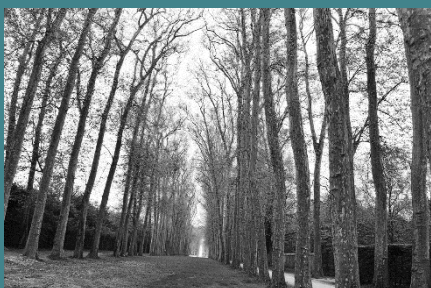


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& design



Ancient Woodland Impact Assessment

Client

Hallam Land Management Limited

Project

Land East of Knowsley Lane

Knowsley

Date

May 2026

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Figure 1: Ancient Woodland Within 1km

Rev	Issue Status	Prepared/Date	Approved/Date
-	Draft	ET/ 29.04.2026	AJB / 30.04.2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following Ancient Woodland Impact Assessment (EcIA) has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd. (FPCR) on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd.

1.2 The following information is provided in response to comments received from Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) dated 12.03.2026 regarding the Ecology Chapter 7 (FPCR 2025) of the Environmental Statement (Pegasus Group, August 2025, ref P21-3399) accompanying the above application. In summary, these comments request further consideration and provision of additional information relating to irreplaceable habitat, ancient woodland.

7. With the evidence currently provided it is not possible to conclude that there will not be a detrimental impact on ancient woodlands as a result of the development, specifically Howard's Pits and Knowles' Pits located within the site boundary and Syder's Grove adjacent to the north of the site. Justification is as follows:

- The proposed development will result in a net increase of 700 households, increasing the population in the area. I acknowledge that the woodlands are already used by locals for walking, however this amount of housing will significantly increase the footfall within the ancient woodlands on-site, particularly as the proposed housing will surround the woodlands on-site. According to studies, over one third of households own a dog¹, which equates to approximately 233+ dogs within the estate, which will require daily dog walking and it is likely that a significant proportion will visit woodlands on or adjacent to the site.*
- Syder's Grove is very easily accessed from the site and it is likely that there will be an increase in recreation at Syder's Grove as a result of development. The technical note states that Syder's Grove is actively managed for recreational use with strategies in place to manage potential impacts. However, no evidence has been provided detailing the current management of Syder's Grove and no assessment has been provided to conclude that the current management is appropriate for the increase in recreation.*
- The Technical Note also references measures set out with Section 7.5 of the ES, including improving existing informal paths and providing alternative walking routes. Section 7.5 is not specifically aimed at mitigating impacts to the ancient woodland but also covers other ecology matters. While measures are welcomed, they are spread across various reports and are not necessarily targeted to the protection of ancient woodland (although they may be applicable to ancient woodland). A single document specific to the mitigation of impacts to ancient woodland is required to provide confidence that there will not be a detrimental impact on the on-site woodlands as a result of the development.*

1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the other ecological documents prepared for this outline application, which comprises the Ecology and Biodiversity Chapter of the Environment Statement (Chapter 7), and other associated Appendices.

Site Context

- 1.4 The Site is approximately 33.75ha in extent and located on the southern border of Knowsley village. It comprises arable fields, priority habitat deciduous woodland, modified and other neutral grassland, scrub and a number of permanent and temporary waterbodies.
- 1.5 The north and western boundaries are native hedgerows. A stone wall forms the southern and eastern boundary.

Proposals

- 1.6 An application for an outline planning permission (Planning Ref: 25/00486/OUT) for the erection of up to 700 dwellings (C3 use class) with vehicular access from Knowsley Lane together with public open space, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage systems and other associated works at Land at Knowsley Estate, Home Farm Road, Knowsley has been submitted.
- 1.7 At this outline design stage, planting plans and detailed habitat creation and ongoing management measures have not yet been fixed. Therefore, a number of assumptions regarding proposed habitat types and condition have been made during this assessment and have been informed by the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (DWG P21-3399_EN-1002 Rev E) (Pegasus 2025) and professional ecological judgement.

2.0 LEGISLATION, POLICY AND METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 Detail on the relevant national policy and legislation for ecology in relation to development Site are provided within the Ecology and Biodiversity Chapter of the Environment Statement (Chapter 7), and other associated Appendices.
- 2.2 Detail on the methodologies and limitations for the Impact Assessment are provided within the Ecology and Biodiversity Chapter of the Environment Statement (Chapter 7), and other associated Appendices.
- 2.3 An additional visit to Little Wood and Syder's Grove woodlands was undertaken on 8th May 2026 in order to inform an opinion of the current recreational pressures and management practices within these woodlands. These woodlands were included within the ancient woodland revised (England) map layer post submission of the outline planning application.

