

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Survey site:

Stand Cricket Club Hamilton Road, Whitefield Manchester M45 7WE

Client:

FLH Architectural Design

Survey date:

17th October 2024

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Bury Council. The proposal is described as the construction of four paddle courts with single story unit (WC, changing room and storage).

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion.

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

Site Location and Context					
The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference SD 8005 4385 and has an area of approximately 0.2ha. The site comprises of an open plot of grass which is within the grounds of the Stand Cricket Club. It is situated within the town of Whitefield, in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, Greater Manchester. Aerial imagery shows the local landscape to have an urban character, with several residential housing estates in close proximity to the site with scattered trees and woodland patches. Water bodies can be found nearby, such as the River Irwell located 1.1km to the North. Such features likely enhance the area for a variety of species, including bats, amphibians and small mammals.					
Survey Details					
The site survey was undertaken by Richard Weaver BSc (Hons)					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
17/10/2024	15.3	74	100	0	None
Executive Summary					
Arbtech Consulting Ltd. was instructed by FLH Architectural Design to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at the Stand Cricket Club Hamilton Road, Whitefield Manchester M45 7WE. The survey was required to inform a planning application for the construction of four paddle courts with single story unit (WC, changing room and storage) (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution affecting the nearby priority habitat deciduous woodland must be implemented during construction. A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) may be required for this. Precautionary working methods are advised for birds, amphibians and small mammals (discussed within this report). On-site habitat recommendations have been made in reference to the proposed developments the potential impacts to local biodiversity.					
Survey limitations					
It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the searches of historical biological records. A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report. There were no specific limitations to the survey.					

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, proposal plan in appendix 3 and photos in appendix 4). Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
Summary of Survey Findings (UKHab codes used)	The site does not contain any habitats listed as a habitat of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006). However the site contains modified grassland which are of poor quality but could be of value to local wildlife populations (as detailed in subsequent sections of this table). Other habitats within the site are common and widespread and have low ecological value. Notable habitats are present within 2km. On-site habitat descriptions <u>g4 – Modified grassland</u> The lawn areas appears to be actively managed via regular mowing, exhibiting a short sward of 30mm (Appendix 4, figure 1 & 2). The lawn is species poor, with less than 8 vascular plant species present per m². This patch of modified grass was particularly damp with a layer of clay underneath which may explain the dominant species being lesser clubmoss <i>Selaginella selaginoides</i> (Appendix 4, figure 3). The assemblage includes lesser clubmoss <i>Selaginella selaginoides</i> (D), perennial rye grass <i>Lolium perenne</i> (A), creeping buttercup (R), ribwort plantain <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> (R), ragwort <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i> (R) Modified grassland condition assessment: poor a) There are only 5 vascular plant species per m². b) Sward height not varied. It is mown to a low level (30mm). c) Scattered scrub not present. d) No physical damage is evident within grassland. e) No bare ground is present. f) No bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> present within the grassland. g) Invasive, non-native plant species are present within the grassland. Local notable habitats Patches of Priority Habitat - Deciduous Woodland (DWOOD) are present in close proximity to the site. The closest is located 10m to the Southeast, with a second patch of DWOOD 195m to the Northwest. The bordering trees on-site are likely to have functional connectivity to these patches of woodland, given their proximity to the site and the presence of numerous trees throughout the bordering landscape. DWOOD is classed as a priority habitat under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. Further priority

	habitats are present within 2km of the site, including Priority Habitat - Lowland Dry Acid Grassland 1.1km North, Priority Habitat - Lowland Fens 1.1km North, Ancient woodland located 1.4km Southwest and Priority Habitat - Traditional Orchards 1.4km East of the site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	On-site habitats The proposed development will result in the loss of 0.2ha of modified grassland. This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of this habitat. Notable habitats No direct impacts to any notable habitats will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, due to the proximity of the site to DWOOD (10m West of the site) indirect effects (e.g. pollution, dust, litter, surface run off, etc.) could occur during construction.
<i>Recommendations</i>	On-site habitats To compensate for the proposed habitat losses at the site, the following habitat creation measures should be incorporated: To offset the loss of modified grassland, the introduction of woody shrubs and climbing plants will enhance the site for nesting birds, invertebrates and provide shelter for species as they commute. Some good examples are; Elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i>, Box - <i>Buxus sempervirens</i>, Honeysuckle - <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>, Guelder Rose - <i>Viburnum opulus</i>, English Lavender - <i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>. These can be added to the northern borders of the plot. Notable habitats Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution affecting the nearby priority habitat deciduous woodland must be implemented during construction. A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) may be required for this. Biodiversity net gain The Environment Act (2021) requires all developments (excluding exemptions) to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity.. Therefore, the planning application must be accompanied by a landscaping/habitat creation and enhancement strategy, biodiversity net gain calculations and a habitat management and monitoring plan to ensure the proposed development delivers a 10% net gain.
Locality and Designated Sites	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	On-site designations The site is not subject to any designation. Statutory designated sites (within 2km) The proposed development project is within 2km of these Local Nature Reserves (the proximity to the site(s) is shown in brackets): Springwater Park (1km North of the site) <i>"The park has an assortment of habitats including mixed woodland, grassland, streams, ponds and rivers. These are home to many various types of wildlife including deer, foxes, rabbits, birds of prey and fish in the river".</i>

