



QUOD

FORMER RAYWARE SITE,
SPEKE BOULEVARD, LIVERPOOL

Ecological Assessment

April 2016
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Proposals

- 1.1.1. Ecology Solutions was instructed by Quod in February 2016 to undertake an Ecological Assessment of the Former Rayware Site, Speke Boulevard, Liverpool (see Plan ECO1); hereafter referred to as the site.
- 1.1.2. The proposals for the site are for a hybrid application for comprehensive retail-led regeneration comprising: demolition of existing buildings and cessation of temporary airport car parking use; full planning application for erection of 1no. flagship retail unit (Class A1) for Home Bargains (Class A1 non-food retail use with 30% ancillary food and drink for consumption off the premises and ancillary customer café) with associated external garden centre, 1no. building for Class A1 non-food retail use, and 1no. leisure/café/restaurant unit for Class A3 or Class D2 uses along with access and servicing arrangements, car parking, landscaping and associated highway works; outline planning application for up to 9,000 square metres of employment uses (Classes B1(c), B2 and B8) including details of access with all other matters reserved.

1.2. Site Characteristics

- 1.2.1. The site is located to the immediate north of Speke Boulevard, with Evans Road forming part of the western and northern site boundary, and Pharmacy Road forming the eastern boundary. The site current supports a number of vacant industrial buildings and large swathes of hardstanding. The site is currently used for car parking. The site is set with a developed area with built form on all sides of the site with no apparent green corridors in the vicinity of the site.
- 1.2.2. The site largely comprises built form, associated hardstanding and limited areas of scrub, recolonising ground and pockets of amenity grassland and planting.

1.3. Ecological Assessment

- 1.3.1. This document assesses the ecological interest of the site. The importance of the habitats within the site are evaluated with due consideration given to the guidance published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)¹.
- 1.3.2. Where necessary, mitigation measures are recommended so as to safeguard any significant existing ecological interest within the site and, where appropriate, potential enhancement measures are put forward and reference made to both national and local biodiversity priorities.

¹ CIEEM (2016). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

2.1. The methodology utilised for the survey work can be split into three areas, namely desk study, habitat survey and faunal survey. These are discussed in more detail below.

2.2. Desk Study

2.2.1. In order to compile background information on the site and the surrounding area, Ecology Solutions contacted Merseyside BioBank (MBB).

2.2.2. Further information on designated sites from a wider search area was obtained from the online Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)² database, which uses information held by Natural England and other organisations. This information is reproduced at Appendix 1, and where appropriate on Plan ECO1.

2.3. Habitat Survey Methodology

2.3.1. Habitat surveys were carried out by Ecology Solutions in February 2016 in order to ascertain the general ecological value of the site and to identify the main habitats and associated plant species.

2.3.2. The site was surveyed based around extended Phase 1 survey methodology³, as recommended by Natural England, whereby the habitat types present are identified and mapped, together with an assessment of the species composition of each habitat. This technique provides an inventory of the basic habitat types present and allows identification of areas of greater potential which require further survey. Any such areas identified can then be examined in more detail.

2.3.3. Using the above method, the site was classified into areas of similar botanical community types, with a representative species list compiled for each habitat identified.

2.3.4. All the species that occur in each habitat would not necessarily be detectable during survey work carried out at any given time of the year, since different species are apparent in different seasons. Nonetheless, given the habitats present it is considered an accurate and robust assessment has been made of the botanical interest.

2.4. Faunal Survey

2.4.1. Obvious faunal activity, such as birds or mammals observed visually or by call during the course of the surveys, was recorded. Specific attention was paid to any potential use of the site by protected species, priority species, or other notable species.

² <http://www.magic.gov.uk>

³ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a Technique for Environmental Audit*. England Field Unit, Nature Conservancy Council, reprinted JNCC, Peterborough.

- 2.4.2. In addition, specific surveys were undertaken in respect of bats by an experienced and licensed bat worker.

Bats

- 2.4.3. All buildings within the site were subject to an initial appraisal of their potential to support roosting bats.

- 2.4.4. The probability of a building being used by bats as a summer roost site increases if it:

- is largely undisturbed;
- dates from pre-20th Century;
- has a large roof void with unobstructed flying spaces;
- has access points for bats (though not too draughty);
- has wooden cladding or hanging tiles; and/or
- is in a rural setting and close to woodland or water.

- 2.4.5. Conversely, the probability decreases if a building is of a modern or pre-fabricated design/construction, is in an urban setting, has small or cluttered roof voids, has few gaps at the eaves or is a heavily disturbed premises.

- 2.4.6. Field surveys were undertaken with regard to best practice guidelines issued by Natural England (2004⁴), the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2004⁵) and the Bat Conservation Trust (2012⁶).

- 2.4.7. All buildings within the site were surveyed externally and internally to check for bats or evidence of use by bats in February 2016. The survey work was undertaken using (where necessary) a torch, endoscope, mirrors and binoculars.

- 2.4.8. Evidence of the presence of bats was searched for, with particular attention paid to the roofs. A specific search was made for bat droppings, which can indicate present or past use by bats and extent of use, as well as other signs indicative of the possible presence of bats e.g. feeding remains, presence of stained areas or areas that were conspicuously cobweb-free.

