



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL (PEA) AND BIODIVERSITY NET-GAIN REPORT

LAND AT THURSBY WALK

Kirkby, Liverpool

Client: Revival Architects

October 2025

Quality Assurance

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Summary

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was commissioned by Revival Architects in October 2025 of a site located off Thursby Walk, Kirkby, Liverpool. The survey was commissioned to support a planning application for the re-development of the site for residential properties.

The purpose of the survey and the report is to provide an ecological baseline and an initial assessment of the potential impacts of any potential development proposals upon the nature conservation of the site.

Further to the above, a baseline Biodiversity Net-Gain (BNG) assessment (using the Statutory Defra Metric Calculation Tool) was commissioned to determine a baseline calculation for the site and inform any future development proposals to determine if a minimum 10% net-gain in biodiversity can be achieved on-site as part of the development.

Due to the scale of the proposed development and distance/disconnect from any statutory or non-statutory designated sites, no impacts upon such sites are anticipated because of the proposed development.

In view of the results of the desk and field-based assessment of the site, the site is considered to be of negligible to low ecological value currently. Habitat losses as a result of prior clearance and the proposed development as calculated using the Defra Statutory Metric will be compensated for entirely via on-site habitat retention, enhancement and creation as part of the design of the proposed development.

Appropriate mitigation and enhancement (achieving a minimum of 10% biodiversity net-gain) as per the BNG metric section of this report has been considered at the design stage to ensure measures are being taken to avoid an overall adverse impact and mitigation is put in place to maintain and enhance the biodiversity value of the site in the long-term as part of future development proposals. Additional biodiversity enhancements including habitat for bats and birds and consideration to artificial lighting have also been proposed.

For the development to proceed in line with UK legislation and Planning Policy relating to biodiversity, the recommendations contained within this report will be adopted as necessary.

Where appropriate measures as recommended in the report are adopted, the development will be able to proceed having considered and addressed the necessary legislation and both local and national policy relating to biodiversity conservation.

1. INTRODUCTION

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was commissioned by Revival Architects in October 2025 of a site located off Thursby Walk, Kirkby, Liverpool. The survey was commissioned to support a planning application for the re-development of the site for residential properties.

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Further to the above, a baseline Biodiversity Net-Gain (BNG) assessment (using the Statutory Defra Metric Calculation Tool) was commissioned to determine a baseline calculation for the site and inform any future development proposals to determine if a minimum 10% net-gain in biodiversity can be achieved on-site as part of the development.

1.1. Site Description

The site is located off Thursby Walk, Kirkby, Liverpool (Grid Reference: SJ 42006 97908) and currently consists of an area of public grassland (amenity) and adjacent hardstanding for car parking. The site is situated in an urban area comprised of residential properties and local shopping parade and associated infrastructure.

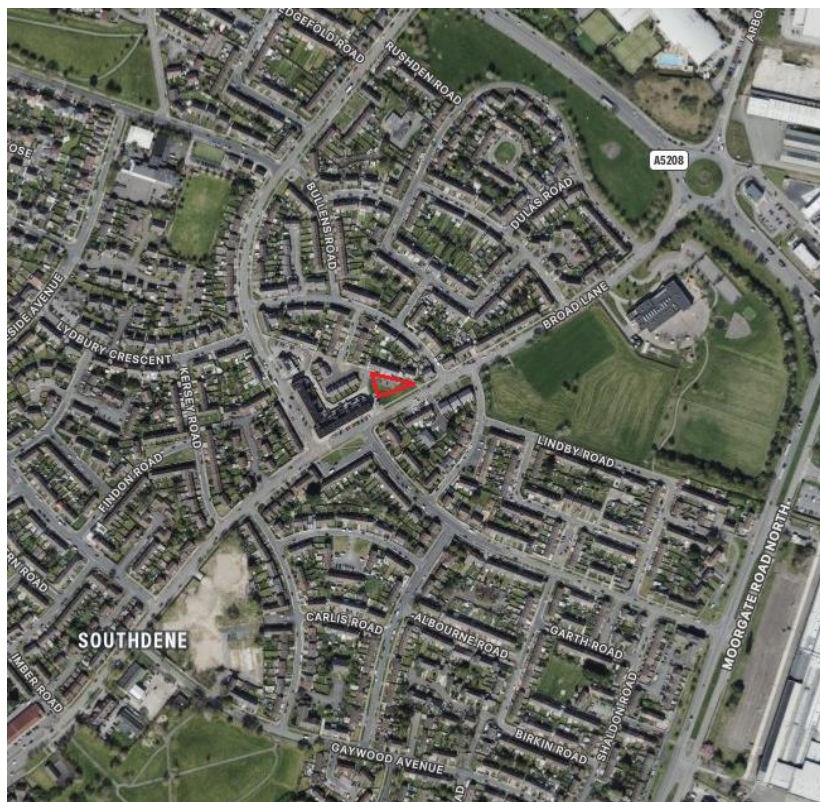


Figure 1. Site location and surrounding landscape character.

1.2. Proposed Development

The proposed development is for the construction of three residential properties with associated car parking and gardens (as per proposed development and planting plan indicated at Appendix 6 and detailed within 1373-RA-XX-XX-DR-A-0100).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Personnel & Quality Assurance

Rob Nicholson BSc (Hons) MCIEEM is a Class 2 Bat licence holder and Great Crested Newt Licence holder (Natural England), has over 17 years' relevant experience as an ecologist and is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Rob has also been 'named ecologist' on numerous European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) for bats for a range of species and roost types in both England and Wales.

All field work and assessment was undertaken in accordance with current best practice guidelines (CIEEM, 2016). The field survey was undertaken on the 22nd October 2025 and the desk-based assessment was conducted on the 23rd October 2025 (following receipt of data requested from Local Records Centres).

The report has been prepared in accordance with guidance produced by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM 2017) and the British Standard 42020:2013.

2.2. Scope of the Assessment

The following ecological features / resources were considered during the assessment:

- Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated sites;
- Habitats of principal importance for conservation of biodiversity;
- Protected species;
- Species of principal importance for conservation of biodiversity;
- Other notable species.
- Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Baseline Calculations)

No consultations have taken place in relation to determining the scope of the assessment.

2.3. Desk Study

To inform the survey a desk study was conducted using available ecological information relating to ecology for the area surrounding the site. Online resources, including Multi-Agency Geographic Information Centre (MAGIC), were consulted in relation to the presence of sites and habitats of importance in the wider context.

A data request to the Merseyside Biobank, the Local Records Centre (LRC) for the area, was made for full species records and list of non-statutory designated sites (e.g., local wildlife sites) within 2 km of the site (full details available upon request).

Other organisations in the county that may hold relevant ecological data were not consulted (the full extent of data can be provided upon request).

It is important to note that most species are greatly under-recorded and therefore a lack of records for a location should not be taken as an absence of the species concerned.

Furthermore, a historical record for a habitat or species does not necessarily confirm its current presence.

2.4. Field Survey

UKHabs Survey

A habitat survey was conducted based on the techniques and methodologies described in the UKHabs version 2.0 Handbook (2023) and using standard nomenclature (Stace 2019). The habitats present were recorded on to a field map (Appendix 2) along with digital photographs (Appendix 3), providing supplementary information on, for example, species composition structure and management where relevant. This was extended to include notes on fauna and habitats which could potentially support protected species.

2.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline Calculations

Due to the nature of the proposed development, it is understood that a biodiversity net gain assessment of the proposed works is required, as per local and national policy. Biodiversity net gain occurs in development when the project leaves the natural environment in a better state than it was prior to the project. To achieve biodiversity net gain, the developer is required to ensure that wildlife habitats are created or enhanced. It requires the development to result in a demonstrable increase in habitat value to the baseline (how the site was prior to development). Biodiversity net gain should be demonstrated quantitatively.

To demonstrate biodiversity net gain, the value of the habitats are assessed using a recognised metric tool to calculate biodiversity units. The biodiversity losses or gains resulting from the development are then calculated by subtracting the baseline (pre-development) units from the post development units. The statutory biodiversity metric (Defra, 2024a) has been used to demonstrate biodiversity net gain in a quantitative manner.

The Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2016) are a set of ten principles which have been produced to provide a framework that helps improve the UK's biodiversity by contributing towards strategic priorities to conserve and enhance nature while progressing with sustainable development. To demonstrate that biodiversity net gain has been achieved in a qualitative manner for a development it would need to be shown that the development meets these ten principles which have been listed below:

- Apply the mitigation hierarchy
- Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere
- Be inclusive and equitable
- Address risks
- Make a measurable net gain contribution
- Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity
- Be additional
- Create a net gain legacy
- Optimise sustainability
- Be transparent

The biodiversity net gain assessment has been produced in accordance with the British Standard (BS) for Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development, BS42020:2013.

The objectives of this report are as follows:

1. *To identify the planning policy context relevant to BNG matters on the site.*
2. *To describe the baseline biodiversity value of the site based on the UK Habitat condition assessment.*
3. *To evaluate the proposed biodiversity of the site based on the agreed final landscape proposals.*

4. *To calculate the predicted change in the biodiversity unit value of the site post development and demonstrate the potential biodiversity net gain of the proposed development in a quantitative manner.*
5. *To assess if the proposed development meets the requirements of the trading rules and demonstrate how the proposed development does meet those requirements.*
6. *To demonstrate how the proposed development meets the ten principles set out in the 'Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles for Development' and has led with the mitigation hierarchy.*

The Mitigation Hierarchy

The aim of the BNG assessment is to identify, predict and evaluate potential key effects arising from the proposed development and assess them against the mitigation hierarchy. The mitigation hierarchy requires that developers first take steps to avoid and then to minimise impacts on biodiversity. Only after these steps are taken should developers look to compensate for losses that cannot be avoided. Finally, if compensation within the development footprint is not possible or does not generate the most benefits for nature conservation, the losses should be offset elsewhere. The proposals have been developed in accordance with the British Standard for 'Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain – Specification', BS8683:2021 to reduce risk to harm of biodiversity and maximise the potential gains on the site.

Biodiversity Metric Rules

The rules set out in the table must be followed, otherwise a biodiversity net gain cannot be claimed for the project.

1. The trading rules of the biodiversity metric must be followed.
2. Biodiversity unit outputs, for each type of unit, must not be summed, traded, or converted between types. The requirement to deliver at least a 10% net gain applies to each type of unit.
3. To accurately apply the biodiversity metric formula, you must use the statutory biodiversity metric calculation tool or small sites biodiversity metric tool (SSM) for small sites. The tools remove the need for a user to manually calculate the change in biodiversity value. The tool will summarise the results of the calculation and inform a user whether the biodiversity net gain objective has been met.

4. In exceptional ecological circumstances, deviation from this biodiversity metric methodology may be permitted by the relevant planning authority

Biodiversity Metric Calculation

Biodiversity metrics (units) were calculated for the site using the “Statutory Biodiversity Metric-Calculation Tool” and guidance available on the government website (Defra, 2024a, 2024b). The biodiversity metric spreadsheet is provided as an Excel file with this report.