3.0 RESULTS

- 3.1 Prior to submission, none of the woodlands on Site or within 1km were mapped as ancient woodland on the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website. Following an update to the ancient woodland revised (England) map layer, the woodlands included within Table 1 have been identified as ancient woodland (see Figure 1 for their locations).

Table 1 Ancient Woodland within 1km of the Site Boundary.

Site Name	Distance from Site at Closest Point	Description
Howard's Pits	Within the Site	Mapped as Infilled Ancient Wood Pasture the ancient woodland revised (England) map layer. Howard's Pits is the eastern parcel of the two woodlands located centrally within the Site. Canopy species were similar to W-1, broadly in line with NVC community W10-<i>Quercus robur</i> - <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> woodland. Sycamore was frequent to abundant throughout, the canopy with pedunculate oak as a frequent associate. The understorey is dominated by the invasive non-native rhododendron with other species noted only rarely including hawthorn, hazel, holly, hybrid black-poplar and blackthorn. The stands of Rhododendron are dense and the ground flora is mostly absent beneath. However, some open glades are present where the ground flora is more established. English bluebell, creeping soft grass and remote sedge were noted as occasional. W-2 was assessed as 'poor' condition, scoring poorly for presence of invasive non-native species (INNS), low diversity and cover of native species, lack of ground flora and presence of veteran trees.
Knowles' Pits	Within the Site	Mapped as Infilled Ancient Wood Pasture the ancient woodland revised (England) map layer. Knowles' Pits, is the western of two woodland parcels located centrally within the Site. Sycamore was abundant amongst the canopy with pedunculate oak and crack willow as locally frequent associates. An established understorey is present, comprising frequent hazel, dogwood and the invasive non-native species Rhododendron. Other species were noted as a rare or occasional occurrence including downy birch, alder, rowan and grey willow. The ground flora would be broadly characterised as NVC community W10-<i>Quercus robur</i> - <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> woodland with locally frequent common ivy and other species occurring at a rare abundance including the ancient woodland indicator species: remote sedge, native daffodil, English bluebell and scaly male fern.

Site Name	Distance from Site at Closest Point	Description
		Localised areas in the centre of the wood align more closely towards NVC community W6 <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> woodland. In these areas there was a greater abundance of species indicative of damp conditions including alder, crack-willow, grey willow and goat willow. Yellow iris and remote sedge occurred frequently in localised areas. Other species were recorded as occasional or rare including wood dock, bittersweet, creeping buttercup, bluebell and wild angelica. The ancient woodland indicator species remote sedge was noted at an occasional to frequent abundance. Several ponds were present within the woodland and a network of informal paths run throughout linking the more permanent ponds. W-1 was assessed as 'poor' condition, scoring poorly for presence of INNS, diversity and cover of native species and presence of veteran trees.
Knowsley Park	Parts adjacent to the south and east boundaries	Located on the eastern and southern border of the Site, but separated from the development by a high stone wall. A mosaic of woodland habitats are present within Knowsley Park LWS including areas mapped as Ancient Wood Pasture, Infilled Ancient Wood Pasture, Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland and Ancient Replanted Woodland Adjacent to the Site are areas mapped as Ancient Wood Pasture and Infilled Ancient Wood Pasture. Public access to the park is controlled via ticketing.
Syder's Grove	40m N	A mature wood mapped as Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland, dominated by Sycamore, with some mature specimens of Oak, Ash and other native trees. The site is leased to Knowsley Town Council however day to day maintenance is undertaken by Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council under the council's Parks and Green Spaces service, which regularly monitor and maintain sites and support community use and volunteers.
Little Wood Lodge	94m SW	Small Parcel of Little Wood outside of the Little Wood designated LWS on the eastern side of the M57. The woodland appears to be associated with a private garden, and no public access is apparent. The wood is mapped as Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland.
Little Wood	290m west	Located on the western side of the M57. Mapped as Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland. Part of the Little Wood LWS. Broadleaf woodland of 8 hectares with high species diversity and an interesting invertebrate fauna that requires survey. Plants here include native bluebell and regionally important <i>Cyperus sedge Carex pseudocyperus</i>. The wood is managed by the Woodland Trust as a community wood.

Site Name	Distance from Site at Closest Point	Description
Pinfold Wood	365m N	Two parcels of woodland bisected by a track and mapped as Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland. Owned and managed by Knowsley Council.
Admiral's Belt	461m S	Small parcel within the belt of woodland to the south west. In between Knowsley Lane and the M57. No mapped footpaths and no apparent direct access. Mapped as Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland.
Meakins Pits	496m northwest	2 parcels of woodland mapped as Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland and adjoining the M57 within Meakins Pits LWS. It consists of a plantation woodland, dominated by Scot's pine <i>Pinus sylvestris</i> and broadleaf trees, split by the M57 Motorway. Not publicly accessible.

