

Preliminary Ecological Appraisals

Areas being considered for allocation for future development within the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework in Oldham

June 2020



For

Oldham Council

By

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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Areas being considered for allocation for future development within the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework in Oldham

1 Introduction

- 1.1 GMEU was commissioned on behalf of Oldham Borough Council to undertake preliminary ecological assessments (appraisals) of sites being considered for potential allocation for future development through the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework in Oldham for Oldham District.

Site Appraisals have been undertaken in accordance with the CIEEM 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 2013¹'.

The Guidelines State -

'Preliminary ecological surveys have a range of purposes; one key use is in the site development process to gather data on existing conditions, often with the intention of conducting a preliminary assessment of likely impacts of development schemes or establishing the baseline for future monitoring. As a precursor to a proposed project, some evaluation is usually made within these appraisals of the ecological features present, as well as scoping for notable species or habitats, identification of potential constraints to proposed development schemes and recommendations for mitigation'.

'Preliminary Ecological Appraisals are also an important preliminary step, whether taken by the developer or by the planning authority, to inform decisions as to whether a particular site should be included as an allocation in a development plan. The information obtained from such an appraisal is appropriate for use in the process of selecting preferred options and in the strategic environmental assessment of the Plan'.

Although there are numerous terms used to describe the preliminary survey and reporting, 'Ecological Appraisal' is considered to be the term most suited to describing a preliminary or baseline level of survey or assessment.

- 1.2 The aim of preliminary surveys is not to provide a fully comprehensive suite of ecology surveys for sites, but rather to identify sites where ecological constraints to future development are likely to prove significant. Decisions can then be made as to further surveys that may be required to inform development proposals, to provide guidance as to the extent and type of ecological mitigation or compensation that may be required to accommodate development or to recommend that sites are removed from consideration for allocation because the ecological constraints identified are very significant and mitigation or compensation may not be possible or desirable.

- 1.3 Preliminary Appraisals aim to identify ‘**notable**’ habitats and species. Material considerations in planning and similar types of decisions can be influenced by factors such as statutory protection given to habitats and species, local designations, UK or County BAP Priority habitats or species, GMSF policies and species listed in the UK Red Data Book or RSPB Birds of Conservation Concern. Collectively these constitute ‘**notable**’ habitats and species. In Greater Manchester they are sometimes known as ‘GM Priority Species’ or simply ‘**Priority Species**’. Notable habitats and species are given greater weight in planning decisions than other species.
- 1.4 The Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal provide examples of situations where Ecological Appraisals should be undertaken in relation to proposed development. These include –
- *To establish baseline conditions and determine the importance of ecological features present (or those that could be present) within the specified areas, as far as possible;*
 - *To establish any requirements for detailed/further surveys;*
 - *To identify key constraints to a particular project and make recommendations for design options to avoid significant effects on important ecological features/resources at an early stage;*
 - *To identify the mitigation measures, as far as possible including those that will be required (based on the results of further surveys or final scheme design); and*
 - *To identify enhancement opportunities.*
- 1.5 The results of baseline appraisals are potentially of importance as they often form the basis for further ecological surveys and EclA’s/Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and for setting of site management objectives. Consequently, without a consistent approach, important ecological features may be ‘scoped out’ or inadequately surveyed at this stage and are then overlooked in subsequent ecological assessments¹.

2 Legislation and Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Legislative Framework for identifying ‘notable’ habitats and species

The most important habitats and species in land-use planning context are those which are protected by statute. The most relevant statutes include -

- The Convention on Biological Diversity (‘CBD’) 1992 - a multilateral treaty with the objective of developing national strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. It has three main goals: the conservation of biological diversity (or biodiversity); the sustainable use of its components; and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