	- Philip's Park (1.3km South of the site) <i>"The site has an assortment of habitats including mixed woodland, grassland, streams, ponds and lodges. These habitats are home to a wide variety of plants and animals, with the meadows being particularly good for butterflies like the Orange Tip, Brimstone and Peacock".</i> - Chapelfield (1.3km West of the site) <i>"The woodland is an important refuge for wildlife and many typical bird species including Jay, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Wren, Chaffinch and Nuthatch have been recorded here. Water birds like coot and moorhen are also permanent residents on the reservoir".</i> Non-statutory designated sites The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from Greater Manchester Local Record Centre (GMLRC).
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	On-site designations No impacts foreseen. Statutory and non-statutory designated sites No impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such sites (where known) as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers.
<i>Recommendations</i>	On-site designations None required. Statutory and non-statutory designated sites None required.
Invasive / Non-native species	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	N/A
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys but remain vigilant.
Invertebrates	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The habitats present on-site, including modified grassland, likely provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for specialised or protected invertebrates.

Foreseen Impacts	Modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally.															
Recommendations	No further surveys.															
Bats																
Summary of Survey Findings	EPSL data															
	A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are two EPSLs within a 2km radius of site as detailed below:															
	<table><tr><th>EPSL reference</th><th>Bat species affected</th><th>Distance from site</th><th>Impacts allowed by licence</th></tr><tr><td>EPSM2009-1596</td><td>Common pipistrelle</td><td>1.4km</td><td>Destruction of a resting place and breeding site</td></tr><tr><td>2015-16549-EPS-MIT</td><td>Common pipistrelle</td><td>1.7km</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr></table>				EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence	EPSM2009-1596	Common pipistrelle	1.4km	Destruction of a resting place and breeding site	2015-16549-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	1.7km	Destruction of a resting place
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2015-16549-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	1.7km	Destruction of a resting place													
There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site.																
Foraging and commuting habitat																
Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of species poor modified grassland which is subject to regular mowing. These habitats are unlikely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations. In the wider landscape, the Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland which borders the site to the Southeast adds to the continuity of vegetated linear features present in the wider landscape. Bats are well known to utilise linear features to aid navigation whilst travelling between foraging resources and roost sites.																
Roosting habitat																
There are no trees or buildings within the site boundary line.																
Foreseen Impacts	Roosting habitat [Buildings] No buildings were present within the boundary line.															

	Roosting habitat [Trees] No trees were present within the boundary line. Foraging and commuting habitat The proposed development will result in the loss of small area of 0.2ha modified grassland but given their low value and the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats. Artificial lighting The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the retained building without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Roosting habitat [Buildings] Not applicable. Roosting habitat [Trees] Not applicable Foraging and commuting habitat No further surveys are required. Artificial lighting A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Buildings No buildings were present within the boundary line. Trees and vegetation No suitable habitat present within the boundary line for nesting birds. Barn owls The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls. Overwintering birds

	Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Buildings/trees No impacts are anticipated on nesting birds as a result of the proposed development. Barn owls None foreseen. Overwintering birds None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Buildings/trees Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged. Barn owls None required. Overwintering birds None required. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on mature trees beyond the site boundaries will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler 2H Robin Boxes (trees) Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) Or a similar alternative brand. Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole.
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	EPSL data A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site. Habitat suitability

