



GM ALLOCATION 5: CHEQUERBENT NORTH WESTHOUGHTON ECOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION

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Prepared by	TEP - Warrington
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2.0	Mar 2019	AWE	DCS	Jan 2019 draft GMSF & policies update	Current



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G6296.16.001 - Ecological Constraints Plan



March 2019

1.0 Overview

Introduction

- 1.1 TEP was commissioned by Peel Land and Property (North) Ltd in March 2017 to provide an ecological representation of the Chequerbent North site (15.37ha) outlining potential ecological constraints and opportunities in relation to developing the site for employment use.
- 1.2 The site is currently designated as Green Belt in Bolton's Local Plan however, the revised draft of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) January 2019 allocates the land for B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage or distribution) uses in the M61 corridor (GM Allocation 5)
- 1.3 An extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken on 11th May 2017 by Kerry Stead GradCIEEM (FISC Level 4); the Phase 1 Habitat Survey map is shown at Appendix A. Areas of high, medium and low ecological constraint have been identified and are shown on Drawing G6296.016.001 Ecological Constraints Plan.
- 1.4 TEP's assessment indicates that there are no overriding ecological constraints which preclude sustainable development of the land.

Desktop and Background Study

- 1.5 There are no internationally designated wildlife sites within 1km of the site. There is one nationally designated site, a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), within 1km of the site boundary. The proposed commercial development of the site would not trigger liaison with Natural England regarding any Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).
- 1.6 There are four Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) within 1km of the site boundary. All but one of these are separated from the site by the major road network and as such the risk of adverse impacts on the SBIs will be minimal. Provided best practice pollution control measures are implemented along the eastern edge of the development (including a buffer zone excluding development), the risk of adverse impacts on the remaining SBI (Gorse Wood) will be minimal.
- 1.7 Records of protected species within 1km of the site were returned, including great crested newt, common toad, bats, badgers, brown hare and birds (including Schedule 1 bird species and birds of conservation concern).
- 1.8 Full results of the desktop survey, including maps of designated sites, are found in Appendix B.

Site Description

1.9 The site is dominated by improved grassland and arable fields with woodland habitat running along the southern site boundary, inside the site. A ditch runs through part of the site in the east, species-poor hedgerows form the northern and western boundaries and there are also rows of mature trees which provide wildlife corridors. The woodland, watercourse and hedgerows are shown as Area A - Wildlife Corridors on Drawing G6296.16.001.



- 1.10 Area B comprises a mosaic of habitats including hardstanding, tall ruderal, dense and scattered scrub and modified neutral grassland on Drawing G6296.16.001.
- 1.11 Area C on Drawing G6296.16.001 comprises existing commercial/industrial development and hardstanding.
- 1.12 Area D on Drawing G6296.16.001 comprises grassland which dominates the site. Two ponds were previously present on site, however, these are completely dry and now form only shallow depressions in the landscape.



2.0 Areas of Constraint

High Constraint

- 2.1 The following features comprise Area A Wildlife Corridors, and represent a High Constraint to development:
 - The ditch within the site;
 - Woodland within the site to the south;
 - Hedgerows around the northern and western site boundaries and the rows of mature trees.
- 2.2 These wildlife corridors should be retained in the masterplan and be protected by habitat buffers. It is recommended that the buffers extend at least 12m from these features. The lighting scheme adjacent to the woodland should be carefully planned to avoid light spill onto tree canopies (this can affect bat roosting and displace foraging bats).
- 2.3 The network of hedgerows and associated pockets of woodland are Section 41 habitats¹ and should be retained in the masterplan. The Schedule 8² protected plant species native bluebell *Hyacynthoides non-scripta* was recorded along the ditch and within the woodland. Should any areas where native bluebell are present need to be cleared to facilitate development then bluebell translocation will be required.
- 2.4 The Schedule 9³ invasive plant species Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica* and Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* were recorded in the woodland, although the Japanese knotweed was recorded mainly along the woodland edge in the southernmost section. Clearance and management of these species would be required to facilitate development.

Medium Constraint

- 2.5 Area B represents a Medium Constraint to development. This area comprises a mosaic of various habitats including hardstanding, tall ruderal, dense and scattered scrub and modified neutral grassland.
- 2.6 These habitats and features provide valuable habitat for a wide range of species and prior to development of this area a wide range of surveys would be required to ascertain its importance to any particular species. The results of the surveys can then be fed directly into the masterplan and mitigation provided where required.
- 2.7 Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam were again recorded across Area B, large stands of Japanese knotweed in particular were observed. Again, clearance and management of these species would be required to facilitate development. Native bluebell was also recorded and this would need to be translocated if clearance of this area was required.

