

6.3.12. Policy CS8 relates to green infrastructure and is concerned with enhancements to biodiversity and ecological networks, as well as protected species.

6.3.13. Policy CS21 relates to green infrastructure and trees and is concerned with protecting and enhancing woodland and trees.

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 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.

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7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1. Ecology Solutions was instructed by Quod on behalf of T.J. Morris in November 2015 to undertake an ecological assessment of the Carcraft and Home Bargains site, Liverpool.
- 7.2. The proposals for the site comprise the conversion of the existing Home Bargains training centre to offices and the redevelopment of the Carcraft site into a new training centre and retail units with associated infrastructure and service areas.
- 7.3. The site was subject to an extended Phase 1 habitat survey in December 2015. 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 within or directly adjacent to the site. The closest such site is Croxteth Local Nature Reserve (LNR), located approximately 0.9 km south of the site and comprising 50 ha of woodland, rough grassland and pasture with several ponds. Development of the site is not likely to have any significant direct or indirect effects on the LNR.
- 7.5. The closest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is Mersey Narrows SSSI, located approximately 8.2 km to the west of the site. The site is notified for its large areas of intertidal sand and mudflats, supporting internationally important populations of Turnstone and Redshank and nationally important populations of Cormorant. Development of the site is not likely to have any significant direct or indirect effects on the SSSI.
- 7.6. **Non-statutory Sites.** The closest non-statutory designated site is Croxteth Brook Local Wildlife Site (LWS) / Knowsley Brook proposed Local Wildlife Site (pLWS), which is located immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. It has been designated due to its breeding Water Voles.
- 7.7. Best practice pollution control and impact avoidance measures should be implemented with regard to Croxteth Brook / Knowsley Brook, following Environment Agency guidelines. These guidelines should be adhered to during both the construction and operation of the proposed development. Appropriate standard buffer distances from the watercourse should be enforced, with the boundary treatments designed to safeguard and enhance this wildlife corridor and species therein.
- 7.8. **Habitats.** Overall the habitats present are of low ecological interest and their loss to the proposed development would be of little significance. Any areas of grassland to be retained as part of the development proposals should be subject to management that maintains and increases their floristic diversity.
- 7.9. It is recommended that any new landscape planting associated with the proposals incorporate native species or species of known wildlife value. The management of pond P1 to enhance its attractiveness to wildlife would also constitute an enhancement in biodiversity terms.
- 7.10. **Protected Species.** The 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. Pond P1 and the habitats adjacent to Croxteth Brook / Knowsley Brook provide some habitat opportunities for foraging and commuting 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. An eight-metre-wide maintenance zone along Croxteth Brook / Knowsley Brook, required by the Environment Agency, will help to ensure habitat continuity for foraging bats.
- 7.12. No evidence of the presence of Badger was observed during survey work undertaken. The development is not likely to have any significant effects on Badgers.
- 7.13. The adjacent watercourse is subject to a designation due to the presence of Water Voles, albeit no evidence of Water Vole presence immediately adjacent the site has been identified during surveys carried out to date by Ecology Solutions. It is considered that further targeted surveys in respect of this species could be avoided if appropriate safeguards of the suitable habitats identified can be secured such that these habitat opportunities remain unaltered as part of the development proposals.
- 7.14. It is likely that the trees, scrub, semi-improved grassland and pond within the site will offer good 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.
- 7.15. 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).
- 7.16. 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.
- 7.17. The rough semi-improved grassland habitat in the vicinity of the off-site watercourse is of superficial suitability for common reptiles. It is therefore recommended that targeted surveys for this group are completed prior to any clearance work of suitable habitats.
- 7.18. Pond P1 offers limited suitability for breeding Great Crested Newts. Given the paucity of aquatic habitats for Great Crested Newts and the lack of local records, no targeted surveys are recommended. Attention should be paid to the potential presence of Great Crested Newts under any refugia checked as part of targeted reptile surveys. Rough semi-improved grassland within the site provides dispersal opportunities for amphibians, and the retention and favourable management of these areas under the development proposals would maintain and potentially enhance these opportunities. As a further enhancement, hibernacula or log piles could be established in undisturbed areas of the site in the vicinity of the adjacent watercourse.