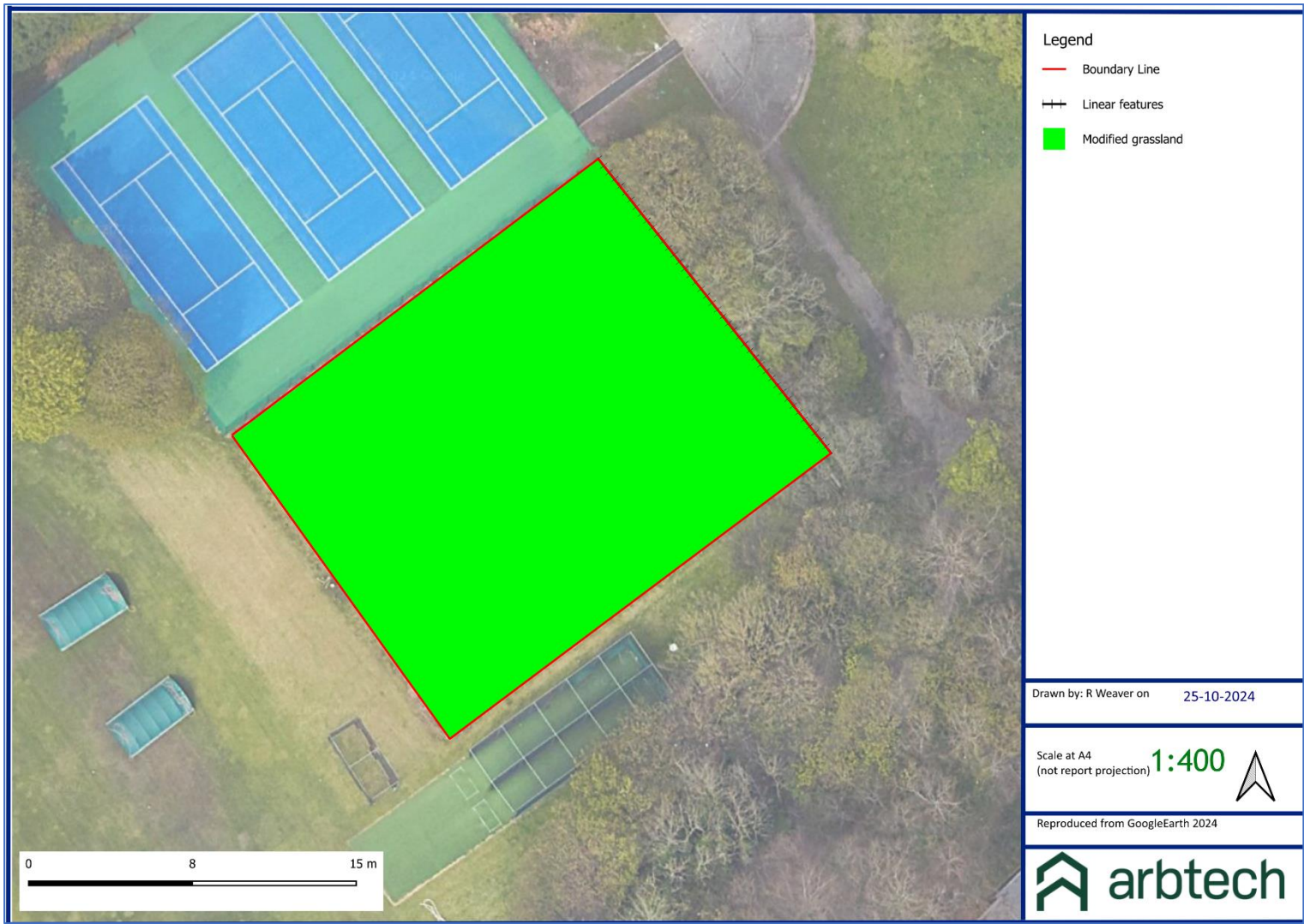
	There is no suitable habitat present on site for reptiles due to a lack of habitats such as scrub and rank grassland which would offer refuge for these species. Further, the site is surrounded by urban development (i.e. roads and buildings) which is considered sub-optimal for reptile migration and therefore reptiles are considered unlikely to migrate from any nearby suitable habitats to the development site. As such it is likely that reptiles are absent from the development site. Wider landscape The wider landscape is mostly developed residential land and roads which offers a lower ecological value to reptiles in the form of habitat or commuting opportunities. The wooded area which borders the plot to the Southeast (Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland) may offer more suitable habitat for reptiles. The presence of reptiles utilising this adjacent habitat cannot be discounted but the likelihood of them commuting across is unlikely due to the high frequency of mowing and grounds management within the plot.								
Foreseen Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on reptiles as a result of the proposed development.								
Recommendations	None required.								
Amphibians									
Summary of Survey Findings	EPSL and survey data A review of the MAGIC database returned one granted EPSL records for great crested newts within 2km of the site.								
	<table><tr><th>EPSL reference</th><th>Bat species affected</th><th>Distance from site</th><th>Impacts allowed by licence</th></tr><tr><td>2020-46281-EPS-MIT</td><td>Great crested newt</td><td>1.2km South</td><td>Destruction and destruction of a resting place.</td></tr></table>	EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence	2020-46281-EPS-MIT	Great crested newt	1.2km South	Destruction and destruction of a resting place.
	EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence					
	2020-46281-EPS-MIT	Great crested newt	1.2km South	Destruction and destruction of a resting place.					
	MAGIC database also returned evidence indicating the presence of great crested newts resulting from historic pond surveys undertaken in 2016 and 2018. These records are located 1km, 1.4km and 1.8km West and 1.9km Southwest of the site. Great crested newts exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton <i>et al.</i> 2001). As such, the great crested newt metapopulation known to be present 1km, 1.4km and 1.8km West and 1.9km Southwest are not suitably connected to the site.								
Aquatic habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m) Great crested newts (GCN) exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001).									
There are no ponds on the site, but a review of aerial imagery (MAGIC and OS Maps) indicates the presence of three ponds within 500m; the pond (P1) is located 190m Southeast of the site and is situated on the far side the (Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland). This habitat may have potential terrestrial connectivity to the site due to an absence of definitive barriers to dispersal. The pond (P2) is located 490m South on the other side of Higher Lane within Whitfield Golf Club. P3 is located 237m Northeast within Whitefield Park on the far side of the									

