



Ecological Impact Assessment

Land at Kings Business Park, Prescot

Mersey Design Group Ltd

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Commission	1
1.2	Proposed Development/Identification of Impacts	1
1.3	Aims and Objectives	1
1.4	Background/Acknowledgments.....	1
1.5	Local Planning Policy	2
1.6	Site Context	3
2	Methodology.....	5
2.1	Desk Study	5
2.2	Field Survey	5
2.3	Assessment.....	7
2.4	Limitations.....	11
3	Baseline Ecological Conditions	12
4	Assessment and Mitigation	20
5	Enhancement and Monitoring	25
6	Conclusion.....	26
7	References	27

Tables and Figures

Figure 1 – Survey Area.....	4
Table 1 – Survey Dates and Conditions	5
Table 2 – Categorisation of Bats by National Rarity	8
Table 2 – Roost Valuation System	9

Table 4 – Ecological Features	12
Table 5 – Assessment of effect and mitigation measures	20
Table 6 – Enhancement & Monitoring	25

Drawings and Appendices

Drawing CRM958001-ENZ-XX-XX-DR-Z-0001 – Habitat Map.....	29
Appendix A – Proposed Site Layout.....	30
Appendix B – Legislation and National Planning Policy	31

Non-Technical Summary

- i. In June 2024 Enzygo Ltd was commissioned by Mersey Design Group Ltd (the client) to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of Land at Kings Business Park, Prescott, L34 1NS (central grid reference: SJ 45552 92376), located within the Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council planning authority. This report has been updated in February 2025 following comments received from Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) in December 2024 and subsequent updated field survey.
- ii. The purpose of this report is to provide biodiversity information identifying ecological features, confirmed impacts/effect, and proportionate avoidance/mitigation/compensation strategies, followed by enhancements. This information will support the planning application and assist the Planning Officer in making an informed decision.
- iii. The following key ecological features and associated recommendations have been identified:
 - **Green Infrastructure, TPO, Red Squirrel** – (*Offsite boundary lowland mixed deciduous woodland is a priority habitat and provides green infrastructure and wildlife corridor function. The entire site and wider Kings Business Park is covered by a TPO. There are records of Red Squirrel in the area*) – No trees present within the site and no anticipated tree loss. Offsite boundary woodland is to be retained and protected in accordance with BS5837:2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations*, with fencing and a sensitive lighting scheme implemented. No detailed further pre-determination surveys are required for Red Squirrel as there are no habitats onsite to support this species;
 - **Bats** – (*The small building within Plot C to be demolished is assessed is of Negligible suitability for roosting bats in accordance with current guidance, with no potential roosting features incidentally observed. No trees onsite providing any potential roosting features. Offsite boundary woodland provides suitable roosting, foraging and commuting habitat*) – No further pre-determination surveys required. However, best practice precautionary measures to be implemented during the demolition phase. As above, retain and protect the offsite boundary woodland which provides suitable roosting, foraging and commuting habitat with fencing and a sensitive lighting scheme;
 - **Breeding Birds** – (*The small building within Plot C provides significantly limited opportunities for nesting birds, and an abundance of suitable habitat is present in the surrounds*) – Site clearance should be conducted outside of the nesting season where the programme allows (March – August inclusive), where necessary within the nesting bird season, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) should supervise, including undertaking a nesting bird check prior to demolition and vegetation clearance to ensure no nests are affected. As above, retain and protect the offsite boundary woodland which provides suitable nesting habitat with fencing and a sensitive lighting scheme;
 - **Badgers** – (*No specific sett creation opportunities for Badgers onsite; however, badgers may traverse the site during foraging and commuting as suitable habitat is present in the immediate surrounds, including offsite boundary woodland, the sloped banks of the offsite sparsely vegetated land to the northeast, and the golf course to the south*) – A pre-commencement check of land within a 30m radius of the plots should be conducted prior to commencing construction works to ensure no setts will

be affected. Best practice precautionary measures to be implemented during the construction phase to prevent the accidental injury or killing of badgers which may traverse the site, such as covering pits and safe storage of chemicals; and,

- **Great Crested Newt (GCN), Common Reptiles, and Priority Species** – *(The small areas of modified grassland (Plot B) and sparsely vegetated urban land (Plot A) provide a significantly limited extent of poor-quality habitat for Common Reptiles, GCN, and a restricted range of priority species. Hardstand and buildings (Plot C) provide negligible opportunities)* – No detailed further pre-determination Reptile, or GCN surveys are required as the site provides significantly poor suitability habitat. Best practice precautionary RAMs are to be followed during the construction phase to prevent the accidental injury or killing of priority and protected species which could stray onto the development sites, such as sensitive clearance, covering holes, and providing a means of escape. Any wildlife found onsite should be allowed to disperse offsite or relocated by hand (except for GCN, who should only be handled by licenced ecologists or in emergency situations).
- iv. Biodiversity enhancements will include new bat and bird boxes.
- v. This report has demonstrated that, if the outlined mitigation measures are implemented in full then no significant residual impact could be expected, and the proposed application will result in 'no net loss in biodiversity' whilst providing opportunities for 'biodiversity net gain' in accordance with NPPF and Local Planning Policy.

1 Introduction

1.1 Commission

- 1.1.1 In June 2024 Enzygo Ltd was commissioned by Mersey Design Group Ltd (the client) to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of Land at Kings Business Park, Prescott, L34 1NS (central grid reference: SJ 45552 92376), located within the Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council planning authority. This report has been updated in February 2025 following comments received from Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) in December 2024 and subsequent updated field survey.
- 1.1.2 *Enzygo Ltd are not considered to act as a Principal Designer for any mitigation/enhancement strategies identified within this document, in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CITB, 2016).*

1.2 Proposed Development/Identification of Impacts

- 1.2.1 The study will inform full planning permission for the demolition of two existing small units and the clearance of vegetation to allow the construction of small, containerised plant / machinery. Existing access from will be utilised and there will be no use of any surrounding land during the construction phase. Anticipated impacts during the construction phase include noise, vibration, and dust.
- 1.2.2 Refer to Appendix A for Proposed Site Layout.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

- 1.3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide biodiversity information which succinctly identifies ecological features on site and within the corresponding zone of influence, confirmed impacts resulting from the proposed application, associated effect to identified ecological features, confirmed proportionate avoidance/mitigation/compensation strategies, and confirmed enhancements that will be implemented in accordance with the British Standard for Biodiversity BS42020:2013 (BSI, 2013).
- 1.3.2 This information will support the planning application and assist the Planning Officer in making an informed decision on whether the application can demonstrate 'no net loss in biodiversity' and a 'biodiversity net gain' in accordance with National Planning Policy Frameworks (NPPF) and Local Planning Policy.
- 1.3.3 This report has been produced with reference to current Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland, Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine (CIEEM, 2018), Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (CIEEM, 2017), Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition (Collins, 2023), and is in accordance with Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development BS42020:2013 (BSI, 2013).

1.4 Background/Acknowledgments

Consultations

- 1.4.1 In December 2024 consultation was received from Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) regarding this application. In addition to comments in relation to construction waste management and waste storage, the consultation highlights issues and concerns within the previous version of this report and separate DEFRA Metric calculation, specifically in relation to the lack of baseline survey of the area proposed for tree planting, and as result

to reports couldn't be seen as acceptable at present. The consultation also provides recommendations for ecological enhancements including bird and bat boxes, and native landscape planting. This consultation has been reviewed and details used to inform the updated field survey and habitat information presented here, and to inform the separate updated DEFRA Metric calculation.

- 1.4.2 It is our understanding that to date there has been no further correspondence with the County Ecologist or any statutory consultees i.e. Natural England, regarding this specific application.