The metric uses area and linear habitat features as a proxy measure for capturing the value and importance of biodiversity. It uses a calculation in MS Excel to allow for the importance of these features for nature: their size, ecological condition, distinctiveness and location. The metric enables assessments to be made of the baseline (pre-intervention) biodiversity value of a site in terms of ‘biodiversity units’ and calculates the projected post-development (post-intervention) biodiversity value. The metric can also be used to measure off-site biodiversity changes for a project or development and can be applied from the level of an individual field to, for example, an entire river catchment.

The calculator uses the following variable elements to determine biodiversity units, based on the information collected in the field:

Habitat type: The field survey was based on the UK Habitat (UKHabs) classification system (UK Habs, 2023).

Area (Hectares): The area has been measured based aerial imagery using Geographical Information System (GIS) based software. Measurements have been rounded up or down to achieve a minimum mapping unit (MMU). Mapping habitats at different times of year may lead to variation between where one habitat starts, and another begins as there is potential overlap between habitats (the ecotone). The actual field mapping is based on both field survey and aerial imagery in order to achieve the best representation of the areas covered by each habitat identified on-site. The areas for the post development site were taken from a pdf version of the development and planting plan (see Appendix 6 and drawing number 1373-RA-XX-XX-DR-A-0100).

Condition: The condition is a means to measure the quality of a habitat based on a series of physical characteristics and typical species of a particular habitat type. In order to aid the process, the statutory metric provides ‘condition assessment sheets (Defra, 2024c).’ Condition sheets provide a list of positive indicators for each habitat and dependent on how many positive indicators a particular habitat meets will equate to the relevant condition for that specific habitat.

In order that this process can be followed, in relation to this calculation, the number of positive indicators that are met for each habitat type are presented in the accompanying excel document for each habitat found on-site.

Strategic significance: This element is to assess the habitats on site in relation to the geographical location in which they are located. Information to determine the significance of a habitat within a specific landscape can be found in Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) as well as a variety of sources that include local plans, local biodiversity and National Character Areas. The strategic significance is based on three categories which equate to a different score, which are as follows: High – 1.15; Medium – 1.1 and Low - 1.

2.6. Assessment and Evaluation

The importance of the habitat features on site were assessed and defined in a geographical context. The frame of reference for the habitat features in terms of their geographical importance is in line with guidance set out in CIEEM, 2018.

Species are assessed, where appropriate, against best practice guidelines. As part of the evaluation, further surveys may be recommended based on the suitability of habitats to support protected species, the habitats themselves and potential impacts posed by the proposed development, and the legal protection afforded to both habitats and species.

2.7. Zone of Influence

The assessment conducted for this report has considered the area in which ecological features could be subject to significant effects from the proposed development. The area of the potential effects is often wider than the actual perimeter of the development site and is known as the Zone of Influence.

The Zone of Influence varies for different ecological features and each designated site, habitat and species has been considered in relation to their sensitivity to the proposed development.

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR) – 10km
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) – 2km
- Great Crested Newt (GCN) ponds - 500m
- Badger – 50m

- Other notable species/habitats – site level only

3. CONSTRAINTS

The protected species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on the site. It should not be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group.

Even where data for a particular species groups are provided in the desk study, a lack of records of a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of ecological interest; the area may simply be under recorded.

The UKHab Survey does not constitute a full botanical survey or provide accurate mapping of invasive plant species, and the survey was undertaken just outside of the optimal period for botanical survey, however it is considered unlikely that this will have any significant effect upon the assessment given the habitats present.

Despite any of the above limitations, it is considered that this report reflects accurately the habitats present, their biodiversity importance, and the potential for the site to support protected and notable species.

4. BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

4.1. Designated Sites

Statutory Designated Sites

According to the Natural England online mapping resource MAGIC the following Statutory Designated sites are located within 2 km of the site:

- Acornfield Plantation Local Nature Reserve (LNR) approx. 1.8km east
- Croxteth Local Nature Reserve (LNR) approx. 2km south

Locations in relation to the site are illustrated below in Figure 2.

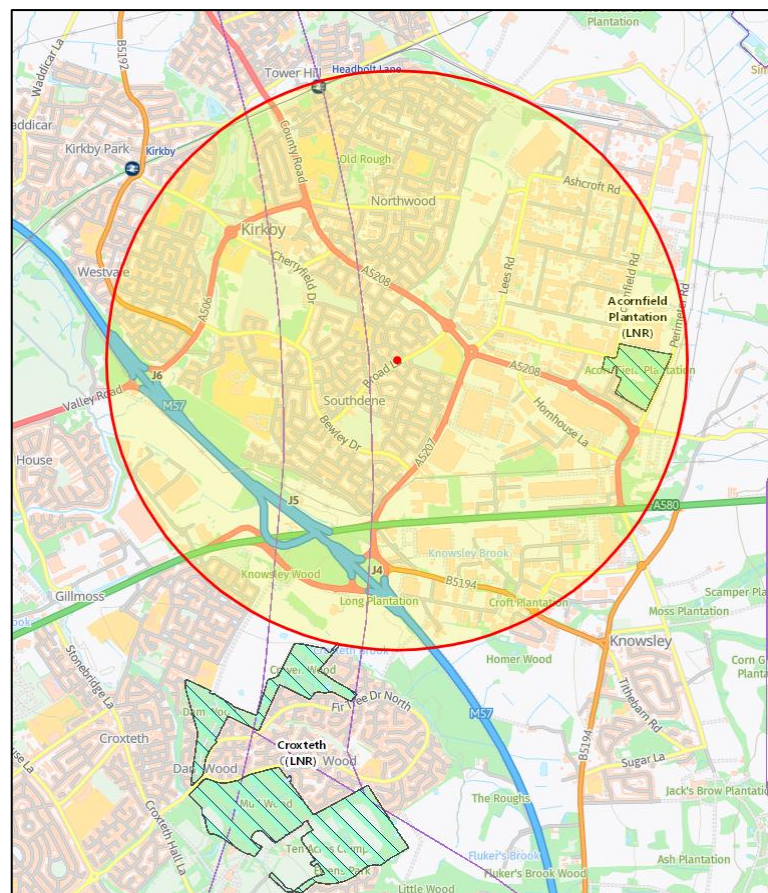


Figure 2. Statutory Designated Sites within 2km of the site.

Non-statutory sites

According to data supplied by Merseyside Biobank, the following non-statutory sites overlap with the 2km search area surrounding the site:

- Kraft Operational Land – Knowsley Local Wildlife Site (1.9km south east of the site)
- Otis Meadow – Knowsley Local Wildlife Site (2km south east of the site)

4.2. Habitats

The habitats identified during the UKHabs Survey are listed and described below. All habitats are marked on the UKHabs map in Appendix 2 and each habitat type is illustrated with a photograph in Appendix 3.

Desk Study

According to the Natural England online mapping resource MAGIC, there are the following mapped habitats within 2km of the site:

- Woodland (Broadleaved/Mixed Deciduous)
- Neutral Grassland
- Lowland Meadow
- Ponds
- Scrub
- Scattered Trees/Parkland

Field Survey

The habitats identified on site during the field survey are listed and described below. All habitats are marked on the habitat map in Appendix 2.

Developed Land, Sealed Surface – u1b

There are a number of existing public parking bays and footpaths that bound the site but which are outside of the development boundary (not included on habitat map as outside of redline boundary).

Modified Grassland – g4

The site is comprised entirely of grassland which has been created and managed for amenity purposes. The grassland is homogenous and species poor, comprising of species typical of amenity grasslands. Species present are limited to Annual Meadow Grass (*Poa annua*), Perennial Rye-Grass (*Lolium perenne*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum* agg) and Daisy (*Bellis perennis*).

4.3. Species

Species likely to occur in close proximity to the site according to information provided by the local records centre (records within last 10 years) or with relevance to habitats present within or adjacent to the site (as identified during the field survey) are covered below:

Amphibians

There are records common and widespread amphibian species within 2km of the site in the last 10 years which are limited to:

- Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*)
- Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*)

None of the above records are related to the site. According to MAGIC website, there are no records of granted European Protected Species Licences for Great Crested Newt within 500m of the site. In addition, there are no Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns or Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017 – 2019 (for District Level Licencing) records within 500m of the site.

There are no mapped waterbodies within 500m of the site and connectivity in the wider context is interrupted by the network of roads associated with the urban development. There are no waterbodies onsite and terrestrial habitat is suboptimal for this species group.

In view of the above, the site is considered highly unlikely to support or be of any importance for this species group.

Badger

There are no records of Badgers (*Meles meles*) within 2 km of the site within the last 10 years.

The site consists entirely of an isolated patch of modified/amenity grassland in an urban environment. There is no habitat within or in close proximity to the site suited for sett building.

In view of the above, the site is of no value or interest for this species.

Bats

According to Merseyside Biobank, there records of three bat species within 2 km of the site within the last 10 years (plus records of unconfirmed species). Species recorded include:

- Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
- Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)
- Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

According to MAGIC website, there are no records of granted European Protected Species Licences for bats within 2 km of the site

The site has been assessed as being of 'negligible suitability' as a foraging resource and commuting route for bats, due to the absence of suitable habitats onsite and urban location with adjacent roads/buildings likely deterring light sensitive species.

Birds

There are a large number of records of birds within 2km of the site in the last 10 years according to data provided by Merseyside Biobank. None of the records are directly related to the site.

The habitats within the site are highly limited in ecological value and as habitat for birds, with the exception of a foraging resource for species such as Blackbird (*Turdus merula*). There is no habitat present suitable for supporting nesting for any species.

Invertebrates

There are numerous records of invertebrate species within 2 km of the site according to Merseyside Biobank. None of the records are directly related to the site. There is an absence of habitat with potential to support any notable invertebrate species within or adjacent to the site.

Reptiles

There are no records of reptiles within 2 km of the site within the last 10 years provided by Merseyside Biobanks

Habitat within the site is of negligible potential for reptiles and there is no uninterrupted terrestrial connectivity to other habitat with potential for reptiles in the wider area. Given the urban location of the site and absence of records for reptiles in the locality, the site is considered to have negligible potential to support common reptile species.

Other Notable Species

There are records provided by Merseyside Biobank of other notable species within 2km of the site in the past 10 years, including:

- Red Squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*)
- Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*)
- Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

None of the above records are related to the site. Given the urban nature of the site with no connectivity to habitats better suited to Red Squirrel or Brown Hare, such as woodland, open farmland or open grassland, the site is considered of negligible value for these species.

The site provides limited foraging habitat for Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), however, there is no habitat that provides shelter or nesting habitat within or adjacent to the site.

Non-native Invasive Species

According to Merseyside Biobank there are records of non-native invasive species within 2km of the site in the past 10 years as follows:

- False Virginia-Creeper (*Parthenocissus inserta*)
- Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*)
- Montbretia (*Crocasmia aurea x pottsii* = *C. x crocomiliflora*)
- *Rhododendron ponticum*
- Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

None of the above species were recorded on site during the survey or are likely to occur on or adjacent to the site.

Notable Flora

According to data provided by Merseyside Biobank, there has been several species of notable flora recorded over the past 10 years within 2km of the site. None of the records are related to the site and none of the above species were recorded within the site at the time of survey, or are likely to occur in a grassland sward managed for amenity value only. No other notable species of flora were recorded within the site at the time of survey or is anticipated to be present within the site.