- Nagoya Protocol, COP Decision X/2 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 – a global agreement on biodiversity which established a global vision for biodiversity, including a set of strategic goals and targets to drive action;
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) – transposes the European Habitats and Birds Directives (Council Directive 92/43/EEC and 79/409/EEC respectively) into UK law. This conveys protection to certain listed species and to the habitats on which they rely to complete their lifecycle.
- The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats 1979 (Bern Convention) – an international legal instrument in the field of Nature Conservation, covering the natural heritage in Europe and in some African countries. It is particularly concerned about protecting natural habitats and endangered species, including migratory species;
- The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals 1979 (Bonn Convention) - aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their range. It is an intergovernmental treaty, concerned with the conservation of wildlife and habitats on a global scale.
- Wildlife & Countryside Act (W&CA) 1981 (as amended) – provides a national level of protection to specific animals and plants native and controls the release of non-native species;
- Countryside & Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 – extends the protection of certain species from reckless as well as intentional acts. Part III requires that government departments have ‘regard for the conservation of biodiversity’, something that is extended by the NERC Act 2000;
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 – requires planning authorities to consider impacts on “habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity” when determining planning applications. Section 41 (S41) lists habitats and species of principal importance (for biodiversity conservation), which are to be considered, irrespective of whether they are covered by other legislation. The S41 list was originally taken forward under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (first published in 1994) but is now prioritised under the Biodiversity 2020 Strategy
- Hedgerows Regulations 1997 – protects ‘important’ hedgerows from being uprooted or destroyed. Importance is determined based on adjacent land use, age, historic value and ecological value (specific criteria are set out in the Regulations); and

- Protection of Badgers Act (PBA) 1992 – protection of badgers and their setts from killing, injury and certain acts of cruelty. Protection of setts from damage, obstruction or destruction.

2.2 The Policy Framework for identifying ‘notable’ habitats and species

2.2.1 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (NPPF) Chapter 11: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment requires that development delivers **net gains** in biodiversity in addition to minimising the impacts on biodiversity. It highlights the need to protect and enhance valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils, as well as recognising the wider benefits of ecosystems.

- National Planning Policy Guidance deals with “The Natural Environment” and paragraphs 8 to 23 deal with matters of biodiversity. The guidance details how the mitigation hierarchy (avoid-mitigate-compensate) should be applied and advises on how protected species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity (S41 features) should be considered in determining planning applications
- The NPPF assumes protection of all ancient woodland and veteran trees unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the need of, or benefits of, development outweigh the loss. In this respect ancient woodland is defined as an area which has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD and a veteran as a tree of exceptional value for wildlife, in the landscape, or culturally because of its great age, size or condition.
- The application of national planning policy, with regard to the assessment of net impacts on tree cover and quality, is reinforced by published guidance in the form of BS5837:2012. It should be assumed that any necessary tree removal should be mitigated or offset and that any application should be supported by an assessment of residual impact by a qualified arboriculturist. It should also be assumed that all ancient woodland and veteran trees are sacrosanct and must be incorporated appropriately within any development.
- Making Space for Nature (Lawton, 2010), an independent published review of England’s wildlife sites and the connections between them, is widely recognised to have informed the subsequent White Paper (see below). This identified a number of recommendations to create a sustainable, resilient and more effective ecological network. This report led to an Ecological Framework for certain habitats in Greater Manchester to be developed. The preliminary appraisals reported on here have taken account of this Network.
- Natural Environment White Paper (The Stationery Office, 2011) set out the vision of repairing ‘inherited’ damage in the natural environment, leaving the

natural environment in fitter condition for future generations. Key aims of the White Paper can be summarised as a commitment to protect and improve the natural environment, to grow a green economy, to reconnect people and nature, and to international monitoring and reporting.

- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services (DEFRA, 2011) [Ref 10.18] provided a comprehensive picture of how international commitments are implemented. Four priority areas for action were identified including a more integrated large-scale approach to conservation on land and sea and reducing environmental pressures.

2.3 Biodiversity Action Plans

There is a statutory requirement under the terms of the NERC Act 2006 for the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. This List, known as the Section 41 (S41) list, is expected to be used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the NERC Act “to have regard” to the conservation of biodiversity in England when carrying out their normal functions. In particular, Local Authorities are expected to use the list to identify the species and habitats that should be afforded priority when applying the requirements of para. 109 of the NPPF to conserve and enhance the natural environment. Although it is recognised that there is no direct link between the List and the Duty S41 species and habitats are given greater weight in the planning system than species which are not on the list.

The government has withdrawn support for the preparation and implementation of Biodiversity Action Plans for the species and habitats on the List, and Action Plans are not referred to in the England Biodiversity 2020 Strategy. But Natural England’s view is that Local Nature Partnerships can voluntarily choose to implement local Biodiversity Action Plans if they wish to, and they are still being implemented in many areas.