- 2.4.9. Despite the limited tree coverage on site all trees were nonetheless assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. Features typically favoured by bats or evidence of past use by bats were searched for including:

- Obvious holes, e.g. rot holes and old Woodpecker holes;
- Dark staining on the tree, below the hole;
- Tiny scratch marks around a hole from bats' claws;

⁴ Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

⁵ Mitchell-Jones, A. J. & McLeish, A. P. (Eds.) (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual*. 3rd edition. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

⁶ Hundt, L. (2012). *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines*. 2nd Edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

- Cavities, splits and or loose bark from broken or fallen branches, lightning strikes etc.; and
- Very dense covering of mature Ivy over trunk.

2.4.10. In addition, the site was appraised in terms of its likely value for both foraging and commuting bats.

3. ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

- 3.1. A habitat survey was originally undertaken across the site by Ecology Solutions in February 2016.
- 3.2. The following main habitat / vegetation types were identified within the site during the survey undertaken:
- Buildings;
 - Hardstanding;
 - Scrub / Trees; and
 - Former Amenity Grassland & Amenity Planting
- 3.3. The location of these habitats is shown on Plan ECO2, and described individually below.

3.4. Buildings

- 3.4.1. There are six buildings on site, these are labelled B1 to B6 on Plan ECO2 and described individually below.
- 3.4.2. Building B1 is a single storey brick and breezeblock structure associated with two disused steel storage tanks (see Photograph 1). The roof of the building has collapsed and overall the building is in a very poor state of repair (see Photograph 1). Building B1 has no bat roosting potential.
- 3.4.3. Building B2 is a former warehouse (and may also at one time have been a factory of some description). It is noted that the building is present in two distinct sections. The first section of the building is of a prefabricated concrete (presumably reinforced) structure, with broken or missing glass skylights across the roof structure. The second section is present to west with no internal link. The construction varies in this section of the building being of brick with a steel frame. Corrugated metal sheets fitted with skylights form the roof structure. Overall the building is seen to be in a very poor state of repair with large piles of miscellaneous rubbish present (see Photograph 2). Building B2 supports no bat roosting potential.
- 3.4.4. Building B3 is a prefabricated reinforced concrete frame building similar to first section of building B2. Skylights present across the roof structure are broken and missing so the interior is open to the rain. The building is currently used for the storage of cars (see Photograph 3). There is a brick and breezeblock extension to the building with steel cladding on the exterior.
- 3.4.5. Overall the building B3 is in a very poor state of repair and supporting no potential for roosting bats.
- 3.4.6. Buildings B2 and B3 are linked by covered area; this area is of a prefabricated concrete and steel frame construction. Glass and plastic skylights are present across this area with both ends open.

- 3.4.7. Building B4 is a single storey brick built former gatehouse. The building supports a flat felted roof. The building is in a very poor state of repair with no bat roosting potential.
- 3.4.8. Building B5 is a brick built electrical sub-station with a flat felted roof. The building is in a good state of repair and does not provide any roosting opportunities.
- 3.4.9. Building B6 is a two storey office building on the western site boundary. The building is brick built with concrete supports and has a flat felted roof. The building supports glass windows on both the lower and upper floors and it would appear that the building is absent of any roof void. The building appears to be in a reasonable state of repair. No obviously points of entry or roosting opportunities would appear present (see Photograph 4).

3.5. Hardstanding

- 3.5.1. A large proportion of the site, outside of the buildings, is formed by hardstanding (see Photograph 5).
- 3.5.2. Although the majority of the hardstanding remains clear and used as car parking, the margins of the hardstanding at a number of places is being colonised by opportunistic and early colonising species. Species noted during the course of the survey include Stonecrop *Sedum* sp., Canadian Fleabane *Conyza canadensis*, Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Rough Meadow Grass *Poa trivialis*, Cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense*, Mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris*, and Butterfly Bush *Buddleja davidii*.

3.6. Scrub / Trees

- 3.6.1. The most significant area of vegetation within the context of the site is on north-eastern boundary with an area of trees and scrub present (see Photograph 6).
- 3.6.2. Species associated with the scrub / trees include Cherry *Prunus avium*, Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Willow *Salix* sp., Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Butterfly Bush, *Cotoneaster* sp., Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, Ivy *Hedera helix*, Variegated Ivy *Hedera* sp., Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, and Cleavers *Galium aparine*.

3.7. Former Amenity Grassland & Amenity Planting

- 3.7.1. Small areas of former amenity planting and amenity grassland are present to the south of building B3, and west and south-west of buildings B5 and B6 (see Photograph 7).
- 3.7.2. Species associated with these areas include *Hebe* sp., Sycamore, Hawthorn, Butterfly Bush, *Forsythia* sp., Dogwood, Box *Buxus sempervirens*, Greater Periwinkle *Vinca major*, Perennial Rye Grass *Lolium perenne*, and Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*.

3.8. **Background Records**

- 3.8.1. MBB returned no records of notable plants from within the site or its immediate vicinity.

4. WILDLIFE USE OF THE SITE

- 4.1. General observations were made during the surveys of any faunal use of the site, with specific attention paid to the potential presence of protected species.