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¹ Under S41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006, Local Planning Authorities are under a duty to have regard to habitats and species of principal importance for biodiversity (such as native hedgerows, natural watercourses, deciduous woodland, lowland meadows etc)

² Schedule 8: Protection for wild plants afforded by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended)

³ Schedule 9: It is illegal to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended)



2.8 Area C comprises buildings and hardstanding only, buildings would need to be assessed for their potential to support roosting bats before any demolition could take place. There are two small dilapidated buildings which have partially collapsed and become overgrown with vegetation.

Low Constraint

2.9 Area D represent a Low Constraint to development. The improved and arable grassland habitats dominate the site and make up Area D. These are not Section 41 habitats.

Protected and Priority Fauna

- 2.10 Constraints relating to protected and Section 41 species⁴ are considered in Table 1.
- 2.11 Loss of woodland (Section 41 habitat) would result in the reduction in range for many common bird species that utilise these areas for nesting and foraging. Additionally, it would reduce foraging and commuting opportunities for bat species (Section 41 and European Protected Species (EPS⁵)).
- 2.12 Loss of grassland would result in the reduction in range for farmland bird species and brown hares (Section 41 species) along with a reduction in foraging habitat for badger. The effect of losses of Area D habitats should be balanced by creation of new habitats of value to birds and badgers; e.g. new ponds, wetlands, species-rich grasslands and woodland.
- 2.13 These new habitats would be capable of supporting populations of Section 41 birds, albeit not the same species that would be displaced from the farmed area.
- 2.14 Policy GM-G 10 of the revised GMSF January 2019 states that a net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought across the plan as a whole.

⁴ The rarest and most threatened species in England are listed under Section 41 of the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. Protecting and enhancing S41 species is key delivering the Biodiversity 2020 strategy.

⁵ European Protect Species (EPS) are animals and plants that are listed under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive and receive protection in England under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010).



Table 1. Summary of constraints related to Fauna

Fauna Group/ Species (Protected)	Constraint	Details
Amphibians	Yes	There are no ponds located on site, however, there are seven ponds located within a 500m radius of the site not separated from the site by any barriers. There is good terrestrial habitat on site for amphibians, and desktop records show great crested newts to be present within the 500m radius. Surveys of these ponds for great crested newts would be required prior to a planning application being submitted.
Reptiles	Yes	The site contains good habitat for reptiles within Area D, the mosaic of hardstanding, tall ruderal and scrub provides good foraging, refuge and basking areas. Reptile surveys would be required to ascertain whether there is a requirement to mitigate for these species in the future masterplan.
Birds	Yes	No bird surveys have been carried out on the site, the desktop search revealed the Section 41 bird species grey partridge, herring gull, house sparrow, lapwing, skylark and starling. Additionally the Schedule 16 bird species kingfisher, little ringed plover and peregrine were recorded all within 1km of the site (but not within the site).
		The broad-leaved woodland on site should be retained and enhanced, improving habitat for woodland bird species. New strategic planting would be recommended to strengthen the hedgerow network within the site and provide more habitat for hedgerow bird species.
Bats Ye		No bat (EPS) roosts have been identified on site, however, there were a number of mature hybrid black poplar and additional mature trees within the woodland with bat roosting suitability. The buildings on site could also offer some roosting suitability to bats. Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and Myotis sp. have all been recorded within 1km of the site boundary.
	Yes	The broad-leaved woodland should be retained as this provides good foraging and commuting habitat for bats, along with the ditch corridor, hedgerows and rows of trees. However, the loss of any bat foraging habitat and habitat severance impacts can be mitigated within the design and through habitat creation. Buildings and trees to be impacted will need to be assessed for bat roost potential prior to any demolition.
Badger	No	Although there are records of badgers within 1km of the site, no evidence of badgers was found within the site or immediately adjacent to the site (within 30m). There are no implications for the development with regard to badgers.
Water vole	Yes	Only the ditch in the east of the site was considered to have suitability for water voles, albeit low suitability. There are no records of water vole within a 1km radius of the site. Survey is required to confirm presence/absence of water vole.