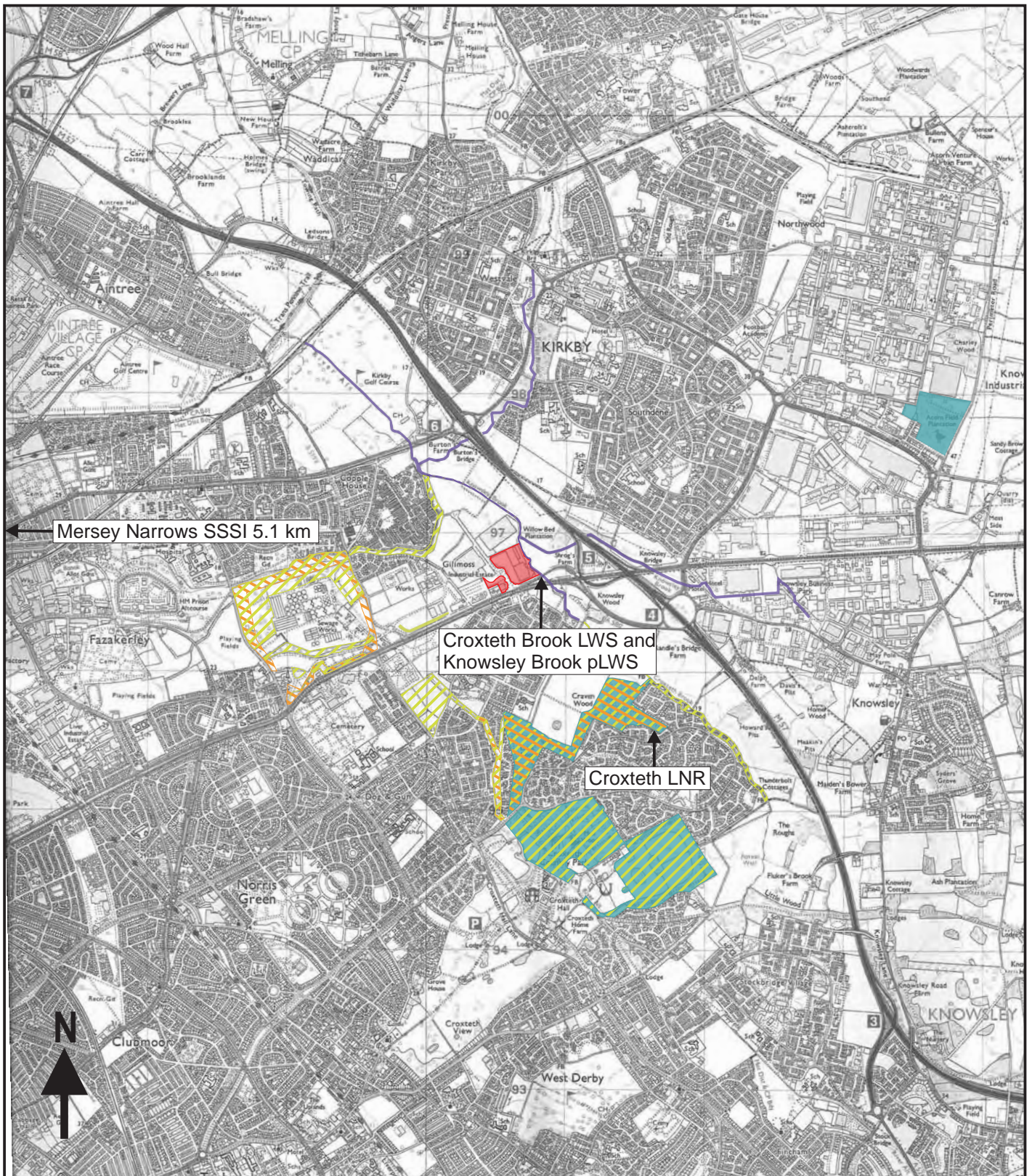
- 7.19. No evidence of the presence of other protected or notable species was noted on site during survey work undertaken or from the background data search information received.
- 7.20. In conclusion, there is no overriding ecological constraint to the redevelopment of the site and it is considered that the relevant policy requirements will be met. The proposals accord with planning policy with regard to nature conservation at all administrative levels.

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PLANS

PLAN ECO1

Site Location and Ecological Designations



KEY:

- SITE LOCATION
- LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (LNR)
- KNOWSLEY LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE (LWS)
- LIVERPOOL LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE (LWS)
- LIVERPOOL PROPOSED LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE (pLWS)



6933: CARCRAFT AND
HOME BARGAINS SITE, LIVERPOOL

PLAN ECO1: SITE LOCATION
AND ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS

PLAN ECO2
Ecological Features



- KEY:**
- SITE BOUNDARY
 - SEMI-IMPROVED GRASSLAND
 - AMENITY GRASSLAND
 - SCRUB
 - AMENITY PLANTING
 - POND
 - HEDGE
 - TREE
 - BUILDING
 - LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE (LWS)
 - PROPOSED LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE (pLWS)



6933: CARCRAFT AND HOME BARGAINS SITE, LIVERPOOL

PLAN ECO2:
ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

PHOTOGRAPHS