

Extended Phase One Habitat Survey (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal)

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STAR Radcliffe.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the project

The client is proposing the re development of the STAR Radcliffe site in Bury.

1.2 Site location, context and main habitats

The site is located within the Radcliffe area of Bury in a semi urban environment and enclosed by existing residential and commercial land uses. The Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal borders the north of the site, and the Manchester Metro Link line borders the western side of the site. The habitat on site comprises of scattered trees, amenity grassland, scrub and building habitat including areas of hard standing and play areas.

1.3 Report purpose

To prepare a Preliminary Ecological Assessment or Extended Phase One Habitat Survey for the development site following CIEEM guidelines (*Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, April 2013*). The purpose of the report is to provide information relating to the location, extent and distribution and impact on the conservation of wild plants and animals and natural and semi natural habitats affected by development. This report sets out the methods, results and recommendations arising from the above work.

1.3.1 Surveyor information

Christopher Gaughan (Technical Director) has attained a Foundation Degree in Ecology and Conservation Management and has attended FSC Field Courses for Land mammals, Great Crested Newts, Barn Owls, and Ecological Survey Techniques. He has over 20 years experience in field surveys and Ecological Consultancy, and holds an NE Class 2 license (2015-14359-CLS-CLS). He has attended courses for trees and bats, bat survey techniques, bat handling, bat mitigation and attended numerous online

workshops, along with being heavily involved in voluntary bat work through 3 different Bat Groups.

2. Desk Study

2.1 Methodology

The desk study collated information on designated statutory and non-statutory wildlife sites within 1km search radii around the proposed development site.

Information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites and legally protected/notable species records were obtained from <http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx> and contained in section 2.2 below.

2.2 Designated sites, species and habitats - Results Overview

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx>) has confirmed no statutory designations apply to the site and the site boundaries.

The site is located within SSSI Impact Zone for Nob End and Ashclough SSSI which is located 2475m west of site. The development proposal does not appear to conform to those development types that require the LPA to consult Natural England on the likely risks. Chapel field LNR is located 950m south and Hollins Vale is located 2245m east of site.

The site itself is in the Community Forest non statutory designation.

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside website data has confirmed the following habitats and species apply to the site and its immediate locality:

- There are no section 41 habitats listed on the inventory on the site or adjacent to the site boundaries. Priority woodland is located on the site boundary to the north outside the scrub denoted on the habitat plan.
-

- There are numerous areas of listed woodland within the 1km which are mainly located within 1km.
- The site is within the National Habitat Network All Habitats Combined (England) Network Enhancement Zone 2
- The canal to the north of the site is designated as National Habitat Network All Habitats Combined (England) Lowland Fens.
- The site area is covered by the countryside stewardship priority area for lapwing species and the area forms part of the Bird Conservation Targeting Project for farmland assemblages of bird species.
- There are no important Bird Areas, Seabird considerations, or water and wetland considerations in respect of avian species. The site is 450m south of an upland breeding bird area.
- The closest granted European Protected Species (EPS) license application by Natural England was for bat species (Pipistrelle) approximately 450m east of site. No other EPS licenses are within 1km.

The Local Records Centre data indicates the following:

- There are several protected species on site (S41) which include House sparrow, skylark, dunnoek, linnet, kingfisher and reed bunting are all present within 1km. Kingfisher, hobby, little ringed plover, otter and peregrine are all recorded within the 1km.
- Badger records are within 1km, the closest is <1km
- A bat roost has been identified off site <50m (Common Pipistrelle) as well as several signs from the same species all within 250m. Several bat species are recorded within 1km including 8 roost sites.
- Sites of Biological Interest are recorded as Manchester and Bolton and Bury east canal adjacent to site including the wetland near Radcliffe <150m off site to the north. Withins reservoir <950m from site and marl pits and Black Lane <900m from site and Sailors Brow <800m from site.
- Chapel field LNR is located 950m south of site.

3. Extended Phase One Habitat Survey

3.1 Methodology and survey results

The site was visited on the 7th July 2023 and a survey of the site was conducted using the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey 2010. Distinct habitats were identified and any features of nature conservation interest or habitat areas that were too small to map were subject to a more detailed description in a Target Note (T1 etc) and contained in Appendix 1 – Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Mapping and Appendix 2 – Vascular Plant Site List.