Previous Planning Applications

- 1.4.3 A search of the Knowsley Council planning portal has revealed planning applications within the vicinity of the development from the last 5 years with ecological information relevant to this assessment:
- 1.4.4 A planning application located approximately 0.34km east (ref: 24/00065/KMBC1) for *'Demolition of existing linked extension and the erection of a single storey side and rear extension together with a colonnade and orangery to side elevations. Conversion of the first floor to form 4 no. serviced apartments. Alterations to existing building to include the installation of new and replacement windows and other associated landscaping works'* contains the results of a Daytime Bat Survey (Rachel Hacking Ecology, 2020), which has been used to inform this assessment.
- 1.4.5 A planning application located approximately 0.4km southwest (ref: 20/00773/LBC) for *'Proposed pavilion development, new footpath access, containers and fence enclosure, lighting, CCTV, playing field drainage and associated works'* contains the results of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (Weddles, 2024), which has been used to inform this assessment.

1.5 Local Planning Policy

- 1.5.1 The following policies of Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy 2016 (Knowsley Council, 2016) are applicable to biodiversity:
- **CS2: Development Principles** - Recognise environmental limits, protect and enhance environmental assets, enhance local character and promote quality of place;
 - **CS8: Green Infrastructure** - Maintenance and Enhancement of Knowsley's Existing Green Infrastructure; and,
 - **CS21: Greenspaces and Trees** - Protect and conserve greenspaces to meet local requirements for quantity, quality and accessibility which satisfy both current and future needs for residents and visitors.
- 1.5.2 The following saved policies of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006 (Knowsley Council, 2006) remain applicable to biodiversity:
- **DQ4: Trees and Development;**
 - **ENV2: Noise and Vibration;**
 - **ENV3: Light Pollution;**
 - **ENV4: Hazardous substances; and,**

- **ENV5: Contaminated Land.**

- 1.5.3 The site also lies within the Kings Business Park which is allocated as a Regional Investment Site to which UDP policy EC4 applies (Knowsley Council, 2006). The policy wording states all applications should provide high quality design and layout which reflects the landscape and ecological value, and secure long-term management of existing habitats.
- 1.5.4 The Trees and Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Knowsley Council, 2016) is applicable to this assessment.
- 1.5.5 Refer to Appendix B for relevant details of European and National Legislation, and National Planning Policy.

1.6 Site Context

- 1.6.1 The site comprises three small land parcels which are proposed to be subject to development totalling approximately 0.04 Ha, an existing access road, and a 0.06 Ha area of existing grassland and scrub which is proposed to be utilised for new landscape planting. The site is located within the existing Kings Business Park in Prescott. Land parcel to the northwest comprises a small area of modified grassland, land parcel to the east comprises sparsely vegetated urban land which has previously been cleared, and land parcel to the southeast is currently small buildings. The area of proposed landscape planting to the south predominantly supports unmanaged neutral grassland, with localised areas of modified grassland, and mixed scrub.
- 1.6.2 The immediate surrounds comprise woodland to the north, east, and south, with the M57 motorway further east, a golf course to the south, Kings Business Park to the west, with residential housing beyond.
- 1.6.3 The site lies within the Merseyside Conurbation National Character Area (Natural England, 2013) which is characterised as *'a predominantly urban and suburban landscape, based around the settlements of Liverpool, Birkenhead, Bootle, Kirkby, Maghull, Huyton, Bebington and Wallasey. The NCA sits on a low-lying but gently rolling platform punctuated by low sandstone ridges and bisected by the lower estuary of the River Mersey. There is a dense settlement pattern of housing and large-scale industry focusing on the city of Liverpool and Birkenhead/east Wirral, with their diverse historic and cultural centres. Many of the city edge settlements function as commuter settlements. There is a large proportion of industrial land use, with docks, warehouses and associated commercial land, interlinked by an extensive transport infrastructure'*.
- 1.6.4 To enable the reader to easily distinguish between the three proposed development plots covered under this assessment, each has been numbered: Plot A covers land to the east (sparsely vegetated urban land), Plot B covers land to the northwest (modified grassland), and Plot C covers land to the southeast (buildings or developed land sealed surface).

Figure 1 – Survey Area



Image courtesy of Google Image Pro 7.3.2.5491. Imagery date February 2025.

2 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 Desk study details were obtained from the following sources on the associated dates to provide background on ecological features in the vicinity of the site. In each case the search included the site and the specified area beyond the site boundary based on the expected zone of influence. Candidate and potential designations are considered too as these are also legally protected. Records obtained included:

- Statutory sites designated or classified under international conventions or European legislation within a 5km radius, statutory sites designated under national legislation (including Marine), Natural England GCN Pond Surveys for District Level Licensing data (and GCN Risk Zones), and existing EPS Licence applications within a 2km radius, and Priority Habitat & Ancient Woodland Inventory within a 0.5km radius 20th August 2024 (DEFRA, 2024);
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and Biodiversity Conservation Areas within the immediate zone of influence 20th August 2024 (Knowsley Council);
- Waterbodies within a 0.5km radius (Online mapping sources including: Google Maps; MAGIC; and Ordnance Survey Street View, 20th August 2024); and
- Legally protected species, any Priority species (which includes: National Biodiversity Species, Local BAP Species, Species of conservation concern and Red Data Book (RDB) species, Birds of Conservation Concern (BOCC), nationally rare and nationally scarce species, and OSPAR Commission list of threatened/declining species) and Invasive species (listed under section 14 of Schedule 9 only) within a 2km radius, and any Locally designated wildlife sites, notified Local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitats, and important hedgerows/veteran trees within the immediate zone of influence, 21st August 2024 (Merseyside Biobank) (Woodland Trust, 2024).

2.1.2 Data received has been extracted and summarised using QGIS 2.18, with original sources not extracted directly. Data has also been edited where relevant to prevent sensitive or confidential records being made public in accordance with Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK (CIEEM, 2020).

2.2 Field Survey

2.2.1 Field Surveys were undertaken on the following dates by the identified staff, all of whom satisfy necessary field survey competencies as stipulated by the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Weather conditions on the day of survey have been included and where relevant survey/class licence numbers referred to.

Table 1 – Survey Dates and Conditions

Survey	Date	Staff/Licence	Environmental Conditions
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment	7 th August 2024	Melissa Finch MSc, BSc (Hons) QCIEEM – Consultant Ecologist.	100% cloud, dry, no wind, and a temperature of 15°C.

Survey	Date	Staff/Licence	Environmental Conditions
Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	7 th January 2025	KT Smith MSc, BSc (Hons) – Assistant Ecologist	100% overcast, occasional hail, light wind and 3°C

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- 2.2.2 In accordance with Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 2nd Edition (CIEEM, 2017) the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) survey included the following.

Mapping of Habitat Types

- 2.2.3 This assessment has utilised the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) methodology (UKHab, 2023) as the recommended published method of habitat classification. It has been used to categorise and map the primary habitat types present within the survey area using a standard set of habitat categories, with associated secondary codes/features identified where applicable. Details of current management and habitat condition have also been recorded where appropriate.
- 2.2.4 Each of the main habitats has been described; including details of component plant species abundances (recorded using the DAFOR scale: D=Dominant, A=Abundant, F=Frequent, O=Occasional, R=Rare). Additionally, any stands of non-native invasive plant species were recorded. Habitat extents have been visually mapped onto a topographic plan, with approximate location/areas recorded only (a GPS unit has not been utilised to accurately record these).

Assessment of possible presence/likely importance for Protected & Priority Species

- 2.2.5 An assessment of the possible presence of protected or priority species, and the likely importance of habitat features present for such species has also been undertaken, particularly where uncommon or specialised habitats are present in accordance with current PEA guidelines (CIEEM, 2017). However, no specific protected species survey has been undertaken unless listed under additional surveys as below. Any incidental sightings of protected or priority species, or field signs of such species has also been recorded. Species assessed include: Plants & Fungi; Terrestrial/aquatic invertebrates; Fish; Amphibians; Reptiles; Breeding, wintering, and migratory birds; Bats (including potential roost sites, foraging, and commuting habitats/features), Badger, and other mammal species.