Version 2.0

⁶ Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 affords protections of the birds, their nests, eggs and young at all times. It is an offence to disturb these species at an active nest site.

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Fauna Group/ Species (Protected)	Constraint	Details
Otter	No	The site does not support otter and does not have potential for the species. There are no implications for the development with regard to otter.
Brown Hare	Yes	There are records of brown hare on site and suitable habitat for brown hare is present within the site. There will be habitat loss as a result of the proposals, as brown hare makes use of a mosaic of habitats including arable land. Leaving grassland tall in buffer zones and keeping the hedgerows will retain some value in the site for brown hare.



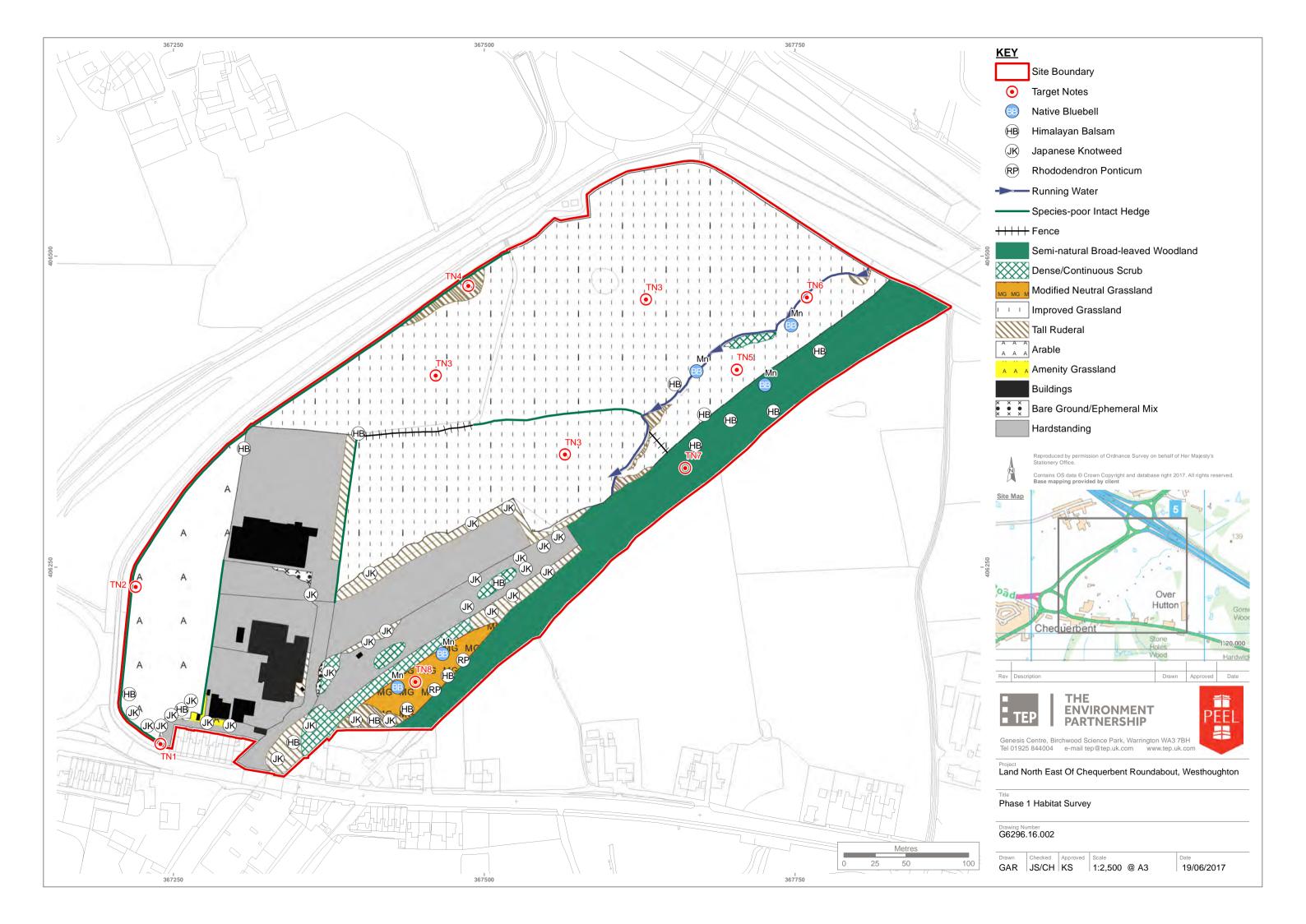
3.0 Opportunities

- 3.1 There are opportunities to enhance biodiversity through the process of development, in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018), under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2016⁷, and the GMSF revised draft January 2019 policies as outlined in Chapter 8 'A Greener Greater Manchester'.
- 3.2 The GMSF revised draft January 2019 states that development of the site (GM Allocation 5) in relation to ecology will need to:
 - Require high quality landscaping particularly alongside the western boundary to Snydale Way;
 - Retain screening along the eastern boundary comprising of trees and hedgerows;
- 3.3 There is no Illustrative Masterplan for this site to date, however, the above points can be incorporated into the proposed development.
- 3.4 Habitat creation can include woodland, hedgerows and ponds (including attenuation ponds) with the enhancement of habitat achieved through ongoing management plans.

⁷ Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2016 places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity which in turn will seek to contribute to the achievement of the commitments of the Biodiversity 2020 strategy.



APPENDIX A: Phase 1 Habitat Survey



Target Notes Report

NE CHEQUERBENT ROUNDABOUT

Target Note TN1

Tall ruderal vegetation adjacent to road.