3.1.2. Vascular Plants and Habitat

Table 1: Site habitats

Habitat Code	Dominant species	Less frequent species
A.2 Scrub	Betula pendula Salix caprea	Crataegus monogyna
A.3.1 Broadleaf scattered trees	Acer pseudoplatanus Acer platanoides	Betula pendula Salix caprea
J.1.2 Amenity grassland	Festuca rubra Trifolium repens Poa annua Trifolium repens	Plantago lanceolata Ranunculus repens

3.1.3 Protected and Notable Species (Mammals)

Water Voles

The habitat on the site does not contain running water habitat suitable for the species.

Bat species

Bats are comprehensively protected under UK and European legislation. Bats are largely ubiquitous there is green infrastructure linking the site to the wider landscape. The site contains sub optimal foraging habitat on the site as only amenity grassland is present which is intrinsically poor value for invertebrates. Trees and buildings may need to be removed for development which could contain bat roosts.

Badgers and Hedgehog

Badgers are protected under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which prohibits deliberate interference with the animal or its sett. Badger records are present in the LRC data. A standard badger survey was undertaken making checks on site and in the immediate site margins. For example, up to 20m+ from site was checked for signs for field signs of Badger (hair, tracks, prints, dropping or latrines) and no field signs of badger were found. Equally no field signs were found for hedgehog, however suitable foraging habitat does exist due to the presence of trees and grassland and the semi urban nature of the site.

3.1.4 Amphibians

The desktop and field survey exercises indicate field ponds are located within 400m of the site (to the north and off site). There is no aquatic breeding habitat associated with the site itself but optimal foraging, dispersal and hibernating habitat for amphibians to be present.

3.1.5 Birds

All birds with only minor exceptions are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), as amended. It is also an offence to disturb birds whilst nesting or displaying breeding behaviour, during the breeding season.

The area forms part of the Bird Conservation Targeting Project for arable assemblages of bird species including lapwing. The habitats on site are suitable for breeding bird species. Although no specific bird survey was undertaken the site is unlikely to support a significant amount of grassland and /or farmland birds. Urban birds are more likely to use the site such as house sparrow and starling which are birds of conservation concern.

3.1.6 Vascular Plants

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 section 13 1(b) affords some wildflowers protection from uprooting. No other IUCN listed, BAP or other notable plants were identified. 2 non-native invasive (WCA Schedule 9) vascular plants were found on and within influence of the site. A stand of Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) was located outside of the red line boundary to the north of the disused railway, adjacent to the wetland area. Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) was discovered along the northern boundary and throughout the woodland area to the north. See appendix 3 for specific locations.

3.1.7 Reptiles

All native reptile species in the UK are protected under law from killing or sale. No habitat exists on the site for these species to be present and no LRC records are present.

3.2. Constraints to the Surveys

The timing of the site visit was undertaken at an optimal time of year for all species and habitats to be identified within the framework of a Phase 1 survey.

4. Summary and Impact

4.1 Summary – Protected habitats

The surveys have confirmed that the site does not support a habitat protected under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (*NERC*) Act 2006 - Habitats and Species of Principal Importance in England. There are no priority hedgerows on the site. Priority woodland is located off site to the North and East.

Summary - Protected species

No evidence of protected species was recorded on site during the site walkover.

Summary – Protected sites

There are no statutory or non-statutory designated sites within the boundaries of the development site or within the site margins. The site is part of the National Habitat Network All Habitats Combined (England) Zone 2 expansion.

Impact – General

The development proposals are as shown on the site layout plans

Impact - Species

The full extent of protected species that may reside on this site will require confirmation following further surveys as recommended in section 4.2. The following general impacts are considered to apply:

Bat species. Potential loss of optimal commuting and foraging. The existing trees and buildings to be removed may contain bat roosts.

Badger / hedgehog. Currently no evidence of badger, hedgehog has potential to be present on site.

Water vole. No impact considered likely.

Amphibians. Potential loss of optimal commuting and foraging habitat.