4.2. Bats

- 4.2.1. No trees within the site have features that are suitable to support roosting bats.
- 4.2.2. All of the buildings within the site have been subject to detailed internal and external surveys by a licensed bat worker. No evidence of any bat roost was identified. All buildings were considered to support negligible opportunities for roosting bats.
- 4.2.3. The small area of scrub and trees in the north of the site provides some very limited foraging opportunities within the context of the site but is not considered to be significant in the landscape setting, and will not be fundamental to maintaining any local bat population at a favourable conservation status.
- 4.2.4. Information received from the desk study returned two bat records from the search area, both through to refer to the same individual (a juvenile male Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* recorded approximately 1.3km north of the site in 2007).

4.3. Badgers

- 4.3.1. No evidence of the presence of Badger *Meles meles* was observed during survey work undertaken. It is considered that the site provides negligible suitability for Badger being devoid of sett building and foraging opportunities for any locally present social group.
- 4.3.2. A single Badger record was returned as part of the desk study. The record refers to the presence of a sett between approximately 1.1km and 1.8km south-west of the site in 2014.

4.4. Other Mammals

- 4.4.1. Given the habitats present the site is not expected to support any other mammal species save for potentially Brown Rat *Rattus norvegicus*.

4.5. Birds

- 4.5.1. The buildings within the site were seen to support and be used by a number of Feral Pigeons *Columba livia*. Additional bird species noted during the course of the survey include Blackbird *Turdus merula*, Great Tit *Parus major*, Magpie *Pica pica* and Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*.
- 4.5.2. The site is considered to provide suitable nesting habitat in the form of the building structures for Feral Pigeon, whilst the elements of scrub and tress provide some limited foraging and nesting habitats for additional bird species.

- 4.5.3. The data search returned no records of any notable bird species or bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

4.6. Reptiles

- 4.6.1. The desk study returned a single reptile record from the search area. The presence of Common Lizard *Zootoca vivipara* was confirmed at a location approximately 2.1km south-west of the site in 2011.
- 4.6.2. There are no habitats suitable to support reptile species on site and there is no likelihood of them being present within the site. No further regard to common regard is required as part of this assessment.

4.7. Amphibians

- 4.7.1. The desk exercise returned 14 records of amphibians from the search area including the species Common Frog *Rana temporaria*, Smooth Newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* and Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*.
- 4.7.2. The nearest and most recent record of Great Crested Newt concerns the presence of eggs approximately 1.2km south of the site in 2009. The nearest records of Smooth Newt are of its presence and breeding at a location approximately 1.5km south of the site in 2007. The nearest record of Common Frog relates to confirmed breeding approximately 1.4km north-west of the site in 2013.
- 4.7.3. Despite the number of records of amphibians returned as part of the desk study the site is devoid of suitable aquatic habitats and largely absent of any suitable terrestrial habitats. The paucity of the site together with the absence of any green corridors connecting the site to suitable habits in the wider area shall preclude any likely presence of this group.
- 4.7.4. No further regard to amphibians is required as part of this assessment.

4.8. Invertebrates

- 4.8.1. The habitats within the site are likely to support a suppressed and limited invertebrate assemblage. It is considered the site is of limited entomological value.
- 4.8.2. The desk study returned records of a number of notable invertebrate species in the local area. The nearest records are of two North Merseyside priority species, namely Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella* (one adult recorded) and Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans* (two adults recorded), and come from approximately 1km north-east of the site in 2014. The site supports no suitable habitat for these species.

5. ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION

5.1. The Principles of Ecological Evaluation

- 5.1.1. The guidelines for ecological evaluation produced by CIEEM propose an approach that involves professional judgement, but makes use of available guidance and information, such as the distribution and status of the species or features within the locality of the project.
- 5.1.2. The methods and standards for site evaluation within the British Isles have remained those defined by Ratcliffe⁷. These are broadly used across the United Kingdom to rank sites so priorities for nature conservation can be attained. For example, current sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation maintains a system of data analysis that is roughly tested against Ratcliffe's criteria.
- 5.1.3. In general terms, these criteria are size, diversity, naturalness, rarity and fragility, while additional secondary criteria of typicalness, potential value, intrinsic appeal, recorded history and the position within the ecological / geographical units are also incorporated into the ranking procedure.
- 5.1.4. Any assessment should not judge sites in isolation from others, since several habitats may combine to make it worthy of importance to nature conservation.
- 5.1.5. Further, relying on the national criteria would undoubtedly distort the local variation in assessment and therefore additional factors need to be taken into account, e.g. a woodland type with comparatively poor species diversity, common in the south of England, may be of importance at its northern limits, say in the border country.
- 5.1.6. In addition, habitats of local importance are often highlighted within a local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). The North Merseyside BAP highlights a number of habitats. Where these occur within or adjacent to the site they are considered below.
- 5.1.7. Levels of importance can be determined within a defined geographical context from the immediate site or locality through to the international level.
- 5.1.8. The legislative and planning policy context are also important considerations and have been given due regard throughout this assessment.

5.2. Habitat Evaluation

Designated Sites

- 5.2.1. **Statutory Designations.** There are no statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest within or adjacent to the site. The closest

⁷ Ratcliffe, D. A. (1977). *A Nature Conservation Review: the Selection of Study areas of Biological National Importance to Nature Conservation in Britain*. Two Volumes. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

such site is the Allerton (Eric Hardy) Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which is situated approximately 1.8km north-west of the site (see Plan ECO1). Located approximately 2.1km to the south-west of the site is the Mersey Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Site (see Plan ECO1).