Additional Surveys

Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment of buildings:

- 2.2.6 In accordance with current guidance (Collins, 2023), an inspection of structures within the site was undertaken. Equipment used to aid the survey included: high-powered torches. Notes were made on the following:
- Type, construction and age of structure (particularly if traditional materials have been used or the presence of specialist bat roosting features);
 - Presence/absence of potential roost features (i.e. crevices between bridge girders, cracks within concrete etc);

- Environmental factors that would increase the probability of bat presence (i.e. dark zones with no/limited exterior lighting, south/west facing aspects, good quality foraging/commuting habitat nearby particularly prominent linear features) and those that would decrease the probability of bat presence (high light levels, dense urban areas, recent works, high levels of noise or vibration or human disturbance, poor quality foraging/commuting habitat etc); and
- Type and location of any roosting bat evidence (i.e. presence of live or dead bats, audible squeaking, droppings, feeding remains, urine stains, grease marks etc).

2.3 Assessment

Bats

2.3.1 Based on the findings of the survey, each building/structure has been classified into one of the following categories in accordance with current guidance (Collins, 2023). The assessment is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed/following further surveys:

- Known or confirmed roost – Structure with evidence of bat use or bat presence;
- High Suitability – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat;
- Medium Suitability – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status;
- Low Suitability – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions, and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by large numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation);
- Negligible Suitability – No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasions. Or,
- None – No habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats at any time of year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).

2.3.2 Where roosts are identified (irrespective of species conservation status), these have been categorised as follows in accordance with current guidance (Collins, 2023):

- Transitional roost (April-September/October) – used by a few individuals or occasionally small groups of bats on waking from hibernation or in the period prior to hibernation;
- Maternity roost (May-August) – used by breeding females, where babies are born and raised to independence. Adult males rarely found here;

- Satellite roost (May-August) – used by a few individuals to small groups of breeding females as alternative roost sites in close proximity to maternity roosts;
- Mating roost (September-November) – established by males of some species to display/call to females to mate;
- Hibernation roost (October-March) - where bats may be found during the winter. They vary greatly in terms of the number of individuals and diversity of species using them;
- Night roost (March-November) – used by bats as roosts other than traditional day roosts to rest in during the night. May be used by a single individual on occasion or regularly by an entire colony;
- Day roost (March-November) – used by bats during the day to rest in, often by males. Bats may regularly use a number of days roosts or the same site for several weeks;
- Feeding roost (May-November) – can be occupied by a single bat or a few individuals to an entire colony to feed, shelter from the weather or to rest temporarily; and
- Swarming sites (August-November) – where large numbers of bats from several species

2.3.3 Following the framework for valuing bats in Ecological Impact Assessment set out by Wray et al. (2007), bat roosts are assigned a value, based on roost type and species rarity, using a geographic frame of reference, as detailed in the below tables.

Table 2 – Categorisation of Bats by National Rarity

Rarity within Range	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Common (population over 100,000)	Common Pipistrelle Bat (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>), Soprano Pipistrelle Bat (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>), Brown Long-eared Bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	Common Pipistrelle Bat, Soprano Pipistrelle Bat	Common Pipistrelle Bat, Soprano Pipistrelle Bat	Common Pipistrelle Bat, Soprano Pipistrelle Bat
Rarer (population 10,000-100,000)	Lesser Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>), Whiskered Bat (<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>), Brandt's Bat (<i>Myotis brandtii</i>), Daubenton's Bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>), Natterer's Bat (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>), Leisler's Bat (<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>), Noctule Bat (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>), Nathusius' Pipistrelle Bat (<i>Pipistrellus</i>	Lesser Horseshoe Bat, Daubenton's Bat, Natterer's Bat, Brown Long-eared Bat	Daubenton's Bat, Natterer's Bat, Brown Long-eared Bat	Daubenton's Bat, Natterer's Bat, Leisler's Bat, Nathusius' Pipistrelle Bat, Brown Long-eared Bat

Rarity within Range	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
	<i>mathusii</i>), Serotine Bat (<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>)			
Rarest (population under 10,000)	Greater Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>), Bechstein's Bat (<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>), Alcathoe Bat (<i>Myotis alcathoe</i>), Barbastelle Bat (<i>Barbastelle barbastellus</i>), Grey Long-eared Bat (<i>Plecotus austriacus</i>)	Greater Horseshoe Bat, Whiskered Bat, Brandt's Bat, Bechstein's Bat, Alcathoe Bat, Noctule Bat, Nathusius' Pipistrelle Bat, Serotine Bat, Barbastelle Bat	Whiskered Bat, Brandt's Bat, Alcathoe Bat, Noctule Bat, Nathusius' Pipistrelle Bat, Leisler's Bat	Whiskered Bat
*Vagrant species and occasional visitors	Greater Mouse-eared Bat (<i>Myotis myotis</i>), Parti-coloured Bat (<i>Vespertilio murinus</i>), Kuhl's Pipistrelle Bat (<i>Pipistrellus kuhlii</i>), Savi's Pipistrelle Bat (<i>Hypsugo savii</i>), Pond Bat (<i>Myotis dasycneme</i>), Notch-eared Bat (<i>Myotis emarginatus</i>), Northern Bat (<i>Eptesicus nilssoni</i>)			

Table 2 – Roost Valuation System

Geographic Frame of Reference	Roost Types
District, Local or Parish	Feeding Perches (common species), individual bats (common species), small numbers of non-breeding bats (common species), mating sites (common species)
County	Maternity sites (common species), small numbers of hibernating bats (common and rarer species), feeding perches (rarer/rarest species), individual bats (rarer/rarest species), small numbers of non-breeding bats (rarer/rarest species)
Regional	Mating sites (rarer/rarest species) including well-used swarming sites, maternity sites (rarer species), hibernation sites (rarest species), significant hibernation sites
National/UK	Maternity sites (rarest species), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
International	Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

General

- 2.3.4 A level of importance has been assigned to each ecological feature, where sufficient baseline data is available to do so, in accordance with current guidance (CIEEM, 2018). This is defined within a geographical context as follows: International and European; National; Regional; Metropolitan, County, vice-county, or other local authority-wide area; River Basin District; Estuarine system/Coastal cell; and Local (plus Negligible where no associated value has been identified). For example, importance of designated sites reflects the geographical context of the designation (where designated sites no longer meet designation criteria and those formally 'de-notified' OR where an undesignated site meets published selection criteria must also be considered). When considering habitats and species contextual information about distribution and abundance of that habitat/species in the area must be considered (if the

habitat/species status is currently in a degraded or unfavourable condition its potential value should be considered).

- 2.3.5 The assessment then considers potential impacts (both positive and negative) generated during the construction and operational phase of the proposed application. Only impacts that are likely to be significant are considered. Impacts that are either unlikely to occur, or if they did occur are unlikely to be significant, are not considered.
- 2.3.6 Cumulative impacts are then considered where the application meets criteria in accordance with national EIA screening guidance (GOV.UK, 2019), and where agreed with the competent authority during scoping. This takes into consideration existing background levels of threat or pressure, looks at critical thresholds, and assess both additive/incremental and associated/connected impacts and effects.
- 2.3.7 Relevant aspects of ecological structure and function are then considered when determining if identified impacts will have a significant effect upon ecological features. Where necessary, this assessment utilises information from other specialists i.e. air quality, hydrology etc, to determine the level of impact. In accordance with current guidance (CIEEM, 2018) these are described using the following characteristics, where relevant: positive or negative; extent; magnitude; duration; frequency and timing; and reversibility.
- 2.3.8 The mitigation hierarchy is then explored in accordance with BS42020:2013 (BSI, 2013). This seeks as a preference to avoid impacts, then to mitigate unavoidable impacts, and as a last resort, to compensate for unavoidable residual impacts that remain after avoidance and mitigation measures. Justification has been provided by the client/their planner where the mitigation hierarchy cannot be followed, or for example where compensation is a preferred approach where the competent authority has adopted a County wide strategy i.e. District Level Licensing Schemes (GOV.UK, 2019). In this instance current national Biodiversity Offsetting guidance has also been consulted (GOV.UK, 2019). Additional information has also been provided by the client/their planner where the applicant wishes to demonstrate exceptional circumstances or where they wish to pursue alternative strategies. Any residual impacts following mitigation measures etc are then identified.
- 2.3.9 All mitigation measures follow species specific current best practice guidance and the source has been identified accordingly. Deviation from guidance has been explained by the ecologist and is proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed works.
- 2.3.10 It is important that planning decisions are based on up-to-date ecological data, and the specific timeframe over which survey data is considered valid should follow general advice (CIEEM, 2019). Although it should be noted that the presence/absence and status of protected species can change seasonally/annually. The age of data should also be assessed separately when considering the submission of an EPS Licence (i.e. Natural England may require data to be from the current season).
- 2.3.11 Local Environmental Records Centres (LERC) issue a licence for use of provided biodiversity data for 1 year only, after which time this should be renewed to validate an application (and reports updated accordingly to incorporate any new records). Following completion of surveys all relevant biodiversity data will be submitted to the relevant LERC and other groups as appropriate.