- 3.2 Akers pits and The Roughts were included within the previous impact assessment but have been excluded from this assessment as they have not been mapped as ancient woodland within the ancient woodland revised (England) map layer.
- 3.3 Ancient woodlands are considered as Important Ecological Features (IEF) at a Metropolitan Area scale.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Changes to woodland and tree habitat, including understorey, ground flora and roots and damage to soils, such as compaction

During construction

- 4.1 No direct ancient woodland losses are anticipated; however, construction works have the potential for indirect impacts to ancient woodland via accidental damage, pollution and soil compaction.
- 4.2 With the exception of Howard's Pits, Knowles' Pits and ancient woodland within Knowsley Park, which lie adjacent to or within the Site. All other ancient woodland is considered sufficiently distanced from the Site to avoid such impacts.
- 4.3 Knowsley Park is adjacent to the boundary; however, the proposed development area is located over 17m from Knowsley Park and a 2.5m high solid stone wall forms the boundary between this ancient woodland and the Site, therefore impacts to Knowsley Park via this pathway have been ruled out.

During operation

- 4.4 The Proposed Development will result in an increase in the local population which increases the risk of recreational impacts to ancient woodland through physical damage, compaction, trampling, littering and dog fouling.
- 4.5 Knowles' Pits (W-1) are currently subject to frequent recreational use by dogwalkers and anglers which is not formally managed. As a result of these pressures the ground flora is relatively species-poor. The most likely effect from the proposals is that the level and intensity of this use will increase, resulting in greater pressure and associated effects.
- 4.6 Within Knowsley Park, access is strictly controlled via ticketing, therefore recreational impacts have been ruled out.
- 4.7 No formal or obvious informal public access is apparent to, Little Wood Lodge, Admiral's Belt and Meakin's Pits. Given the distance from the Site and availability of alternative closer publicly accessible woodlands it is considered unlikely that significant numbers of new residents from the development would use Little Wood Lodge, Admiral's Belt or Meakins Pits, and additionally Pinfold Woodlands for recreation. Recreational impacts to these receptors have therefore been ruled out.
- 4.8 Little Wood is designated as a LWS and community wood and is currently actively managed to encourage public access. Management practices apparent during the walkover visit to the woodland included formalised footpaths, picnic areas, interpretation boards and litter bins. Some minor degradation of the woodland, including littering, dog fouling and trampling was apparent but levels were relatively low. and occurred mostly on and adjacent to paths. However, in limited locations was located further into the woodland and away from the paths, where informal paths, littering and some lighting of fires was noted. These areas tended to be focussed on specific features such as the ponds and ditches and were likely a result of children playing. The pedestrian/ cycle route to Little Wood from the Site would entail crossing a busy road at Knowsley Lane and from this point forward, no pathway is provided on the road that crosses the motorway until arriving at Stockbridge village. Given Little Wood is already

surrounded by residential development and is actively managed to encourage public access, as part of its Statutory designation, it is expected that in the absence of any additional mitigation, that any resulting negative effect as a result of the scheme would not be significant.

- 4.9 Syder's Grove wood is located 40m north of the Site and is likely to be used recreationally by new residents. A new active travel corridor link from the Site through Syder's Grove is being considered which may include improvements to the existing footpath network within the Syder's Grove woodland. No lighting of the cycleway is anticipated and improvements will be limited to the existing footpath network, therefore effects on the ancient woodland are unlikely to be significant. The wood is owned and actively monitored and managed by Knowsley Council and is already entirely surrounded by urban development. The woodland trust website describes the wood as perhaps the most used wood serving the village. Within the woodland are a number of existing footpaths, comprising a mixture of mown paths and more formal tracks, which access the woodland from the northern, eastern and southern edges of the woodland. During the woodland walkover, the woodland appears to be very well managed and the presence of formal footpaths, regular mowing of pathways and a narrow verge and presence of litter bins were noted at the woodland entrances. Very minor impacts from litter and dog fouling were apparent (less than would be expected in such an urban area), however these were mostly limited to pathways and adjacent mown areas, with little impact apparent within wider woodland. The ground flora was not characteristic of a NVC woodland type, comprising mostly bramble scrub, which would not be particularly sensitive to recreational impacts and provides a buffer to access away from the paths. It is therefore expected that in the absence of any additional mitigation, that the resulting effects of increased recreational pressure would be negative but these would unlikely be significant.