- 5.2.2. The redevelopment of the site being isolated within existing built form is not considered likely to have any direct or indirect effects on the local statutory designated sites, either alone or in-combination with other projects or plans. Nonetheless it is recommended that standard engineering safeguards are adopted to minimise potential effects during demolition and construction.
- 5.2.3. **Non-statutory Designations.** There are no non-statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest within the site. The closest such site is the Sites on the Northern Airfield Local Wildlife Site (LWS), which is located approximately 0.4km west of the site (see Plan ECO1).
- 5.2.4. The site is separated from the LWS by existing built form and it is not considered likely that any direct or indirect effects would occur on the LWS from the proposed redevelopment. Adhering to best practice demolition and construction protocol will avoid any unlikely effects arising.

Habitats

- 5.2.5. Overall the habitats present are of low intrinsic ecological interest and their loss to the proposed redevelopment would be of no significance.
- 5.2.6. It is recommended that any new landscape planting associated with the proposals incorporate native species or species of known wildlife value.

5.3. Faunal Evaluation

Bats

- 5.3.1. All bats are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and included on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 ("the Habitats Regulations"). These include provisions making it an offence:
- deliberately to kill, injure or take (capture) bats;
 - deliberately to disturb bats in such a way as to:-
 - (i) be likely to impair their ability to survive, to breed or rear or nurture their young; or to hibernate or migrate; or
 - (ii) affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;
 - to damage or destroy any breeding or resting place used by bats;
 - intentionally or recklessly to obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter or protection (even if bats are not in residence).
- 5.3.2. The words deliberately and intentionally include actions where a court can infer that the defendant knew that the action taken would almost inevitably result in an offence, even if that was not the primary purpose of the act.

- 5.3.3. The offence of damaging (making worse for the bat) or destroying a breeding site or resting place is an absolute offence. Such actions do not have to be deliberate for an offence to be committed.
- 5.3.4. In accordance with the Habitats Regulations the licensing authority (Natural England) must apply the three derogation tests as part of the process of considering a licence application. These tests are that:
1. the activity to be licensed must be for imperative reasons of overriding public interest or for public health and safety;
 2. there must be no satisfactory alternative; and
 3. the favourable conservation status of the species concerned must be maintained.
- 5.3.5. Licences can usually only be granted if the development is in receipt of full planning permission.
- 5.3.6. The site is devoid of suitable roosting opportunities with the trees and buildings lacking suitable features and construction form to provide suitable roosting sites. A through surveys was completed any a licensed bat worker with no evidence of any roost found.
- 5.3.7. The site may provide some limited foraging opportunities for any locally present bat population but the loss of these foraging opportunities is unlikely to have any bearing on the favourable conservation status of any bat roost.
- 5.3.8. As an enhancement consideration could be mad to the provision of new roosting opportunities as part of the redevelopment of the site.

Birds

- 5.3.9. Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is concerned with the protection of wild birds, whilst Schedule 1 lists species that are protected by special penalties. All species of birds receive general protection whilst nesting.
- 5.3.10. It is likely that the trees, scrub within the site will offer nesting and / or foraging resources for a variety of common bird species, but there is no evidence to suggest that any notable species would be present on or close to the site.
- 5.3.11. It is recommended that a check survey for nesting bird species be undertaken prior to any removal of suitable nesting habitat (including the buildings), or that this be done outside of the nesting bird season (typically March to July inclusive). No further survey work is required for birds provided that vegetation is cleared outside of the nesting season.
- 5.3.12. It is recommended that the landscape strategy for the proposed development incorporate native species of local provenance and include shrubs and trees to provide suitable nesting and foraging habitat for birds.

- 5.3.13. As an enhancement consideration could be mad to the provision of new nesting opportunities as part of the redevelopment of the site.

6. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1. The site is situated in the City of Liverpool. The planning policy framework that relates to nature conservation at the site is issued at two main administrative levels: nationally through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and locally through the Liverpool Core Strategy Submission Draft. Any proposed development will be judged in relation to the policies contained within these documents.

6.2. National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.2.1. Guidance on national policy for biodiversity and geological conservation is provided by the NPPF, published in March 2012. It is noted that the NPPF continues to refer to further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system provided by Circular 06/05 (DEFRA / ODPM, 2005) accompanying the now-defunct Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9).
- 6.2.2. The key element of the NPPF is that there should be *“a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking”* (paragraph 14). It is important to note that this presumption *“does not apply where development requiring Appropriate Assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered, planned or determined”* (paragraph 119).
- 6.2.3. A number of policies in the NPPF are comparable to those in PPS9, including reference to minimisation of impacts to biodiversity and provision of net gains to biodiversity where possible (paragraph 109) and ensuring that Local Authorities place appropriate weight to statutory and non-statutory nature conservation designations, protected species and biodiversity.
- 6.2.4. The NPPF also considers the strategic approach that Local Authorities should adopt with regard to the protection, enhancement and management of green infrastructure, priority habitats and ecological networks, and the recovery of priority species.
- 6.2.5. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF comprises of a number of principles that Local Authorities should apply, including encouraging opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments; provision for refusal of planning applications if significant harm cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for; applying the protection given to European sites to potential SPAs, possible SACs, listed or proposed Ramsar sites and sites identified (or required) as compensatory measures for adverse effects on European sites; and the provision for the refusal for developments resulting in the loss or deterioration of ‘irreplaceable’ habitats - unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.
- 6.2.6. National policy therefore implicitly recognises the importance of biodiversity and that with sensitive planning and design, development and

conservation of the natural heritage can co-exist and benefits can, in certain circumstances, be obtained.

