

Midland Metro

G3

Phase 1 Survey and Target Notes

Table G3.1 below describes the Phase 1 habitat survey target notes, which accompany Figures G3.1 to G3.7 in Volume 2 of this ES.

Table G3.1 Phase 1 Habitat Survey Target Notes to accompany Figures G3.1-G3.7, ERM, August 2001

| Target Note Number | Grid Reference | Habitat Type | Description |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------|---|
| 1 | | | <p>Rough neutral grassland dominated by <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> (false oat-grass) with scattered scrub and regenerating young trees (standing at 1-2m tall), including <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (sycamore), <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch), <i>Buddleja davidii</i> (butterfly bush), <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow) and <i>Sambucus nigra</i> (elder) that has established over most of the track bed. Towards the edges of the track there is a tall ruderal/scrub community dominated by <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg (bramble), <i>Chamerion angustifolium</i> (rosebay willowherb), <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> (cow parsley) and occasional patches of <i>Fallopia japonica</i> (Japanese knotweed). Semi-mature and mature trees (approximately 3m tall) line the track along most of this section and include <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch), <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow), <i>Sambucus nigra</i> (elder), <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (sycamore) and a row of <i>Populus sp</i> (poplar) at the northern end of the route near to the existing Great Wednesbury Metro stop.</p> <p>A row of mature <i>Populus sp</i> (poplar) trees to the south east of the track, the Smith Road underbridge and the River Tame (Wildlife Corridor) underbridge are all suitable bat roosts. Trees and scrub on and adjacent to the railway casement east of the River Tame crossing is suitable foraging area for bats. 21 bird species were recorded in this stretch of the route from the existing line at Wednesbury to the Tame Valley Canal (LNR/Wildlife Corridor) crossing, including moorhen, coot, grey wagtail, blackcap, willow warbler, long-tailed tit and two Red list species, song thrush and reed bunting.</p> |
| 2 | | | <p>The banks of the River Tame (Wildlife Corridor) are lined with <i>Salix</i> spp (willows) and heavily vegetated in this section with tall ruderal vegetation on both sides of the river to 1.5m tall, dominated by <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> (cow parsley). Extensive areas of <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> (Indian balsam) occur along this stretch of the river.</p> |
| 3 | | | <p>Ocker Hill Balancing Pond Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) is below the track way and separated by an embankment approximately 4m high and 3m wide. The embankment is covered in coarse grassland (dominated by <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> (false oat-grass)) and tall herb/scrub species, including <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg (bramble), <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> (cow parsley) and <i>Urtica dioica</i> (nettle). The pond is surrounded by <i>Salix</i> spp (willows) approximately 2m tall and there is abundant <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> (great willowherb) around the fringes.</p> <p>Beyond the pond is Leabrook Waste Repository Site, an open area of semi-improved grassland with scattered scrub (mainly <i>Salix</i> spp (willows)) and patches of <i>Juncus</i> spp (rushes). The land grades up to a hill covered in semi-improved grassland with dense <i>Ulex europaeus</i> (gorse), <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> (broom) and <i>Salix</i> spp (willows) scrub.</p> <p>Canada goose, mute swan, moorhen and coot were recorded on the pond. The site is suitable for birds and small mammals. Grey wagtail & reed bunting were recorded in the area surrounding the ponds. This area is suitable foraging area for bats, with a combination of open water, grassland and scrub. Badger droppings were recorded from the grassland at the Leabrook site and close to the ponds. The ponds are used for angling.</p> |
| 4 | | | <p>Tame Valley Canal (LNR/Wildlife Corridor) has little marginal aquatic vegetation, though some lines the north eastern bank. The grassland that is present on both of the canal banks is mown right up to the edge of the water. There is a row of <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch) on the north eastern bank.</p> |
| 5 | | | <p>A broadleaved woodland strip runs along the north eastern edge of the railway line. The main tree species present are <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (sycamore), <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch) and <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow). The trees are approximately 3m tall and the belt stretches approximately 4m across between Eagle Lane Industrial Estate (south of the Tame Valley Canal) and Black Country New Road overbridge. The trees in this strip are more mature than most along the route and provide a linear woodland habitat.</p> <p>There is little in the way of vegetation on the track bed in this stretch, restricted intermittent <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> (false oat-grass) dominated grassland. To the south west of the track is a coarse neutral grassland community with a limited diversity of herb species. Those present include <i>Silene vulgaris</i> (bladder campion), <i>Convolvulus arvensis</i> (field bindweed) and <i>Verbena officinalis</i> (vervain). Scattered scrub, mainly <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow) and <i>Sambucus nigra</i> (elder) lines the south western edge of the track. The River Tame runs parallel to this stretch of the route, lined with coarse grassland / tall ruderal communities comprising common species found abundantly along the route.</p> <p>An adult water vole was recorded on the River Tame in this area, a few metres from the railway embankment.</p> |
| 6 | | | <p>An area of new <i>Salix</i> spp (willow) planting between Black Country New Road and Walsall Canal, within a semi-improved neutral grassland.</p> |
| 7 | | | <p>This section of the track is more densely vegetated than most other areas, with trees lining both sides. The dominant tree species is <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch), approximately 5m tall on the south western edge and 3m tall on the north eastern edge. There is also scattered scrub adjacent to the trees and encroaching on to the track bed, mainly <i>Buddleja davidii</i> (butterfly bush) standing at between 2 and 3m tall, with</p> |

