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Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

August 2024

Project Reference: PR-0247-24

Summerseat Engine Room

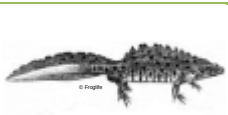
Rowlands Road

Bury

Greater Manchester

BL9 5PZ

National Grid Reference: SD79431459



Summerseat Engine Room, Rowlands Road, Bury, Greater Manchester, BL9 5PZ
Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

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Executive Summary

As part of a proposed planning application and application for listed building consent with Bury Metropolitan Council concerning Summerseat Engine Room off Rowlands Road in Summerseat, Bury, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd carried out a daytime preliminary roost assessment in relation to bats with an inclusive inspection for breeding birds in July 2024.

The survey was commissioned by PPY Design Ltd; the scope of proposals is understood to involve the conversion of the existing structure to provide a restaurant and a bar.

Detailed methods, findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented throughout the report; however, the reader should be aware of the following **Key** points:

Biodiversity Gain

Based on the information gathered during the diurnal assessment, Summerseat Engine Room is **not exempt** from the Biodiversity Gain Planning Condition.

The site is host to the following biodiversity value:

- Habitat: **0.91**
- Hedgerow: **0.00**
- Watercourse: **0.00**

Bats

Based upon the findings of the DBW and associated GLTA, covered through sections 5.0 – 6.0 of the report and supported by **Appendix I**, Summerseat Engine Room is categorised as pertaining to a bat roost suitability of ‘**Moderate**’, in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023); further survey work is recommended to be carried out at the site before an impact assessment can be concluded.

Table 7.2. Recommended minimum number of survey visits for presence/absence surveys to give confidence in a negative result for structures (also recommended for trees but unlikely to give confidence in a negative result).		
Low roost suitability or PRF-I	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability or PRF-M
One survey visit. One dusk emergence survey ^a (structures).	Two separate dusk emergence survey visits ^b .	Three separate dusk emergence survey visits ^b .
No further surveys required (trees).		

*It is recommended that **two dusk emergence surveys** are conducted at the building during the active season of bats (May – August, extending into September) in order to establish if, and if so, how it is being used by bats, identify the species present, abundance, roost locations and flight lines around the site following emergence. A total of **two surveyors** will be required to adequately monitor all elevations and areas of the building that were identified as containing bat roost potential during the daytime inspection and assessment.*

During the GLTA, the woodland trees within the site could not be fully accessed due to the dense vegetation and the height of the bank it stands on; as such, these trees must be categorised as pertaining to a bat roost suitability of 'FAR' in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023).

Whilst this would normally warrant a further survey in the form of an endoscopic investigation via either climbing equipment or a Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP), it is understood that no tree felling is proposed during the works. As such, a further survey is not considered necessary. If, however, proposals are altered at any stage and in a way which results in impacts to any of the trees, then a further survey of the roost features should be carried out to determine usage by bats.

Breeding birds:

Regarding wider breeding bird species, there are abundant viable nesting opportunities within the woodland, scattered scrub and tall vegetation, which could provide suitable nesting locations within the nesting bird season of March – August, inclusive.

Any works impacting upon any of the taller vegetation should therefore be carried out outside of the breeding bird season, typically March – September inclusive. For works within the breeding bird season, any areas that can support nesting birds should be checked by a professional Ecologist for nesting birds within 48 hours or less prior to works commencing.

Habitats

Construction works pose a risk of impact to the priority woodland onsite and adjacent to the east.

It is therefore recommended that protective measures are enacted at the site prior to any works to ensure that no negative impacts will occur. A lighting plan is also recommended to be produced for the site to prevent spill into the priority woodland.

Invasive Non-native Species

One INNS, listed under Schedule 2 (Part II) of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (IASO) 2019 was incidentally observed within the site during the survey, Himalayan balsam in various areas and in dense abundances.

To prevent further spread of this species from within the site, it is recommended that it is eradicated from the site prior to development. A Method Statement should be collated by a suitably qualified ecologist or invasive species specialist outlining how this species will be removed pre-works, including details regarding site biosecurity protocols.

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1.0 Introduction & Reasons for Survey

- 1.1 As part of a proposed planning application and application for listed building consent with Bury Metropolitan Council concerning Summerseat Engine Room off Rowlands Road in Summerseat, Bury, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd carried out a daytime preliminary roost assessment in relation to bats with an inclusive inspection for breeding birds in July 2024.
- 1.2 The survey was commissioned by PPY Design Ltd; the scope of proposals is understood to involve the conversion of the existing structure to provide a restaurant and a bar. See **Figure 1.1** for a site location plan.

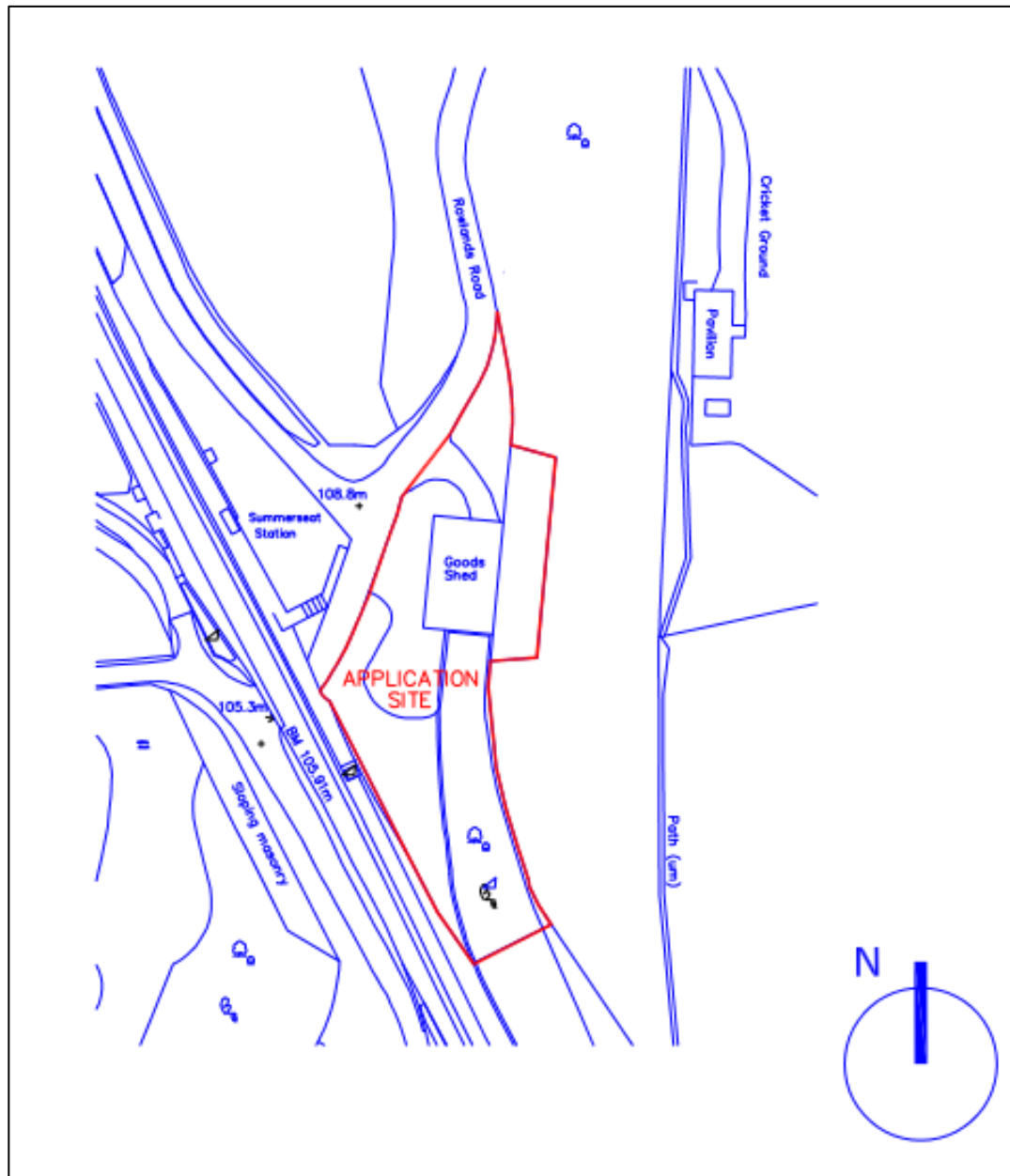


Figure 1.1 – Site Location Plan © PPY Design Ltd

- 1.3 The site was previously surveyed in relation to bats in 2007, where it was categorised as pertaining to 'High' bat roost suitability in line with the then appropriate Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (2006); therefore, two dusk emergence surveys and one dawn re-entry survey was undertaken at the site in both 2007 and 2012, which resulted in the conclusive emergence of small numbers of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bats along with acoustic data obtained from a deployed static device which demonstrated calls from both common pipistrelle

and whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*) bats. The site was subsequently categorized as hosting a day roost for both species.