Chamerion angustifolium Rubus fruticosus agg. Cirsium arvense Epilobium hirsutum Lolium perenne Urtica dioica Galium aparine Heracleum sphondylium	Rosebay Willowherb Bramble Creeping Thistle Great Willowherb Perennial Ryegrass Nettle Cleavers Hogweed	A F F F O
		Ö
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed	0
Taraxacum officinale agg.	Dandelion	0
Meconopsis cambrica	Welsh Poppy	R

Target Note TN2

Margins of arable field.

Festuca rubra	Red Fescue	Α
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire-fog	F
Urtica dioica	Nettle	F
Alopecurus geniculatus	Marsh Foxtail	0
Anthriscus sylvestris	Cow Parsley	0
Epilobium hirsutum	Great Willowherb	0
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed	0
Ranunculus repens	Creeping Buttercup	0
Rumex crispus	Curled Dock	0
Rumex obtusifolius	Broad-leaved Dock	0

Target Note TN3

Improved grassland fields.

Lolium perenne	Perennial Ryegrass	D
Festuca rubra	Red Fescue	F
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire-fog	F
Ranunculus repens	Creeping Buttercup	F
Alopecurus pratensis	Meadow Foxtail	0
Anthoxanthum odoratum	Sweet Vernal-grass	0
Cirsium arvense	Creeping Thistle	0
Poa annua	Annual Meadow-grass	0
Taraxacum officinale agg.	Dandelion	0
Alopecurus geniculatus	Marsh Foxtail	R
Cerastium fontanum	Common Mouse-ear	R
Luzula campestris	Field Woodrush	R
Rumex acetosa	Common Sorrel	R

Target Note TN4

Former pond, now dry and overgrown with tall ruderal herbs.

Chamerion angustifolium	Rosebay Willowherb	Α
Urtica dioica	Nettle	Α
Phalaris arundinacea	Reed Canary-grass	F
Impatiens glandulifera	Himalayan Balsam	0
Juncus effusus	Soft Rush	0
Rubus fruticosus agg.	Bramble	0

KEY - D = Dominant, A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare

Target Note TN5

Improved grassland with a species composition identical to TN3 byut frequent soft rush and occasional cuckoo flower also recorded.

Target Note TN6

Stagnant ditch holding water but with no flow and heavily overgrown.

Great Willowherb	Α
Small Reedmace	Α
Soft Rush	F
Nettle	F
Bluebell	0
Yellow Pimpernel	0
Spanish Bluebell	R
	Small Reedmace Soft Rush Nettle Bluebell Yellow Pimpernel

Target Note TN7

Semi-natural broad-leaved woodland naturally vegetated over a disused railway.

Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire-fog	Α
Betula pendula	Silver Birch	F
Prunus sp.	Cherry species	F
Ranunculus repens	Creeping Buttercup	F
Rubus fruticosus agg.	Bramble	F
Salix cinerea	Grey Willow	F
Alnus glutinosa	Alder	0
Cardamine hirsuta	Hairy Bitter-cress	0
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	0
Equisetum sp.	Horsetail species	0
Geranium robertianum	Herb-Robert	0
Hedera helix	lvy	0
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed	0
Impatiens glandulifera	Himalayan Balsam	0
Mercurialis perennis	Dog's Mercury	0
Ranunculus acris	Meadow Buttercup	0
Rosa canina agg.	Dog Rose	0
Salix caprea	Goat Willow	0
Dryopteris filix-mas	Male-fern	R
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Bluebell	R
Juncus effusus	Soft Rush	R
Sorbus aria	Whitebeam	R

Target Note TN8

Area of MG dominated by Yorkshire fog.

Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire-fog	D
Fallopia japonica	Japanese Knotweed	F
Festuca rubra	Red Fescue	F
Chamerion angustifolium	Rosebay Willowherb	0
Dryopteris filix-mas	Male-fern	0
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed	0
Impatiens glandulifera	Himalayan Balsam	0
Ranunculus acris	Meadow Buttercup	0
Rumex acetosa	Common Sorrel	0
Alopecurus pratensis	Meadow Foxtail	R
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Bluebell	R



APPENDIX B: Desktop Study



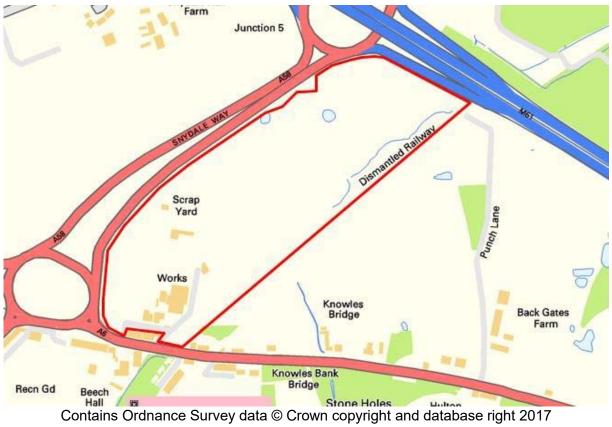
Desk Based Ecology Assessment Chequerbent North (GM Allocation 5) Approximate Central Grid Reference: SD 67472 06361

Contents

- Site location plan
- Extract from local plan
- Extracts of relevant planning policies
- Local site designations
- Local species records
- National site designations
- Habitat inventory records

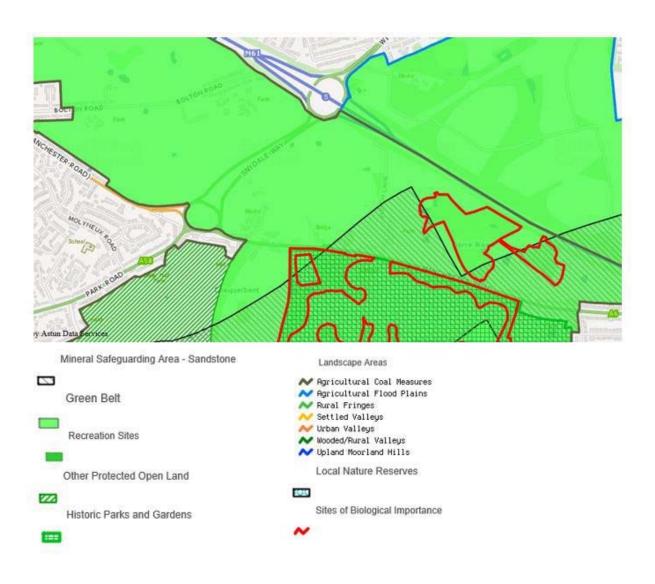


Site location plan





Extract of Bolton Council's Local Plan (adopted March 2011) and supporting key





Extracts of relevant planning policies and supplementary planning guidance

Policy CG1

The council and its partners will:

