



Wild Service

Site Name	Reeves Field
Prepared by	Olatz Gartzia
Date	25/10/2017

Site description

The Site is located in the centre of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. It is an approximately 4.6ha open playing field and the central grid reference for is SO 95553 21143.

The Site is positioned on the centre of the town, surrounded by an urban landscape, with several open greenspaces and an extensive garden network within 2km radius.

Methodology

An extended Phase 1 habitat survey of the Site was undertaken on 24 October 2017 following standard methods¹. Phase 1 habitat survey provides a rapid means of classifying broad habitat types in any given terrestrial Site.

The survey was 'extended' by considering the suitability of the Site to support notable or protected flora or fauna. Detailed surveys were not completed for these species; however, based on an understanding of species ecology, consideration was given to the Study Area's potential to provide sheltering or foraging habitat and/or connectivity to allow dispersal between populations.

The Study Area was also inspected for signs of any invasive plant species subject to legal controls e.g. Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) or Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*).

¹ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). 2010. *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey: A technique for environmental audit*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Results

Habitat descriptions are set out below. While considering this information, reference should be made to the Phase 1 habitat map presented in **Figure 1** and the target notes in **Table 1**. The habitats identified on Site included amenity grassland, lines of trees a small patch of tall ruderal vegetation and a building.

Table 1: Target Notes.

Target Note	Description
1	The Site was enclosed by a line of trees that could provide habitat for nesting birds and foraging and commuting habitat for bats.
2	The building on Site provides potential to support roosting bats.

Amenity grassland

The Site was a large, well-maintained rugby training field and as such, the majority was composed of a well mowed amenity grassland (**Photo 1**). This habitat was dominated by perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), but had areas where yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), common field-speedwell (*Veronica persica*) and dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.).



Photo 1: An example of amenity grassland within the Site.

Line of trees

The Site was enclosed by a line of trees (**Target Note 1; Photo 2**). The tree line was composed of small-leaved elm (*Ulmus minor*), horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), cherry (*Prunus avium*), English oak (*Quercus robur*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). On the northern end, the tree layer was thicker and the understory was less managed than the remaining of the Site. Species composition here was composed of bushes and tall ruderal herbs including hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), dog rose (*Rosa canina*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*).



Photo 2: The line of trees surrounding the Site.

Tall ruderal vegetation

There was a small area of tall ruderal vegetation on the north-western end of the Site (**Photo 3**). This habitat had abundant nettle with occasional hedge bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*). Spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) was also present but rare.



Photo 3: Tall ruderal vegetation.

Building

There was a small, modern, single storey brick building on the south-western end of the Site (**Target Note 2; Photo 4**). The building had a pitched roof clad with concrete tiles. There were several small gaps between tiles and mortar that could provide opportunities for crevice dwelling bats.



Photo 4: Building with some potential roost features for bats.

Evaluation and Discussion

No protected species were recorded during the survey, although the habitats present provided opportunities for protected species.

Bats

The building on Site had some gaps between the tiles and the mortar which provide roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats. No potential roosting features were recorded on the trees on Site. The line of trees provided foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

Reptiles

The majority of the Site was composed of well-mown amenity grassland and therefore was unsuitable for reptiles. There was a small area of tall ruderal vegetation on the northern end of the Site that could provide habitat for common reptile species, however, this area was too small to sustain a population.

Badger

The Site is suitable for badger foraging. No well-worn badger paths, push-throughs or trapped hairs were found along the fence surrounding the Site.

Breeding birds

The line of trees on Site provided suitable habitat for breeding birds.

Hedgehog

The lines of trees and tall ruderal vegetation on the northern end of the Site may provide suitable habitat for hedgehog. The dense patch of ruderal had piles of logs and rubble which may support hibernation sites.

Further Surveys

Due to the potential for protected species to be present on site, the following surveys may be recommended prior to the commencement of works;

- Bats – a detailed building inspection and any required emergence/re-entry survey if the building is scheduled to be removed and bat activity surveys prior to the removal of the lines of trees;
- Birds – no specific survey is recommended, but vegetation scheduled for removal between March and August must be checked for evidence of breeding birds.



Wild Service



Legend

- ① Target note
- Site boundary
- Tree line
- A Amenity grassland
- Buildings
- ▨ Tall ruderal vegetation

Phase 1 Habitats Map

Reeves field

Date: 24 October 2017

Scale: 1:2,750

Drawn by: OG

Drawing: Figure 1