- 1.4 The aim of the 2024 survey was to ascertain if the structure is still of value to bats, whilst an assessment of nesting and general suitability for birds was also carried out. If any potential roost features (PRFs) were found to be suitable for bats, or signs of use were observed, where suitable habitats and / or bat records exist in the locality, then more detailed surveys would be recommended i.e. dusk emergence surveys during the main active season of bats which is May – August (extending into September).
- 1.5 If additional surveys are required following the initial site visit, this report will outline the details of those further requirements, in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023).
- 1.6 If it was determined that bat(s) or their roost / place of rest / shelter will be subsequently impacted by the works then a European Protected Species (EPS) licence would be legally required to proceed with the development.
- 1.7 If evidence indicated breeding birds may be impacted by proposals, tailored recommendations would be made accordingly, species pending.
- 1.8 As part of the local authority's planning policies and obligations to the Planning Framework, ecological surveys are generally required prior to planning permission being granted where protected / priority habitats and species are, or may be present, that could be affected by the proposals for which the application seeks consent. Where more detailed surveys are recommended by the ecologist, following an initial daytime investigation, then Local Planning Authorities (LPA), on the advice of their ecological advisors, will not grant permission until such time that all relevant information is gathered.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 1.9 In addition to the above, the survey aimed to ascertain the baseline value of the habitats on site, to allow for the completion of a 'Biodiversity Statement'. Habitats would thus be identified, measured and mapped using UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (2023), before they would be condition assessed in accordance with Biodiversity Net Gain Principles and Rules (DEFRA, February 2024) covered in the most recent User Guide.¹

¹ See:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65c60e0514b83c000ca715f3/The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_User_Guide_.pdf

2.0 Protected Species & Their Requirements

Bats

2.1 All British bats and their **roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and are listed in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2019) (EU Exit). When dealing with cases where an EPS (all UK bats) may be affected, a planning authority is a competent authority within the meaning of Regulation 7 of the Regulations, and therefore has a statutory duty, as the local authority, to have due regard to the provisions of the Regulations in the exercise of its functions.

2.2 Uses of Buildings by Bats

- a) Summer breeding roost (May – August)
- b) Hibernation roost (October – March)
- c) Transitional or temporary roost (other months)

2.3 Roost selection is often closely correlated to suitable foraging habitat within a reasonable commuting distance from the roost and different sites are used depending upon insect densities and abundance; climatic conditions can also affect their ability to successfully forage. All British bats are insectivorous.

*** The term roost is generically referred to as a place that bat/s use for the any of the above reasons, however it should be noted that under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2019) (EU Exit) (Regulation 43 (d) the term roost is not used but refers to “a breeding site or resting place of such an animal” and is afforded legal protection. The roost, breeding site or resting place of bats, which ever terminology is used is legally protected whether or not bats are in occupation.*

2.4 Up to ten bat species have been recorded in Greater Manchester, most of which use built structures, notably occupied residential properties, for roosting. All bats feature on the local biodiversity action plan for the area; the most frequently encountered bat species is the Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) which will roost in building crevices, and its abundant status in Manchester is reflected throughout the UK.

Breeding birds

2.5 All wild birds, no matter how common, their eggs, young and nests, whilst being built or occupied, are protected under both the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA 1981) and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act 2006).

2.6 Any work that would damage an occupied nest, eggs or young of breeding birds, regardless of priority status, must be avoided; any damage to nests that may occur as a result of the development should be outside of the main breeding bird season (March – August). On occasions nests can become unoccupied during the breeding season but the status of the nest(s) should be determined by a suitably experienced ecologist / ornithologist.

2.7 Birds listed on Schedule 1 (Sch.1) of the WCA 1981, for example barn owl (*Tyto alba*), are afforded a greater level of protection and are safeguarded also from disturbance. This raptor is known to inhabit urban environments, where suitable nesting sites, such as churches, cathedrals and other taller structures, coincide with an abundance of prey items in the form of urban bird species, including feral pigeon.

Policy

- 2.8 Paragraph 186 of the National Policy Planning Framework (as revised in December 2023) states:

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

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

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

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

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

- 2.9 This national focus on the conservation of the natural environment is echoed in Policy EN6 of the Adopted Bury Unitary Development Plan (2022), which states:

“The Council will retain, protect and enhance the natural environment of the Borough, particularly in relation to areas of ecological, wildlife and geological importance.”

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 2.10 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised in December 2023, legislates net gain in biodiversity through paragraphs 180(d), 185(b) and 186(d). An effort should be made, therefore, through the development design to provide ecological enhancement in order to deliver an overall increase in biodiversity, and opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.
- 2.11 The Environment Act 2021 ('The Act') came into force in November 2021. Aspects of the Act relating to BNG came into force on the 12th February 2024, whereby BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).
- 2.12 The Act is supported by secondary legislation, consisting of six statutory instruments laid within law, of which the relevant legislation includes:
- The Environment Act 2021 (Commencement No. 8 and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2024²
 - The Biodiversity Gain Site Register Regulations 2024³

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/44/contents/made>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/45/contents/made>

- The Biodiversity Gain Site Register (Financial Penalties and Fees) Regulations 2024⁴
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024⁵
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024⁶
- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024⁷

Priority Habitats & Species

- 2.13 In the United Kingdom, legal protection and otherwise legislative recognition is afforded to particular habitats and species based on a variety of ecological factors. These are typically referred to as priority habitats and species, and can be identified under a variety of legislation and local policy, notably the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP), Section 41 (s.41) of the NERC Act as well as under Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPS).

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/45/contents/made>

⁵ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/47/contents/made>

⁶ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/48/contents/made>

⁷ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/50/contents/made>

3.0 Survey Methodology

- 3.1 As part of the Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds report, a desk-top and field-based study is conducted. Methods for both components of the appraisal are given below.

Desktop study

- 3.2 Prior to a site visit, a desktop study was conducted using online resources to obtain information pertaining to any sites afforded statutory (e.g. SSSI) and non-statutory (e.g. LWS) designations for nature conservation within 2.0 kilometres of the site boundary. To do so, the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGiC – provided by DEFRA) was accessed to gather such information; this particular interactive mapping service was also used to locate any locally granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses (EPSML) and species records to further inform conclusions concerning such species in the context of the study site and its proposed development.
- 3.3 Historic satellite imagery was reviewed using sources such as Google Earth (© 2023/24) to help establish past use of the land and determine the nature of adjoining and extending habitats; such information aids in the understanding of how the site might interact with its surroundings ecologically and its value in that context, and how the development may impact at a wider scale.
- 3.4 In addition, the Bury Metropolitan Council 'Planning – Public Access' online function was utilised to help inform the desktop study by analysis of existing publicly accessible ecological survey results that have been carried out locally within the previous five years.
- 3.5 A commercial data request to the Local Environment Records Centre serving the area – in this case Greater Manchester Local Record Centre (GMLRC) – has not been sourced and is justified through application of the following recent guidance:

1) The Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK (CIEEM, 2020) states:

"It is generally expected that a desk study, including a data search, will be a key part of the ecological surveys or reports produced to inform a planning application. Freely available web-based sources of data and contextual information should always be used; in some cases, it may be acceptable to not undertake a data search with the LERC or other relevant NSS or local interest groups, for example:

- ii) Situations where the **data search would be extremely unlikely to provide information needed to inform the assessment, due to the scale and location of the proposed development**. The appropriateness of excluding a data search will need to be judged on a case-by-case basis as, in most situations, it will be essential to carry out such a search even if the development is very small or is likely to have a low impact. It can be very difficult to demonstrate that a data search would not have provided relevant information without obtaining and reviewing those data.*
- iii) In some cases for Preliminary Roost Assessments of buildings in **low impact / small-scale scenarios**, such as an extension to a residential property, loft conversions (full or partial), installation of Velux/dormer windows, single modern agricultural or similar building conversion or demolition; however, it should not be assumed that data searches are never required for such scenarios and this must be judged on a case by case basis and justified accordingly.*

- 3.6 As exemptions as made **bold** above can be applied at the site, whilst following best practice, it is considered unnecessary to conduct a commercial data request following the desk study effort and daytime assessment at this time, which offers a proportionate level of survey effort. If, however, a data search is considered necessary by the Local Authority advisory body to inform the ecological impact assessment following any further surveys recommended in this report, a proportionate data search should be commissioned with results interpreted into the conclusions and recommendations of a re-issued / updated report.