Changes to functional habitat connections

During construction

- 4.10 Whilst provision of the loop road will result in a minor loss of Hedge H-6, this does not provide functional connectivity between Howard's Pits and Knowsley Park to the south due to the presence of a 2.5m high stone wall at the boundary with Knowsley Park. As such there will be no changes to the functional connectivity of the two woodlands

During Operation

Within the proposed design, existing corridors will be enhanced by new greenspace and scrub /tree planting, which will strengthen links between the two woodlands and provide a more diverse and extensive corridor.

Changes to air quality

During construction

- 4.11 The Air Quality Assessment (Chapter 10 and Appendix 7.9 of the Environment Statement (AQ Consultants 2025)), concluded that the Proposed Development will not have a significant impact on local roadside air quality as a result of construction traffic emissions, due to the low number of vehicles predicted to access the Site per day.
- 4.12 The construction phase has the potential to increase the amount of airborne dust, particularly in periods of dry weather. In the absence of mitigation, dust deposition could result in damage to woodland vegetation. The Air Quality Assessment concluded that with embedded mitigation

in place, the effects of construction dust will be 'not significant' upon any of the surveyed woodlands (Knowles' Pits, Howard's Pits and Ash Plantation (within Knowsley Park adjacent to the Site) and Little Wood).

- 4.13 The Institute of Air Quality Management Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction, suggests that effects to potential ecological receptors are unlikely at distances over 50m from the source. As such, with the exception of Howard's Pits, Knowles' Pits Knowsley Park LWS and Syder's Grove all other areas of ancient woodland fall outside this buffer.
- 4.14 A small part (approximately 0.4% of the total) of Syder's Grove is located within 50m, however the majority of the woodland is over 50m from the Site boundary and none of the woodland is within 75m of proposed development activity because a belt of greenspace is proposed within the north of the Site. As such, construction phase impacts from dust to Syder's Grove are considered to be negligible.

During operation

- 4.15 Within the Biodiversity Air Quality Assessment report (Chapter 10 and Appendix 7.9 of the Environment Statement (AQ Consultants 2025)), Little Wood and Meakins Pits ancient woodlands were scoped out of the assessment as no development traffic will pass within 200m of those.
- 4.16 The Air Quality Assessment considered changes to nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and ammonia concentrations, as well as changes to nitrogen and acid deposition fluxes that may likely change as a result of the Proposed Development. The assessment modelled changes within Howard's Pits and Knowles' Pits onsite as well as within Knowsley Park. The result of this assessment concluded that as a result of reductions in the baseline levels, NO_x and nitrogen deposition concentrations would show an overall reduction within the predicted model. Acid deposition would not show an increase, significantly above the predicted baseline levels in the absence of development and predicted Ammonia levels do not exceed the Critical levels for significant harmful effects.
- 4.17 The Air Quality Assessment did not formally model impacts to the additional ancient woodland parcels within Syder's Grove, Little Wood Lodge, Admiral's Belt and Pinfold Wood as they were designated following submission and were not identified as potential ancient woodlands within the MEAS consultation. However, given that the assessment has scoped out air quality impacts for all the included woodlands, it is considered unlikely that impacts to these additional areas would occur, given their further distance from the Site and similar locations close to existing residential areas or roads. Air quality impacts on ancient woodlands are therefore discounted.

Changes to ground water, from pollutants or changes in hydrology

- 4.18 There are no obvious hydrological links between proposed development areas and areas of ancient woodland. As such, no pathways for hydrological effects during construction have been identified.

Increased light pollution

- 4.19 Increased light levels during construction and post-development have the potential to negatively affect the function of Howard's Pits, Knowles' Pits and adjacent Knowsley Park

ancient woodland as a habitat for wildlife and the retained and proposed wildlife corridors linking them.

- 4.20 However, a 2.5m high wall is present between Knowsley Park LWS and the Site, which will form a barrier to lighting impacts. As discussed within the Ecology Chapter and bat Appendix (Appendix 7.5), given the buffer between these ancient woodlands and proposed development, impacts are unlikely to be significant.
- 4.21 Given the distance of other ancient woodland from the Site, lighting impacts are considered unlikely.
- 4.22 It is not anticipated that cycleway improvements through Syder's grove will include any additional lighting within the woodland.