- 1. Safeguard and enhance the rural areas of the borough from development that would adversely affect its biodiversity including trees, woodland and hedgerows, geodiversity, landscape character, recreational or agricultural value; or its contribution to green infrastructure, reducing flood risk and combating climate change.
- 2. Safeguard and enhance biodiversity in the borough by protecting sites of urban biodiversity including trees, woodland and hedgerows from adverse development, and improving the quality and interconnectivity of wildlife corridors and habitats.
- 3. Safeguard and enhance parks, gardens, allotments, civic spaces, cemeteries and playing fields and improve the quality and multi-functional benefits of these assets.
- 4. Allow some development on informal green spaces in the urban area, provided that it allows for the improvement of remaining green spaces and helps to meet the strategic objectives for housing.
- 5. Reduce the risk of flooding in Bolton and other areas downstream by minimising water run-off from new development and ensuring a sequential approach is followed, concentrating new development in areas of lowest flood risk.
- 6. Work towards minimising energy requirements, improving energy efficiency, lessening the reliance on fossil fuel-based energy and reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.
- 7. Maximise the potential for renewable energy development and encourage proposals that contribute towards the renewable energy targets set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Policy CG6AP - Other Protected Open Land

The Council will permit development proposals within the defined areas of Protected Open Land shown on the Proposals Map, provided that they fall within one or more of the following categories:

- 1. The development represents limited infilling within an established housing or industrial area, is in scale with it and would not adversely affect its character or surroundings; or
- 2. It forms part of, and is required for, the maintenance of an existing source of employment; or
- 3. The development requires a location outside the urban area, but is inappropriate within the Green Belt, and providing it maintains the character and appearance of the countryside; or
- 4. The development would be appropriate within the Green Belt.

Where new buildings are permitted they should be sited to form a group with existing buildings wherever possible. In cases where this is not possible, buildings, car parking areas and any other new structures should be sited where they will be well screened and unobtrusive in the landscape. All buildings and extensions should be of a high standard of design, using materials that are compatible with the landscape.

Policy CG7AP - Green Belt

The council will not permit inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development includes any development which does not maintain the openness of land or which conflicts with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, and the erection of new buildings except for:

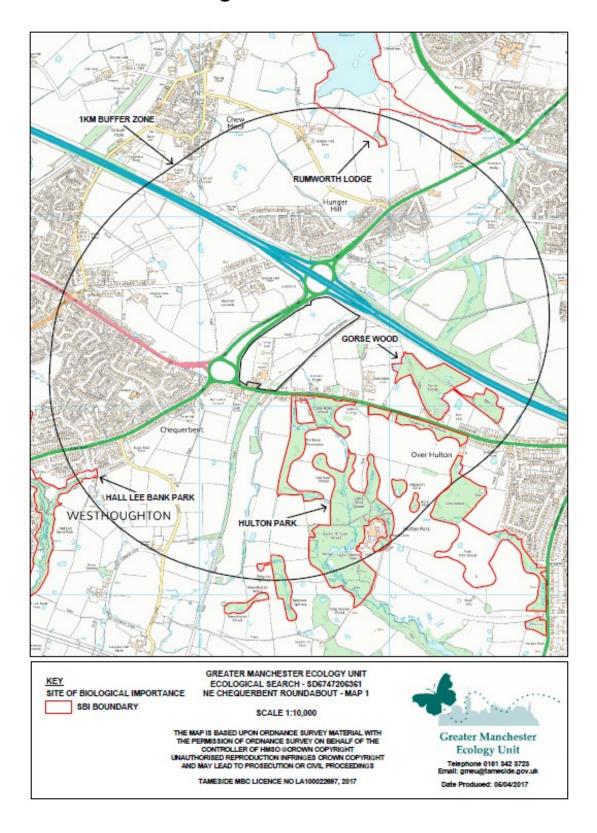


- 1. Agriculture and forestry;
- 2. Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, and for cemeteries which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- 3. The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- 4. The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- 5. Limited infilling in villages at Hart Common and Scot Lane End as shown on the Proposals Map