Field survey

- 3.7 In context with the above, a diurnal inspection and assessment of the building and the immediate environment in relation to bats and breeding birds was conducted on 16th July 2024 in overcast conditions (15°C), wind 1/12 (Beaufort scale), 100% cloud, by the following surveyor (see **Table 3.1**):

Table 3.1 – Site surveyor credentials

Name	Description of most relevant credentials
Mr. H. Mulligan Qualifying CIEEM	• Consultant Ecologist with two years of training and experience, • MBIolSci in Biological Sciences (Zoology), • Accredited agent on the (Class 2) Natural England bat licence of Mrs. K. Wilding (CLS-14227). • Meets the requirements of CIEEM's Competency Framework Section S (Surveying) to Competence level.

Bats

- 3.8 Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023), states:

“The guidelines should be interpreted and adapted on a case-by-case basis according to site-specific factors and the professional judgement of an experienced ecologist. The questions should not be whether the guidelines were followed, but were the defined objectives of the surveys met? Where examples are used in the guidelines, they are descriptive rather than prescriptive.”

- 3.9 The site was assessed for bats; a daytime bat walkover (DBW) was undertaken to observe, assess and record any habitats or features suitable for usage by bats, either as commuting, foraging or roosting provision. Wider connectivity to other habitats was also considered during the DBW.
- 3.10 Buildings and other permanent / semi-permanent structures (where present) were subject to a preliminary roost assessment (PRA), to identify potential areas which may be of value to bats and to determine evidence of use. This typically involves a systematic search of the external aspects of any structure(s), comprising an investigation of features known to be used by bats (for example roofing material, soffits, fascia, lead flashing hanging tiles) using a high-powered torch and close-focus binoculars, where necessary. An internal assessment of the structure(s) was also carried out, with the aid of a high-powered torch and endoscope, where necessary, to identify any evidence of bat use of a structure. Field signs of bats typically comprise bat droppings, urine splashing, fur-oil staining, incidental animal presence, dead specimens and / or the presence of prey items, such as moth wings.
- 3.11 Trees (where present) would be subject to a ground level tree assessment (GLTA) using equipment such as close-focus binoculars and a high powered-torch. Potential roost features

(PRFs) can include woodpecker holes, rot holes, hazard beams, other vertical or horizontal cracks or splits in stems and branches, partially decayed lifted bark, knot holes, man-made holes, tear-outs, cankers in which cavities have developed, other hollows or cavities, including butt-rots, double-leaders forming compression forks with included bark, gaps between overlapping stems or branches, partially detached climbing species with stem diameters in excess of 50mm or pre-existing bat / bird boxes. These PRFs can then be determined as PRF-I or PRF-M, dependent on their suitability for individual / low numbers of bats or their capability to host multiple bats.

- 3.12 Criteria for roost assessment are based upon the determinants given in the Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023): (see **Figures 3.1 – 3.3** overleaf).

Birds

- 3.13 The site and any built structure(s) on site were inspected for evidence of nesting and suitability for relevant species. Bird species observed and heard were recorded on site, and a search was made for nest material, or areas suitable for nesting – this can take the form of searching structures, woody vegetation, semi-aquatic vegetation such as reeds and / or ground flora. Elevations of any buildings or structures on site were inspected for evidence of birds that show a high dependency upon built structures, many of which are in a state of decline. These might include the following species for example (list non-extensive):

- Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*): Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) red status
- House sparrow (*Passer domesticus*): BoCC red status
- House martin (*Delichon urbica*): BoCC red status
- Swift (*Apus apus*): BoCC red status

- 3.14 Additional to the site's capacity to support generally common species for breeding, the area was also subject to an assessment for wider capacity to support species with extra protection under Sch.1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended), as well as those listed in s.41 of the NERC Act and on the Lancashire BAP.

Biodiversity Gain

- 3.15 Assessment of baseline Area Habitat / Hedgerow / Watercourse units have been carried out and assessed separately in accordance with the guidance, principles, and rules – where present on site.
- 3.16 Measurement of habitats was carried out using a combination of desktop software – QGIS, Google Earth and MAGiC Maps 2023/24, whilst physical habitat measurements were also taken in the field during ground truthing, where necessary.
- 3.17 The results, conclusions and recommendations are based on a number of factors i.e.
- Practical experience of the surveyor,
 - Knowledge of bat / bird species relevant to the site location and geographical range,
 - Nature of the immediate / surrounding habitat in relation to foraging / commuting opportunities,
 - Presence / absence of roost potential and the general condition of the structure / tree,
 - Presence of loft spaces and / or cellars and reasonable practicality of use,
 - Value and types of roost potential, if present (i.e. – maternity, hibernation, transitional).

- 3.18 The results, conclusions and recommendations of this report have been assessed by Mrs. K. Wilding, the Director of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, and her assessment is consistent with that of the surveyor Mr. H. Mulligan.

Table 4.1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.		
Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting habitats in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ^c).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.
a Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute). b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance. c Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten <i>et al.</i>, 2016 and Jansen <i>et al.</i>, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.		

Figure 3.1 – BCT guidelines extract

Table 4.2. Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees on proposed development sites for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.	
Suitability	Description
NONE	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present

Figure 3.2 – BCT extract on tree roost suitability criteria

Table 6.2. Guidelines for categorising the potential suitability of PRFs on a proposed development site for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.	
Suitability	Description
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

Figure 3.3 – BCT extract on tree roost categorisation criteria

4.0 Limitations

- 4.1 The survey took place within the optimal season for both bats and breeding birds, therefore there was a good chance of encountering direct evidence of both species such as through fresh droppings or feeding remains for bats, or through the identification of bird nests or breeding behaviour for signs of breeding birds. Thus, timing is not considered a constraint in this instance.
- 4.2 The eastern aspect of the Engine Room borders dense woodland atop a bank, and as such cannot be well observed. While this is accepted as a limitation, a precautionary approach has been taken when considering any potential roost features located on this aspect. It is judged that enough information was gained from the external assessment of the other aspects to accurately categorise the building's potential to support bats and birds.
- 4.3 In considering all potential survey constraints, no significant limitations were experienced that might adversely influence the results, conclusions, and recommendations of this report.

5.0 Desk Study Results

- 5.1 The site of the proposed works (referred to in-part as “the application site” and “the site”) is situated to the east of Rowlands Road in rural Summerseat, approximately 3.8 kilometres north of Bury town centre (see **Figure 5.1** below). The site broadly comprises a light industrial building, formerly associated with the nearby railway, alongside a small yard and bordering woodland.

