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THE GEORGE HOTEL
ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

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THE GEORGE HOTEL
ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

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SUMMARY

Ramboll UK Limited ('Ramboll') was commissioned by Bowman Riley Architects Ltd (the 'client') to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of the George Hotel, St George's Square, Huddersfield, HD1 1JA (the 'site') in advance of a façade retention scheme at the site (the 'proposed development'). The site is located at Ordnance Survey grid reference SE 14411 16931, within the administrative boundary of Kirklees Council.

A desk study, UKHab survey and a daytime assessment of buildings/structures for bats were completed to assess the likely effects of the proposed development on the ecological features of the site and in the study area, including designated sites. In addition, a BNG assessment was undertaken to calculate the biodiversity change for the site as a result of the proposed development in terms of net loss, no net loss or a net gain.

The site is predominantly an existing hotel building, surrounded by hardstanding and with a small area of vegetation (introduced shrub) present, growing from a roof in the northern-most corner of the site.

No impacts on statutory or non-statutory designations within 2 km of the site are anticipated.

The site contains habitats and species of ecological importance up to the Site level, due to the presence of a small area of introduced shrub, which provides a degree of habitat suitability for invertebrates and potentially for nesting/foraging birds, and opportunity for nesting birds within the hotel building. Roosting bats are unlikely to be present within the building, nor does the site provide potential for foraging/commuting bats.

Proposed mitigation and enhancement measures for these habitats and species are described which include, but are not limited to, provision of on extensive green roof on the building, provision of bird boxes and avoidance of nesting birds.

No significant negative residual effects on identified ecological features are anticipated. It is anticipated that there would be a positive residual effect significant at the Site level in respect of habitats and invertebrates on account of the creation of new habitat on the site (an extensive green roof).

The BNG assessment has demonstrated that it is possible to deliver a net gain of 15.80% for area-based habitats, via the compensatory actions outlined within this report, which exceeds the 10% net gain mandated by Kirklees Council.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

1.0.1 Ramboll UK Limited ('Ramboll') was commissioned by Bowman Riley Architects Ltd to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of land at the George Hotel, St George's Square, Huddersfield, HD1 1JA (the 'site') in advance of a façade retention scheme at the site (the 'proposed development'). The site is located at Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference SE 14411 16931, within the administrative boundary of Kirklees Council as shown in Figure 1: Site Location (Appendix 1).

1.1 Objectives

1.1.1 The aim of this report is to provide an EcIA in relation to the site and the zone of influence (ZOI) of the proposed development (CIEEM, 2019[1]). The EcIA comprises a description of the existing on-site ecological conditions, as well as the ecological context of the site and its ZOI; an appraisal of the site's ecological importance; and an assessment of likely impacts in relation to the proposed development and is associated activities, taking into account the mitigation and enhancement measures incorporated into the proposed development.

1.1.2 In addition, this report provides the results of the BNG assessment in relation to the proposed development.

1.1.3 The structure and content of the report is based on current ecological report writing guidance for EcIA (CIEEM, 2017[2] and BSI Standards Institution, 2013[3]) and BNG good practice[4,5].

1.1.4 The content of this report is based on the findings of:

- a desk study;
- a UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey;
- a daytime inspection of buildings for suitability for bats; and
- a BNG assessment.

1.1.5 The objectives of these surveys and report are to:

- identify designated nature conservation sites located either within the site or the ZOI of the proposed development;
- assess the potential for the site and the ZOI of the proposed development to support populations of protected species or species of nature conservation importance[6];

[1] Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), 2019. Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal and Marine. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, London

[2] CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

[3] BSI Standards Institution, 2013. BS 42020:2013. Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development. BSI Standards Limited, London.