6.3. Local Policy

Liverpool Core Strategy Submission Draft 2012

- 6.3.1. Although this document remains in draft and is to be incorporated into an imminent draft Local Plan, a planning policy officer at Liverpool City Council has confirmed that it is the document against which planning applications will be judged.
- 6.3.2. The Core Strategy sets out the key planning policies that will determine how Liverpool develops over the next 15 years. *Strategic Objective Five: High Quality Infrastructure* contains a number of policies relevant to nature conservation and these are detailed below.
- 6.3.3. *Strategic Policy 26: Protecting and Enhancing Green Infrastructure*

Protection

- 1. Liverpool's green infrastructure resource will be protected from inappropriate development. Specifically, protection will be afforded to:
 - a) Sites that provide a high number of green infrastructure functions/benefits;
 - b) Strategically important open spaces, including Green Wedges and the Mersey Estuary SSSI/SPA/Ramsar Site;
 - c) The network of City, District, Neighbourhood and Local Parks;
 - d) Biodiversity assets, including Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR);
 - e) Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS);
 - f) Locally important open spaces and water courses, including amenity spaces, allotments, playing fields and pitches; and
 - g) Open spaces of historic value.
- 2. Development which is considered likely to cause material harm to a site will not be supported unless the benefits outweigh its loss. Where there is a loss of a green infrastructure asset, replacement provision may be required. In assessing material harm, account will be taken of:
 - a) Recreational function, visual amenity, biodiversity, historic and structural quality and value; and
 - b) The green infrastructure functions provided.

Enhancement

- 3. Green infrastructure will be managed and enhanced to support the regeneration of the City, strengthen its distinctive sense of place and provide a multi-functional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic and other quality of life benefits for local communities within the City by:
 - a) Requiring development proposals to make an appropriate contribution to the enhancement of the City's green infrastructure resource, either through on-site provision or a contribution to improving the function, quality and/or value of

a nearby open space or green infrastructure asset. This could include:

- i. The use of innovative green infrastructure measures such as green roofs in the design of the development;
 - ii. Integration and enhancement of biodiversity features;
 - iii. Contributing to effective water management through the use of permeable surfaces and/or Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and where possible and appropriate to do so the opening up of culverted watercourses;
 - iv. Improving or creating green routes to encourage active and sustainable travel and recreation;
 - v. Improving the recreational function of open spaces, particularly where it would assist in minimising recreational pressures on internationally-designated sites both within and beyond the City boundary;
 - vi. Providing or enhancing green infrastructure at key gateways to, and along, key corridors in the City; and
 - vii. Maintaining access to, and where required addressing deficiencies in, accessible open space.
- b) Requiring green infrastructure plans for all major development proposals to set out how the proposal will contribute to the objectives of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, including an assessment of the green infrastructure functions and benefits provided.
- c) Supporting innovative small-scale green infrastructure projects which meet identified needs of that area. This could include food growing, small community gardens or public art projects.

The City's green infrastructure assets will be identified, and the detailed criteria-based policy for protecting and enhancing green infrastructure, will be set out in a further development plan document.

6.3.4. Strategic Policy 27: Supporting Green Infrastructure Initiatives

The City Council will support and help deliver the aims and objectives of local and sub-regional green infrastructure initiatives and programmes that seek to enhance and create green infrastructure in Liverpool and which deliver a wide range of environmental, economic and quality of life benefits for local communities within the City, including:

- a) The Mersey Forest;
- b) Green Infrastructure Framework for the Liverpool City Region;
- c) North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan; and
- d) Liverpool City Region Ecological Framework.

6.3.5. Strategic Policy 30: Green Infrastructure in the Suburban Areas

1. In the Suburban Areas the emphasis will be on safeguarding green infrastructure and increasing opportunities to enhance its functionality. This will be achieved by protecting and enhancing:

- a) Biodiversity assets, specifically:

- i. **The Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar/SSSI;**
 - ii. **Local Wildlife Sites;**
 - iii. **Local Nature Reserves at Croxteth Country Park, Mill and Alder Wood, Childwall Woods and Fields, and Eric Hardy in Allerton;**
 - b) **The predominately open character and function of the Green Wedges at Otterspool and Calderstones/Woolton;**
 - c) **City Parks – Sefton, Calderstones, Croxteth Parks and Otterspool Park and Promenade; and the restored open land at the Garden Festival site which is also part of the Green Wedge; and**
 - d) **Locally important open space sites, particularly in the Regeneration Fringes.**
2. **A local change to the Green Belt boundary south of the existing operational airport, to facilitate expansion as set out in the Airport Masterplan in the latter part of the Core Strategy period, will be considered. The precise extent of this change, and detailed criteria to be met in its implementation, will be set out in a further development plan document.**