Note: Full Local Records Centre Data is available upon request

5. PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

5.1. National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024, is a revised update to previous versions and is a policy framework document which provide a range of important principles. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

“protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)”;

“recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland”;

“minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs”;

Paragraph 192 goes on to state:

“To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should”:

“Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation;” and

“promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity”.

Further to this, paragraph 193 states that:

“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles”:

“if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused”;

“development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;”

“development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁷⁰ and a suitable compensation strategy exists;” and

“development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate”.

Finally, Paragraph 195 states that *“the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site”.*

5.2. Local Planning Policy

Table 1 details the policies within Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (Adopted January 2016) which are relevant to the ecological features associated with the proposed development.

Table 1: Summary of relevant local planning policy

Policy	Description
Policy CS8	Maintenance and Enhancement of Knowsley's Existing Green Infrastructure:
Green Infrastructure	1) Knowsley's existing Green Infrastructure and its beneficial functions will be protected, managed and/or enhanced, primarily to:

- a) Ensure more attractive and cleaner residential neighbourhoods;
- b) Sustain and promote biodiversity (including designated sites, priority habitats and protected and endangered species) in accordance with importance and contribution to ecological networks;
- c) Preserve the character and function of historic environments and valued landscapes;
- d) Mitigate the effects of climate change and flood risk;
- e) Mitigate air, water and noise pollution;
- f) Provide local opportunities for sport, recreation and allotments; and
- g) Provide sustainable transport linkages between residential neighbourhoods and easy access to employment and services.

2) To achieve the above, planning powers and other interventions will be used to:

- a) Protect and enhance strategically important areas of greenspace;
- b) Ensure an appropriate quantity and improved quality of locally important open spaces, including outdoor sports provision (and ancillary facilities of appropriate scale);
- c) Promote effective movement of wildlife through a network of strategic green links, by protecting, maintaining and improving existing and new open spaces, water courses (including water quality) and biodiversity assets;
- d) Protect, enhance and/or introduce biodiversity into existing areas of Green Infrastructure, through integration into the design of new development and public realm projects;
- e) Improve accessibility for communities to greenspace offering leisure and recreation opportunities;
- f) Protect and where possible improve green paths and cycleways linking residential areas, existing strategic areas of greenspace, employment locations, local community services and leisure facilities;
- g) Work in partnership with other districts and relevant bodies at a landscape scale to minimise the impact of development upon Knowsley's existing biodiversity and geological assets, and sustain the protection afforded to internationally important sites, including supporting habitat, for biodiversity outside of the borough; and
- h) Deliver new integrated and functional Green Infrastructure that helps to mitigate and adapt to climate change, such as sustainable drainage systems, carbon capture and storage, soft landscaping and green roofs.

Strategic Green Links

4) Knowsley's strategically important green links are:

- a) Alt Corridor (Huyton) – stretching from Huyton Village through South Alt Park, Alt Park, Alt Meadows and into Stockbridge Village;
- b) Valley Corridor (Kirkby) – stretching through Valley Meadow, St. Chad's Park, Millbrook Park, Millennium Green and Mill Dam;
- c) Whiston to Cronton Corridor – stretching through Cronton, Stadt Moers Park and Whiston Greenway;
- d) Halewood Triangle – Halewood Park linkage with the Trans-Pennine Trail and to the national cycle network;
- e) M57 Green Belt Corridor; and

	f) Knowsley Hall Estate – including Knowsley Safari Park and Local Wildlife Sites. Approach to Green Infrastructure and New Development 6) New development must be served by Green Infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and the local environment, in a manner which will: a) Contribute to the creation of a high-quality residential environment; b) Provide access to high quality open space for leisure and recreational purposes; c) Seek to protect, maintain and where possible enhance biodiversity within and around new developments according to their designation and significance to provide space for nature; and d) Provide adequate mitigation and/or, as a last resort, compensation for Green Infrastructure or biodiversity loss, in circumstances where harm resulting from the development is otherwise unavoidable.
Policy CS2 Development Principles	Principle 4: Recognise environmental limits, protect and enhance environmental assets, enhance local character and promote quality of place by: (h) Maintaining or enhancing the quantity and quality of biodiversity and habitats, including potential impacts on nationally and internationally important sites for biodiversity;

5.3. Relevant Legislation

National Legislation

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) consolidates and amends existing national legislation to implement the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (Birds Directive) in Great Britain.

Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 places a duty upon all local authorities in England to promote and enhance biodiversity in all of their functions. Section 41 lists habitats and species of principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity. Fifty-six habitats and 943 species of Principal Importance for Conservation are included on the Section 41 list and draws upon the UK BAP List of Priority Species and Habitats.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transpose Council Directive 92/43/EEC, on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats

Directive), into national law and transpose elements of the EU Wild Birds Directive in England and Wales. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European sites' (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs)), the protection of 'European protected species', and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European sites.

The Environment Act 2021

Paragraph 2 (3) of Schedule 14 of The Environment Act 2021 makes it mandatory (as of January 2024) for all new developments (with some limited exceptions) to achieve a biodiversity net gain (BNG) of at least 10% by the time the development is completed compared to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This percentage may be amended in the future by the Secretary of State. Please note that some Local Policies stipulate a higher target than this.

The Act allows three methods for securing biodiversity net gains:

1. enhancement of the biodiversity of land to which the planning permission relates;
2. the allocation of registered offsite biodiversity gain to any development for which the planning permission is granted; and
3. the purchase of biodiversity credits for any such development.

A biodiversity gain statement must set out whether, and if so how, the biodiversity gain objective applies in relation to development where the onsite habitat is irreplaceable, how the development will minimise any adverse effects to the onsite habitat, and what evidence must be produced to show how the biodiversity net gain has been met upon completion of the development.

Biodiversity gains will need to be maintained for at least 30 years after the development is completed.

6. ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MITIGATION, AND FURTHER SURVEY

6.1. Designated Sites

Due to the scale of the proposed development and distance/disconnect from any statutory or non-statutory designated sites, no impacts upon such sites are anticipated because of the proposed development.

6.2. Habitats

Habitats present on or adjacent to the site include the following:

- Developed Land, Sealed Surface – u1b (Not associated within any local strategy in terms of ecology.
- Modified Grassland – g4 (A common and widespread habitat of low ecological importance and therefore is not associated within any specific local strategy.)

Developed Land, Sealed Surface – u1b

These areas lie adjacent to the main development area (outside of the redline boundary) in the form of public parking bays and footpaths, that will be retained. These areas are bounded by highways.

Modified Grassland – g4

The majority of the site is comprised of modified grassland and this will be developed, with the exception of two discreet areas (total of 153m²) that will be retained enhanced and over planted with eight individual native trees.

6.3. Biodiversity Metric Baseline Calculation

Baseline

Using the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric, it was possible to calculate the existing biodiversity value in terms of “Biodiversity Units” of the site.

The Metric provides a score of **0.15 baseline habitat units** associated with habitat present within the site currently.

Recommendations have been made at an early to retain small areas of existing habitat and create new areas of habitat to compensate for those lost, to be adopted within the landscape design at part of the proposed development.

Based on the score of **0.15 baseline habitat units** and development proposals for the site, breakdown of habitat retention, enhancement and creation (types, target condition and areas) that could be feasibly achieved is as follows:

Existing Habitat Retention:

- **Retention of 153m² of existing modified grassland.** These areas will be two boundary areas to the western and eastern extents of the site.

Existing Habitat Enhancement:

- **The retained grassland above (153m²) will be enhanced from 'poor' modified grassland to 'moderate' modified grassland.** The retained will be enhanced through the addition of a flowering seed mix (Emorsgate EL1 Flowering Seedmix) and reduction in mowing intensity to create an increase in native species and structural diversity, whilst maintaining amenity value through visual benefits of the presence and encouragement of flowering species. These areas will be located outside of private residential gardens.

Habitat Creation:

- **Planting of Individual Trees of native species x 8 small trees with a 'moderate' target condition:** These trees would be native species planted at an immature stage and as such only accrue a relatively small value per tree compared to a mature tree. These trees will be planted along retained grassland (above) located at site boundary areas (outside of private garden areas). Proposed tree planting would include native species such as Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), Field Maple (*Acer Campestre*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and Apple (*Malus sylvestris*).

The remainder of the site would be taken up by 'vegetated garden' (300m²) buildings, hardstanding and other infrastructure (400m²) – referred to as "Developed land; sealed surface" in UKHabs terms.

Note: Vegetated garden associated with private residential gardens is included in BNG calculations as per current local mandatory guidance (MEAS, 2023) which states that "Only habitats outside of privately owned plots are to be included within the post-development sheets of the metric. **Any planting, including individual trees and hedgerows, within private gardens must be inputted as the habitat type 'Urban – Vegetated garden'.**

Post-development Calculation (On-site Habitats)

The new on-site area habitats are based on the development plan and proposed planting plan drawing 1373-RA-XX-XX-DR-A-0100 and indicative plan at Appendix 6, and are detailed within the accompanying metric document. A summary of the results is provided below in Figure 3:

Thursby Walk, Kirkby, Liverpool

Headline Results

Scroll down for final results ▲

Return to results menu

On-site baseline	Habitat units	0.18	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.20	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	0.08	39.02%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.08	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
FINAL RESULTS			
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.08	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	39.02%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓		

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Habitat units	10.00%	0.18	0.18	0.00	No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

Figure 3. Statutory Biodiversity Metric 'post-development' values based on achievable landscape proposals.

In view of the above, the post-development metric calculation results in an **uplift of 39.02% area habitat units**. There are no linear or watercourse habitat units to consider.

As +10% net-gain is viable on-site, **no off-site provision** will be required in order to satisfy the Biodiversity Net-gain requirement for the development.

6.4. Species and Species Groups

Results of the desk study and field survey are used to determine protected species that may be of relevance to the site and the proposed development. Those that are not considered relevant to the site following the above assessment are not discussed specifically any further.

Bats

The site has been assessed as being of 'negligible - low suitability' as a foraging resource and commuting route for bats due to the urban location and adjacent roads/buildings likely deterring light sensitive species.

In order to enhance the site for bats in the long-term, it is recommended consideration is given to the installation of bat boxes, into the proposed buildings. Boxes such as the Habibat 001 should be considered. Bat Boxes would need to be installed at a height of >4m with a southerly aspect. This is to enhance the site by providing potential roost features for bats in the long term.

Any proposed external lighting scheme associated with the future development of the site should be designed to ensure that it is sensitive to the presence of wildlife, including bats foraging and commuting through the site. Any lighting proposals should include low-level lighting or other site appropriate solutions to prevent artificial light levels from deterring bats from the site (please see *Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' ILP Guidance Note (2023)* for further information).

Birds

The site currently contains only limited foraging habitat for birds and no nesting potential during the breeding season.

It is recommended that to enhance the biodiversity value of the site integrated bird boxes should be incorporated into the site. In particular, integrated nest boxes / bricks designed to accommodate House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and Swift (*Apus apus*) would be particularly beneficial. These should be integrated into the proposed new buildings.