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| | | some <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow). |
| 8 | | <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch) and <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow) dominated broadleaved woodland strip. <i>Buddleja davidii</i> (butterfly bush) is scattered on the track bed and the south western edge of the track supports a rough grassland / tall ruderal community. |
| 9 | | <i>Fallopia japonica</i> (Japanese knotweed) shrub growing in a tall ruderal area immediately north west of the Horseley Road overbridge. |
| 10 | | <i>Fallopia japonica</i> (Japanese knotweed). |
| 11 | | A number of sunken concrete structures containing water occur along this stretch of the route between Church lane and Park Lane East and young common frogs and tadpole were recorded in these. |
| 12 | | Birmingham Canal (Wildlife Corridor) near Park Lane East. Scattered trees (dominated by <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch)) have established on the north eastern bank of the canal and on the north west side of the railway easement, where this is mainly <i>Salix</i> spp (willows). Scattered trees and scrub line the south eastern bank, dominated again by <i>Salix</i> spp (willows) and <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch), with some <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (sycamore) regeneration. A peacock butterfly was recorded flying in this area. |
| 13 | | Birmingham Canal (Wildlife Corridor) near Coneycgre Leisure Centre playing fields. Very slow moving canal approximately 6m wide. Aquatic vegetation includes <i>Nuphar lutea</i> (yellow water lily) and <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> (yellow iris). Concrete banks mean that there is little in the way of marginal vegetation, there is a neutral grassland strip between the towpath and the canal on the north eastern side of the canal and tall ruderal communities along the south western edge. Broadleaved woodland occurs to the north of the towpath abutting the railway embankment. Dominant species include <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (sycamore), <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (ash), <i>Quercus robur</i> (pedunculate oak), <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow) and <i>Sambucus nigra</i> (elder), with some <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (hawthorn). The understorey is dominated with <i>Urtica dioica</i> (nettle), with <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> (cow parsley) and coarse grassland dominated by <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> (cock's foot) with some <i>Hordeum secalium</i> (wall barley). Mature trees line the south eastern edge <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch) where there is a neutral grassland community. There were sixteen bird species recorded from this area including green woodpecker and skylark, with moorhen on the canal. |
| 14 | | There was no access to this stretch of the route. From either end of this section, it looked to have a vegetation composition similar to that along most of the route with scattered scrub and regenerating trees. |
| 15 | | Land adjacent to Dudley Guest Hospital (SLINC). An area of tall ruderal and coarse grassland with scattered trees and scrub. Comprised of common species found elsewhere along the route, but provides a more open area of habitat for birds and other animals in a predominantly urban area. |
| 16 | | Broadleaved woodland on the south side of the track, between Birmingham New Road and Tipton Road. This is a well-established woodland strip with a mix of broadleaved species including <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch), <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow), <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (sycamore), <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (ash), with <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (hawthorn), <i>Buddleja davidii</i> (butterfly bush) and <i>Sambucus nigra</i> (elder) scrub. The woodland is encroaching on to the track bed, where tall ruderal and grassland communities have established, of a similar mix of species as in other stretches of the route, particularly <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg (bramble), <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> (cow parsley), <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> (hoary willowherb) and <i>Arrhenathrum elatius</i> (false oat-grass) dominated grassland. |
| 17 | | Track between Tipton Road and the former Dudley freightliner depot. A grassland community has established on the track here, of interest for the orchid species it supports, both <i>Dactylorhiza praetermissa</i> (southern marsh orchid) with a few <i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i> (heath spotted orchids) were recorded. Other grassland species include <i>Holcus lanatus</i> (Yorkshire fog), <i>Festuca</i> sp (fescue) and <i>Arrhenathrum elatius</i> (false oat-grass) and herbs including <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> (oxeye daisy), <i>Trifolium pratense</i> (red clover), <i>Tussilago farfara</i> (colt's foot). There is some regenerating <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (sycamore) and <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch) with <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> (bramble). |
| 18 | | The former Dudley freightliner depot. An area of waste ground that has developed a weedy vegetation on the rubble and thin soils. The species present are common species, typical of these areas and include <i>Euphrasia nemorosa</i> (common eyebright), <i>Digitalis purpurea</i> (foxglove), <i>Cirsium</i> spp (thistles) and <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> (hoary willowherb). The area is surrounded by mature trees mainly <i>Betula pendula</i> (silver birch) and <i>Salix</i> spp (willows) that are regenerating on the waste ground. |
| 19 | | Dudley Canal passes through Parkhead viaduct at Parkhead Locks (SLINC/WCA). There is a parkland area to the north west below the rail route, with open amenity grassland that stretches down to the edges of the concrete sided canal. There are also areas of developing |