Increased noise and vibration

- 4.23 Construction operations are likely to increase noise levels temporarily. No significant effects on susceptible fauna were identified within the Ecology Chapter or species appendices.
- 4.24 Additionally, given that the ancient woodlands are located adjacent to existing residential areas, operational noise is unlikely to cause significant effects as fauna are likely to be habituated to recreational noise.
- 4.25 Although no construction information is available at this stage, it is not anticipated that any piling will be required at the proposed Site, therefore all construction vibration effects are anticipated to be negligible. Additionally, no vibration impacts are anticipated during the operational phase.

Risk of garden encroachment, including potential invasive species

- 4.26 There are existing barriers to dumping of garden waste between the Site and Knowsley Park in the form of a high wall. Additionally, given the minimum 15m buffer between gardens and ancient woodland within Howard's Pits, Knowles' Pits and ancient woodland within Knowsley Park, garden encroachment into ancient woodland is considered unlikely given the greenspace buffer surrounding the ancient woodlands. All other ancient woodland is considered sufficiently distanced from the Site to avoid impacts. The risk of garden encroachment, has therefore been scoped out.

5.0 MITIGATION

Embedded Mitigation

- 5.1 The design, which is shown on the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan has sought to retain and buffer areas of ancient woodland onsite and adjacent to the boundary.
- 5.2 Within the embedded mitigation, a minimum 15m wide buffer of planting has been incorporated between the development area and onsite Howard's Pits and Knowles' Pits and adjacent Knowsley Park ancient woodlands. This buffer will mitigate for potential construction impacts via accidental physical damage, pollution and soil compaction.
- 5.3 Approximately 40% of the Site will comprise greenspace post-construction, including a network of footpaths and usable public open space outside of the ancient woodland areas,

which will provide alternative recreational opportunities within the Site to minimise the potential for significant adverse effects on ancient woodland both on and offsite.

- 5.4 The proposed design has focused on maintaining and strengthening the connectivity between and functionality of the onsite and adjacent areas of ancient woodland by establishing significant areas of green infrastructure located immediately adjacent to these habitats. This will maintain and strengthen connectivity for wildlife along the northern boundary of Knowsley Park and from the central Howards and Knowles' Pits towards Knowsley Park.
- 5.5 It is proposed to amend the landscape plan to incorporate a 57m (approx.) wide green corridor which could allow for a 20m dark corridor at the proposed loop road crossing of the existing H-6, connecting Howard's Pits to Knowsley Park. The detailed design of the Site's green infrastructure, secured and delivered by the Biodiversity Net Gain Condition attached to any planning permission, will focus on strengthening these existing corridors, through the creation of additional woodland and scrub.
- 5.6 New planting has been specifically located to provide a buffer from physical, recreational disturbance and lighting impacts via provision of woodland and scrub planting adjacent to areas of ancient woodland onsite and adjacent.
- 5.7 The layout has avoided locating gardens adjacent to areas of woodland and proposed scrub planting within the buffer zone will reduce access and provide further protection from impacts.

Specific Mitigation

- 5.8 A Draft Recreational Management Plan (FPCR 2026) has been produced, based on the illustrative proposals, which sets out measures to ensure that the ancient woodland within and adjacent to the Site does not deteriorate as a result of increased recreational activity associated with the proposed development.
- 5.9 The document sets out the following information:
- The location of sensitive areas within the woodlands (e.g. areas of ancient woodland indicator species and important plant communities) and any protection measures for those areas;
 - Visitor management proposals including details of any proposed footpath provision or access provisions;
 - Further details of fencing such as the types of fencing deemed most appropriate and the proposed extent of fenced areas;
 - How the enhanced areas of the woodland will be safeguarded;
 - Provision of dog waste bins including proposed number and locations deemed most appropriate;
- 5.10 To mitigate for recreational impacts to offsite ancient woodlands particularly Little Wood and Syder's Grove, it is recommended that a financial contribution towards managing the existing pressures of these woodlands is made. This might include but is not limited to provision of new or additional dog waste or litter bins, signage, interpretation boards and path management/maintenance with details to be agreed with the council who currently manage

the woodland. In addition, new home owner packs will be distributed highlighting the pressures and sensitivities of the surrounding ancient woodlands.