Birds. Loss of foraging habitat and disturbance during the breeding season.

Vascular Plants. Loss of vascular plant habitat identified on site is a low-level impact

Reptiles. Low-level impact

4.2 Recommendations for protected species

4.2.1 Mammals

Bat species

A Bat Roost Assessment of all trees and buildings to be removed and / or affected by noise relative to construction is required. The Bat Roost Assessment may recommend the need for a summer emergence survey/s on the identified roost features in trees. The site may hold great significance for commuting and foraging bat species. A single visit transect survey is suggested to advise the planning application of this aspect, along with a preliminary Bat roost assesment.

Badgers / hedgehog

No evidence of these species was found but a pre start check shall be made to ensure no badger activity has developed since this walkover survey. Measures are required to incorporate hedgehog into the development plans.

4.2.2 Amphibians

An amphibian appraisal is needed for these species.

4.2.3 Avian

A breeding bird appraisal / survey will be required prior to any tree to removal ascertain the importance of the site to breeding birds at that time. This will not be required outside the breeding bird season.

4.2.4 Vascular Plants

No other further surveys are required for vascular plants. An eradication plan for Indian balsam is needed

4.2.5 Reptiles

No further surveys are required for these species.

5. Recommendations, mitigation, enhancement measures

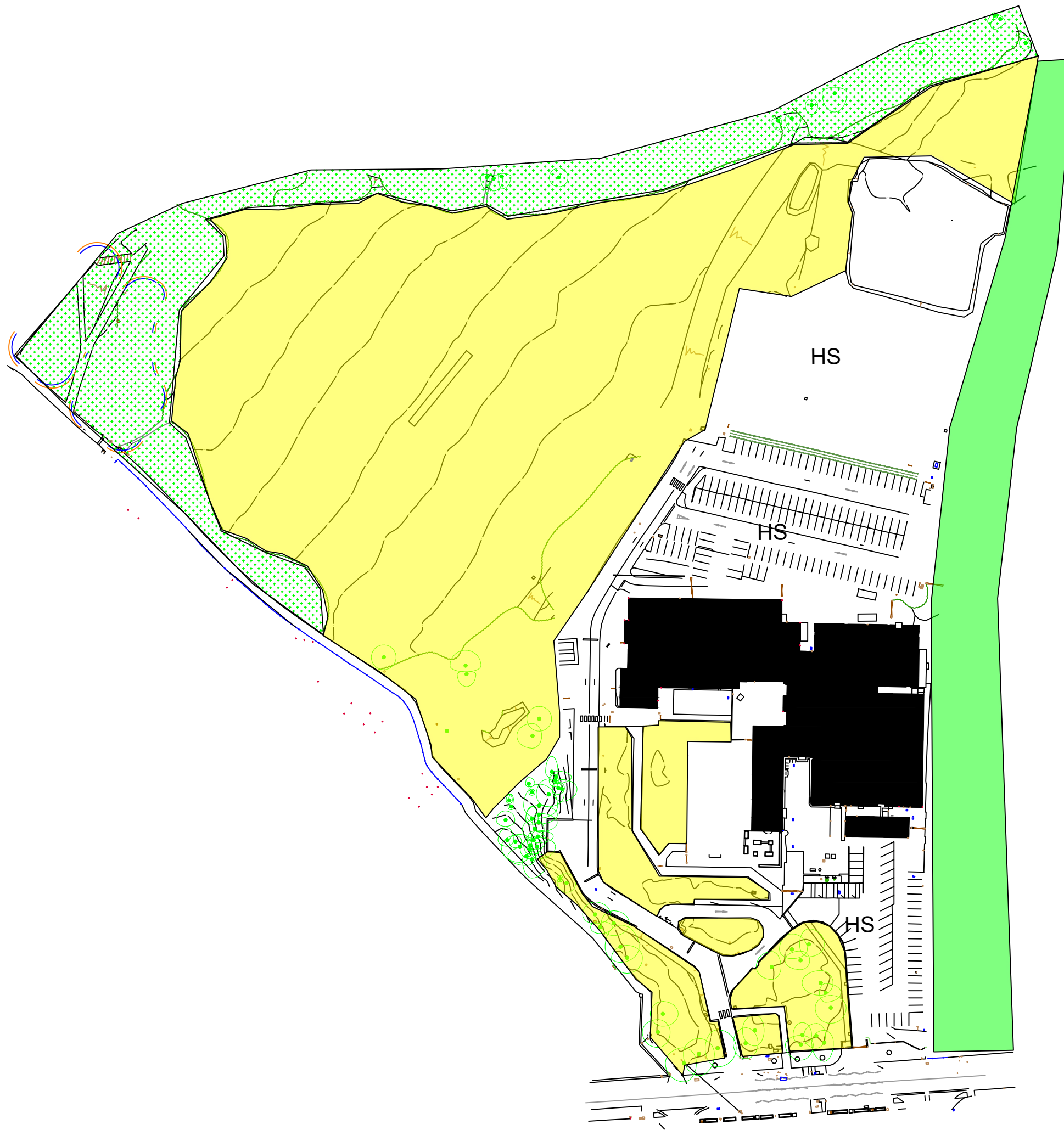
5.1 Recommendations, mitigation, enhancement measures