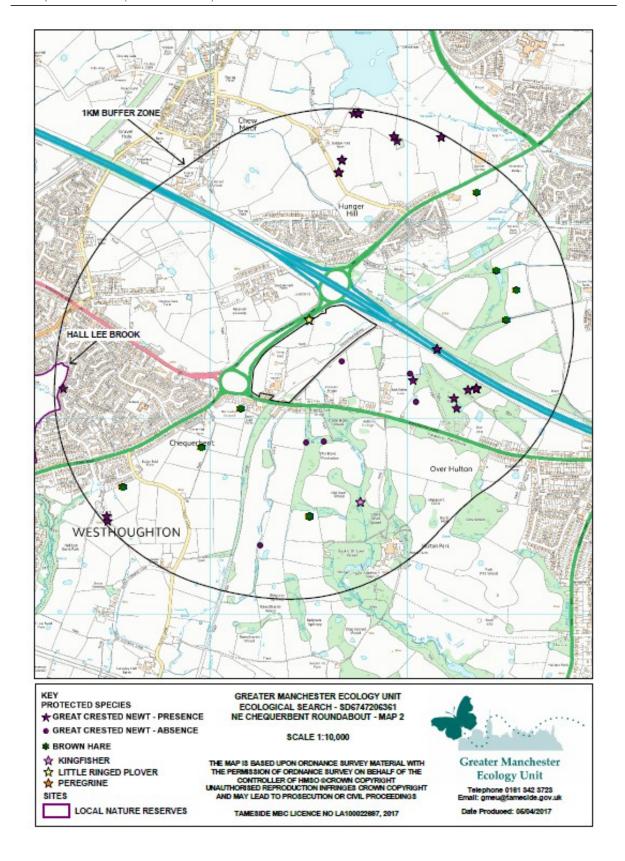
Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it than the existing development



Map provided by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit of site designations within 1km

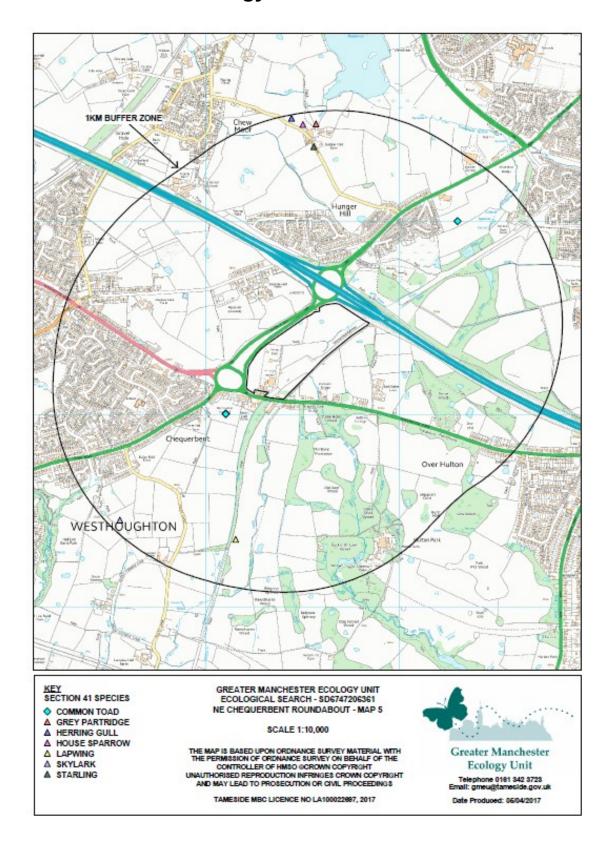




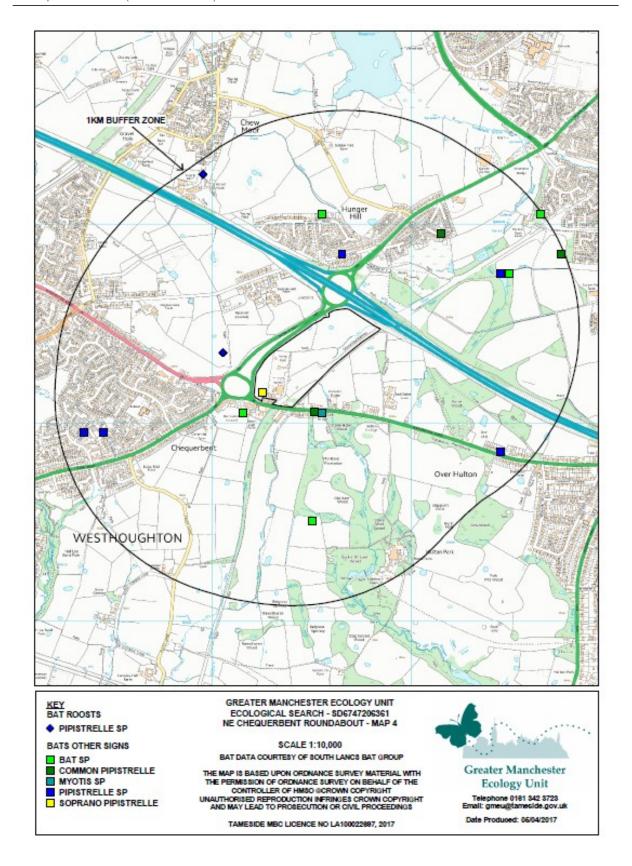




Extract of species data provided by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit within 1km