2.3.1 ‘BAP’ habitats of relevance in Oldham include –

- Arable farmland
- Broadleaved and Mixed woodland
- Moorland and Fell
- Mossland (Blanket Bog)
- Marshy Grassland
- Reedbed
- Rivers and Streams
- Species-rich Neutral Grassland

'BAP' species of relevance in Oldham include –

- Brown hare
- Farmland birds
- White-clawed crayfish
- Lapwing
- Reed Bunting
- Skylark
- Song Thrush
- Twite

3 Methodology

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisals have involved:

3.1 Desk-top surveys

3.1.1 Initial desk-based studies were conducted to identify notable (*as defined above*) or protected sites, habitats or species potentially affected by future development proposals. As part of which the following questions were addressed

- Are there any existing ecology assessments?
- Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?
- Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?
- Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?
- Does the site have any potential to support specially protected species?
- Does the site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types?
- Are there any identified ecological considerations that would impose a significant constraint to future developments?

Desk-top information was appraised by Derek Richardson, Principal Ecologist and Suzanne Waymont, Senior Ecologist, experienced ecologists with more than 35 years of experience as 'land-use planning' ecologists and first-hand knowledge of many of the sites appraised. Many of the sites are known to ecologists within GMEU because GMEU has been providing ecological advice on planning applications in Oldham for more than three years. Following the desk-top surveys recommendations have been made about which sites will require further survey work.

Desktop Information included information obtained from –

- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Map
- Statutory protected sites and priority habitat inventory
- Where's the Path 3 Satellite & OS imagery
- Google Maps Satellite imagery
- Greater Manchester Bird Atlas 2007-2011 - Bird records, abundance and distribution data for Greater Manchester
- Greater Manchester Local Record Centre (GMLRC)
- Information from surveys of sites undertaken to inform planning applications

Desk-based studies were based on different buffer zones around GIS site boundaries supplied by Oldham Council.

Original site boundaries were supplied by Oldham Council.

For international and nationally designated sites a buffer around sites was set at 5km; for local wildlife sites the buffer was set at 1km.

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POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	CB3
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM 2
Site Name	Stakehill
NGR (centre of Site)	389260 407240
Area (Ha)	93.55
Does the site already have permission?	No
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Unknown
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	Potentially Yes, parts of the site are within 100m of the Rochdale Canal SAC/SSSI. The South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA may be affected by increases in recreation and air pollution effects
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	Yes, because of the proximity to the Rochdale Canal SAC but also potentially for impacts on the South Pennines
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	The Rochdale Canal is also a Local Wildlife Site (Site of Biological Importance)
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Yes, ponds on site could support great crested newts and water voles and the site supports foraging habitat for Barn owls. Buildings could support roosting bats and the site supports good foraging habitat for bats. Reasonable Badger habitat.
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support priority habitat types and/or priority species?	Yes, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats - hedgerows and ponds • Species – farmland birds including linnet, reed bunting and barn owl, common toads
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	

The site itself is not designated at any level for its nature conservation value but it does support priority habitats and species and it is close to the Rochdale Canal SAC. Currently there are no known ecological constraints which are so important as to preclude the allocation of the site, but ecological mitigation and compensation will likely be needed to avoid harm to important habitats and species.

Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform future planning applications

At planning application stage surveys will be needed for –

- Bats
- Amphibians
- Farmland Birds
- Badgers
- Extended Phase 1 habitat surveys

An assessment of the potential impacts of any development proposals on the special nature conservation importance of the Rochdale Canal will also be needed.

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	CB3
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM21
Site Name	Thornham Old Road
NGR (centre of Site)	389260 407240
Area (Ha)	34.73
Does the site already have permission?	No
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Unknown
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	No – the site is too distant from any statutory designated sites and/or there are no pathways
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	No
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Ponds present, so potentially great crested newts. Foraging habitat for bats is present, some foraging habitat for badgers is present.
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types?	Ponds and a small area of broadleaved woodland
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	Limited; there are no known reasons why the site should not be allocated, although mitigation and/or compensation may be required for some species

Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications

- Extended Phase 1 habitat survey
- Amphibian survey incl. great crested newts
- Badger survey

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraints to future developments?

No; site is dominated by featureless, species-poor agricultural grassland

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	OL7
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM 17
Site Name	Hanging Chadder
NGR (centre of Site)	391660 409230
Area (Ha)	22.66
Does the site already have permission?	In part (App ref. PA/059009/10), although the planned development was never implemented
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Yes, although rather dated (2010)
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	No – site is too distant from European sites
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	No
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected or priority species?	There are ponds present, so possible great crested newts. Some bat foraging habitat present and buildings within the site have some potential to support bats. There is a (very old) record of common lizard from within the site boundary. Some (limited) badger habitat is present
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types?	Ponds and hedgerows
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	Ecological constraints are not expected to be significant, although mitigation/compensation will likely be needed for any losses to pond and hedgerows, and great crested newts, if present, will require mitigation.

Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications

- Extended Phase 1 habitat survey
- Amphibian survey
- Bat surveys
- Badger surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraints to future developments?

No

POTENTIAL SITE ALLOCATIONS FOR OLDHAM COUNCIL GMSF

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	-
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM16
Site Name	Cowlshaw
NGR (centre of Site)	392940 408630
Area (Ha)	32.30
Does the site already have permission? In part (app ref. PA/337616/15)	
Are there existing ecology assessments?	No
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	The site is within 10km of the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA/SSSI; given the very large size of the site recreational use of the SAC may increase as a result of population uplift that could result from the development of the site for residential use.
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	Yes
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	Yes the Local Wildlife Site 'Ponds at Cowlshaw Farm' (Site of Biological Importance) is within the site boundary
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Potentially great crested newts and bats (foraging and roosting)
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types or priority species?	Yes, ponds, hedgerows, wet/marshy grassland, broadleaved woodland, wetland birds (Curlew and lapwing) and farmland bird assemblages.
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	The presence of the Local Wildlife Site is a potentially significant constraint. Woodland is a potential constraint.

Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications

- Phase 1 Habitat survey
- Amphibian surveys (incl. great crested newts)
- Breeding bird surveys
- Badger surveys
- Bat surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraint to future developments?

The presence of the Local Wildlife Site and broadleaved woodland are potentially significant constraints, although the size of the site ought to allow for retention of these habitats or compensatory provision if lost

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	OL6
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM 14
Site Name	Beal Valley
NGR (centre of Site)	393970 408020
Area (Ha)	51.2
Does the site already have permission?	Yes, a small part of the northern edge of the site (App ref. A/057631)
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Yes, most recently by the Ecology Unit in 2017
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	Yes, the Shaw Side Local Wildlife Site (Site of Biological importance) is within the allocation.
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species	Possible water vole, foraging bats, badgers
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types?	Wet (marshy) grassland, broadleaved woodland, river course, hedgerows
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	The SBI may be a significant constraint, although the size of the overall allocation could mean that there is space for habitat compensation
Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 habitat survey, • Amphibian surveys • Badger surveys

- Water vole Surveys
- Bat surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraints to future developments?

SBI, River Course, broadleaved woodland would all need to be taken into account.

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	OL8
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM 15
Site Name	Broadbent Moss
NGR (centre of Site)	394130 407120
Area (Ha)	75.02
Does the site already have permission?	Much of the site is subject to planning applications, most notable ref. PA/336287/14 9land fill and restoration operations)
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Yes, to inform planning applications and surveys undertaken by the Ecology Unit
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	No
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Little Ringed Plover, foraging bats, potentially badgers, farmland bird communities
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types or priority species?	Wet / marshy grassland, broadleaved woodland, ponds
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	Woodland, wet grassland and ponds would need to be retained and/or compensated for if lost
Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Phase 1 habitat survey • Badger Survey • Amphibian surveys (incl. great crested newt surveys) • Bat surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraint to future developments?

Nothing so substantive as to rule out the site from allocation, although woodland, wet grassland and ponds would need to be retained and/or compensated for if lost

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	OL2
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM 20
Site Name	Spinners Way / Alderney Farm
NGR (centre of Site)	395632 408009
Area (Ha)	2.0
Does the site already have permission?	A small part of the site (app. ref. PA/334670/13)
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Unknown
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	No
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Possible bats (roosting and foraging)
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types and/or priority species?	No
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	No significant constraints identified
Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Phase 1 habitat surveys • Bat surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraint to future developments?

No

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	OL5
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM 18
Site Name	Chew Brook Vale (Robert Fletchers)
NGR (centre of Site)	400800 403720
Area (Ha)	32.26
Does the site already have permission?	No
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Unknown
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	Potentially yes, the site is within 600m of the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC/SSSI indirect effects (recreational pressure) may need further assessment
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	Yes
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	No
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Bats, kingfisher, great crested newts, water vole
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types or priority species?	Ponds, broadleaved woodland, water course, important bird assemblages
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	The ponds, woodland, water course and bird assemblages place potentially significant ecological constraints to the development of this site
Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended Phase 1 habitat surveys

- Bat surveys
- Amphibian surveys (incl. great crested newts)
- Water vole surveys
- Bird surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraint to future developments?