2.4 Limitations

- 2.4.1 Data held by consultees may not be exhaustive. The absence of evidence does not indicate evidence of absence. Enzygo cannot take responsibility for the accuracy of external data sources and as such discrepancies and inaccuracies may occur.
- 2.4.2 Natural England do not hold information of Ancient Woodland less than 2ha in size.
- 2.4.3 Knowsley Council do not hold information on important hedgerows or veteran trees.
- 2.4.4 Records over 10 years old for transient species (as these are likely to have moved during the interim) and species protected from sale only under the W&C Act 1981 and amendments, are excluded (as these are not relevant to a planning application). Additionally, given the large number of priority species, these have only been included if identified from the desk study and/or habitats recorded on site have been assessed as providing suitable conditions.
- 2.4.5 Sites designated for Landscape or Geological reasons have not been included within this report.
- 2.4.6 The initial Habitat Survey was undertaken in August at an optimal time of year at the height of growing season when the majority of planting species are readily identifiable. It is recognised that the January 2025 updated survey is outside of the optimal habitat survey window, however, considering the commonly occurring and widespread habitats and conditions present, it was possible to appropriately identify habitats to inform the assessment presented here. No uncommon or rarer habitats are present for which survey at a more optimal time of year is required.
- 2.4.7 This document does not contain a comprehensive list of botanical species on site. Only plant species characteristic of each habitat and incidental observations of notable plant species were recorded. In addition, many plant species are only evident at certain times of the year and so some plant species may have gone undetected.
- 2.4.8 All areas of the site were accessible.

3 Baseline Ecological Conditions

3.1.1 Ecological features identified by the desk study/field survey are presented below, along with their details and associated ecological value. Refer to Drawing CRM958001-ENZ-XX-XX-DR-Z-0001 for the location/extent of ecological features where relevant.

Table 4 – Ecological Features

Ecological Feature	Details	Ecological Importance
Statutory sites designated or classified under international conventions or European legislation		
None	-	-
Statutory sites designated under national legislation (& Impact Risk Zones)		
SSSI IRZ	LPA should consult Natural England on likely risks from the following: • Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals • Solar schemes with a footprint > 0.5ha, all wind turbines • Livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 4000m². • General combustion processes >50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion. • Landfill. Incl: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill. • Any discharge of water or liquid waste of more than 20m³/day that is discharged to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream.	N/A – <i>application type does not meet any of these criteria.</i>
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)		
None	-	-
Other locally designated wildlife sites (LWS)		
Huyton & Prescot Golf Club LWS 0.04km S	A well-managed golf course with woodland, ponds and wetlands. Prescot Brook forms the eastern boundary with water voles. Plants typical of ancient semi-natural woodland are found in the woodland areas.	County
Knowsley Park LWS 0.5km N	Ancient parkland and estate on a mix of acidic (peat) and neutral soils with sandstone exposures along the brooks. Much coniferous planting has taken place although several of the woodlands contain plants indicative of ancient semi-natural woodland. Other habitats include dams with open water, acidic grassland, remnant heath and mire. The Park also has populations of bats and other protected species.	County

Ecological Feature	Details	Ecological Importance
Carr Lane Lake LWS 0.5km SE	A wetland with a large area of open water which is unusual in Knowsley. The water is fished.	County
Huyton Lane Wetland LWS 1.25km SW	A large area of predominantly neutral marsh with a smaller area of acidic marsh. Other habitats present include ditch; the River Alt; tree and shrub planting; dry neutral grassland.	County
Stadt Moers LWS (Q2 and visitors centre, Q3, and Q4) 1.5km S	Q2: A small area of dense woodland with neutral grassland areas re-colonised on bare substrate. Q3: A mix of grassland, scrub and woodland habitats forming part of the Country Park at Stadt Moers. Q4: A large area of semi-improved neutral grassland with areas of scrub and developing broadleaf woodland.	County
Copse south of the A58 LWS 1.65km NE	A lightly wooded area with neutral grassland and a small pond. Good regeneration of oak and birch is occurring.	County
Prescot Reservoirs LWS 1.8km NE	This site comprises of two reservoirs and a disused dry reservoir. The disused reservoir and areas surrounding reservoirs 3 & 4 have now been colonised by a diverse and species rich grassland including species such as, Northern Marsh orchid and Common Spotted orchid.	County
River Alt, Seth Powell Way LWS 1.86km SW	A section of the River Alt with known Water Vole breeding population. This site is within a Nature Improvement Area.	County
England HPI, Local BAP Habitats, Ancient Woodland, Important Hedgerows, Veteran Trees, TPOs and Conservation Areas		
Deciduous Woodland HPI 0.02km N	A total of 13.22 Ha of lowland mixed deciduous woodland priority habitat is located within a 500m radius of the site, with the nearest 20m north.	Local
Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)	The entire site and wider Kings Business Park appears to fall within TPO ref: 91/00006/TPO from 1991. Much of the land has been developed since the designation. No trees onsite.	Local
Conservation Area	The site does not fall within a Conservation Area.	N/A
Veteran Trees	No veteran trees identified within the vicinity of the development on the Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory Map.	Negligible
Green/Blue & Aquatic Infrastructure, Dark Zones, and Local Policy		
Green Infrastructure	Whilst the plots themselves hold little biodiversity value, the site is bordered by offsite lowland mixed deciduous woodland to the north, west and south, which provides green infrastructure and wildlife corridor function. The offsite boundary woodland has connectivity with Huyton and Prescot Golf Club to the south, which is located approximately 40m south of Plot C, and a linear band of woodland lining the M57 motorway to the east, which connects with larger areas of woodland to the south.	Local
Blue Infrastructure	There is no notable blue infrastructure within a 500m radius of the site. There are ditches to the immediate north and south of the site which were dry at the time of survey. The ditches may be controlled and/or seasonally inundated with water.	Negligible

Ecological Feature	Details	Ecological Importance
Habitat Types		
Plot A: Sparsely Vegetated Urban Land (u1f) 	To the east of the site is Plot A, which is set within an area of sparsely vegetated urban land, which has previously been cleared and is recolonising (~40% vegetation cover). Species comprised occasional Yorkshire Fog and Red Fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), with rare Broom (<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>), Cock's Foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>), Creeping Bent (<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>), Large Trefoil, Common Yarrow, Oxeye Daisy (<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>), Lesser Stitchwort (<i>Stellaria graminea</i>), Ribwort Plantain, Common Knapweed (<i>Centaurea nigra</i>), and Common Ragwort. No invasive species recorded. Sparsely vegetated urban land does not represent a Local or UK BAP Priority habitat.	Negligible
Plot B: Modified Grassland (g4) 	To the northwest of the site is Plot B, which comprises a rectangular shaped area of close-mown modified grassland. Whilst the grassland is maintained short, there was sward height diversity (>20% <7cm, >20% >7cm). There is no scrub or Bracken present, no signs of physical damage with localised areas of bareground (1-5%). Species comprised abundant Yorkshire Fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>), with frequent Perennial Ryegrass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>), White Clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>), and occasional; Common Ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>), Dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>), Curled Dock (<i>Rumex crispus</i>), Ribwort Plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>), Common Vetch (<i>Vicia sativa</i>), Cut-leaved Crane's-bill (<i>Geranium dissectum</i>), Large Trefoil (<i>Trifolium aureum</i>), and Common Yarrow (<i>Achillea millefolium</i>). No invasive species recorded. Modified grassland does not represent a Local or UK BAP Priority habitat.	Negligible