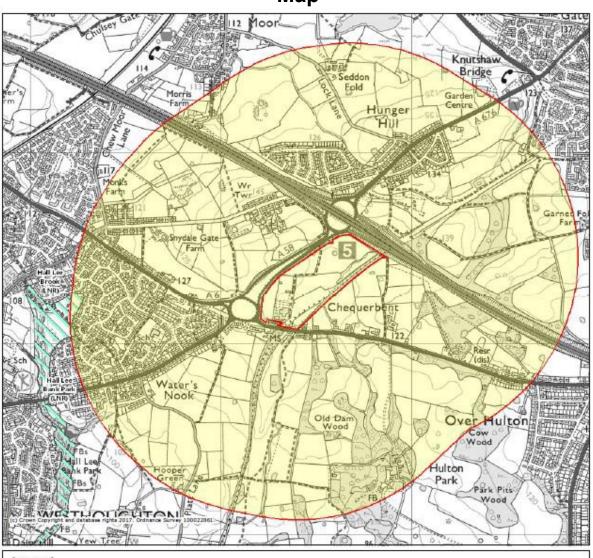








MAGIC Map 1km search zone for designated wildlife sites - Map







MAGIC Map 1km search zone for designated wildlife sites – Report

Local Nature Reserves (England)

Reference

1481596

Name

HALL LEE BROOK

Hectares

7.47

Hyperlink

http://www.lnr.naturalengland.org.uk/special/lnr/lnr_details.asp?themeid=1481596

MAGIC Map search for SSSI Impact Risk Zones for site only

SSSI Impact Risk Zones - to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites (England)

1. DOES PLANNING PROPOSAL FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW?
2. IF YES, CHECK THE CORRESPONDING DESCRIPTION(S) BELOW. LPA SHOULD CONSULT NATURAL ENGLAND ON LIKELY RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING:

All Planning Applications

Infrastructure

Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.

Wind & Solar Energy

Minerals, Oil & Gas

Rural Non Residential

Residential

Rural Residential

Air Pollution

Pig & poultry units, slurry lagoons > 4000m³

Combustion

General combustion processes >50MW energy input. Incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/ combustion.

Waste

Composting

Discharges

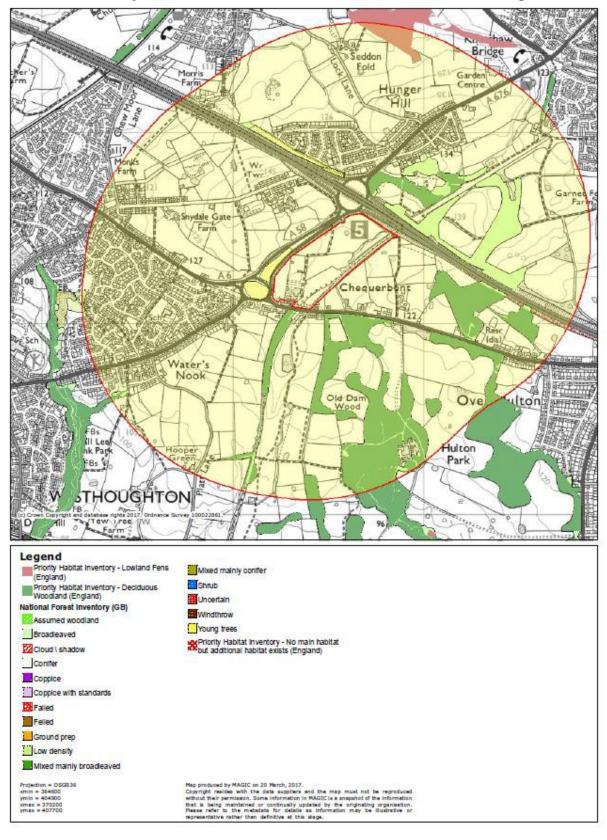
Water Supply

GUIDANCE – How to use the Impact Risk Zones

/Metadata for magic/SSSI IRZ User Guidance MAGIC.pdf



MAGIC Map 1km search zone for habitat inventory data





DRAWINGS

G6296.16.001 - Ecological Constraints Plan





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