Proposed planting, including tree, enhancement of grassland and vegetated garden areas, will enhance both foraging and nesting opportunities for birds in the long-term.

Other Species

Though the site is not considered to be of value for any other protected species, the site contains habitat suitable for supporting Hedgehog.

Creation of 'vegetated garden areas' with enhanced grassland and trees to the site boundaries will benefit Hedgehogs. Where solid fencing or walls are to be installed at site boundaries, installation of 'Hedgehog highways' and nest boxes should be considered within the site to encourage and protect this species.

7. CONCLUSIONS

In view of the results of the desk and field-based assessment of the site, the site is considered to be of negligible - low ecological value currently. Habitat losses as a result of prior clearance and the proposed development as calculated using the Defra Statutory Metric will be compensated for entirely via habitat retention, enhancement and creation as part of the design of the proposed development.

Appropriate mitigation and enhancement (achieving a minimum of 10% biodiversity net-gain) as per the BNG metric section of this report has been considered at the design stage to ensure measures are being taken to avoid an overall adverse impact and mitigation is put in place to maintain and enhance the biodiversity value of the site in the long-term as part of future development proposals.

Additional biodiversity enhancements including habitat for bats and birds and consideration to artificial lighting have also been proposed.

For the development to proceed in line with UK legislation and Planning Policy relating to biodiversity, the recommendations contained within this report will be adopted as necessary.

Where appropriate measures as recommended in the report are adopted, the development will be able to proceed having considered and addressed the necessary legislation and both local and national policy relating to biodiversity conservation.

8. REFERENCES

BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity - Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Technical Guidance Series. www.cieem.net.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2015). Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing. Technical Guidance Series. www.cieem.net.

DEFRA (2023) Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool.

ILP & BCT (2023) Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night.

MEAS (2024) Guidance Note on Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain and its Implementation in the Liverpool City Region

Multi-Agency Geographic Information Centre: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>.

Stace. C. (2010). *New British Flora of the British Isles*. 2nd Edition. Cambridge University Press.

UKHab Ltd (2023) UK Classification Version 2.0.

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APPENDIX 1 SITE LOCATION PLAN



SJ420979

APPENDIX 2: UKHABS PLAN

SEE NEXT PAGE



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Existing Habitat Plan

Land off Thursby Walk, Kirkby, Liverpool

October 2025

Client: Revival Architects

Drawing by: RN

Version: 1

Key:



Modified Grassland—g4



Development Site Boundary

SRN
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APPENDIX 3: SITE PHOTOS



Photo 1. Grassland that forms the majority of the site (Looking east)



Photo 2. Grassland that forms the majority of the site (looking North)



Photo 3. Grassland that forms the majority of the site (looking North east)



Photo 4. Grassland that forms the majority of the site and carparking bays to the south west (looking south)

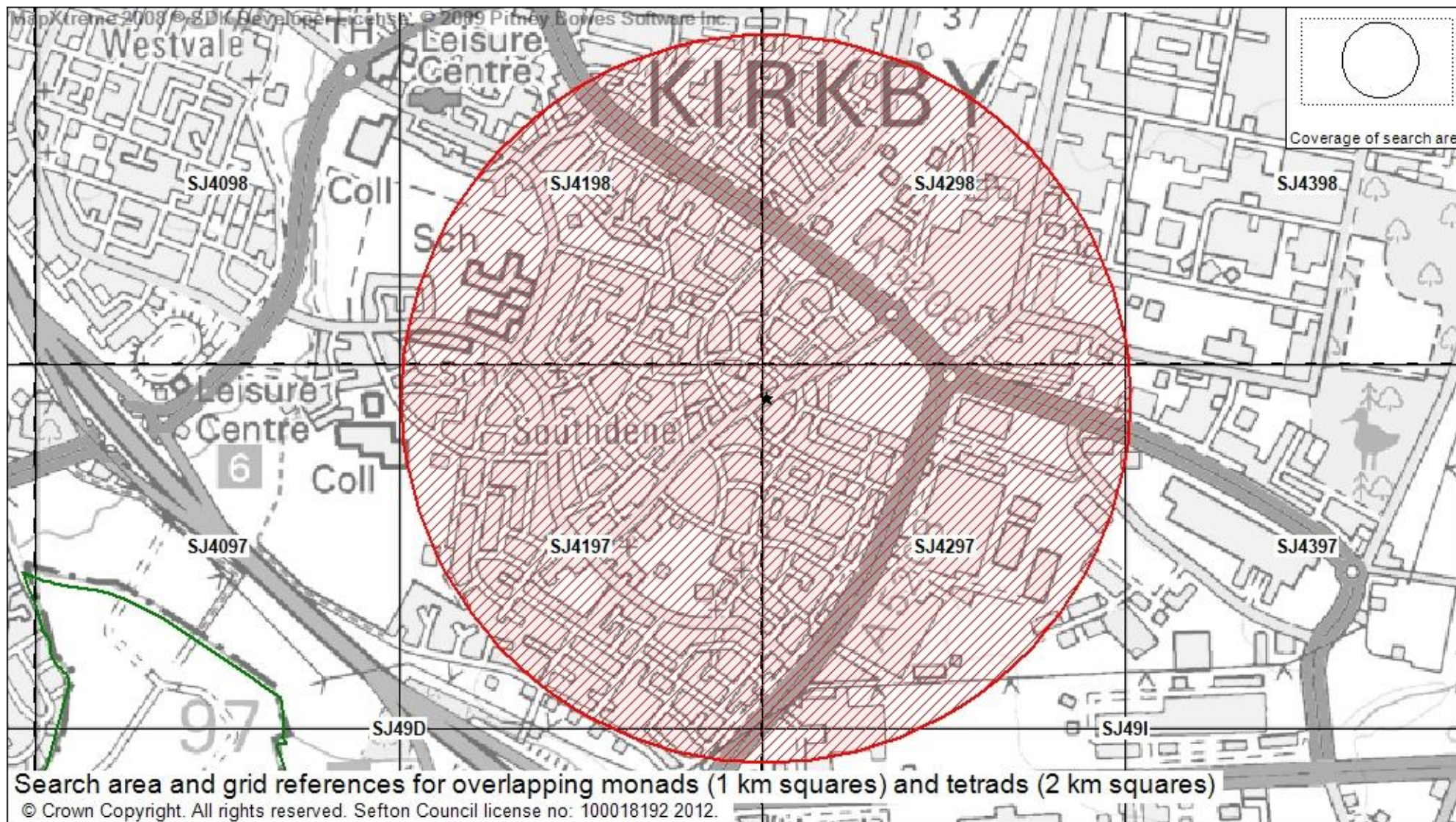
APPENDIX 4: LOCAL RECORD CENTRE DATA.

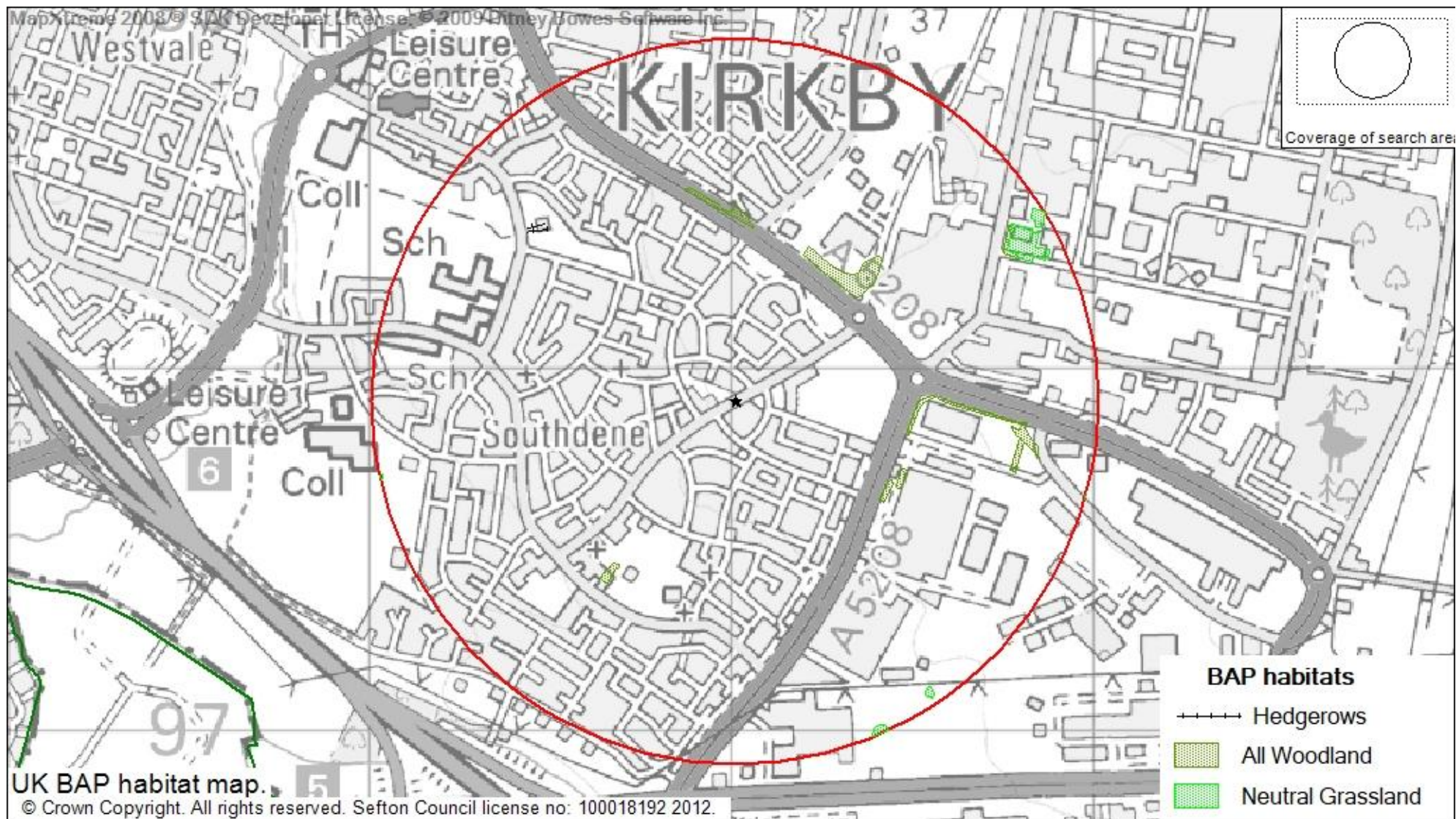
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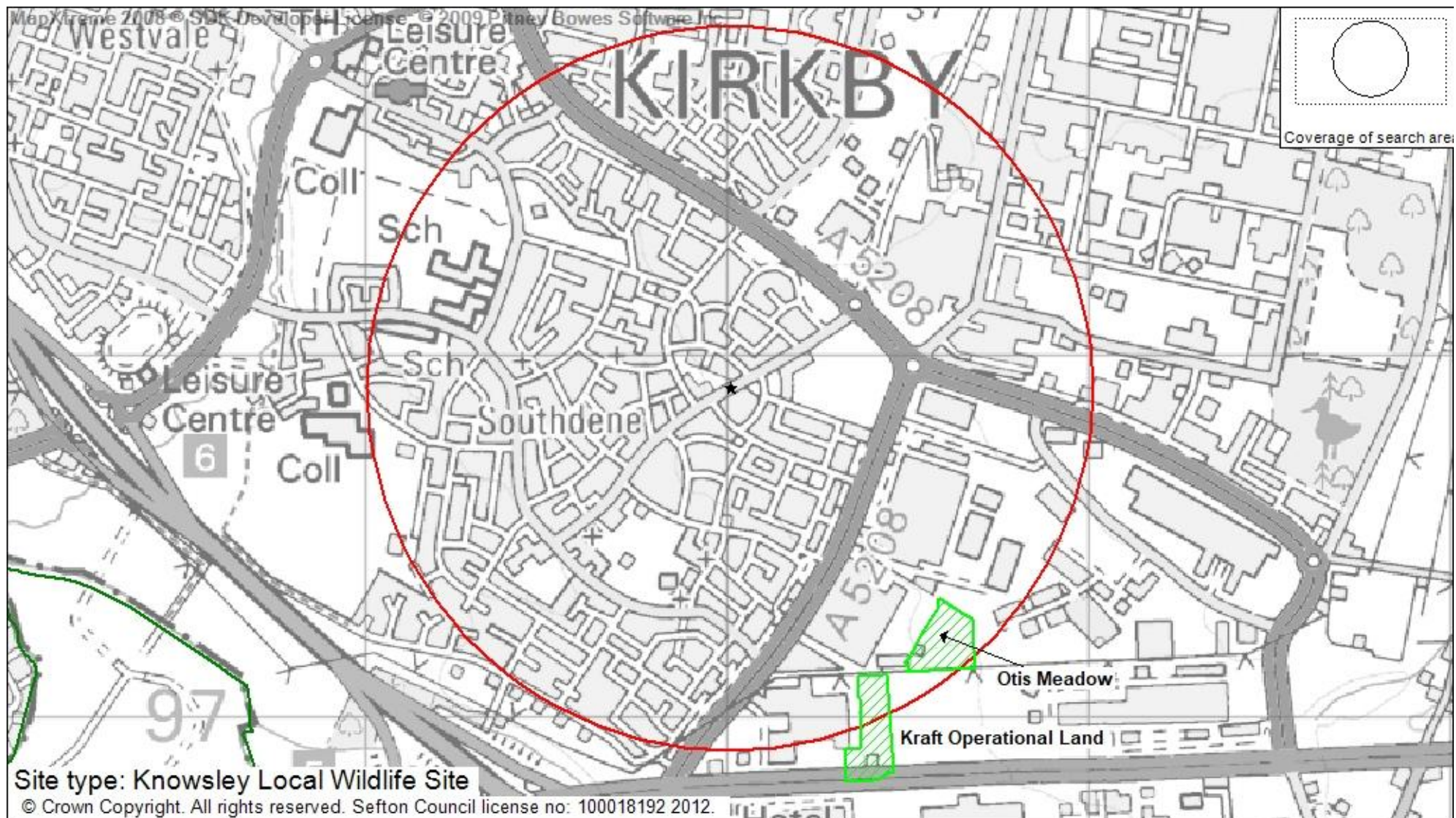