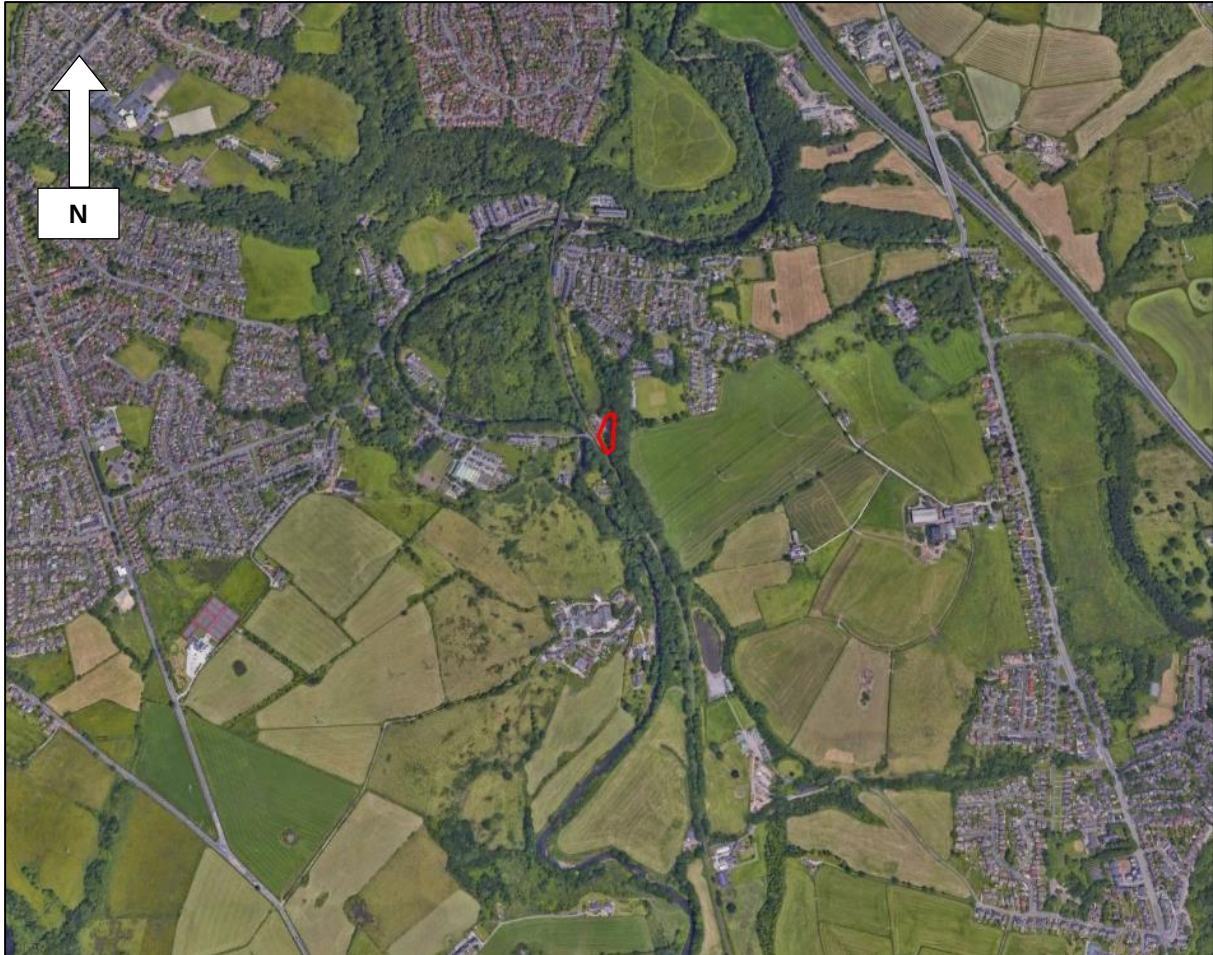


Figure 5.1 – Location of the red line boundary within the landscape © Google Earth Pro 2023/24

- 5.2 The immediate environment is largely rural in nature, with woodland bordering to the east and extending to the south and north. The village of Summerseat is located to the north beyond the woodland, while Summerseat train station lies directly to the west of the site, with the associated railway line bordering the south-western edge of the site, and this runs adjacent to the River Irwell; both of these features are also lined with extensive woodland. Beyond the Irwell and railway line, scattered areas of residential and industrial development divide the various semi-natural habitats, while agricultural land also extends to the east and south-west.

Relevant planning history

- 5.3 A number of previous planning applications have been undertaken at the site, with the most recent dating from 2013 (Ref: **56397**); bat surveys were undertaken as part of this application, which revealed that the building was being utilised by two common pipistrelle bats and a whiskered bat.

Designated sites

- 5.4 Two statutory designated sites for nature conservation are present within a 2.0km search radius of the site (see **Table 5.1** for information and **Figure 5.2** below for a visual aid).

Table 5.1 – Statutory Designated Sites within 2.0 kilometres of application site and reasons for designation

Site name	Designation type	Interest features
Kirklees Valley (1.6 kilometres south-west)	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Natural England Citation states: “The habitats to be found with Kirklees Valley are varied including woodland, grassland, heathland, ponds, lodges and streams. Wildlife includes a variety of birds, amphibians and bats. Roe deer have been seen on occasion.”
Redisher Wood (1.9 kilometres north-west)	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Natural England Citation states: “One of the best ancient woodlands in the Borough with a good display of bluebells in the spring. It is home to a number of important woodland birds. Holcombe Brook runs through the wood and has stone loach and aquatic insects such as mayflies. The shallow ponds have interesting plants including marsh marigolds and common valerian. Habitats include semi-natural broad leaved woodland, scrub, neutral grassland, acid grassland, acid heath, marshy grassland, standing water/running water, swamp and bracken.”

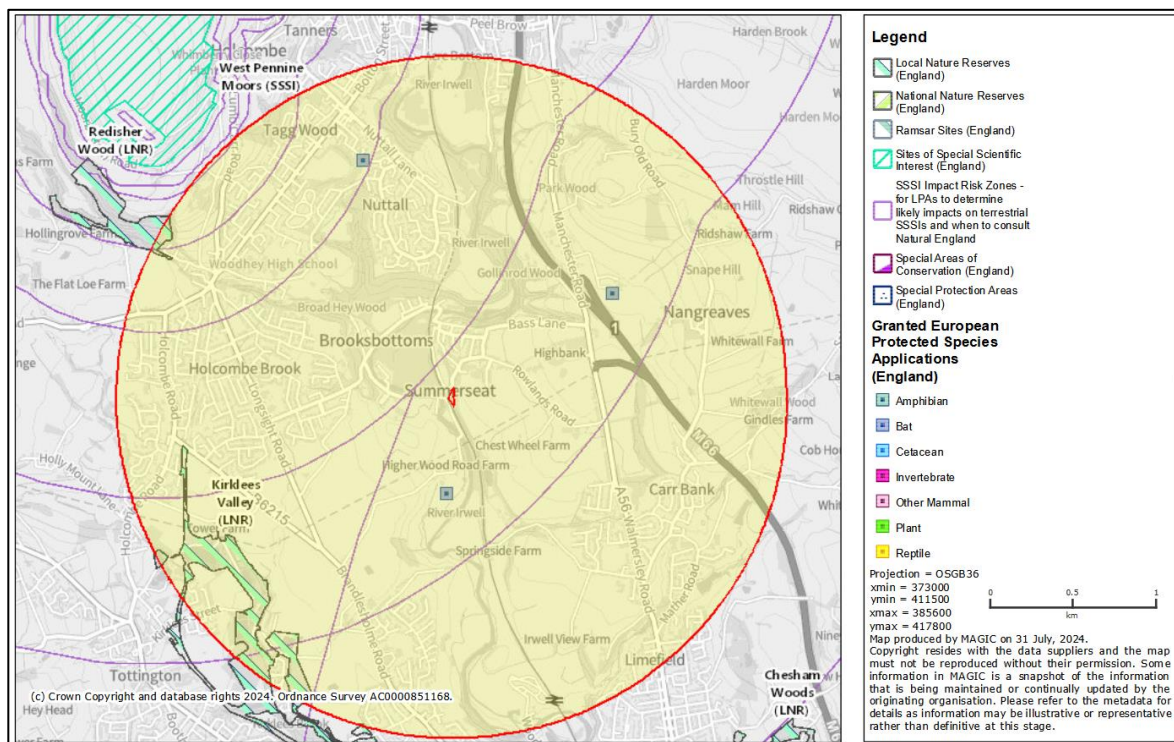


Figure 5.2 – Designated site and EPSML data for the area within 2.0km of application site © MAGiC Maps 2024

5.5 The site is also positioned within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the wider landscape, including the West Pennine Moors at a distance of 2.1 kilometres to the north-west. Based on the IRZ information available on MAGiC Maps, the site does not fall under any of the categories which would trigger further consultation with Natural England. It is also considered unlikely that works to the property would increase residential disturbance on the surrounding designated sites, and NE are unlikely to need be consulted in this regard.