Ecological Feature	Details	Ecological Importance
Plot C: Developed Land Sealed Surface (u1b) 	To the south of the site is Plot C, which comprises an area of hardstand with a small building and a bin store. No vegetation assemblage is associated with this habitat type. Developed land sealed surface does not represent a Local or UK BAP Priority habitat.	Negligible
Other Neutral Grassland (g3c)	At the south of the site adjacent to the existing road access of Huyton Lane is an area of relatively species-poor unmanaged neutral grassland with an abundance of tall ruderal herb vegetation. The species assemblage is characterised by abundant Yorkshire-fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>), Cock's-foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>), Common Nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), Great Willowherb (<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>), with frequent False Oat-grass (<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>), Creeping Thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>), Michaelmas Daisy (<i>Aster sp.</i>) and Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.), with occasional Common Ragwort (<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>), Common Knapweed (<i>Centaurea nigra</i>), Yarrow (<i>Achillea millefolium</i>) and Common Hogweed (<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>). This grassland has >20% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges, < 8 species per m², no valuable varied sward (not with at least 20% <7cm and 20% >7cm), no notable bare ground, and with Bramble encroaching >5% cover. No indicators of any uncommon, rare or species-rich grassland types. This grassland does not represent any UK BAP Priority Habitat.	Negligible
Modified Grassland (g4)	At the road margin at the south of the site adjacent to the site entrance is a further localised strip of Modified Grassland, which is comparable in species composition, conditions and management to the area of Modified Grassland associated with Area B above. This grassland does not represent any UK BAP Priority Habitat.	Negligible
Mixed Scrub (h3h)	A localised area of Mixed Scrub abuts to south-eastern boundary of the site adjacent to Huyton Lane. This habitat is characterised by abundant Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>) and Bramble, with a ground layer supporting frequent Common Nettle, Cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>) and occasional Ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>). This scrub habitat does not represent any UK BAP Priority Habitat.	Negligible

Ecological Feature	Details	Ecological Importance
Developed Land Sealed Surface (u1b) 	The remainder of the site comprises the sealed surface hardstanding of the existing access road from Huyton Lane. This habitat is significantly disturbed and no significant vegetation assemblage is present. Developed land sealed surface does not represent any UK BAP Priority Habitat.	Negligible
Legally Protected & Priority Species (& Consultation Zones where applicable)		
Bats, roosting	The small single storey building within Plot C is of a construction type that is not typically associated with roosting bats (Collins, 2023), and has no roof spaces or crevices present to support roosting bats. Plot C is therefore assessed as providing <i>Negligible</i> roosting opportunities, as a small amount of uncertainty remains as bats can use apparently unsuitable features on occasion (Collins, 2023). The adjacent bin store has no roof and offers <i>None</i> suitability in accordance with recent guidance (Collins, 2023). No opportunities for roosting bats identified on any other plots under assessment and no trees onsite. In addition, lighting and noise from the adjacent industrial building, as well as frequent use and disturbance would likely deter rarer species. The local data search returned recent records of Common Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>), Soprano Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>), Brown Long-eared Bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>), Daubenton's Bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>), Nathusius's Pipistrelle (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>), Noctule (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>), and Whiskered Bat (<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>) within a 2km radius. The location data provided is not accurate enough to depict the nearest record. Two EPS licence within a 2km radius for Brown Long-eared Bat and Common Pipistrelle (ref: 2018-38343-EPS-MIT and 2017-28690-EPS-MIT-1), with the nearest located 0.5km northwest.	Local

Ecological Feature	Details	Ecological Importance
Bats, Foraging and commuting	The habitats within the site provide negligible opportunities for foraging and commuting bats. However, the offsite woodland corridors to the north and south of the site provides <i>High</i> suitability foraging and commuting habitat for bats in accordance with recent guidance (Collins, 2023), which is continuous and well-connected to suitable habitats within the wider area, including Huyton and Prescot Golf Club LWS to the south.	Local
Badger	No evidence of setts/excavation or any activity recorded during the PEA survey and no specific opportunities noted within Plots A-C. The wider parcel of sparsely vegetated land to the east may provide opportunities for sett creation as it has sloped banks and is bordered by woodland. Whilst plots are unsuitable for Badger (<i>Meles meles</i>) sett creation, the modified grassland and sparsely vegetated areas may provide a significantly limited extent of suitable foraging and commuting habitat for badgers. Additionally, the site has connectivity with suitable habitats in the wider area, including offsite boundary woodland and Huyton and Prescot Golf Club LWS further south, which increase the likelihood of presence. No records.	Local
Dormouse	No suitable habitat onsite to support Hazel Dormouse (<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>). In addition, the site is in an area of the country where this species is significantly rare, if not extinct. No records.	Negligible
Otter & Water Vole	No suitable habitat on or adjacent to the site to support both Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) and Water Vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>), and no recent records of either within a 2km radius.	Negligible
Other Protected Mammals	Common habitats only, which are not suitable for other protected mammals. The offsite boundary woodland may provide suitable habitat for Red Squirrel (<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>), who are known to be present in the area. No trees or suitable habitat onsite to support this species. The local data search returned 10 recent records of Red Squirrel within a 2km radius, with the nearest record approximately 350m north.	Local
Specially Protected Birds	There is no suitable habitat within any of the plots to support Schedule 1 bird species. In addition, there is an abundance of suitable habitat to support specially protected bird species in the surrounding area. No records.	Negligible

Ecological Feature	Details	Ecological Importance
Breeding, Wintering and Migratory Birds	The modified grassland and sparsely vegetated habitats provide negligible opportunities for nesting birds. The small single storey building provides significantly limited nesting opportunities for a restricted range of common nesting bird species only. Disturbance from the industrial building, workers, and proximity to the road, as well as additional threats from predators would likely deter individuals. No habitat onsite which would attract ground-nesting, wintering or migratory bird species, and an abundance of suitable habitat is present in the surrounds to support these species. No records.	Local
Common Reptiles	The buildings and hardstand provide no opportunities for common reptiles. However, the areas of modified grassland and sparsely vegetated urban land with woodland surrounds may offer a significantly limited extent of suitable foraging and commuting habitat for common reptile species. No records.	Local
Great Crested Newt	The modified grassland and sparsely vegetated urban land offer a significantly limited extent of poor-quality habitat for Great Crested Newt (GCN) (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>) during the terrestrial phase of their lifecycle, and buildings and hardstand provide negligible values. No ponds on or within the vicinity of the site to support GCN in the aquatic phase of their lifecycle. There are ditches to the north and south of the site which were dry at the time of survey, but which may have water levels controlled and/or seasonally inundated with water. A large pond is located 190m southeast within Kings Business Park, two small ponds within Huyton and Prescot Golf Club 210m and 470m south, and a small pond located 470m southwest. It is considered that there is connectivity between the site and ponds within Kings Business Park and Huyton and Prescot Golf Club, but a lack of suitable habitat is present onsite which would attract this species. Unlikely presence of species. There is no Natural England GCN Impact Risk Zone map or NatureSpace Partnership Impact Risk Zone covering the area under assessment. The local data search returned two recent records of GCN within a 2km radius, both located approximately 1.98km northeast. MAGIC Maps shows a GCN Class Survey Licence Returns on a waterbody 1.98km northeast from 2016, and a granted EPS licence for GCN 1.6m northeast in 2017 (2017-28128-EPS-MIT).	Local
Other Protected Herpetofauna	Typical developed habitats only not suitable for other protected herpetofauna. No records.	Negligible