5.11 The following lists the core documents that will secure the necessary mitigation and enhancement measures. They can be secured through appropriately worded pre-commencement planning conditions attached to the planning application:

- A detailed Construction and Environmental Management Plan for Ecology (CEMP) to include:
 - a. Details on protective measures for retained and created habitats within the Site, informed by an arboricultural report (and ecological information). The CEMP would outline measures to provide protection to the above and below ground elements of retained hedgerows, woodland and trees that are present on Site and adjacent. To be based on BS 5837:2012, 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction', which comprises the use of protective fencing of root protection areas to restrict damage to features during construction;
 - b. A programme for the monitoring and management of rhododendron. This will include a requirement for control of these species and working method statements during the construction phase to prevent spread of INNS off site;
 - c. Precautionary measures and procedures in order to minimise the risk of any increase in contaminated surface water run-off and pollution events entering sensitive habitats during construction;
 - d. Detailed information on dust control measures which will be implemented during construction;
 - e. Measures to limit the impact of artificial light on retained and created habitats during the construction phase;
 - f. Where appropriate, use of sound and vibration dampening techniques during construction;
 - g. An Ecological Constraints and Mitigation Plan drawing that clearly shows the location of constraints and details of mitigation required, where necessary;
 - h. Method statements for works in order to minimise any harm to protected species during works; and
 - i. Any lighting would be designed to accord with current best practice both for public amenity and safety and in relation to reduction of potential effects on wildlife to direct light onto the road corridors and minimise lateral and vertical light spill.
- A detailed lighting scheme for the Site will be designed to minimise light-spill onto habitats both within and adjacent to it that are suitable for bat foraging and/or commuting. It is recommended that the lighting design strategy is reviewed (and if necessary updated) for any new development proposals as part of future Reserved Matters applications, to ensure there are no negative impacts to wildlife from lighting. Lighting strategies should be informed by best practice guidance, as set out below:
 - a. the avoidance of direct lighting of woodland edge, scrub and retained trees or proposed areas of habitat creation / landscape planting;

- b. LED luminaires should be used where possible due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability;
 - c. a warm white spectrum (ideally <2700 Kelvin) should be adopted to reduce the blue light component;
 - d. light sources should feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats;
 - e. column heights should be carefully considered to minimise light spill and glare visibility; and
 - f. lighting levels should be as low as guidelines permit and only used where required for public safety.
- An updated BNG Assessment, which will provide updated details of the biodiversity offsetting scheme and associated management and monitoring of retained and created habitats.
 - A Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP): this provides planting/landscape information that includes both the landscape and ecology features and their management for an appropriate period. In accordance with the planning practice guidance (PPG) for BNG, this document can be submitted as part of a Biodiversity Gain Plan once full planning permission has been received. This document can also include ecological enhancement and management information as appropriate to demonstrate how the biodiversity net gain measures will be delivered.

6.0 ENHANCEMENT

- 6.1 Presently Howard's Pits and Knowles' Pits, are in a 'poor' condition and are not actively managed for nature conservation. The current lack of structural management and presence of invasive rhododendron within the woods has resulted in a limited ground flora which is mostly absent within the eastern parcel Howard's Pits (W-2). Proposals aim to enhance onsite woodland from poor to moderate condition via management including control of invasive non-native rhododendron and selective felling to open up the ground layer, allowing native ground flora species to develop and improve the woodland structure. Within the illustrative BNG calculations an overall increase of 2.57 Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland units is predicted.
- 6.2 This will allow the natural regeneration of trees and a more diverse understorey and ground flora to develop. Changes such as thinning to create clearings will likely improve the quality of the foraging habitat for species such as bats and birds by creating more open habitats for feeding and increasing the abundance of prey species.
- 6.3 Should planning permission be granted, the woodland enhancements, management and monitoring would be secured for a minimum 30 years via the BNG planning condition. Therefore, the scheme will put the retained onsite ancient woodland habitat and also the proposed buffer habitat areas adjacent to the onsite and offsite woodlands into long-term positive management and provide an enhancement to their existing condition. This will provide a positive effect to the onsite and adjacent ancient woodlands Howard's Pits, Knowles' Pits and Knowsley Park.

7.0 PREDICTED EFFECTS

7.1 Table 2, below summarises the likely impacts, suggested mitigation and predicted effects on Ancient Woodland from proposals. With the exception of those woodlands included in Table 2, no other likely effects on ancient woodland have been identified within the ZOI.

7.2 Ancient woodlands are considered as important IEF at a Metropolitan Area scale.

Table 2 Summary of Likely impacts, mitigation and predicted effects on Ancient Woodland.