5.6 Where no impact to SSSI's is predicted, NE issue the following advice within their standing guidance on SSSI impact zones (NE, 2019):

"It is important to note that the SSSI IRZs only indicate Natural England's assessment of likely risk to the notified features of SSSIs. Where they indicate such a risk is unlikely, this does not mean that there are no potential impacts on biodiversity or the wider natural environment."

5.7 A number of Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) are located within 2.0km of the site; see **Table 5.2** for more information.

Table 5.2 – SBIs within 2.0 kilometres of application site and reasons for designation

Site name	Interest features
Broadhey Wood & Woodhey (0.6 kilometres north-west)	Ancient woodland
Castlesteads Wood, Burrs (1.4 kilometres south)	Woodland
Crow Lumb Wood (1.5 kilometres north)	Semi-natural broadleaved woodland
Flushes at Springside (1.0 kilometres south)	Grassland
Gollinrod Wood (0.3 kilometres north)	Ancient woodland
Kirklees Brook (1.3 kilometres south-west)	Small lodges, bats and aquatic invertebrates.
Nuttal Farm Pasture (1.2 kilometres north)	Grassland
Redisher Woods & Holcombe Brook (1.6 kilometres north-west)	Ancient woodland, grassland, ponds & lodges, and aquatic invertebrates.
Whitewall Wood (1.8 kilometres east)	Woodland

Habitats

- 5.8 An online search of MAGiC Maps identified the following priority habitats within a 2.0km search radius (see **Table 5.3** below).

Table 5.3 – Priority habitats located within 2.0km buffer

Habitat Type	Designation	Distance to site
Ancient & semi-natural woodland	Ancient Woodland	0.5km north
Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat Inventory	Onsite
Good quality semi-improved grassland	Priority Habitat Inventory	0.5km south
Lowland dry acid grassland	Priority Habitat Inventory	0.5km north
Lowland fens	Priority Habitat Inventory	0.9km south-west
Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land	National Land Use Database	1.8km south-east
Purple moor grass and rush pasture	Priority Habitat Inventory	0.9km south
Traditional orchards	Priority Habitat Inventory	0.7km north-west

Bats

- 5.9 An online search of MAGiC Maps revealed that three European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses (EPSMLs) for bats have been granted within a 2.0km radius of the site boundary, see **Table 5.4** for further details.

Table 5.4 – EPSML data records from MAGiC Maps

Licence Number	Distance from Site	Context (where relevant)
2014-3807-EPS-MIT	0.5km south	Common pipistrelle; destruction of resting place
2014-5187-EPS-MIT	1.5km north-west	Common pipistrelle & soprano pipistrelle; destruction & damage of resting place
2020-45495-EPS-MIT-2	1.1km north-east	Common pipistrelle; destruction of resting place

- 5.10 Habitats in the immediate vicinity of the site provide high value foraging, roosting and commuting opportunities for bats, with extensive woodland to the north and east, and lining the River Irwell and the adjacent railway line extending to the south. The habitats present are considered likely to support those bat species which are adapted to urbanisation, for example the common pipistrelle, alongside brown long-eared and noctule bats, which favour woodland habitats, and Daubenton's, a species which favours waterbodies for foraging.

NB: *Where quality habitat is present close to buildings then the percentage use of those buildings, by bats, increases given that roost opportunities are available and vice versa.*

Birds

- 5.11 Given the dense woodland in all directions, the extending environment is likely to support a moderately diverse assemblage of bird species. In addition, the woodland likely affords opportunities for Schedule 9 listed raptors such as barn owl, with the areas of rank arable fields offering foraging habitat for this group.

Biodiversity Gain

5.12 The Bury Metropolitan Borough Council Policy Map⁸ was accessed and used to assess the strategic significance of the site in terms of the local nature recovery strategy (LNRS) and Unitary Development Plan. The map revealed that the application site falls within an area designated under the following:

- Policy OL5/2 – River Valleys,
- Policy EN2/2 – Conservation Areas,
- Policy EN6/4 – Wildlife Links and Corridors,
- Landscape Character Area,
- Adopted Green Belt.

⁸ See: <https://maps.bury.gov.uk/ExternalWebMap/Map.aspx?MapName=PolicyMap>

6.0 Field Study Results

Bats

- 6.1 Summerseat Engine Room is a one and two-storey, stone-built barn, actively used for light industry; the building has a pitched, slate roof, and has approximate maximum dimensions of 14m x 21m x 8m (length x width x height). The structure features components such as timber doors, stone sills and lintels, and open eaves. In respect of its condition, the surveyor is not qualified to assess structural state; however, the aesthetic condition of the building was adjudged to be fair, with some minor degradation noted throughout and dense ivy growth to the south.
- 6.2 Internally, it is evident that the building has been renovated recently; the building features no true loft space, with the structure generally open to the roof throughout, and featuring one area of mezzanine to the south. The interior is of a purlin and rafter construction, is cool, partially illuminated by windows, and relatively draughty.
- 6.3 The building is thus considered broadly unsuitable for the breeding purposes of loft-dwelling species such as the brown long-eared bat; these species require dark, warm, non-draughty loft spaces, with space for free flight. While this does not rule out the space being used by this group for other purposes, no evidence was encountered during the survey.
- 6.4 No traditional roof lining is present beneath the roof slates, with plastering present instead, appearing to be added recently; where present, bitumastic underfelt or other such roof linings typically improve a building's value to bats, notably for crevice-dwelling bats of the *Pipistrellus* genus, whereby the bats roost between the lining and the roof cover material provided external opportunities exist. On the mezzanine floor, a number of scattered droppings (approximately ten) attributed to bats of the *Pipistrellus* genus were encountered.

NB: *The breeding roosts of Pipistrelle bats are proportionally higher in occupied residential dwellings where the warm, dry conditions favour the requirements of a maternity colony but other structures are also used, especially for hibernation or by male bats which do not need the same conditions as a maternity colony.*

- 6.5 Externally, a small number of PRFs were noted across the building; there are minor gaps at the open eaves, several ridge tiles are lifted, roof slates are occasionally slipped or slightly raised, and dense ivy covers much of the southern gable elevation. Given the number of features present across the visible aspects, it is reasonably assumed that further PRFs are also present on the obscured eastern elevation. However, the renovations that have taken place on the building appear to have significantly reduced the number of PRFs that were present during the original surveys undertaken at the site in the past.
- 6.6 Given the limited number of opportunities on the building that could be utilised by bats, the droppings located within the structure, and the highly suitable habitat in direct proximity, but considering the reduced potential due to the renovation works that have occurred since the former survey effort, the structure is duly categorised as pertaining to a bat roost suitability of '**Moderate**', in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023), a reduction from the original '**High**' categorisation in 2007.
- 6.7 Given the dense nature of the woodland and the bordering habitats, which stands upon a steep and densely vegetated bank, many of the trees are concealed and difficult to assess in terms of their bat roost potential. While it is understood that none of these areas will be felled for the proposed development, further inspection will be required should proposals be altered to entail any tree felling.

Breeding birds

- 6.8 In relation to WCA Schedule 1 specially protected bird species such as barn owl, the site provides no suitable nesting platforms. While this species may utilise the woodland adjacent, it is understood that this will not be affected by the proposed works.
- 6.9 In relation to more common bird species, no evidence of nesting was encountered during the survey, with the building considered to be absent of features that could be utilised by urbanised bird species or provide ingress for these species. However, the woodland, tall grassland and scattered trees offer a plethora of nesting opportunities.

BNG Baseline Summary

- 6.10 See **Table 6.1** (below) for baseline information and habitat descriptions; refer to **Appendix I** for any supporting imagery. Refer to **Appendix III** for condition assessment criteria and **Appendix IV** – UK Habitats Map for the location of described habitats.