Ecological Feature	Details	Ecological Importance
Protected Fish/Marine	No suitable habitat on or adjacent to the site. No records.	Negligible
White-clawed Crayfish	No suitable habitat on or adjacent to the site. No records.	Negligible
Protected Invertebrates	Typical developed habitats only which are not suitable for protected invertebrates. Unlikely presence of species. No records.	Negligible
Protected Flora	Typical developed habitats only which are not suitable for protected flora. Unlikely presence of species. The local data search returned records of Bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>) (protected from sale only) and Meadow Clary (<i>Salvia pratensis</i>) with 2 km radius.	Negligible
Invasive Flora	No invasive flora recorded onsite during the PEA Survey. The local data search identified Canadian Waterweed (<i>Elodea canadensis</i>), Himalayan Balsam (<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>), Japanese Knotweed (<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>), Japanese Rose (<i>Rosa rugosa</i>), Rhododendron (<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>), Montbretia (<i>Crocasmia pottsii x aurea = C. x crocosmiiflora</i>), and more within a 2km radius.	Negligible
Invasive Fauna	No invasive fauna noted and no notable risk of the proposals leading to the spread of any invasive fauna in the wild. The local data search returned records of Turkish Crayfish (<i>Astacus leptodactylus</i>), Grey Squirrel (<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>), and American Mink (<i>Neovison vison</i>) within a 2km radius from the past 10 years.	Negligible
Priority Species	The modified grassland and sparsely vegetated urban land provide a significantly limited extent of shelter and foraging habitat for a limited range of priority wildlife such as Hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>) and Common Toad (<i>Bufo bufo</i>). No specific features or flora likely to attract priority invertebrates. The local data search returned records of priority species including, <i>inter alia</i> , Brown Hare (<i>Lepus europaeus</i>), Hedgehog, Common Toad (<i>Bufo bufo</i>), Wall (<i>Lasiommata megera</i>), and Buff Ermine (<i>Spilosoma lutea</i>) within a 2km radius from the past 10 years.	Local

4 Assessment and Mitigation

- 4.1.1 Assessment of impacts and the associated ecological effect to identified ecological features are presented below. To clarify, ecological features have been screened out where these are of negligible importance, no likely significant impacts have been identified or where impact is unlikely to occur. This report confirms that there are no likely impacts to any statutory or non-statutory designated sites or ecological features within the vicinity of the development. Mitigation measures can be subject of a condition where appropriate.

Table 5 – Assessment of effect and mitigation measures

Ecological Feature	Impact	Avoidance/Mitigation	Compensation	Significance of Residual Effect
Green Infrastructure, TPO, Red Squirrel	Risk of loss, damage and/or degradation of offsite boundary woodland which is priority habitat and provides Green Infrastructure function. <i>Minor adverse, reversible, reversible impact.</i> Low risk of injury/killing of Red Squirrel during habitat clearance and construction works. <i>Minor adverse, temporary, irreversible impact.</i>	The wider site is covered by a TPO allocated in 1991. No trees within the site and no anticipated tree loss. The final site layout should be sensitively designed to incorporate the retention and protection of the offsite boundary lowland mixed deciduous woodland, which is a priority habitat and provides notable green infrastructure and wildlife corridor function. All boundary trees shall be protected in accordance with BS5837:2012 <i>Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations</i>, including installing and maintaining appropriate protection fencing (to be informed Arboricultural Impact Assessment). All contractors are to be made aware of the purpose of the fencing, with signage used where necessary, and no works are to occur beyond this established boundary, including no storage of materials or machinery. In addition, to avoid potential degradation of these habitats through excessive artificial lighting overspill, a sensitive lighting scheme shall be implemented making use of suitable products such as directional, low-level, capped, screened and/or low-lux lighting. Red Squirrel are known to be present in the area, however, given no suitable habitat is present onsite and the offsite boundary woodland is to be retained and protected, no further survey are deemed necessary.	None required.	No significant effect anticipated.

Ecological Feature	Impact	Avoidance/Mitigation	Compensation	Significance of Residual Effect
Bats	Risk of loss and/or degradation of suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat. <i>Minor adverse, permanent, reversible impact.</i> Low risk of killing/injury and destruction of roosts during building demolition. <i>Unlikely, significant, adverse, permanent, irreversible impact.</i>	The protection measures highlighted above in relation to physical protection of offsite woodland and implementing sensitive lighting will minimise the risk of degradation of the suitable bat foraging and commuting habitats. The lighting scheme should be designed in accordance with the recent guidance Bats and artificial lighting at Night (ILP, 2023). Although the presence of roosting bats at the small buildings to be demolished is assessed as significantly unlikely considering the site conditions and absence of any notable PRFs, it should be noted that due to the transient nature of bats and their roosts, it is possible that common crevice-dwelling species (e.g. Pipistrelle), can sometimes be found in unexpected or unsuitable locations, and/or utilise unidentified roosts beyond the date of the surveys. Therefore, a precautionary approach to demolition should be taken and if bats or evidence of a roost is identified, works would cease, and Natural England consulted on the need for further survey and/or licence requirements with associated mitigation. No specific timing restrictions or supervision of demolition works are recommended recognising the notably low risk of roosting bat presence. Given the lack of PRFs, no further surveys are deemed necessary in accordance with current guidance (Collins, 2023). If works have not commenced within two years from the date of this assessment, it is recommended that an updated survey and inspection is undertaken in the event building conditions have changed or new bat roosts have established during the interim period. If bats or evidence of a roost is identified, works would cease, and Natural England consulted on the need for further survey and/or licence requirements with associated mitigation.	None required.	No significant effect anticipated.

Ecological Feature	Impact	Avoidance/Mitigation	Compensation	Significance of Residual Effect
Badgers	Low risk of killing/injury of Badger and during construction works. <i>Minor adverse, permanent, irreversible impact.</i>	A pre-commencement check is advised prior to construction works commencing to ensure no badger setts are present within a 30-metre radius of the plots. If evidence of badger setts is found within this radius, works are to cease. and the ecologist consulted to advise on how to proceed as a Natural England licence may be required. As Badger may be present in the area and could traverse the site, all construction works shall be undertaken in accordance with a set of best practice precautionary reasonable avoidance measures. Following the site clearance phase the following reasonable avoidance measures should be adhered to (with all relevant site contractors informed of these details) throughout the construction phase: • No works will be conducted at night, or dawn/dusk when Badgers are likely to be active; • Any holes, trenches or other excavations in which Badger may fall into and become trapped will be covered overnight, or otherwise a means of escape provided (e.g. a plank of wood as a ramp); • If piles of soil are to be stored within the site, these will be left un-compacted and not permitted to grass over to reduce the likelihood of Badger using them for new sett creation; • Any pipes must be stored with caps on to prevent Badger access; and, • Any chemicals will be stored securely so that they cannot be accessed by inquisitive Badger. Can be subject of a planning condition.	None required.	No significant effect anticipated.

Ecological Feature	Impact	Avoidance/Mitigation	Compensation	Significance of Residual Effect
Breeding Birds	Low risk of injury/killing nesting birds during the construction phase. <i>Minor adverse, permanent, irreversible impact.</i>	Site clearance should be conducted outside of the nesting season where the programme allows (March – August inclusive), or, where necessary within the nesting bird season, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) should supervise, including undertaking a nesting bird check prior to demolition and vegetation clearance to ensure no nests are affected. If any active nests are detected, an appropriate protection area around the nest(s) will be established until it can be determined that the nest is longer active/young have fledged. A survey confirming absence will only remain valid for a few days and up to a maximum of one week (depending on the timing within the nesting season) as birds may commence nesting at any time during the breeding season and therefore potentially in the time between the survey and clearance taking place. As a result, several repetitions may be necessary at the different areas as the site clearance progresses. The protection measures highlighted above in relation to physical protection of offsite woodland and implementing sensitive lighting will minimise the risk of degradation of offsite nesting habitat.	None required.	No significant effect anticipated.