	Knowles' Pits	Howard's Pits	Knowsley Park	Syder's Grove wood	Little Wood
Construction Impacts	Accidental damage, pollution and soil compaction. Airborne dust Lighting impacts	Accidental damage, pollution and soil compaction. Airborne dust Lighting impacts	Airborne dust Lighting impacts	N/A	N/A
Operational Impacts	Recreational impacts (physical damage, compaction, trampling, littering and dog fouling). Lighting impacts	Recreational impacts (physical damage, compaction, trampling, littering and dog fouling). Lighting impacts	Lighting impacts	Recreational impacts (physical damage, compaction, trampling, increased littering and dog fouling).	Recreational impacts (physical damage, compaction, trampling, increased littering and dog fouling).
Effect	Not-Significant Negative Effect	Not-Significant Negative Effect	Not-Significant Negative Effect	Not-Significant Negative Effect	Not-Significant Negative Effect

	Knowles' Pits	Howard's Pits	Knowsley Park	Syder's Grove wood	Little Wood
Mitigation	Provision of a CEMP for Ecology to address construction impacts. Provision of a Recreational Management Plan New home owner packs will be distributed highlighting the pressures and sensitivities of the surrounding ancient woodlands. Provision of a detailed lighting scheme. Provision of a HMMP	Provision of a CEMP for Ecology to address construction impacts. Provision of a Recreational Management Plan New home owner packs will be distributed highlighting the pressures and sensitivities of the surrounding ancient woodlands. Provision of a detailed lighting scheme Provision of a HMMP	Provision of a CEMP for Ecology to address construction impacts. Provision of a detailed lighting scheme New home owner packs will be distributed highlighting the pressures and sensitivities of the surrounding ancient woodlands.	Contribution to existing management/maintenance of woodland. New home owner packs will be distributed highlighting the pressures and sensitivities of the surrounding ancient woodlands.	Contribution to existing management/maintenance of woodland. New home owner packs will be distributed highlighting the pressures and sensitivities of the surrounding ancient woodlands.
Residual Effect	Negligible /Neutral	Negligible /Neutral	Negligible /Neutral	Negligible /Neutral	Negligible /Neutral
Enhancement	Management to enhance from poor to moderate condition.	Management to enhance from poor to moderate condition.			

7.3 Following implementation of the mitigation measures as described above, no significant impacts to ancient woodland have been identified. As no residual significant negative effects to ancient woodland have been identified, no degradation or loss of ancient woodland is considered likely as a result of proposals.