Table 6.1 – UK Habitat types within the survey area

Area habitat	Sec. Codes	Description
g4 Modified grassland	10 Scattered scrub	Much of the south-west of the site is comprised of a species-poor successional grassland that has grown over former hardstanding due to lack of management; graminoids present include Yorkshire-fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>) and red fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), with abundant ruderal species such as broad-leaved dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>), tall forbs such as rosebay willowherb (<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>) and common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), and scattered stands of bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.).
	16 Tall forbs	
	81 Ruderal or ephemeral	Condition: Poor Habitat Area: 0.0499 ha Strategic Significance: Formally identified in local strategy Habitat Units: 0.11
	518 Neglected	
u1 Built up areas and gardens	16 Tall forbs	A strip of habitat at the centre of the site comprises tall, dense stands of the invasive Himalayan balsam (<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>), most closely aligning with 'Introduced shrub' within the Metric. Other species present include rosebay willowherb and common nettle, with scattered tussocks of grasses such as cock's-foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>).
	524 Invasive non-native species	
	532 Scattered grass	Condition: N/A Habitat Area: 0.0398 ha Strategic Significance: Area / compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy Habitat Units: 0.08
	847 Introduced shrub	

u1b5 Buildings	-	The single building on-site.
		Condition: N/A Habitat Area: 0.0285 ha Strategic Significance: Formally identified in local strategy Habitat Units: 0.00
u1b6 Other developed land	81 Ruderal or ephemeral 532 Scattered grass	The areas at the north-west and north of the site are comprised of cobbled hardstanding, with ruderal vegetation and scattered tussocks of grasses as present within the other habitats.
		Condition: N/A Habitat Area: 0.0477 ha Strategic Significance: Formally identified in local strategy Habitat Units: 0.00
w1f7 Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	30 Semi-natural woodland 213 Complex woody structure	The east of the site is comprised of a mature woodland atop a steep bank, which extends to the east, north and south; species composition is dominated by beech (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>), sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>) and willow (<i>Salix sp.</i>), with an understorey dominated by hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), bramble and dense Himalayan balsam.
		Condition: Moderate Habitat Area: 0.0509 ha Strategic Significance: Formally identified in local strategy Habitat Units: 0.70

- 6.10 The woodland onsite and bordering the site to the east meets the criteria to be defined as a priority habitat under both the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) and the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GMBAP) – ‘Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland’. As such, measures may be necessary to minimise any potential negative impacts to this habitat.

Incidental Observations

- 6.11 As stated in **Table 6.1**, the invasive species Himalayan balsam, listed as such under Schedule 2 (Part II) of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (IASO) 2019, was observed onsite in various areas and in dense abundances. See **Appendix IV** for locations of the species onsite and **Appendix I** for imagery.

7.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

Bats

- 7.1 Based upon the findings of the DBW and associated GLTA, covered through sections 5.0 – 6.0 of the report and supported by **Appendix I**, Summerseat Engine Room is categorised as pertaining to a bat roost suitability of '**Moderate**', in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023); further survey work is recommended to be carried out at the site before an impact assessment can be concluded (see **Figure 7.1**).

Table 7.2. Recommended minimum number of survey visits for presence/absence surveys to give confidence in a negative result for structures (also recommended for trees but unlikely to give confidence in a negative result).		
Low roost suitability or PRF-I	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability or PRF-M
One survey visit. One dusk emergence survey ^a (structures). No further surveys required (trees).	Two separate dusk emergence survey visits ^b .	Three separate dusk emergence survey visits ^b .

Figure 7.1 – BCT extract on 'Moderate' suitability criteria

- 7.2 It is recommended that **two dusk emergence surveys** are conducted at the building during the active season of bats (May – August, extending into September) in order to establish if, and if so, how it is being used by bats, identify the species present, abundance, roost locations and flight lines around the site following emergence. A total of **two surveyors** will be required to adequately monitor all elevations and areas of the building that were identified as containing bat roost potential during the daytime inspection and assessment.
- 7.3 The applicant should be aware that, if during further surveys, evidence is gathered that confirms bat(s) or their roost(s) are found on site and will be impacted upon, then a Protected Species licence may be required to legally commence with the proposals.
- 7.4 Natural England provides information and guidance about licensing and the following extract is included in that guidance:

"If you intend to apply for a licence for development, you are advised to seek the guidance of a consultant ecologist. Natural England's view is that a licence is needed if the consultant ecologist, based on survey information and specialist knowledge of the species concerned, considers that on balance the proposed activity is reasonably likely to result in an offence under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2019 (as amended).

If the consultant Ecologist, on the basis of survey information and specialist knowledge of the species concerned, considers that on balance the proposed activity is reasonably unlikely to result in an offence being committed then no licence is required. However, in these circumstances Natural England would urge that reasonable precautions be taken to minimise the effect on European protected species should they be found during the course of the activity. If European protected species are found, cease the work until you have assessed whether you can proceed without committing an offence. A licence should be applied for if an offence/s is unavoidable, and the work should not commence until a licence is obtained.

The application should be completed by the developer and a consultant ecologist. The ecologist will need to be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of Natural England that they have the relevant skills and knowledge of the species concerned."

- 7.5 Where more detailed bat surveys are recommended by the Ecologist, following an initial daytime investigation, then Local Planning Authorities, on the advice of their ecological advisors, may not determine the application until such time that all relevant information is gathered, i.e., by conducting dusk / dawn surveys. The advice that is provided by the ecological advisors is also in accordance with the obligations placed upon Local Authorities by way of its duties under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2019 (as amended). Therefore, it would be prudent to make enquiries to the relevant departmental Planning Officer before submitting a Planning Application that includes an ecological survey report that recommends more detailed surveys.
- 7.6 During the GLTA, the woodland trees within the site could not be fully accessed due to the dense vegetation and the height of the bank it stands on; as such, these trees must be categorised as pertaining to a bat roost suitability of '**FAR**' in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023) (see **Figure 7.2**).

Table 4.2. Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees on proposed development sites for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.	
Suitability	Description
NONE	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present

Figure 7.2 – BCT extract on tree roost suitability criteria

- 7.7 Whilst this would normally warrant a further survey in the form of an endoscopic investigation via either climbing equipment or a Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP), it is understood that no tree felling is proposed during the works. As such, a further survey is not considered necessary. If, however, proposals are altered at any stage that results in impacts to any of the trees, then a further survey of the roost features should be carried out to determine usage by bats.
- 7.8 Installation of overly harsh artificial lighting as part of any development that exceeds current levels may have a negative impact upon foraging / commuting bats in the landscape, subject to their presence, particularly if increased light spillage occurs in areas that are currently free from illumination, particularly including the dense woodland to the east. A bat-sensitive lighting plan is therefore recommended in order to avoid potential impacts to bats. Several options to consider have been listed overleaf (see **Table 7.1**), though the reader is referred to the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' guidelines (August 2023) for further information.

Table 7.1 – Extract from *Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*, BCT

Appropriate luminaire specifications: Light sources, lamps, LEDs and their fittings come in a myriad of different specifications which a lighting professional can help to select. However, the following should be considered when choosing luminaires and their potential impact on Key Habitats and features:

- All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used
- LED luminaires should be used where possible due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability
- A warm white light source (2700Kelvin or lower) should be adopted to reduce blue light component
- Light sources should feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012)
- Internal luminaires can be recessed (as opposed to using a pendant fitting) where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill
- Waymarking inground markers (low output with cowls or similar to minimise upward light spill) to delineate path edges
- Column heights should be carefully considered to minimise light spill and glare visibility. This should be balanced with the potential for increased numbers of columns and upward light reflectance as with bollards
- Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, should be considered - See ILP GN01
- Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt
- Where appropriate, external security lighting should be set on motion-sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow. For most general residential purposes, a 1 or 2 minute timer is likely to be appropriate
- Use of a Central Management System (CMS) with additional web-enabled devices to light on demand
- Use of motion sensors for local authority street lighting may not be feasible unless the authority has the potential for smart metering through a CMS
- The use of bollard or low-level downward-directional luminaires is strongly discouraged. This is due to a considerable range of issues, such as unacceptable glare, poor illumination efficiency, unacceptable upward light output, increased upward light scatter from surfaces and poor facial recognition which makes them unsuitable for most sites. Therefore, they should only be considered in specific cases where the lighting professional and project manager are able to resolve these issues.
- Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and so should not be relied upon solely.