	Metrolink Whitefield Park and Ride. These landscape features combined are assessed to represent a significant barrier to dispersal limiting access from these ponds to the site for great crested newts. Terrestrial habitat suitability The site provides limited suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians given the lack of optimal habitat (i.e. scrub, rank grassland). The areas of hard standing and mown modified grass offer sub-optimal habitat for terrestrial amphibians. The urban nature of the surrounding landscape (i.e. dominated by roads and hard standing which are sub-optimal for amphibians) it is unlikely that amphibians will migrate on to site. The presence of amphibians utilising this adjacent (Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland) habitat cannot be discounted but the likelihood of them commuting across is unlikely due to the high frequency of mowing and grounds management within the plot.																								
Foreseen Impacts	When georeferencing the proposed development plans over scaled mapping of the site, it is noted that the development area is likely to result in the loss or significant disturbance of 0.2ha of modified grassland. If great crested newts are present within the pond 190m to the Southeast of the site, when completing the rapid risk assessment published by Natural England (Natural England 2015), the proposed development produces a Green risk score, which states: Offence Unlikely (see Figure 1 below). <table><tr><th>Component</th><th>Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)</th><th>Notional offence probability score</th></tr><tr><td>Great crested newt breeding pond(s)</td><td>No effect</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)</td><td>No effect</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)</td><td>0.1 - 0.5 ha lost or damaged</td><td>0.1</td></tr><tr><td>Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)</td><td>No effect</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Individual great crested newts</td><td>No effect</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Maximum:</td><td>0.1</td></tr><tr><td>Rapid risk assessment result:</td><td colspan="2">GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY</td></tr></table>	Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability score	Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0	Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0	Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.1 - 0.5 ha lost or damaged	0.1	Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0	Individual great crested newts	No effect	0	Maximum:		0.1	Rapid risk assessment result:	GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY	
Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability score																							
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Rapid risk assessment result:	GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY																								
Recommendations	Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures: - A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any amphibians to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter amphibians from the working area. - Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent amphibians from utilising these areas.																								

	• Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. • If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. • In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
Badger	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No badger setts were noted on site or within a 30m radius of the site. The site is considered unsuitable for badgers given the lack of suitable sett excavation areas/ground. Further, there is limited suitable badger foraging habitat on site given the lack of fruiting trees/scrub. The site is also surrounded by urban development (i.e. roads and buildings), which is sub-optimal habitat therefore reducing the likelihood of badgers being present within the surrounding area of the site. The wooded area which borders the plot to the Southeast (Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland) may offer more suitable habitat for badgers. The presence of badgers utilising this adjacent habitat cannot be discounted but the likelihood of them commuting across is unlikely due to the high frequency of mowing and grounds management within the plot.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on badgers as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to badgers, further badger surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: • Heras fencing will be erected around the working area to prevent encroachment into retained habitats where badger setts could be present. • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which badgers could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for otters or water voles within 2km of the site. There are no water courses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

<i>Recommendations</i>	None required.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	EPSL data A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for hazel dormice within 2km of the site. Habitat suitability The site lies outside of the know current range for hazel dormice and there are no suitable habitats within the development area. As such it is considered likely that hazel dormice are absent from site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None foreseen.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The modified grassland onsite provides limited commuting opportunities for hedgehogs, with woodland habitat nearby.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: - Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. - The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. - Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