6.4. Discussion

- 6.4.1. The development proposals for the site would be judged against the policies summarised above. It is considered that the development site is of little ecological interest. Mitigation measures have been recommended to offset any minimal potential adverse impacts whilst seeking to provide net biodiversity gains. Taking these recommendations on board it is considered that the relevant policy requirements will be met.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1. Ecology Solutions was instructed by Quod in February 2016 to undertake an Ecological Assessment of the Former Rayware Site, Speke Boulevard, Liverpool.
- 7.2. The proposals for the site are for a hybrid application for comprehensive retail-led regeneration comprising: demolition of existing buildings and cessation of temporary airport car parking use; full planning application for erection of 1no. flagship retail unit (Class A1) for Home Bargains (Class A1 non-food retail use with 30% ancillary food and drink for consumption off the premises and ancillary customer café) with associated external garden centre, 1no. building for Class A1 non-food retail use, and 1no. leisure/café/restaurant unit for Class A3 or Class D2 uses along with access and servicing arrangements, car parking, landscaping and associated highway works; outline planning application for up to 9,000 square metres of employment uses (Classes B1(c), B2 and B8) including details of access with all other matters reserved.
- 7.3. The site was subject to an extended Phase 1 habitat survey in February 2016. A desk-based study was also undertaken to place the site within the local context.
- 7.4. **Statutory Sites.** There are no statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest within or adjacent to the site. The closest such site is the Allerton (Eric Hardy) Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which is situated approximately 1.8km north-west of the site. Located approximately 2.1km to the south-west of the site is the Mersey Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Site.
- 7.5. The redevelopment of the site is not considered likely to have any direct or indirect effects on the local statutory designated sites, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans. Nonetheless it is recommended that standard engineering safeguards are adopted to minimise potential effects during demolition and construction.
- 7.6. **Non-statutory Sites.** There are no non-statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest within the site. The closest such site is the Sites on the Northern Airfield Local Wildlife Site (LWS), which is located approximately 0.4km west of the site.
- 7.7. The site is separated from the LWS by existing built form and it is not considered likely that any direct or indirect effects would occur on the LWS from the proposed redevelopment. Adhering to best practice demolition and construction protocol will avoid any unlikely effects arising.
- 7.8. **Habitats.** Overall the habitats present are of low intrinsic ecological interest and their loss to the proposed redevelopment would be of no significance.
- 7.9. It is recommended that any new landscape planting associated with the proposals incorporate native species or species of known wildlife value.
- 7.10. **Protected Species.** The buildings and trees within the site lack suitable opportunities to support roosting bats. The results of the bat survey work undertaken found no use of the buildings for roosting purposes, and the

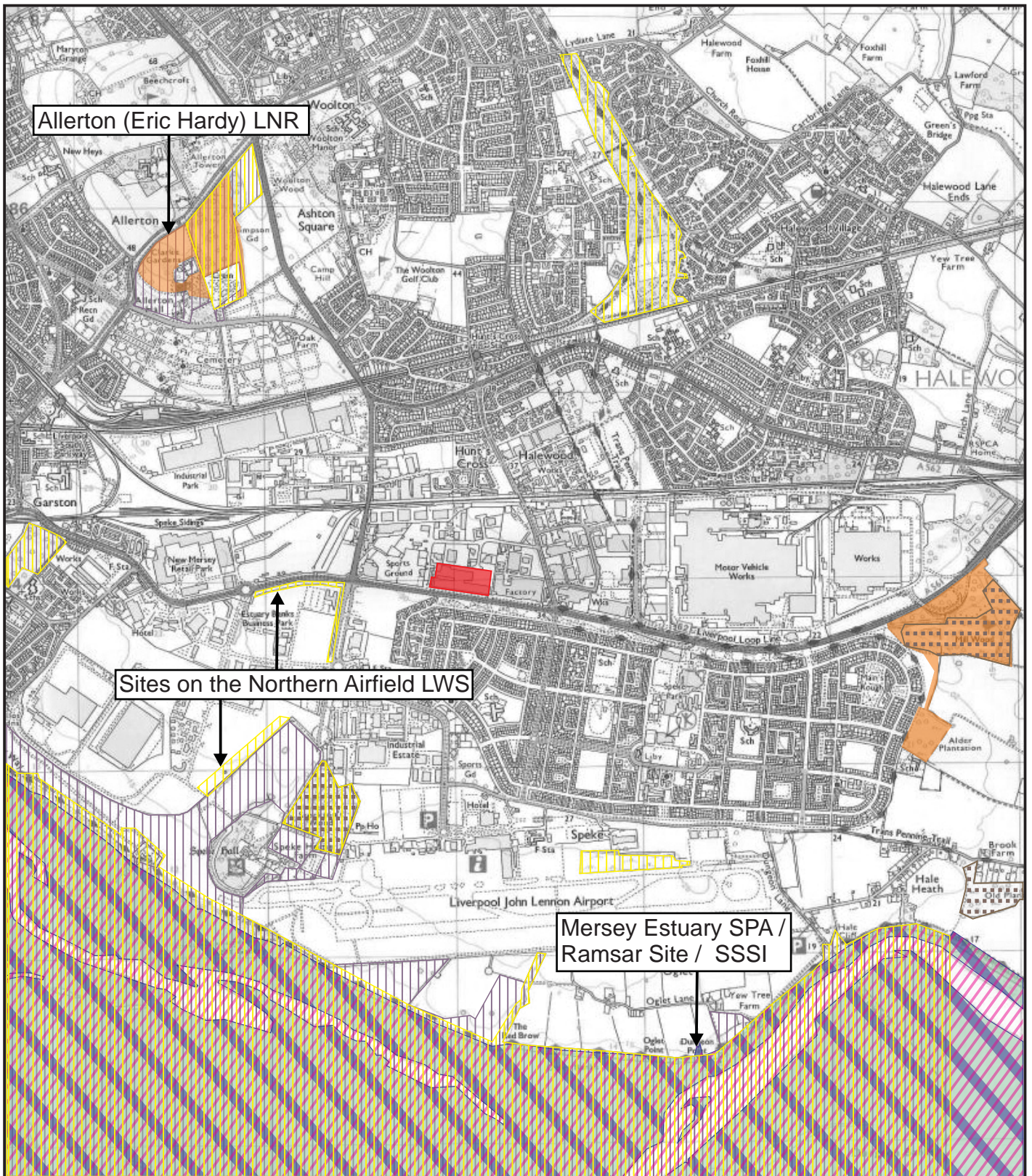
buildings on site are all of constructions, designs and fabrics not typically associated with roosting bats. The dilapidated nature of the buildings further reduces their viability to offer suitable roosting opportunities for bats.