Birds

- 7.9 No impacts are applicable in relation to any Sch.1 (WCA) specially protected bird species such as barn owl, and no further surveys or recommendations are necessary in relation to specially protected birds, with no viability of nesting within the site boundary.
- 7.10 Regarding wider breeding bird species, there are abundant viable nesting opportunities within the woodland, scattered scrub and tall vegetation, which could provide suitable nesting locations within the nesting bird season of March – August, inclusive.

NB: *All wild birds (with only minor exceptions) and their nests whilst being built or containing eggs or dependant young are protected from destruction, damage and disturbance under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is a punishable offence to interfere in any way with an active nest.*

- 7.11 Any works impacting upon any of the taller vegetation should therefore be carried out outside of the breeding bird season, typically March – September inclusive. For works within the

breeding bird season, any areas that can support nesting birds should be checked by a professional Ecologist for nesting birds within 48 hours or less prior to works commencing.

Point 3.24 of the British Standards Publication 42020:2013 defines a professional ecologist as: *"a person who has, through relevant education, training or experience, gained recognised qualifications and expertise in the field of ecology and environmental management."*

- 7.12 Where / if active nests are / have been located by the Ecologist, then any works which may affect them would have to be delayed until the young have fledged and the nest has been abandoned naturally, this can be aided, for example, via implementation of appropriate buffer zone(s) around the nest site (typically 5 – 10 metres) in which no disturbance is permitted until the nest is no longer in use. This would have to be coordinated through the expert judgement of the professional ecologist and species pending.

Habitats

- 7.13 Construction works pose a risk of impact to the priority woodland onsite and adjacent to the east. It is therefore recommended that protective measures are enacted at the site prior to any works to ensure that no negative impacts will occur. A lighting plan is also recommended to be produced for the site to prevent spill into the priority woodland.

Invasive Non-native Species

- 7.14 One INNS, listed under Schedule 2 (Part II) of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (IASO) 2019 was incidentally observed within the site during the survey, Himalayan balsam in various areas and in dense abundances.
- 7.15 Whilst it is not illegal to host any species designated as such within a site, it is an offence, under current legislature, to knowingly permit the spread of an INNS beyond the confines of your site, either via allowing it to grow unchecked or through the irresponsible removal and dumping of waste / plant matter.
- 7.16 To prevent further spread of this species from within the site, it is recommended that it is eradicated from the site prior to development. A Method Statement should be collated by a suitably qualified ecologist or invasive species specialist outlining how this species will be removed pre-works, including details regarding site biosecurity protocols.

8.0 Biodiversity Statement

8.1 Based on the information gathered during the diurnal assessment, Summerseat Engine Room is **not exempt** from the Biodiversity Gain Planning Condition.

8.2 The site is host to the following biodiversity value:

- Habitat: **0.90**
- Hedgerow: **0.00**
- Watercourse: **0.00**

8.3 This Section should be read in conjunction with the hard copy of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric tool – see external Appendix.

9.0 Bibliography

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Appendix I: Site Photographs



Plate 1 – Northern aspect of the Engine Room, with Himalayan balsam in front and woodland to rear

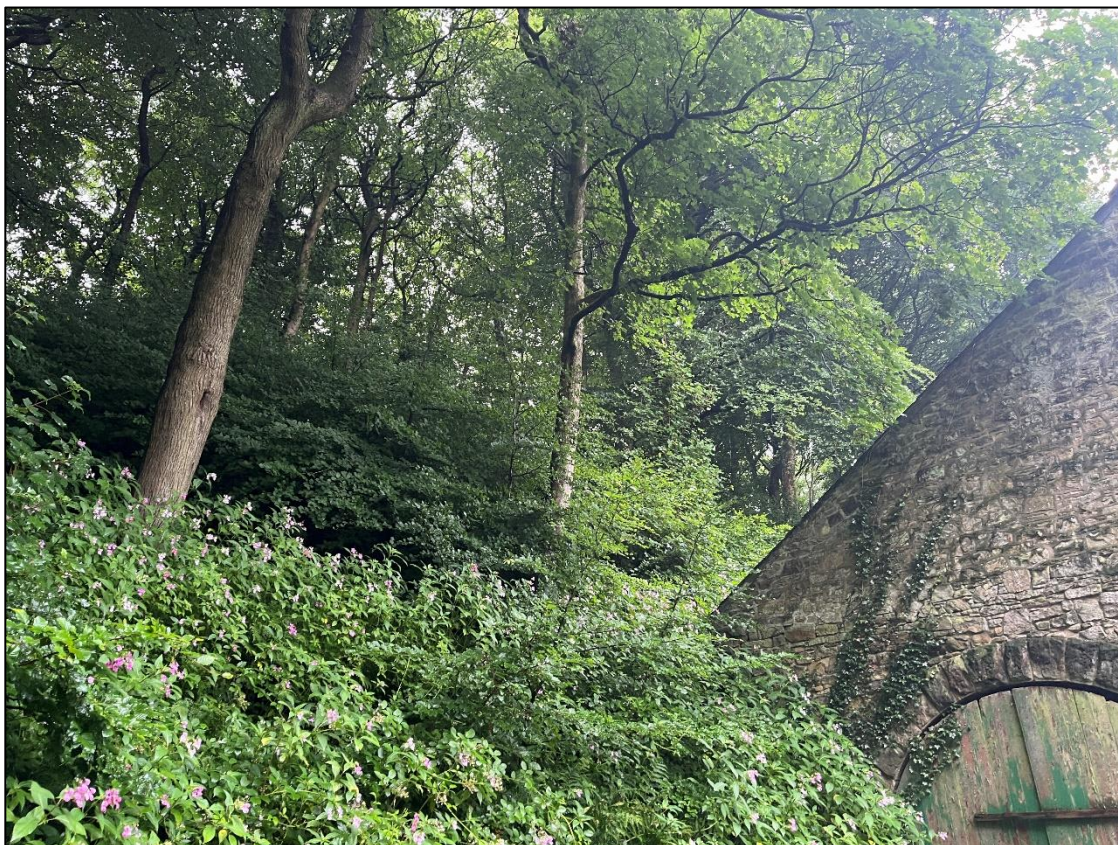


Plate 2 – Character of the woodland to east, with dense Himalayan balsam in understorey



Plate 3 – *Western elevation of the Engine Room*



Plate 4 – *Ruderal nature of hardstanding*



Plate 5 – South of the site, with dense ruderal grassland and tall Himalayan balsam



Plate 6 – Southern building aspect, with woodland to rear and Himalayan balsam throughout