Mitigation applies to works required to comply with legislation when developing land where protected species reside, or protected habitats are being lost. Enhancement relates to biodiversity improvements often made under the National Planning Policy Framework.

At present there is no evidence of protected species on the site which could be affected by development. Other protected species that may be present onsite include bats, badgers and hedgehog. It is recommended that these species are subject to further detailed surveys.

The extent of protected species requires the surveys referred to in section 4.1 and 4.2 to be complete before mitigation can be proposed to support this development. Upon completion of these surveys mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures can be provided and confirmed. The provision of a Biodiversity enhancement report and a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment is considered to apply to the site in accordance with the NPPF guidelines and best practice.

Appendix 1 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map



PHASE ONE HABITAT MAP KEY

- A1 Plantation woodland
- A.2. Scrub
- A.3.1 Broadleaf scattered trees
- J.2 Amenity grassland
- J.4 Building

① Target Notes. Refer to Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Client:
Morgan Sindall

Project:
STAR Radcliffe

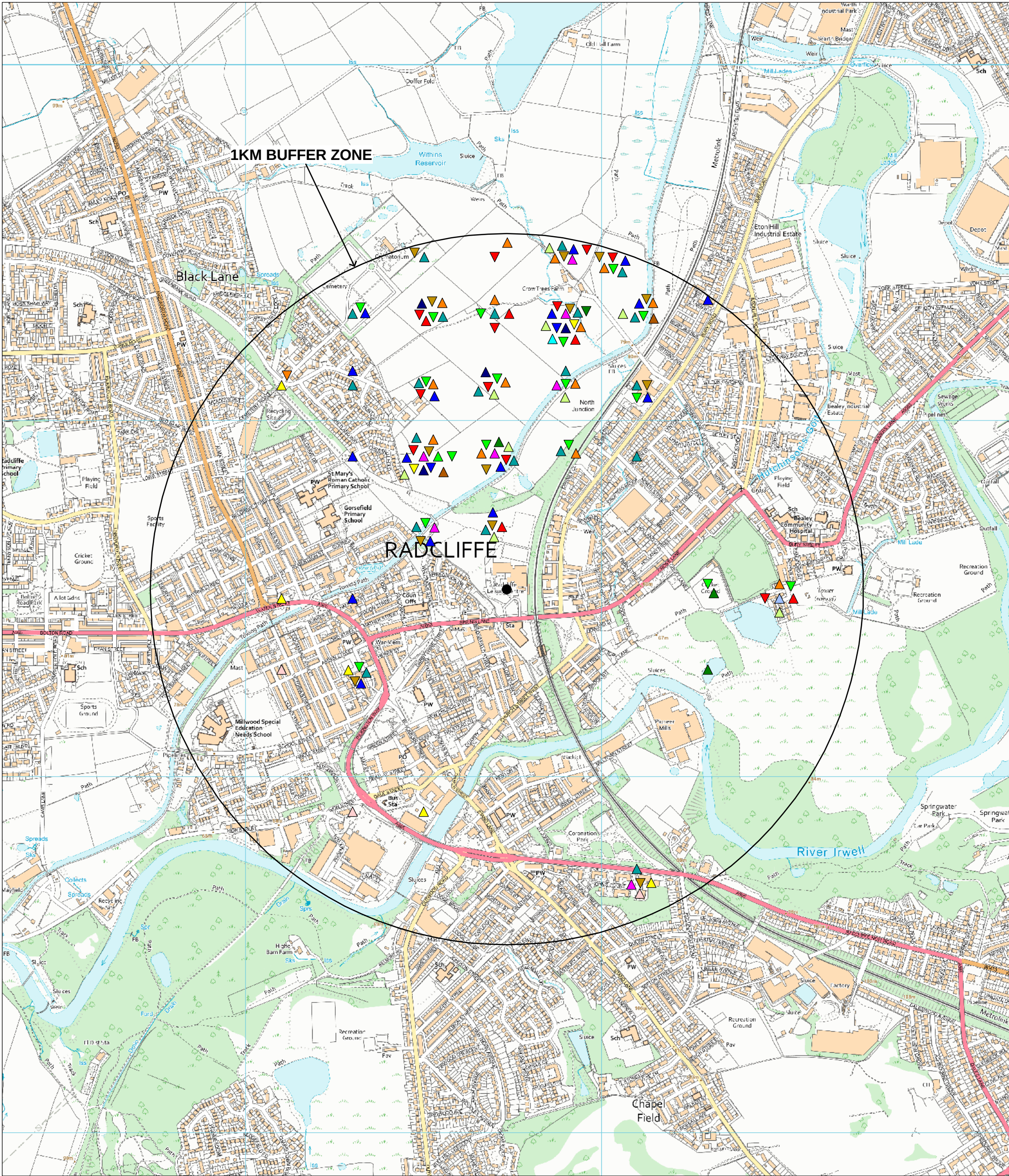
Detail:
Phase One Habitat Map

Drawn By:	Date:	Scale:
SB	067.2023	NTS

Drg No:	Revision:
TR-01	V1

Appendix 2 Site Vascular plant list and LRC data

Acer pseudoplatanus
Acer platanoides
Bellis perennis
Betula pendula
Buddleja sp.
Chamerion angustifolium
Convolvulus arvensis
Corylus avellana
Crateagus monogyna
Dactylis glomerata
Epilobium parviflorum
Fallopia japonica
Festuca rubra
Fraxinus excelsior
Galium aparine
Geranium robertianum
Impatiens glandulifera
Lolium perenne
Plantago lanceolata
Poa annua
Populus serotina
Sorbus aucuparia
Ranunculus repens
Rubus sp.
Rubus agg.
Taraxacum officinale
Trifolium repens
Urtica dioica



KEY **SECTION 41 SPECIES**

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| ▲ BULLFINCH | ▲ LINNET |
| ▲ COMMON TOAD | ▲ REED BUNTING |
| ▲ CUCKOO | ▲ S41 MOTH |
| ▲ CURLEW | ▲ SKYLARK |
| ▲ DUNNOCK | ▲ SONG THRUSH |
| ▲ GR. HOPPER WARBLER | ▲ SP. FLYCATCHER |
| ▲ HEDGEHOG | ▲ STARLING |
| ▲ HERRING GULL | ▲ WALL |
| ▲ HOUSE SPARROW | ▲ WILLOW TIT |
| ▲ LAPWING | ▲ YELLOW WAGTAIL |
| ▲ LESSER REDPOLL | |

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
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RADCLIFFE LESIURE CENTRE - MAP 5