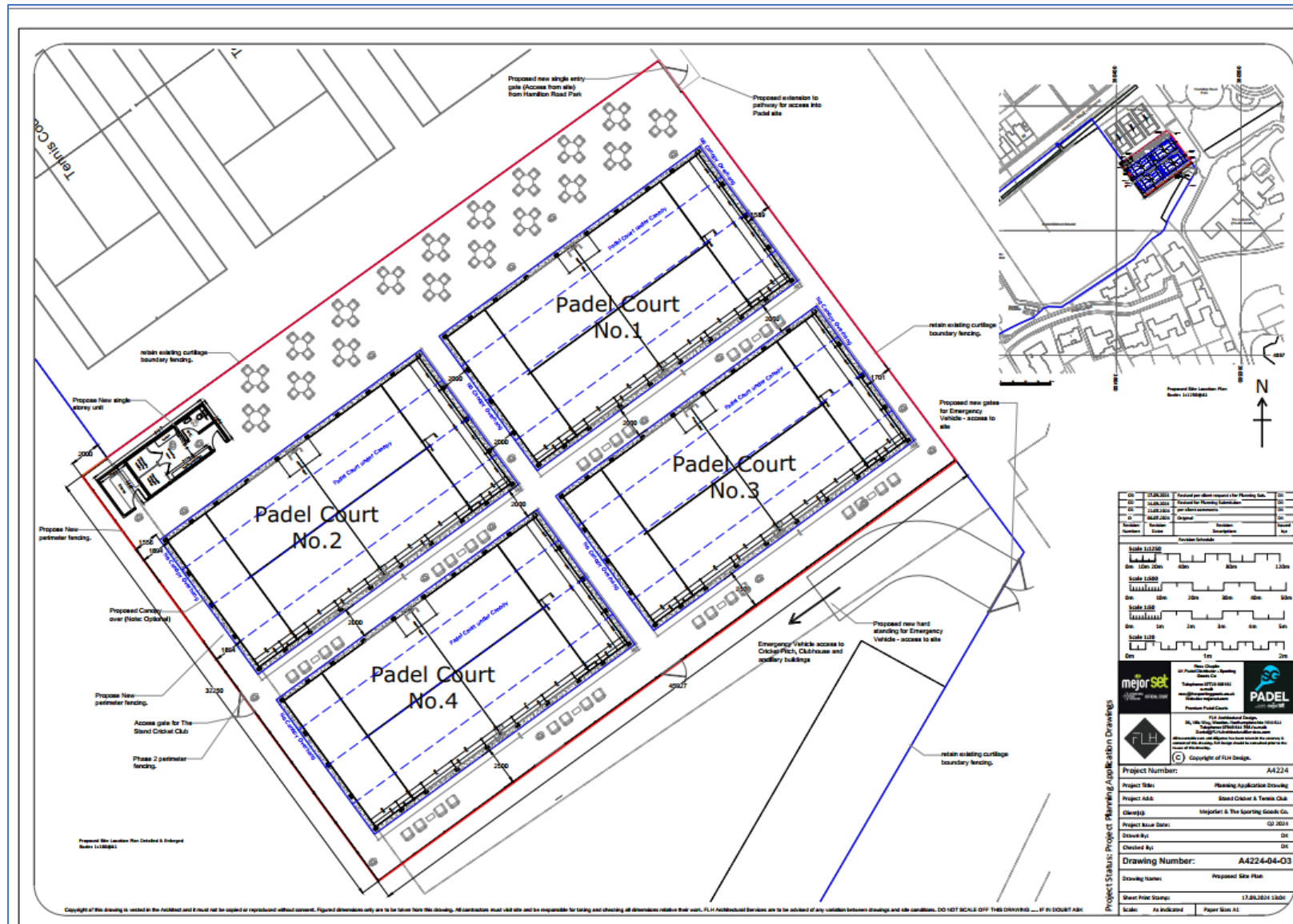
Appendix 1: Habitat map



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Appendix 4: Habitat Photos

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Modified grassland		
Photograph		Description
		Figure 1: patch of modified grassland
		Figure 2: patch of modified grassland



Figure 3: lesser clubmoss *Selaginella selaginoides*

Limitations and Copyright

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Version control

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Richard Weaver BSc (Hons) Ecology Consultant	28/10/24
Proof	0.2	Mel Reid BSc (Hons) MRes MRSB, Senior Consultant	10/11/24
Final	1.0	Richard Weaver BSc (Hons) Ecology Consultant	01/11/2024