Yes, there are potentially significant ecological constraints associated with this site, most notably the presence nearby of European designated sites

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	OL4
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM 13
Site Name	Ashton Road Corridor (northern land parcel)
NGR (centre of Site)	northern site - 392510 401990
Area (Ha)	Approx. 27
Does the site already have permission?	No
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Unknown
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	No
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Possible great crested newts, badgers and bat foraging
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types?	Ponds, broadleaved woodland, hedgerows
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	There would be a presumption against the loss of ponds and woodland. If these features are lost compensation would be required
Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphibian surveys • Extended Phase 1 habitat survey

- Badger surveys
- Bat surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraint to future developments?

Broadleaved woodland (particularly northern land parcel) a potential significant constraint

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	OL4
GMSF allocation ref. no.	n/a, area subsequently removed from GMSF allocation)
Site Name	Ashton Road Corridor (southern land parcel)
NGR (centre of Site)	southern site – 393574 401658
Area (Ha)	Approx. 5.58
Does the site already have permission?	No
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Unknown
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	Yes, the Fennifield Lily Ponds SBI is within the site boundary
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Possible great crested newts, badgers and bat foraging
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types?	Ponds, broadleaved woodland, hedgerows
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	There would be a presumption against the loss of the SBI ponds and woodland. If these features are lost compensation would be required
Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphibian surveys • Extended Phase 1 habitat survey

- Badger surveys
- Bat surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraint to future developments?

Yes, the presence of the SBI is a potential significant constraint

POTENTIAL AREA ALLOCATIONS FOR GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK IN OLDHAM

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no	OL4
GMSF allocation ref. no.	GM 19
Site Name	Land South of Rosary Road
NGR (centre of Site)	393358 402268
Area (Ha)	2.66
Does the site already have permission?	Yes, in part
Are there existing ecology assessments?	Yes, for a relatively small part of the site
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?	No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?	No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?	Yes, a part of the Little Bankfield Clough Local Wildlife Site (Site of Biological Importance) is included in the site boundary
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?	Yes, bats (foraging) and badgers
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types?	Woodlands
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints	There would be a presumption against the loss of the small part of the SBI that lies within the site

Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform planning applications

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey
- Bat activity surveys

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraints to future developments?

Generally no, although the SBI should be avoided

POTENTIAL SITE ALLOCATIONS FOR OLDHAM COUNCIL GMSF

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no
Allocation ref. no. GM22
Site Name Woodhouses Cluster (original allocation)
NGR (centre of Site) - three separate sites
Area (Ha) In total (three sites) - 9.02
Does the site already have permission? In part
Are there existing ecology assessments? Yes, for a relatively small part of the site
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites? No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment? No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites? No
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species? Yes, great crested newts, bats and barn owls
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types? Ponds and hedgerows
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints Potentially high level of constraint – ponds and great crested newt meta-population
Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform development plans Amphibian surveys Bird surveys Bat surveys Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey
Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraints to future developments?

Possible great crested newt population

POTENTIAL SITE ALLOCATIONS FOR OLDHAM COUNCIL GMSF

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS –

Site ref. no
Allocation ref. no. GM22
Site Name Woodhouses, Bottom Field Farm (amended allocation)
NGR (centre of Site) 391140 400610
Area (Ha) In total (three sites) - 2.35
Does the site already have permission? No
Are there existing ecology assessments?
No
Will development of the site affect any statutory nature conservation sites?
No
Would a development proposal be likely to require a Habitats Regulations Assessment?
No
Will the development of the site affect any Local Wildlife Sites?
No
Does the Site have any potential to support specially protected species?
Yes, great crested newts, bats and barn owls
Does the Site support, or have the potential to support, priority habitat types?
Ponds and hedgerows
Overall evaluation of potential ecological constraints
Ponds and great crested newt meta-population are present nearby, although the site itself is dominated by buildings
Recommendations for further surveys that would be necessary to inform development plans
Amphibian surveys Bird surveys Bat surveys Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Overall recommendations – are there any identified ecological constraints that would impose a significant constraint to allocation?

No designated sites will be affected, possible great crested newt population

CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that substantive ecological constraints of such weight that sites should be withdrawn from consideration for allocation are not present on any of the areas assessed.

Notwithstanding the above this should not be taken to mean that sites are without *any* ecological constraints. Sites which do go forward for allocation should be further surveyed in line with the recommendations made in this report if they do later come forward for development. Where necessary compensation and mitigation for ecological harm may be required.

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