Plate 7 – *Example of gaps beneath ridge tiles*

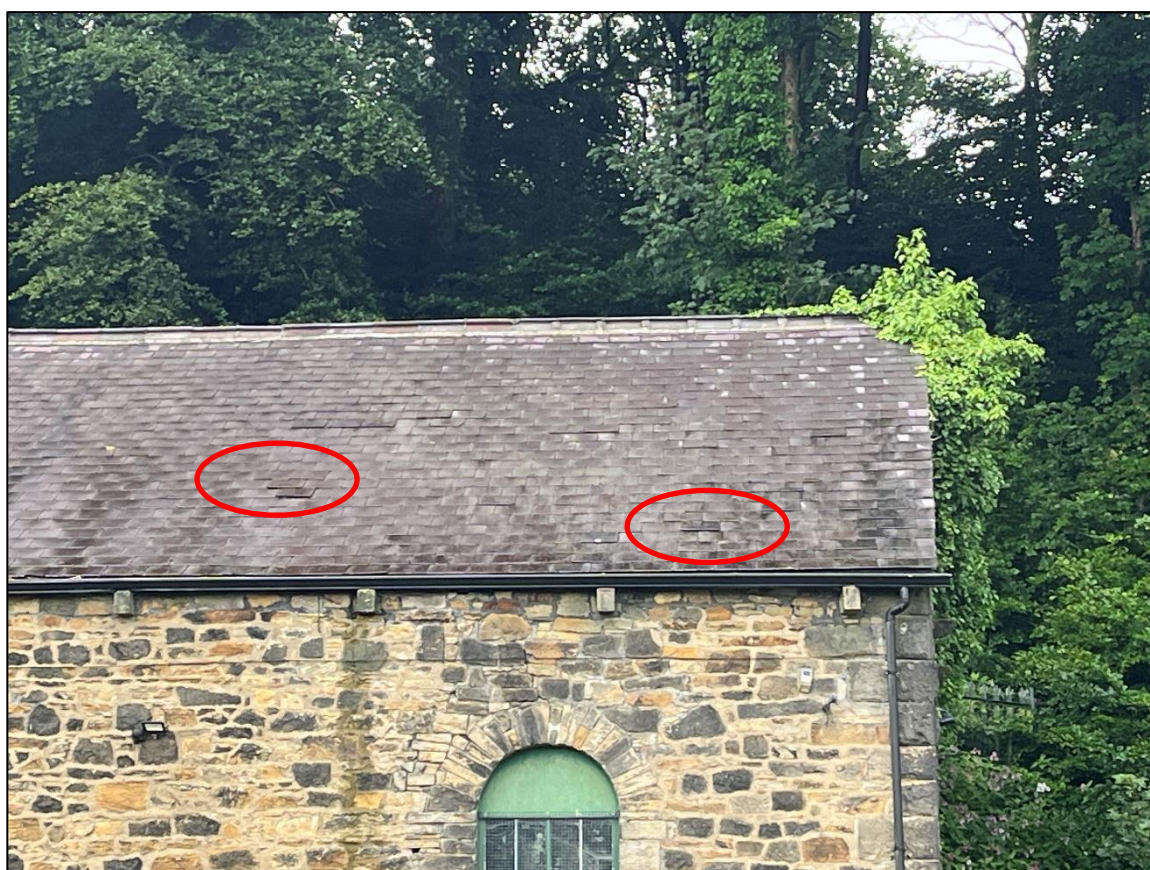


Plate 8 – *Lifted slates*



Plate 9 – *View of open eaves*



Plate 10 – *Internal character of the structure, with obvious signs of renovation*



Plate 11 – *Nature of mezzanine floor, with plastered roof lining*



Plate 12 – *Example of scattered Pipistrellus droppings within building*



Plate 9 – *View of open eaves*



Plate 10 – *Internal character of the structure, with obvious signs of renovation*

Appendix II: Biodiversity Enhancement: General Recommendations

Breeding Birds – House Sparrow

The sparrow terrace has been designed to help redress the balance of falling house sparrow numbers. The current UK population is now half of what it previously was in 1980 and this is widely attributed to habitat destruction and lack of suitable nesting spaces. House sparrows are social birds and like to nest in company, therefore, this terrace provides ideal nesting opportunities for three families. The terrace can be fixed on to the surface of a suitable wall or incorporated into the wall. It is suitable for all types of buildings.



Breeding Birds – Starling

Starling populations have declined dramatically in recent years and are now on the Red List of birds of high conservation concern. Loss of habitat is one of the major pressures on this species and household renovations and new buildings offer much fewer nesting sites than have previously been available. Providing these birds with a safe and secure habitat and nesting environment is a great way to help ensure their future survival.

This Vivara Pro WoodStone® Starling Nest Box has a 45mm diameter entrance hole which makes it ideal for starlings. It should be sited on an external wall or tree at a height of at least 1.5m using an aluminium nail or screw and wall plug (not included). Site near to vegetation if possible as this will provide additional protection and cover.



Breeding Birds – Other

This traditional design has proved to be highly effective in attracting Robins, as well as other small species such as Black Redstart, Spotted Flycatcher and Wren. It is designed to be installed on the walls of houses, barns, garden sheds or other buildings and should be hung so that the entrance is to one side (at an angle of 90° to the wall). The front panel can be easily removed for cleaning.

This type of box should not be made conspicuous on a tree or bush because small predators can enter through the unprotected opening. By hanging on a wall, predators won't be able to reach the box. Alternatively hide the box in Ivy, Honeysuckle or other climbing plants.



Invertebrates - Bee bricks

The Bee Brick can be used in place of a standard brick or block in construction to create habitat for solitary bees. Alternatively, it can be used as a standalone bee house in your garden or wild patch. It will provide much needed nesting space for solitary bee species such as red mason bees and leafcutter bees, both of which are non-aggressive.

Each Bee Brick contains cavities in which solitary bees can lay their eggs before sealing the entrance with mud and chewed-up vegetation. The offspring will emerge the following spring and the cycle will begin again. Each cavity goes part way into the brick, which is solid at the back. Bee Bricks should be placed in a warm sunny spot on a south-facing wall at a minimum height of 1m, with no vegetation obstructing the holes. It is highly recommended that bee-friendly plants should be located nearby so that the bees using the bricks have food, otherwise it is unlikely that the brick will be used. Available in a choice of four colours: white grey, dark grey, yellow and red.



Specification:

- * Material: Concrete
- * Origin: Cornwall, UK
- * Dimensions: W 215mm x D 105mm x H 65mm
- * Weight: 2.9kg
- * Colours: White grey, yellow, dark grey and red

Native Planting and/or Landscaping

New feature landscaping should incorporate native woody plants as opposed to non-native species that are of significantly less benefit to biodiversity. Species such as Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Guelder-rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) are native and will provide a valuable resource for a myriad of wildlife as opposed to non-native, exotic species which are generally much less effective, particularly to pollinator groups including bees, butterflies and moths.

Suitable Trees	Suitable Woody Shrubs
English Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>)	Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)
Rowan (<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>)	Honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>)
Wild Service Tree (<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>)	Guelder Rose (<i>Viburnum opulus</i>)
Silver Birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>)	Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>)
Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	Wild Privet (<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>)
Goat Willow (<i>Salix caprea</i>)	Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>)
Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>)	
Wild Cherry (<i>Prunus avium</i>)	

Appendix III: Condition Assessment Sheets

Condition Assessment Score – Grassland (Low)

Condition Assessment Criteria		g4
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	N
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Y
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	N
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	N
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	N
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	N
Total Score		2
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)		Poor

Condition Assessment Score – Woodland

Condition Assessment Criteria					w1f7
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	
A	Age distribution of trees	Three age classes present	Two age classes present	One age class present	3
B	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or less of whole woodland	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland	3
C	Invasive plant species	No invasive species present in woodland	Rhododendron or laurel not present, other invasive species < 10% cover	Rhododendron or laurel present, or other invasive species > 10% cover	1
D	Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel	Three to four native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel	None to two native tree or shrub species across woodland parcel	2
E	Cover of native tree and shrub species	> 80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native	50-80% of canopy trees and 50-80% of understory shrubs are native	< 50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native	3
F	Open space within woodland	10 – 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space, unless woodland is <10ha in which case lower threshold of 10% does not apply	21- 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space	More than 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space	2
G	Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland; trees 4-7cm dbh, saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth	One or two classes only present in woodland	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland	3
H	Tree health	Tree mortality less than 10%, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback	11% to 25% mortality and/or crown dieback or low risk pest or disease present	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present	2
I	Vegetation and ground flora	Ancient woodland flora indicators present	Recognisable NVC plant community present	No recognisable NVC community	2
J	Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots or a complex woodland	Two storeys across all survey plots	One or less storey across all survey plots	3
K	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees per hectare	One veteran tree per hectare	No veteran trees present in woodland	3

Condition Assessment Criteria					w1f7
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	
L	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems and stumps	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems and stumps	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems and stumps	2
M	Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area and/or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground	More than 1 hectare of nutrient enrichment and/or more than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground	2
Total Score					31
Condition Assessment Result			Condition Assessment Score		
Total score >32 (33 to 39)			Good		
Total score 26 to 32			Moderate		Y
Total score <26 (13 to 25)			Poor		

Appendix IV: UK Habitats Map