SCALE 1:10,000

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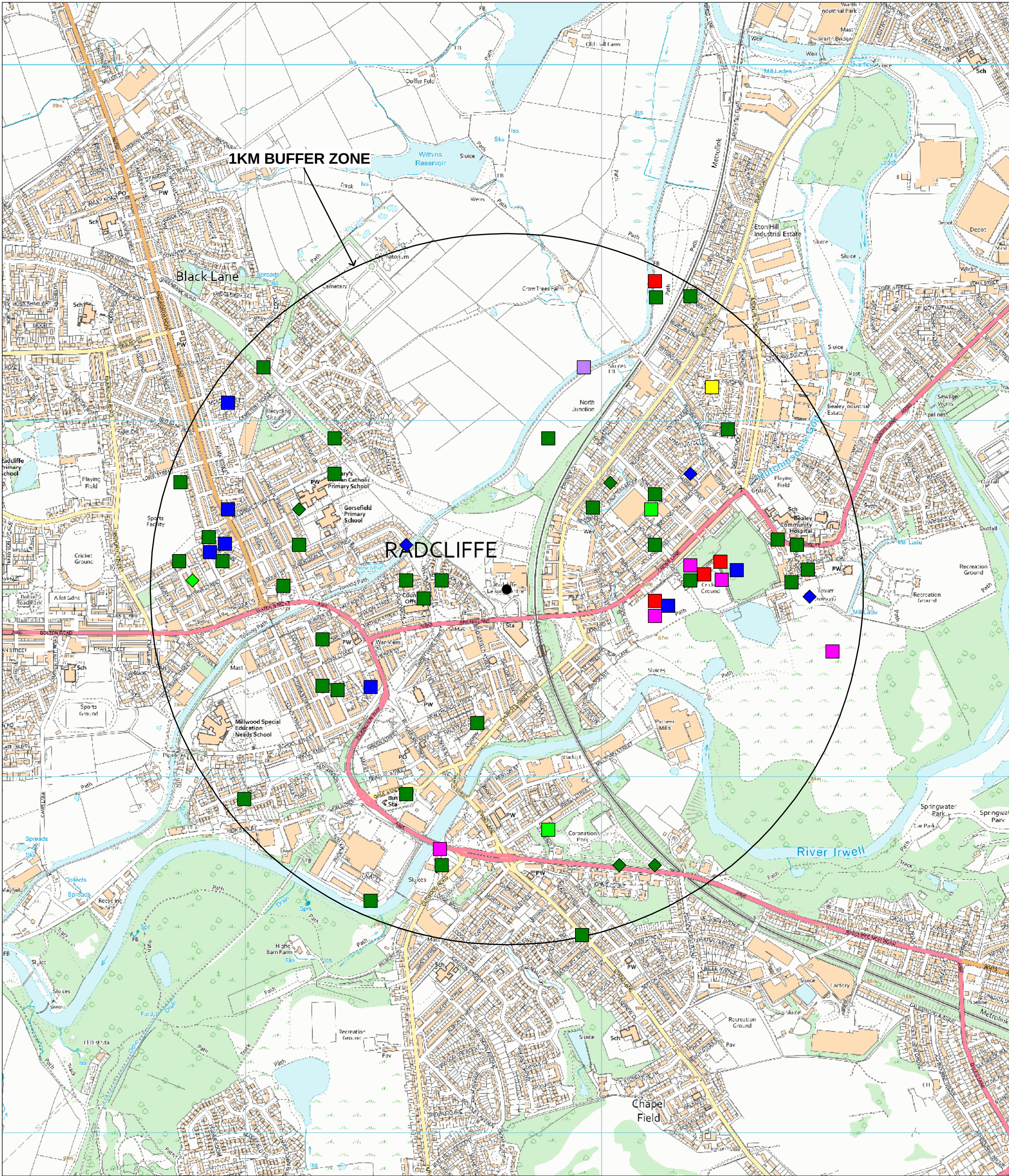
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Date Produced: 03/03/2022



KEY

BAT ROOSTS

- ◆ BAT SP
- ◆ COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- ◆ PIPISTRELLE SP

BATS OTHER SIGNS

- BAT SP
- COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- DAUBENTON'S BAT
- MYOTIS SP
- NOCTULE BAT
- PIPISTRELLE SP
- SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE

**GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
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RADCLIFFE LESIURE CENTRE - MAP 4**

SCALE 1:10,000

BAT DATA COURTESY OF SOUTH LANCS BAT GROUP

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RADCLIFFE LESIURE CENTRE - MAP 1**

KEY
SITE OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE
 **SBI BOUNDARY**

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Appendix 3 Invasive Species Location Map