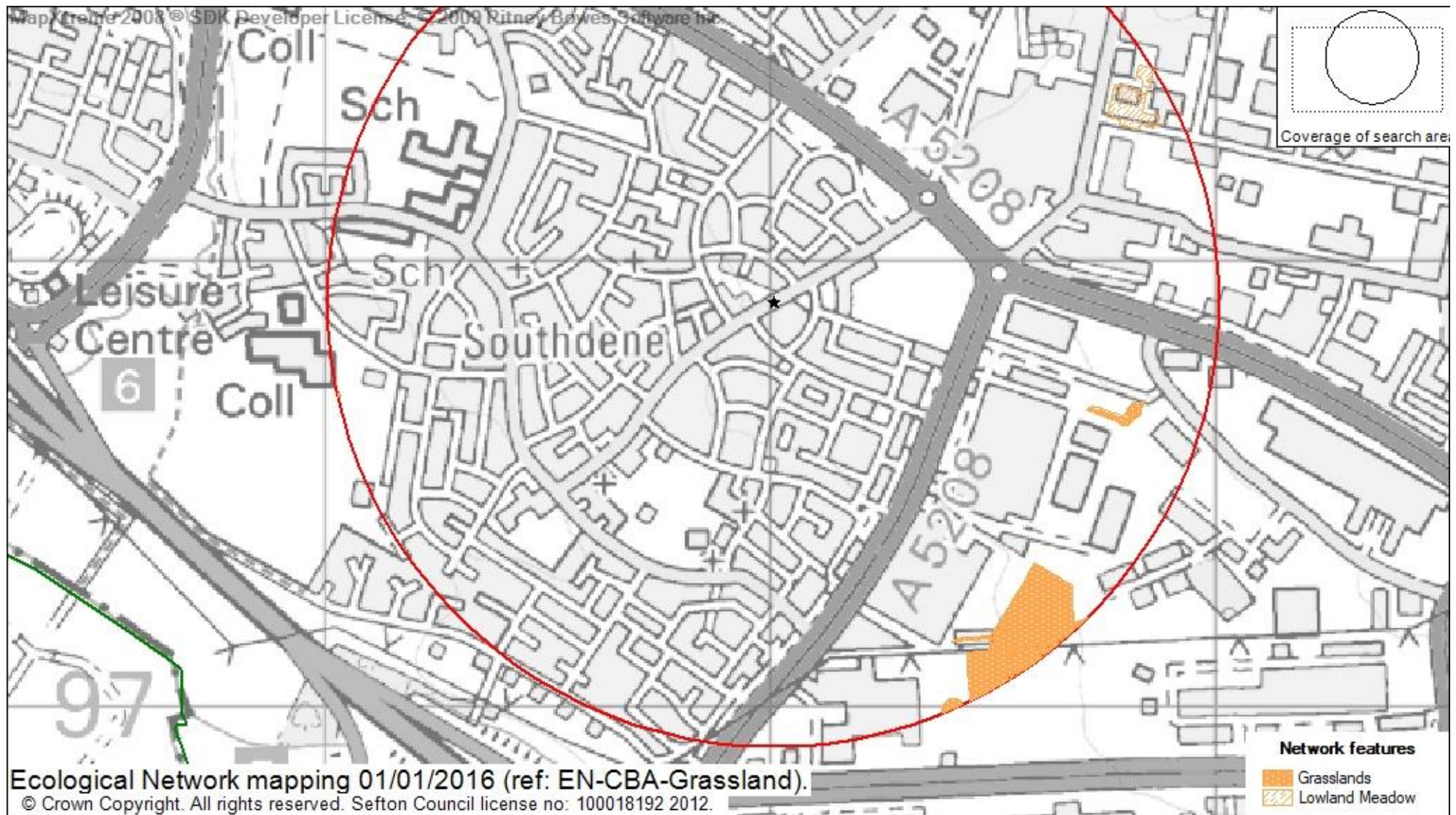
Biodiversity Information Report 21/10/2025

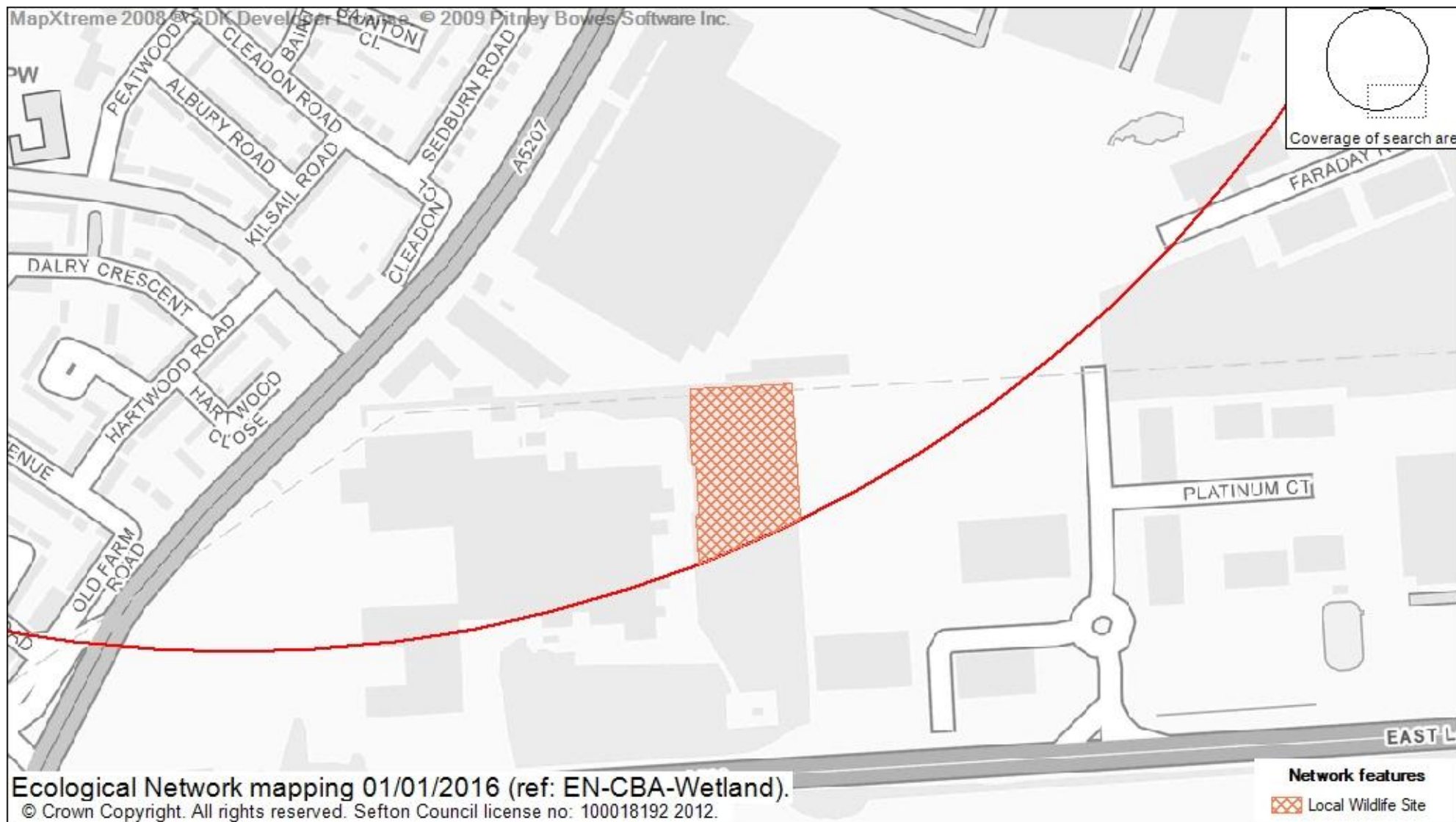
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Site: Thursby Walk, Kirkby, Liverpool, L32 6QD**