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| | | | <p>broadleaved woodland and scrub lining the canal and bordering the amenity grassland, with a substantial tract of mature woodland adjacent to the railway embankment and towards the housing on Kent Place. The casement is scrubby in this section, with mainly <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow) and <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (hawthorn).</p> <p>20 bird species were recorded in this area, including moorhen, Canada goose, whitethroat, blackcap, goldfinch, song thrush and bullfinch. The canal and adjacent habitats are suitable for bat foraging habitat and the Parkhead viaduct is suitable as a roost site for bats.</p> |
| 20 | | | <i>Fallopia japonica</i> (Japanese knotweed). |
| 21 | | | Pensnett (SLINC/WCA) canal area. The trackway here is lined with <i>Salix caprea</i> agg (goat willow) and tall ruderal/scrubby vegetation dominated by <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> (bramble). <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> (oxeye daisy), <i>Papaver rhoeas</i> (poppy) and <i>Lupinus polyphyllus</i> (garden lupin) also occur in this area. |
| 22 | | | Mature, broadleaved woodland at Brierley Hill, dominated by <i>Quercus robur</i> (oak), <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> (alder), birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>), <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (hawthorn) and <i>Acer</i> sp (maple). The understorey comprises mainly <i>Urtica dioica</i> (nettle), <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> (bramble) and <i>Galium aparine</i> (cleavers). The woodland is around the north western edge of an amenity grassland area and abuts a Buddhist Temple. |

(1) A standardised system developed by the former Nature Conservancy Council to allow identification of areas of habitat of nature conservation interest relatively rapidly over a wide area.

(2) Joint Nature Conservation Committee (1993) *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey - A Technique for Environmental Audit* Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

(3) Institute of Environmental Assessment (1995) *Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment* Spon, London.

(4) In Phase 1 Habitat Survey Methodology, notes relating to specific locations on the Phase 1 map are by convention called Target Notes.

(5) Strachan R (1998) *Water Vole Conservation Handbook*, English Nature, Environment Agency & Wildlife Conservation Research Unit.

(6) Ward D, Holmes N & Jose P, (1994) *The New Rivers & Wildlife Handbook*, RSPB, The National Rivers Authority, The Wildlife Trusts.

(7) Harris S, Cresswell P & Jefferies D (1989), *Surveying Badgers*, The Mammal Society, London.

(8) Gent T & Gibson S (1998) *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual*. JNCC, Peterborough.

(1) The criteria used by the World Conservation Union (formerly the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) for assigning species to Red Data categories are widely used for the assessment of rare species in general; full details are given in The World Conservation Union (1994). Besides rarity, other important considerations relate to key species in ecological communities, economically important species, species that are perceived to be exceptionally attractive, and species having special cultural significance.

(2) Vascular plants occurring in sixteen to one hundred 10 kilometre grid squares (Stewart, Pearman & Preston (1994), NCC (1989)).

(1) The interaction between the structure and distribution of landscape elements and ecology.