Ecological Feature	Impact	Avoidance/Mitigation	Compensation	Significance of Residual Effect
GCN, Common Reptiles & Priority Species	Low risk of disturbance and/or injury/killing of Common Reptiles and GCN, during habitat clearance and construction works. <i>Minor adverse, temporary, irreversible impact.</i> Low risk of injury/killing priority species during the construction phase. <i>Minor adverse, permanent, irreversible impact.</i>	Given the limited size of the plots, and that only areas of modified grassland and previously cleared or developed land are to be impacted, it is not considered that further survey for GCN, or Common Reptiles is proportionate or necessary in this instance, and that best practice RAMs and sensitive clearance are suitable to mitigate any potential impacts. All offsite boundary habitats are to be retained and protected with fencing and sensitive lighting, which should serve to protect the natural habitat of these species. In the significantly unlikely event that a GCN is discovered during the construction phase, all works should immediately cease and the ecologist and/or Natural England should be contacted for advice on how to proceed. Best practice precautionary measures are to be adhered to during the construction phase to prevent the accidental injury or killing of priority species, such as safe storage of chemicals, covering holes, and providing a means of escape. Any wildlife found onsite should be allowed to disperse offsite or relocated by hand, except for GCN, which can only be handled by a licenced ecologist (except for in emergencies when the GCN is in immediate risk of harm).	None required.	No significant effect anticipated.

5 Enhancement and Monitoring

- 5.1.1 Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement (above and beyond those required to mitigate for any identified impacts) have been determined through consideration of: Ecological Features identified on site and within the zone of influence; Historical records of protected species/habitats present within the locality; National and Local planning policy including National and Local Biodiversity habitats/species; Local Development Plans including consideration of Green/Blue Infrastructure Resource; Consultation with third parties/stakeholders where applicable; and Other influencing factors such as underlying Geology/Hydrology, intended operational activities, and existing disturbance activities within the locality. This makes specific reference to Biodiversity Net Gain, Good practice principles for development (CIEEM, IEMA, CIRA, 2019).
- 5.1.2 In accordance with the Environment Act 2021 there is a mandatory requirement to demonstrate at least +10% biodiversity net gain, and a Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric calculation will be provided separately. The following additional enhancements are recommended. The specific location and details of the proposals can be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition and/or detailed on the final landscape plans.

Table 6 – Enhancement & Monitoring

Ecological Feature	Enhancement & Monitoring	Significance of Residual Effect
Bats	Installation of Multi-Chamber Bat boxes (or similar product) upon new building faces to provide additional roosting opportunities. Situated on a south or west facing aspect, at least 6ft from ground level, and away from human/lighting disturbance.	Minor Gain
Breeding Birds	Installation of nest boxes on a north or east facing aspect of new buildings, at least 6ft from ground level, and away from human/lighting disturbance.	Minor Gain

- 5.1.3 No post-determination monitoring is currently required. To comply with guidance set out in BS42020:2013, a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) which includes consideration of biodiversity would normally be produced prior to the commencement of construction activities, including site clearance works. However, due to the limited number of ecological features identified, this EclA report (specifically the mitigation details outlined within section 4.0) will sufficiently serve to advise site contractors of any measures necessary to avoid/mitigate impacts to any protected habitat/species. A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) would also normally be produced prior to operation of the site. Again, due to the limited features that will be incorporated into the landscape, this will not be produced.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1.1 Suitable mitigation measures can be incorporated into the proposed application to avoid/mitigate any potential impacts to ecological features and to demonstrate 'no biodiversity net loss' in accordance with NPPF and local planning policy, whilst maintaining the favourable conservation status of identified protected species i.e. bats. As such, no significant residual impact can be expected which would prevent determination of a planning application or development of this site.
- 6.1.2 Additionally, the site re-development allows the opportunity to provide local enhancements to demonstrate a 'biodiversity net gain'.

7 References

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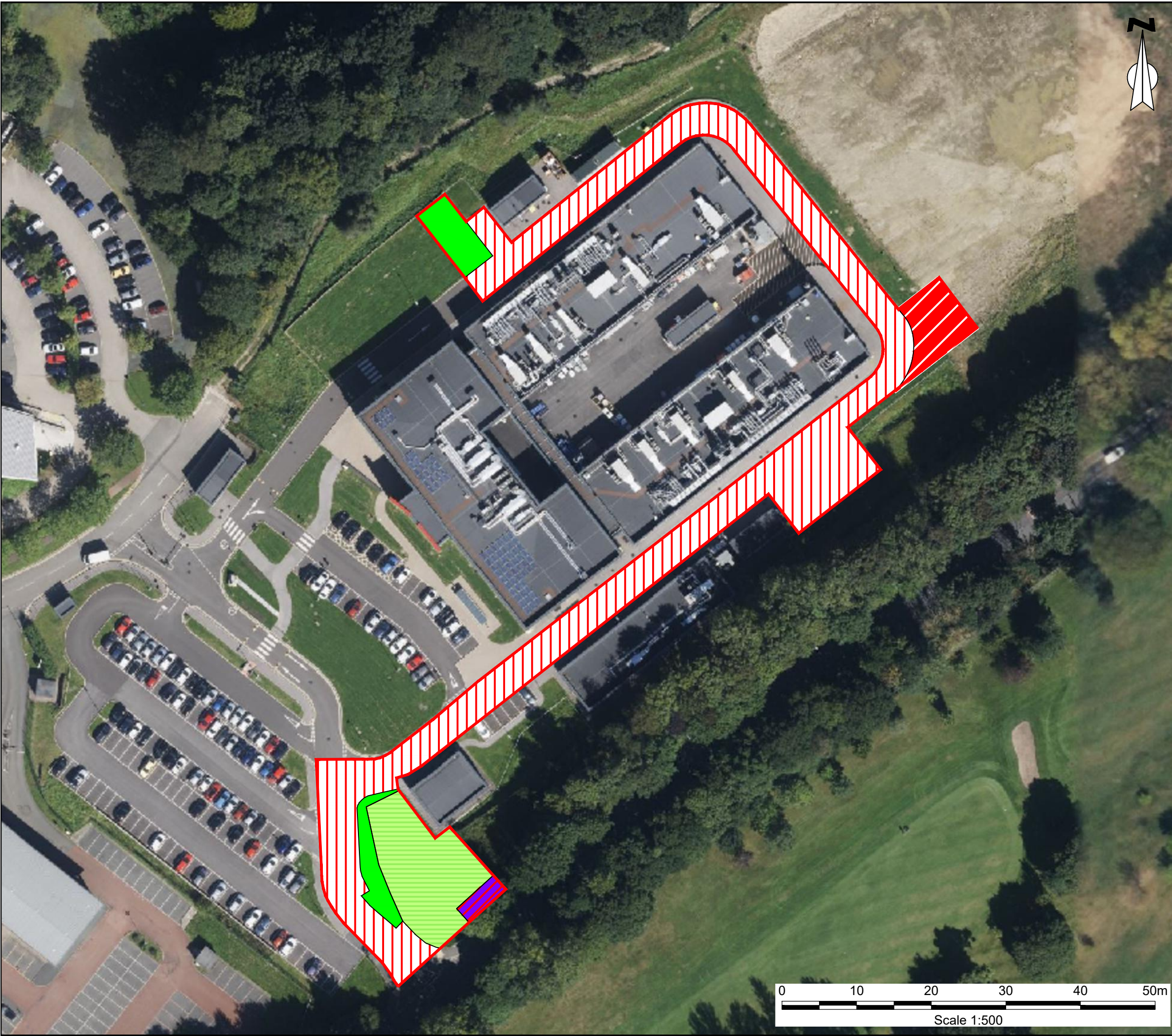
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Drawing CRM958001-ENZ-XX-XX-DR-Z-0001 – Habitat Map



KEY:

- Site Boundary
- Mixed scrub (h3h)
- Other neutral grassland (g3c)
- Modified grassland (g4)
- Developed land, sealed surface (u1b)
- Sparsely vegetated land (u1f)

P04	07.02.25	Redline Updated	LB	CS	CS
P03	25.09.24	Areas Amended	LB	MF	MF
P02	06.09.24	Areas Amended	LB	MF	MF
P01	14.08.24	Issued for comment / approval	LB	MF	MF
Rev	Date	Description	DRA	CHK	APP