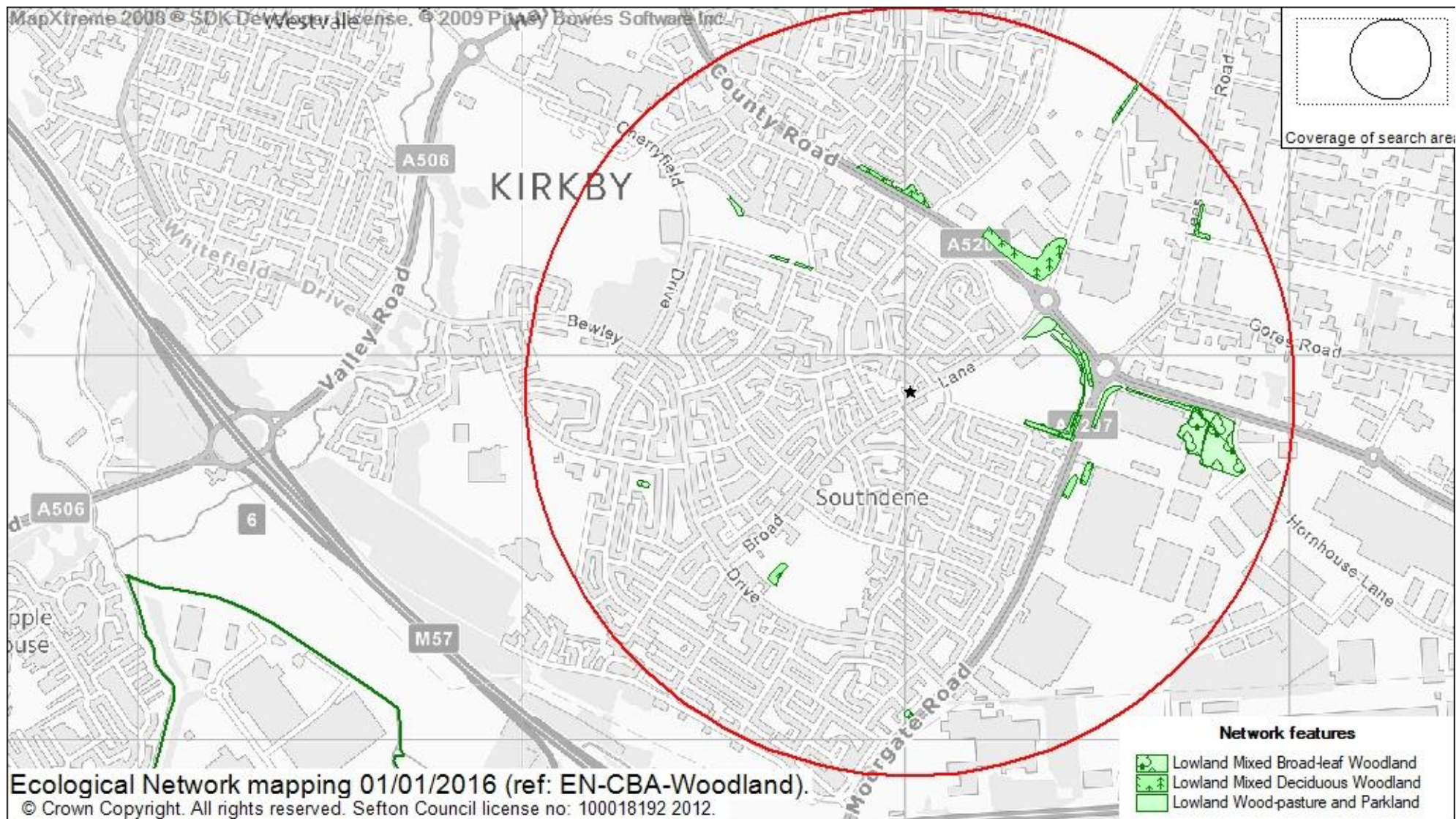


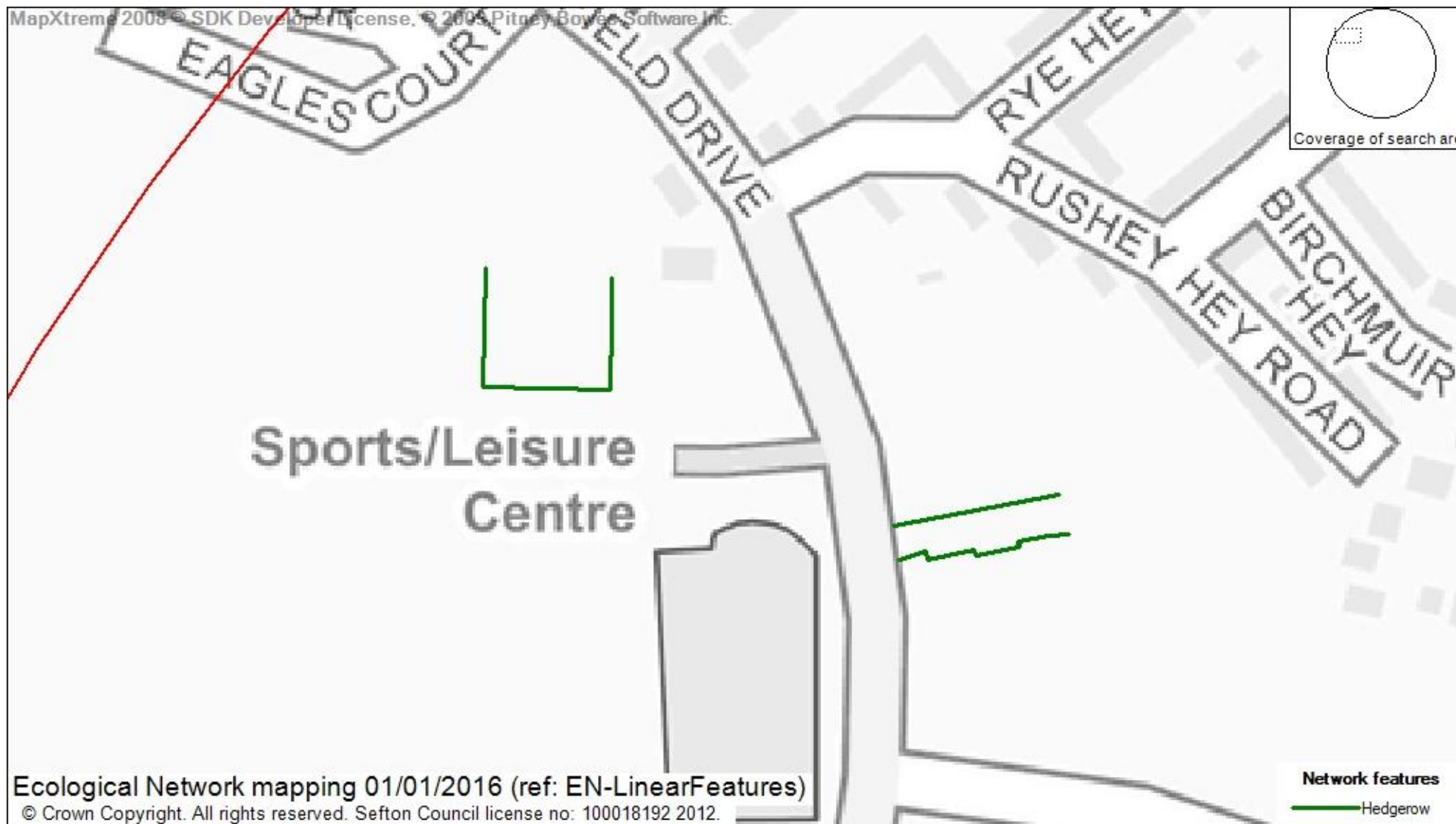


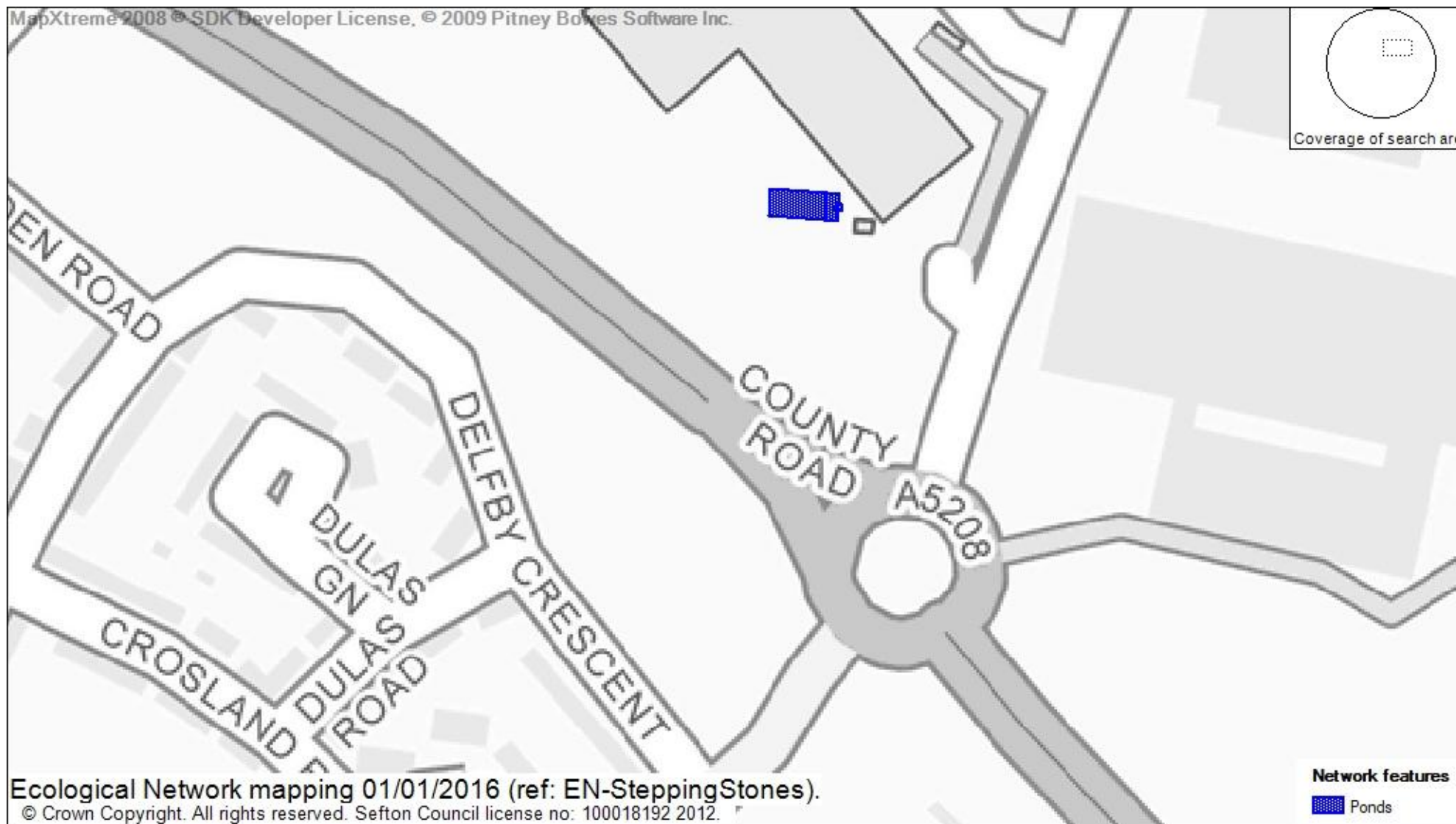


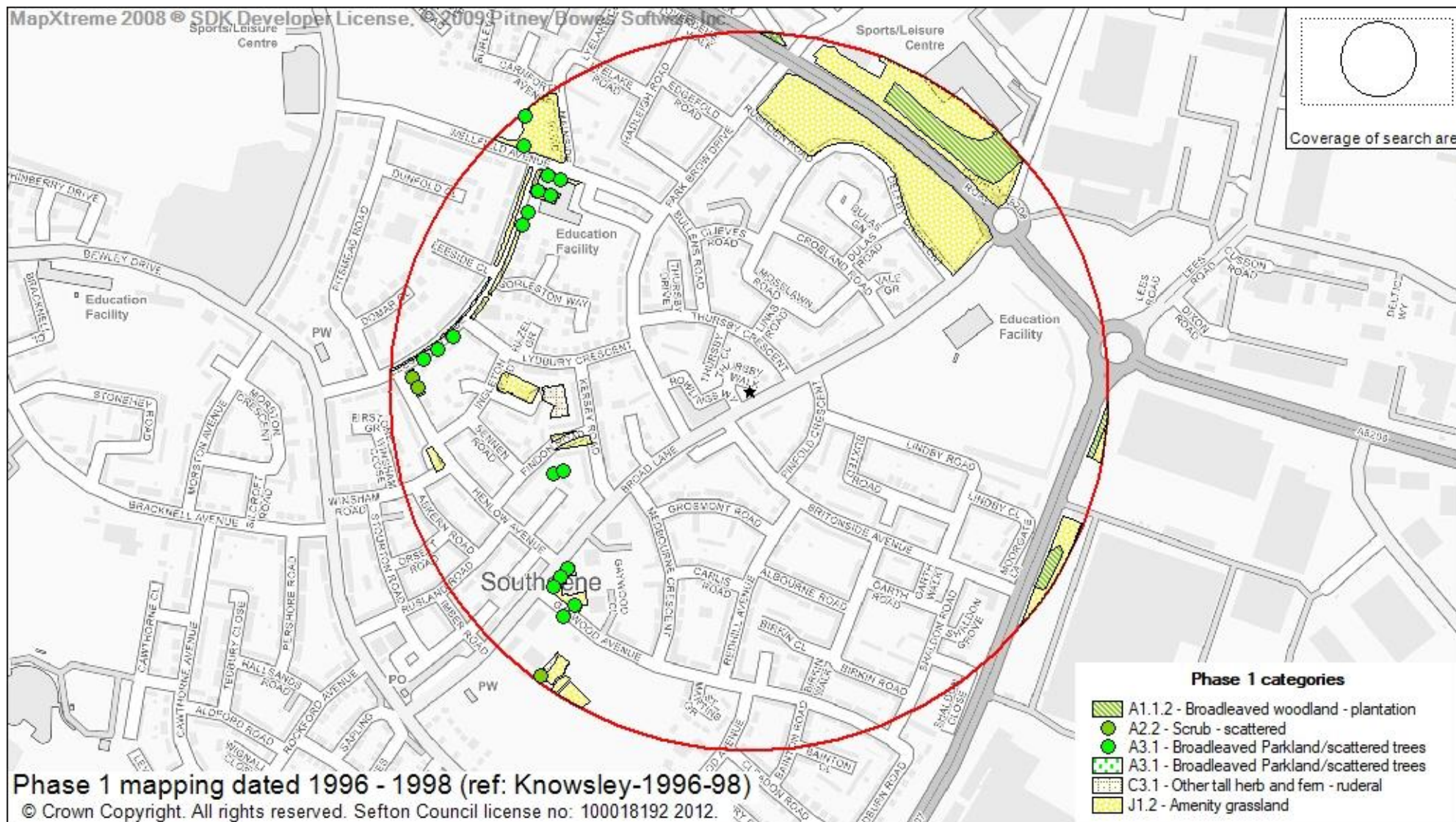






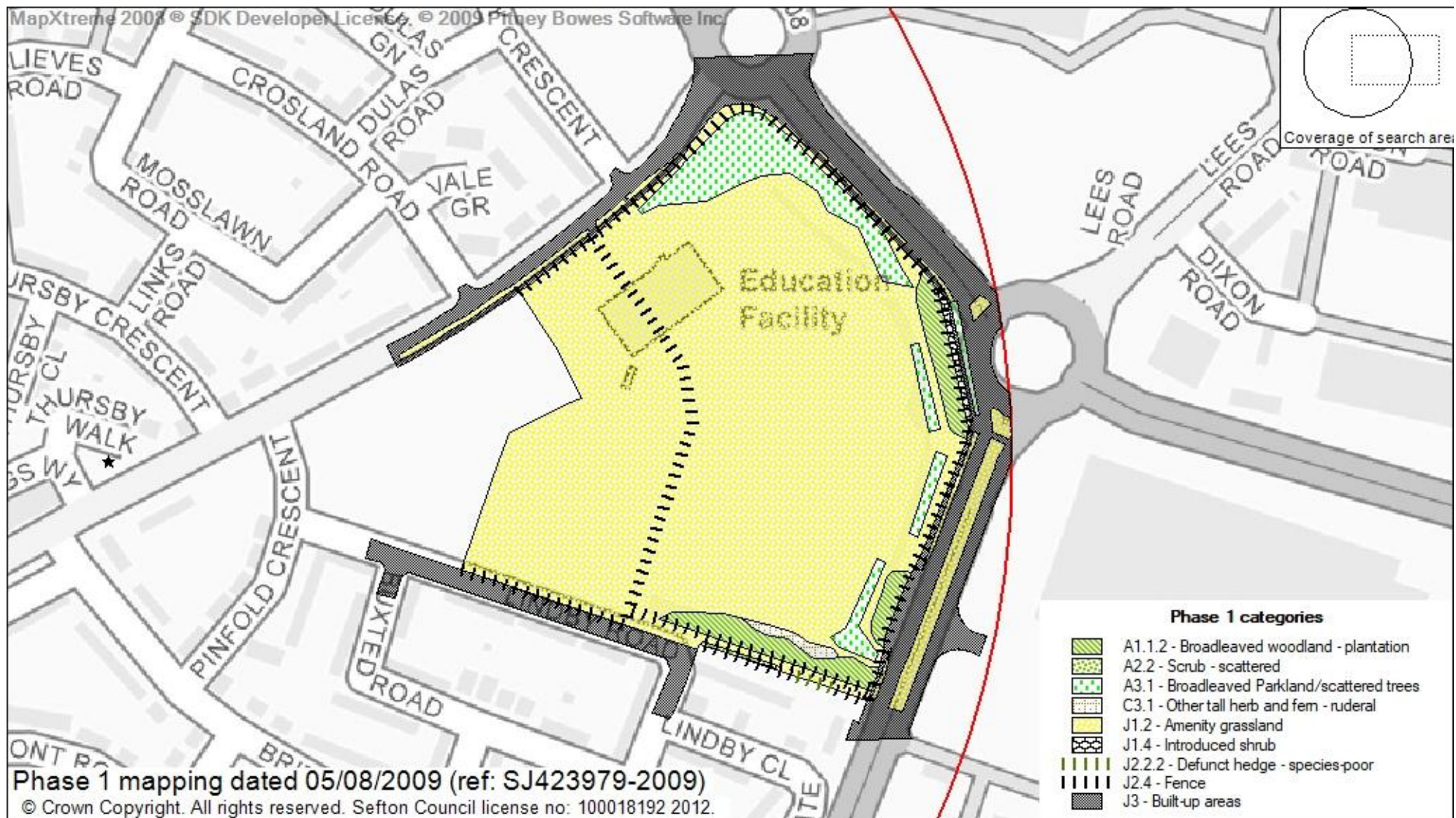


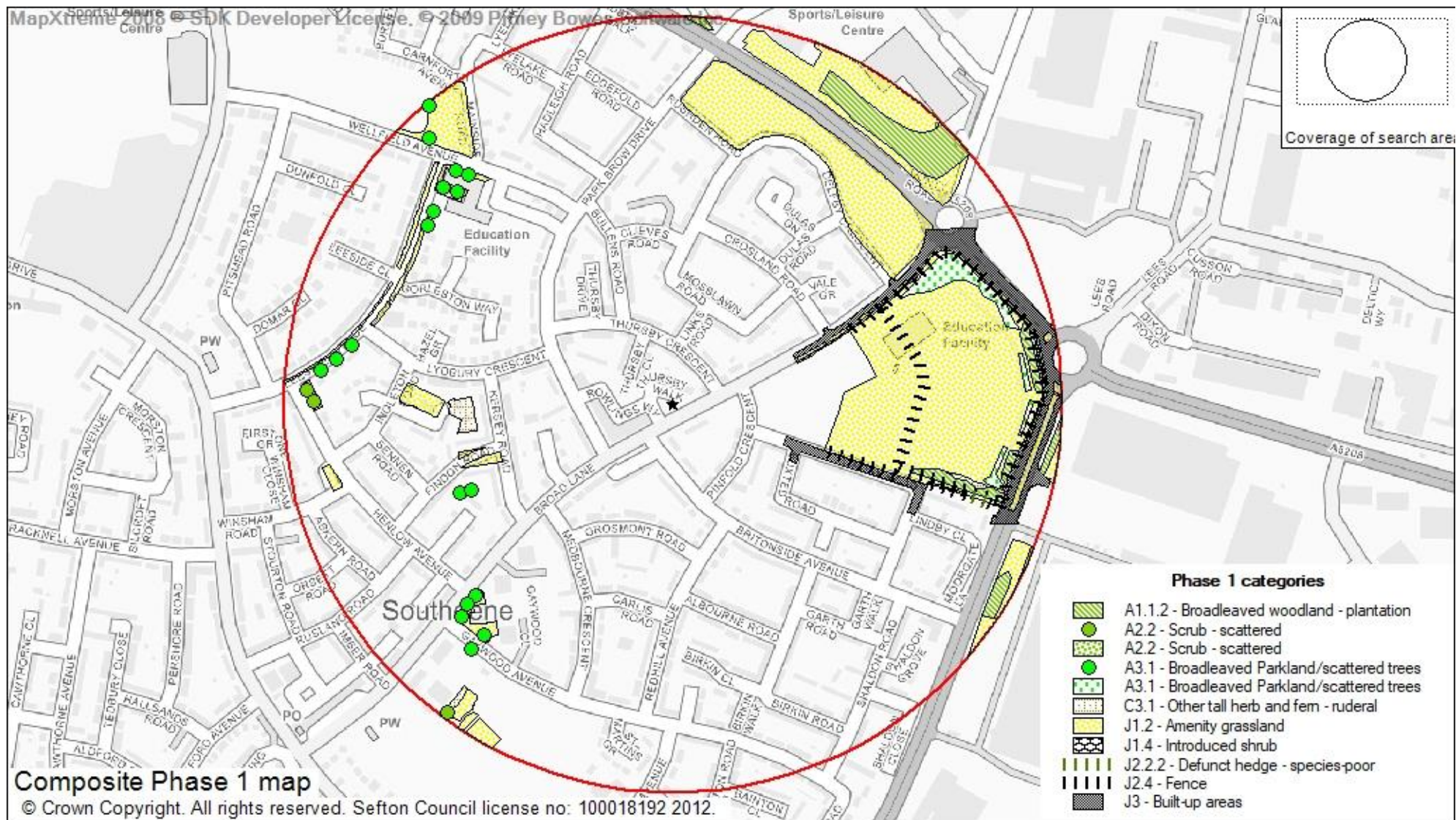


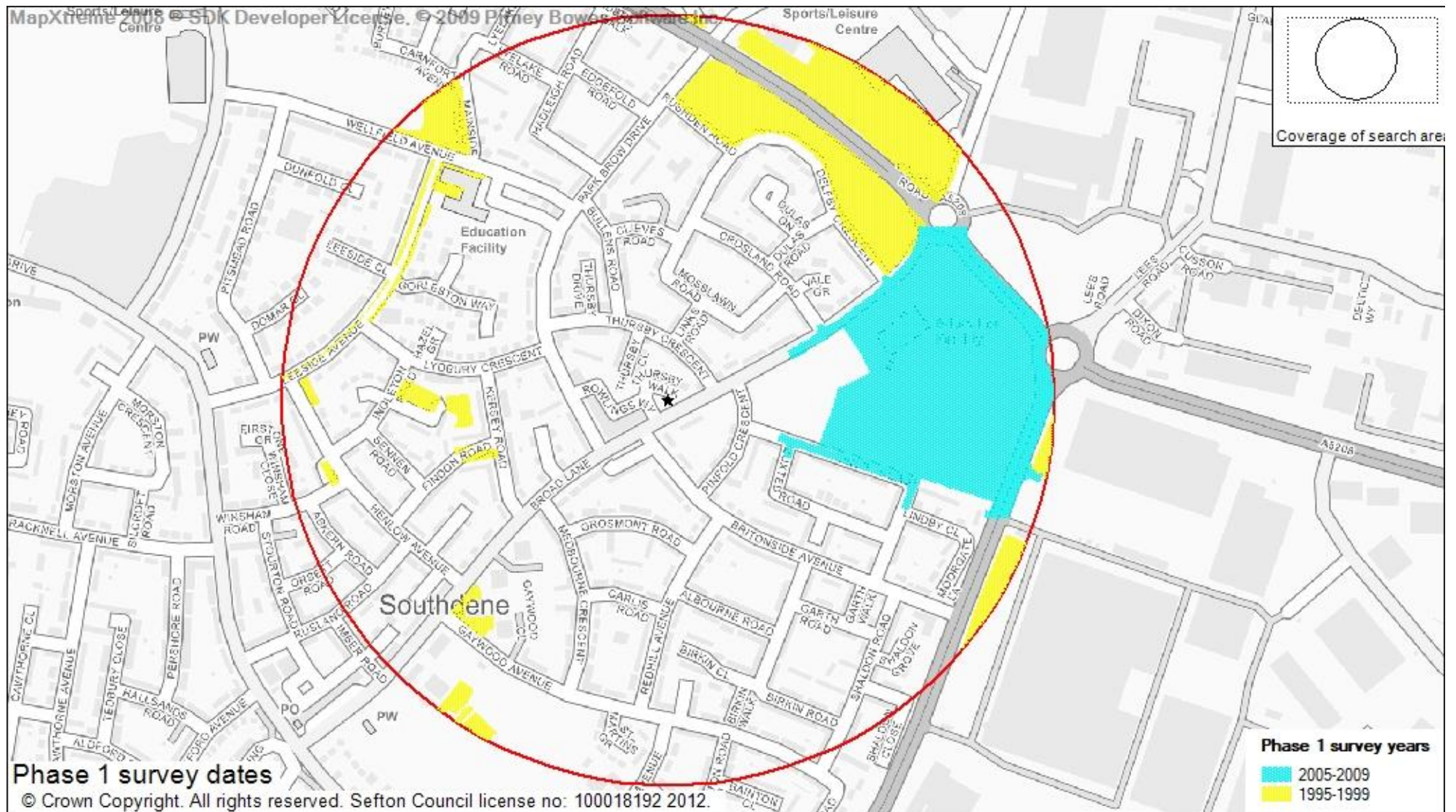


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APPENDIX 5: CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS

PRE-DEVELOPMENT

1. Modified Grassland

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On site. Thursby Walk	Survey date and Surveyor name	22/10/2025
Limitations (if applicable)	None	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	PEA
Grid reference	SJ 42005 97907	Habitat parcel reference	G1
Habitat Description The site is comprised entirely of modified grassland plus associated HS parking bays. The grassland is species poor and highly maintained. There are no rare or notable species present or considered likely to be present and forbs limited to those typical of lawns including Annual Meadow grass, Perennial Rye Grass and Dandelion.			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	No	No less
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	No	No variation - homogenous.
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes	None
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	No	None
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	No	None
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes	None
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Yes	None
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			No
Number of criteria passed			2
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x1/	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)		
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	Yes	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