- 7.11. There is no requirement for a Natural England European Protected Species licence on the results of the surveys completed. The development is not likely to have any significant effects on bat species. It is recommended that the landscape strategy for the proposed development incorporate native species of local provenance.
- 7.12. It is likely that the scrub and trees within the site will offer some limited nesting and / or foraging resources for a variety of common bird species, but there is no evidence to suggest that any notable species would be present on or close to the site. It is not considered that the proposed development would detrimentally affect the species noted as currently utilising the site.
- 7.13. It is recommended that a check survey for nesting bird species be undertaken prior to any clearance, or that this be done outside of the nesting bird season (typically March to July inclusive).
- 7.14. It is recommended that the landscape strategy for the proposed development incorporate native species of local provenance and include shrubs and trees to provide suitable nesting and foraging habitat for birds.
- 7.15. No evidence of the presence of other protected or notable species was noted on site during survey work undertaken or from the background data search information received.
- 7.16. In conclusion, there is no overriding ecological constraint to the redevelopment of the site and it is considered that the relevant policy requirements will be met. The proposals accord with planning policy with regard to nature conservation at all administrative levels.









PLANS

PLAN ECO1

Site Location and Ecological Designations



KEY:

-  SITE LOCATION
-  SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)
-  RAMSAR SITE
-  SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)
-  LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (LNR)
-  LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE (LWS)
-  PROPOSED LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE (pLWS)
-  ANCIENT AND SEMI-NATURAL WOODLAND



6981: FORMER RAYWARE SITE,
SPEKE BOULEVARD, LIVERPOOL

PLAN ECO1: SITE LOCATION AND
ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS

PLAN ECO2

Ecological Features



- KEY:**
- SITE BOUNDARY
 - ADDITIONAL SURVEY AREA
 - HARDSTANDING
 - BUILDING
 - SCRUB
 - SCATTERED SCRUB
 - AMENITY GRASSLAND
 - AMENITY PLANTING
 - TREE
 - PALISADE FENCING



6981: FORMER RAYWARE SITE,
SPEKE BOULEVARD, LIVERPOOL

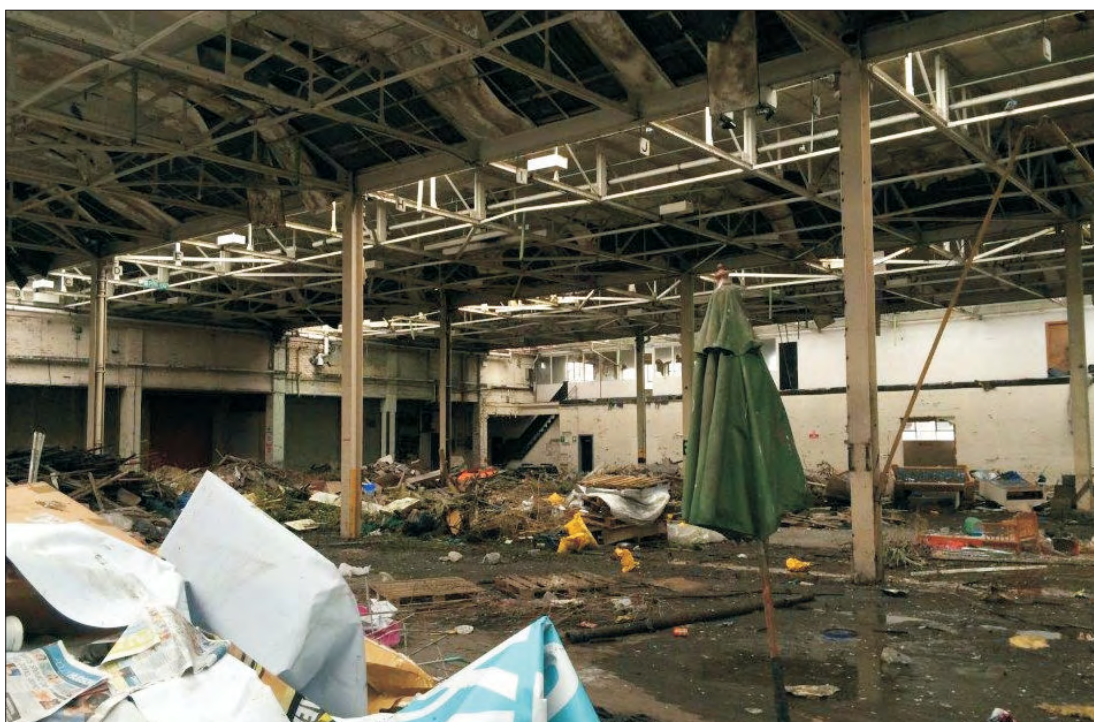
PLAN ECO2:
ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