Project
Prescot

Client
Mersey Design Group Ltd

Drawing Title
UK Habitat Classification Map

Scale 1:500 @ A3	Date 14.08.24	Status Preliminary
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DWG No. CRM958001-ENZ-XX-XX-DR-Z-0001	Revision P03
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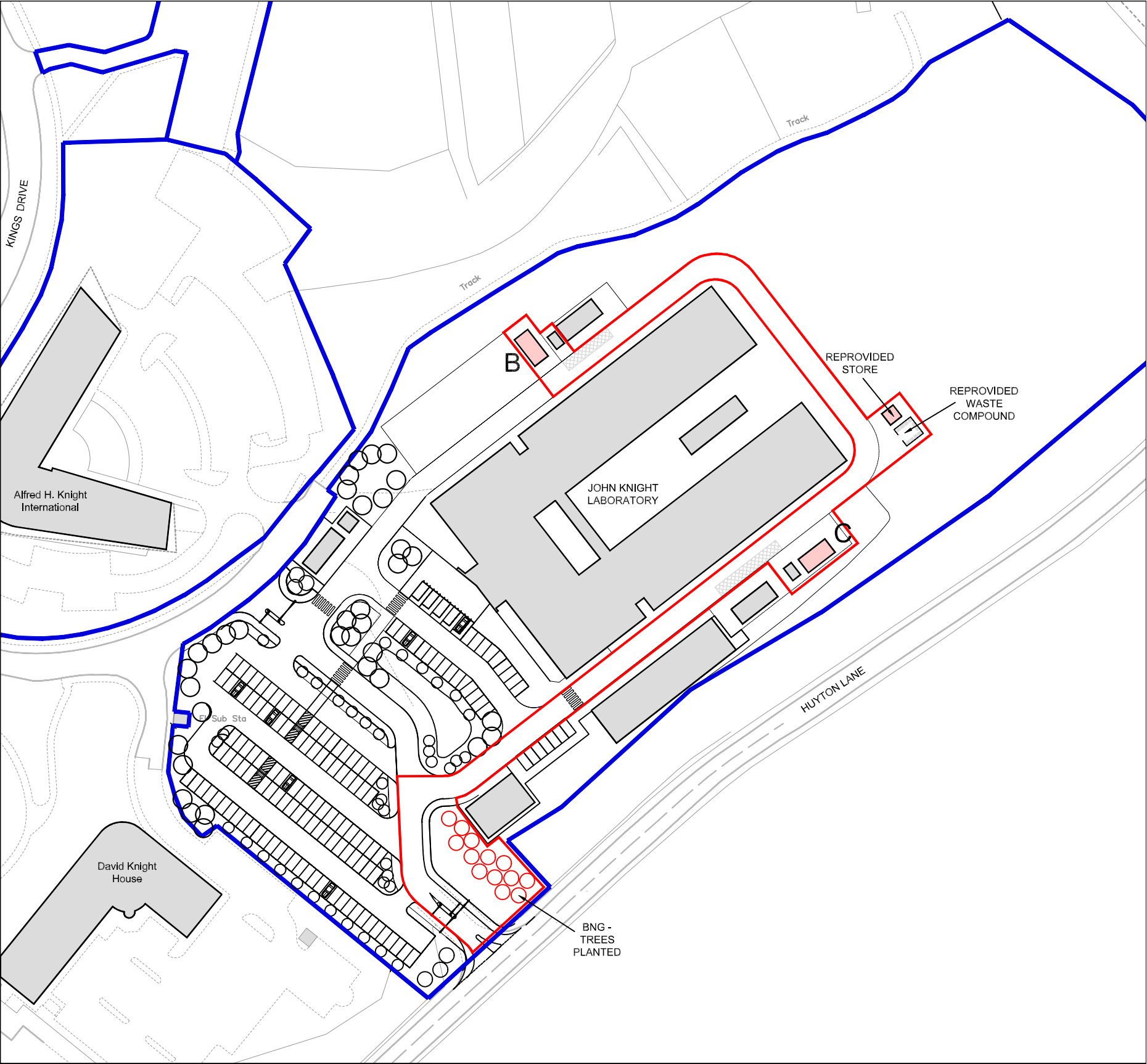
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Appendix A – Proposed Site Layout



Use only labelled dimensions and levels for construction. All dimensions & levels to be checked on site before commencing work and any discrepancies to be notified to C.A. immediately. If in doubt ask ?



C	site boundary changes for planning validation	CM	24/10/24
B	BNG tree planting added+ waste compound relocated	CM	12/09/24
A	building B rotated 90°	CM	05/08/24
rev	comments	initiate date	



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project
Lab Effluent Project
Kings Business Park
Prescot

content
Location Plan

scale 1:1250	sheet A3	date 05/06/24	drawn by CM	checked
project number 308-04	drawing number AL(9)03			rev C
purpose of issue Planning				



Appendix B – Legislation and National Planning Policy

Wildlife legislation and policy relevant (or potentially relevant pending further survey) to the proposed works, based on the findings of the desk study and field survey are set out below. This legal information is a summary only, and the original legal documents should be consulted for definitive information.

Legislation Protection Afforded to Sites/Habitats that could Potentially be Affected by the Proposed Works

Designated Site/Habitat	Legal Status
None	-

Legislation Protection Afforded to Species that could Potentially be Affected by the Proposed Works

Species	Legal Status
European Protected	
Bats, GCN	These animal species and their breeding sites or resting places are protected under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2012, which makes it illegal to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill any such animal or to deliberately take or destroy their eggs; • Deliberately disturb such an animal; • Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal. European Protected Species (EPS) licences can be granted by Natural England in respect of development to permit activities that would otherwise be unlawful under the Conservation Regulations, providing that the following 3 tests (set out in the EC Habitats Directive) are passed: • The development is for reasons of overriding public interest; • There is no satisfactory alternative; and • The favourable conservation status of the species concerned will be maintained and/or enhanced. Under Regulation 9(5) of the Conservation Regulations, Planning Authorities have a legal duty to 'have regard to the requirements of the EC Habitats Directive in the exercise of their functions'. This means that they must consider the above 3 tests when determining whether Planning Permission should be granted for developments likely to cause an offence under the Conservation Regulations. As a consequence, Planning Applications for such developments must demonstrate that the 3 tests will be passed.
Nationally Protected	
Bats, GCN, Red Squirrel	These animals receive full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to: • Intentionally kill, injure or take any such animal; • Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection by any such animal; and • Intentionally or recklessly disturb such animals while they occupy a place used for shelter or protection.

Species	Legal Status
Badger	The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it illegal to wilfully kill or injure a Badger, or attempt to do so and also make it illegal to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a Badger sett. This includes damaging or destroying a sett, obstructing access to a sett and disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett. Licences can be granted to permit sett closure and/or disturbance between July and November inclusive.
Breeding Birds	All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to: - Intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird; - Take, damage, or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.
Common Reptiles (e.g. Viviparous Lizard, Grass Snake and Slow-worm)	These animals receive limited protection under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal to intentionally kill or injure any such animal.
Wild Mammals	The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 makes it illegal to mutilate, kick, beat, nail, or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, drown, crush, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (the NERC Act) places a legal duty on public bodies, including planning authorities, to 'have regard' to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions, which includes consideration of planning applications.

In compliance with Section 41 of the NERC Act, the Secretary of State has published a list of species and habitats considered to be of principal importance for conserving biodiversity in England under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. This is known as the list of Habitats and Species of Principal Importance (HPI/SPI), of which there are fifty-six habitats and 943 species. The HPI/SPI list is used to guide planning authorities in implementing their duty under the NERC Act.

National Planning Policy

The NPPF (2023) set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The NPPF states that:

'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.'

'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 reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;
- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements 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

'The following should be given the same protection as European sites:

- potential Special Protection Areas (SPA) and possible Special Areas of Conservation (SAC);
- listed of proposed Ramsar Sites; and,
- site identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on European sites, potential SPAs, possible SACs, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.'
- The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on European sites (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.'



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