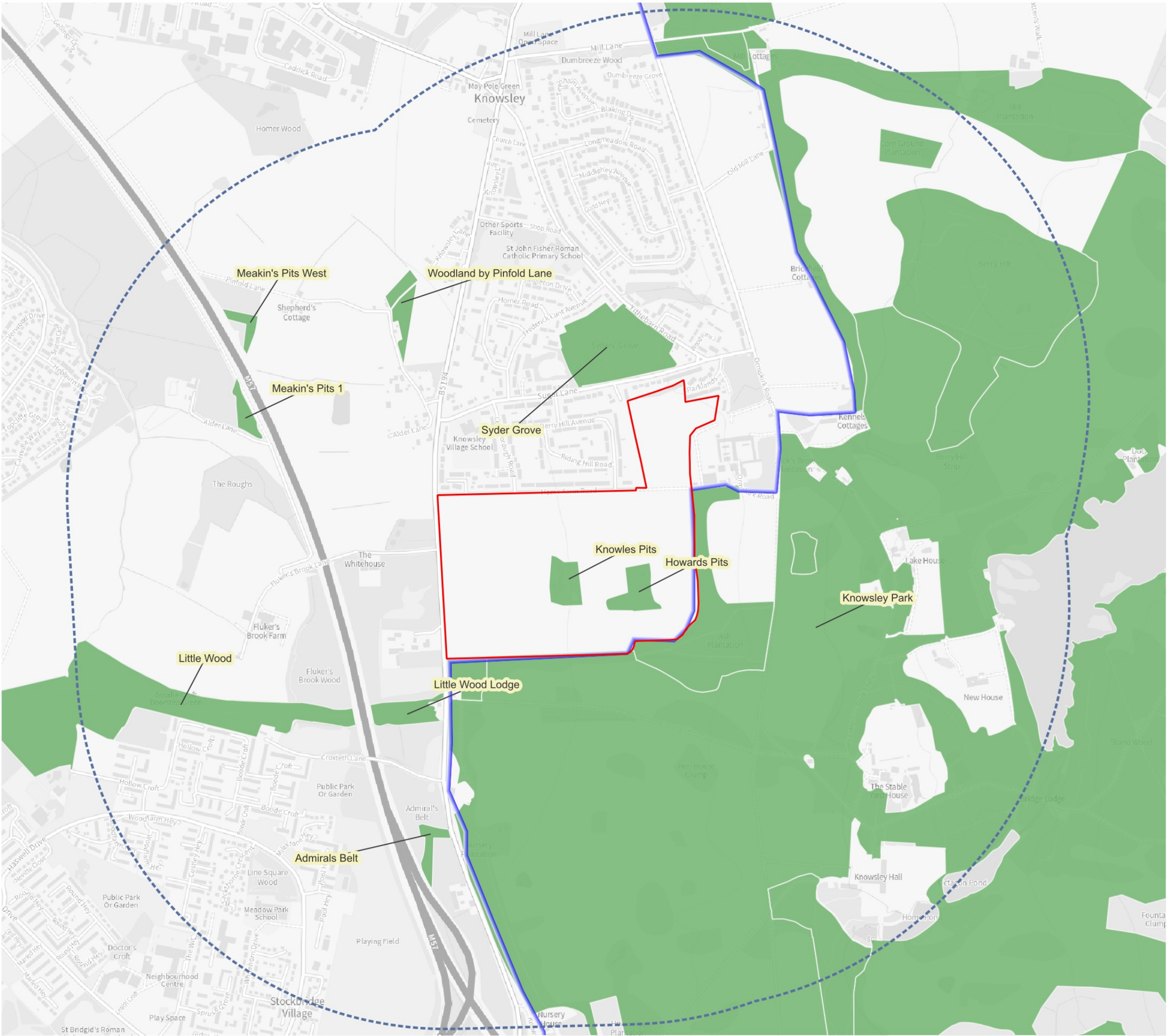
8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The assessment has demonstrated that in the absence of mitigation, proposals would lead to, at most, a Not-Significant Negative Effect at a Metropolitan level on:
- Howard's Pits and Knowles' Pits (onsite) from accidental damage, pollution, soil compaction, dust deposition and lighting impacts during construction and recreational and lighting impacts during operation.
 - Knowsley Park due to dust deposition during construction and lighting impacts during construction and operation.
 - Syder's Grove and Little Wood (offsite) ancient woodland due to potential recreational impacts during operation.
- 8.2 In the absence of mitigation, all other effects on ancient woodland are expected to be at least Neutral.
- 8.3 Mitigation of construction-phase impacts—including accidental damage, pollution, soil compaction, dust deposition, noise, and lighting—will be achieved through the implementation of a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a lighting strategy, as outlined above.
- 8.4 To address potential recreational impacts on Howard's Pits and Knowles' Pits ancient woodlands, a Draft Recreational Management Plan has been prepared based on the illustrative layout. A detailed plan will be submitted at the Reserved Matters stage or as part of a full planning application.
- 8.5 To mitigate for recreational impacts to offsite ancient woodlands, it is recommended that a financial contribution towards managing the existing degradation of the woodland is made. This will mitigate for any additional recreational use of the woodlands from new residents.
- 8.6 New home owner packs will be distributed highlighting the pressures and sensitivities of the surrounding ancient woodlands.
- 8.7 Provision of a detailed lighting scheme will mitigate lighting impacts during operation.
- 8.8 Following the implementation of mitigation and enhancement measures as outlined above, the residual effects on all ancient woodlands within the ZOI are anticipated to be Neutral.
- 8.9 As no residual significant negative effects to ancient woodland have been identified, no degradation or loss of ancient woodland is considered likely as a result of proposals.
- 8.10 Enhancement measures for the on-site ancient woodlands at Howard's Pits and Knowles' Pits will be secured through the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) condition. This will ensure both improvements and ongoing monitoring of the woodlands for a minimum period of 30 years.

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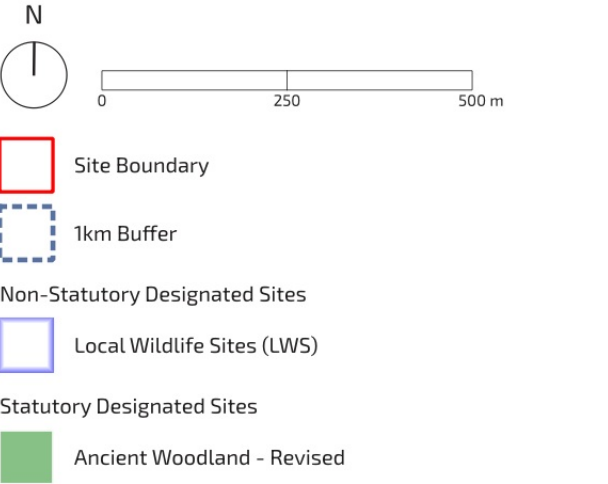
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date 12/05/26 drwn/chkd DV / ET

client Hallam Land Management Ltd

project Land East of Knowsley Lane, Knowsley

title ANCIANT WOODLAND WITHIN 1KM scale 1:10,200 @ A3

number FIGURE 1 rev -

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