Grassland to be lost with the exception of one small area which will be retained and enhanced with trees added.			

POST-DEVELOPMENT

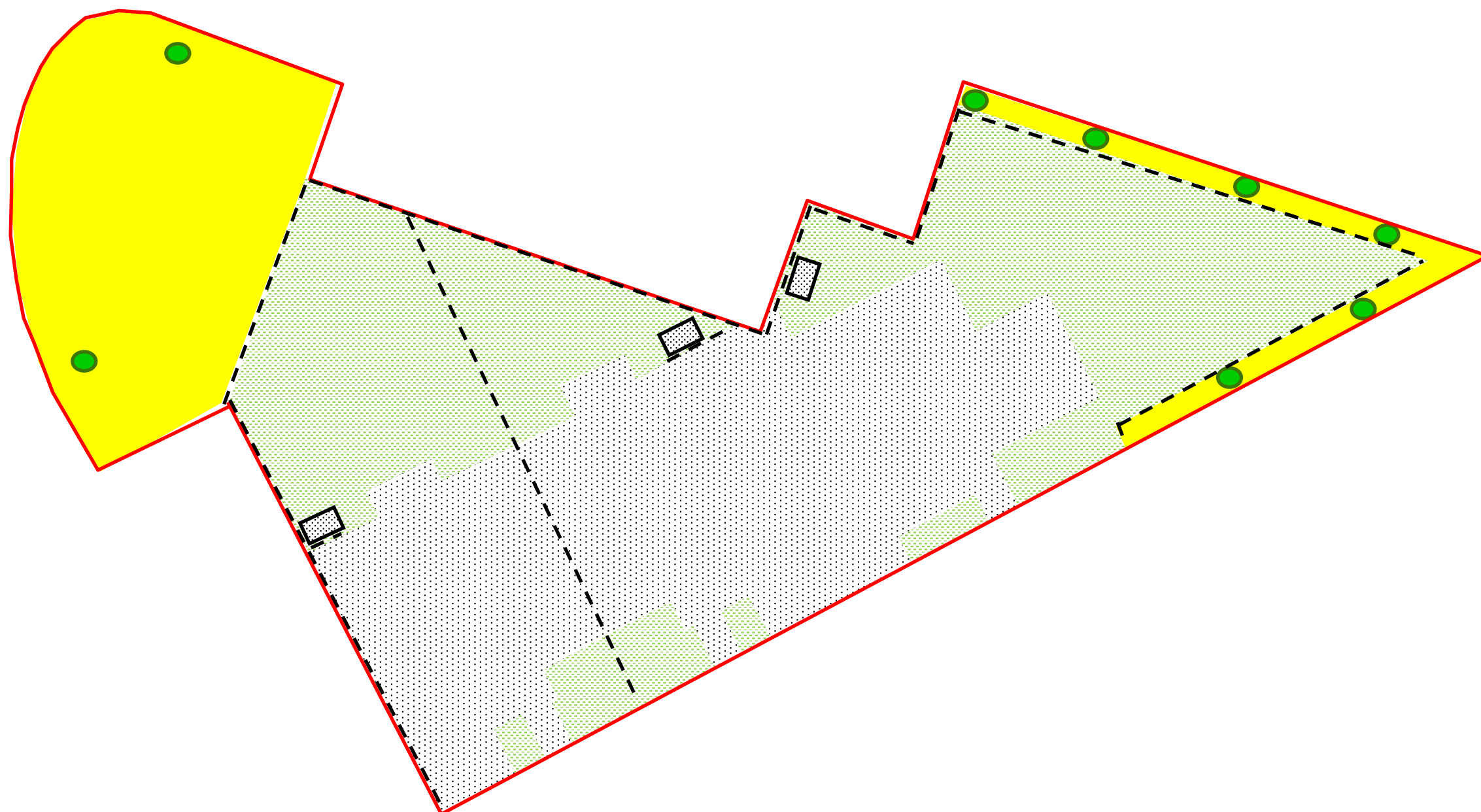
1. Modified Grassland (enhanced) - Moderate
2. Rural Trees – Moderate

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On site. Thursby Walk	Survey date and Surveyor name	22/10/2025
Limitations (if applicable)	None	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	PEA
Grid reference	SJ 42005 97907	Habitat parcel reference	G1
Habitat Description The site is currently comprised entirely of modified grassland plus associated HS parking bays. The grassland is species poor and highly maintained. There are no rare or notable species present or considered likely to be present and forbs limited to those typical of lawns including Annual Meadow grass, Perennial Rye Grass and Dandelion. This area will be retained and enhanced via seeding and alterations to management.			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	Yes	See mix and management to encourage species rich area with wildflowers present.
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Yes	Management of wildflower area to increase structural diversity.
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes	None
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	No	None
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	No	None
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes	None
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Yes	None
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			No
Number of criteria passed			2
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	Yes	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
Grassland to be lost with the exception of one small area which will be retained and enhanced with trees added.			

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Individual trees – Urban trees Individual trees – Rural trees Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees. <i>Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of <u>rural</u> trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in <u>rural</u> locations.</i>			
Habitat Description			
Trees to be planted as part of proposals. Will comprise of native species only			
Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment): Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching. Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only): Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On site	Survey date and Surveyor name	
Limitations (if applicable)		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Grid reference	SJ 42005 97907	Habitat parcel reference	T1
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y	
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Y	
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	N	
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Y	
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N	
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	
Number of criteria passed			
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	Yes	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.			
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score²			

APPENDIX 6: PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT AND PLANTING PLAN

SEE NEXT PAGE



Proposed Habitat Plan

Land off Thursby Walk, Kirkby, Liverpool

February 2026

Client: Revival Architects

Drawing by: RN

Version: 2

Key:

-  Modified Grassland— g4 (retained enhanced)
-  Vegetated garden
-  Individual Trees —u1a
-  Developed, sealed surface—u1b
-  Development Site Boundary
-  Private Garden area fencing

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