PHOTOGRAPHS

PHOTOGRAPH 1: View of Building B1 (External)



PHOTOGRAPH 2: View of Building B2 (Internal)



PHOTOGRAPH 3: View of Building B3 (Internal)



PHOTOGRAPH 4: View of Building B6 (External)



PHOTOGRAPH 5: View of Area of Hardstanding



PHOTOGRAPH 6: View of Area of Scrub / Trees



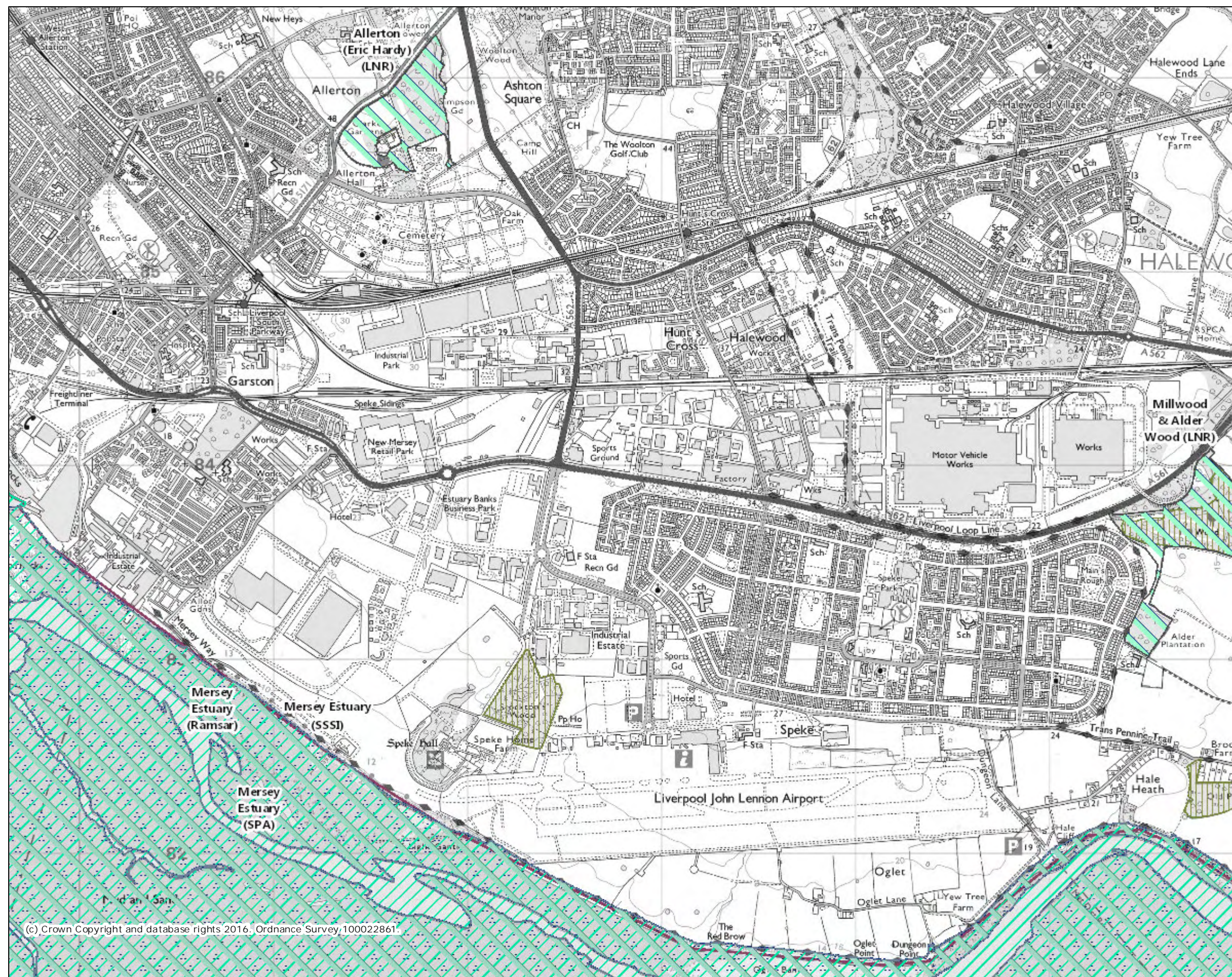
PHOTOGRAPH 7: View of Areas of Amenity Grassland & Amenity Planting











APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Information downloaded from Multi-Agency
Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)



Legend

-  Local Nature Reserves (England)
-  National Nature Reserves (England)
-  Ramsar Sites (England)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)
-  Special Areas of Conservation (England)
-  Special Protection Areas (England)
- Ancient Woodland (England)**
 -  Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland
 -  Ancient Replanted Woodland

Projection = OSGB36

xmin = 338200

ymin = 381600

xmax = 347400

ymax = 386100

Map produced by MAGIC on 19 February, 2016.

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e c o l o g y s o l u t i o n s f o r p l a n n e r s a n d d e v e l o p e r s