[4] CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2016. Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development. Accessed from: https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Biodiversity-Net-Gain-Principles.pdf

[5] CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2019. Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development. A practical guide. Accessed from: https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/C776a-Biodiversity-net-gain.-Good-practice-principles-for-development.-A-practical-guide-web.pdf

[6] The following species are considered to be of nature conservation importance i) listed as a national priority for conservation (such as those listed as habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006; ii) listed as a local priority for conservation, for example in the relevant local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP); iii) assessed as a threatened or near-threatened species according to International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list criteria; iv)

- record the main habitats and features of ecological interest on the site;
- assess the ecological importance of the site;
- describe the proposed mitigation measures;
- assess the potential impacts and likely residual effects of the proposed development;
- calculate the biodiversity change for the site as a result of the proposed development in terms of net loss, no net loss or a net gain; and
- include recommendations to assist the proposed development to minimise biodiversity impacts and maximise biodiversity outputs.

1.1.6 The report is supported by the following appendices:

- Appendix 1: Figures;
- Appendix 2: Legislation and Policy Context;
- Appendix 3: Site Photographs; and
- Appendix 4: Email Correspondence Relating to Provision of Green Roof.

1.2 Site Location and Description

1.2.1 The site is bound to:

- the north/east by John William Street;
- the south by St George's Square; and
- the north/west by Huddersfield Train Station.

1.2.2 The site's surrounding context is of a mixture of retail, transport and commercial uses to the north; retail, commercial and office space to the east and south; and transport to the west.

1.2.3 The site comprises the entirety of the George Hotel and its associated land and covers a total area of approximately 0.11 hectares (ha).

1.3 Proposed Development

1.3.1 The George Hotel is a Grade II listed building in Huddersfield which has been disused for around 12 years and is understood to be in very poor condition internally (largely derelict). The George Hotel is to undergo a façade retention scheme whereby the southern and eastern elevations will be retained, and a new 90 bed hotel will be constructed behind.

1.4 Legislation and Policy Framework

1.4.1 Various legislation and planning policies refer to the protection of wildlife. These are summarised in Appendix 2 but should not be regarded as a definitive legal opinion. When dealing with individual cases, the full texts of the relevant documents should be consulted and legal advice obtained if necessary.

Red or Amber Listed species in national Species of Conservation Concern assessments; v) listed as a Nationally Rare or Nationally Scarce species (e.g. in one of the Species Status Project reviews) or a Nationally Notable species where a more recent assessment of the taxonomic group has not yet been undertaken; and/or vi) endemic to a country or geographic location (including endemic sub-species, phenotypes, or cultural behaviours of a population that are unique to a particular place)

1.5 Legal

1.5.1 This report has been prepared by Ramboll exclusively for the intended use by the client in accordance with the agreement (proposal ref: Q1620014217-002_2, dated 16 November 2022) between Ramboll and the client defining, among others, the purpose, the scope and the terms and conditions for the services. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or in respect of any matters outside the agreed scope of the services or the purpose for which the report and the associated agreed scope were intended or any other services provided by Ramboll.

1.5.2 Ramboll's services are not intended as legal advice, nor an exhaustive review of site conditions and/or compliance. This report and accompanying documents are initial and intended solely for the use and benefit of the client for this purpose only and may not be used by or disclosed to, in whole or in part, any other person without the express written consent of Ramboll. Ramboll neither owes nor accepts any duty to any third party, unless formally agreed by Ramboll through that party entering into, at Ramboll's sole discretion, a written reliance agreement.

1.5.3 Unless otherwise stated in this report, the scope of services, assessment and conclusions made assume that the site will continue to be used for its current purpose and end-use without significant changes either on-site or off-site.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 The purpose of the desk study was to collect existing baseline data about the site and the ZOI, such as the location of designated sites or other natural features of potential ecological importance. The following ZOI has been considered:

- all statutory designated sites up to 2 km from the site, including Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), National Nature Reserves (NNR), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR);
- non-statutory designated sites: Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) up to 2 km from the site;
- records of protected species up to 2 km from the site;
- international and national statutory designated sites with bats as a qualifying feature for designation, up to 10 km from the site;
- irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and ancient/veteran trees within the site boundary; and
- ponds/waterbodies within a 250 m radius of the site.

2.1.2 West Yorkshire Ecology Service (WYES) was contacted to provide details of designated sites and protected species within 2 km of the site. Due to data ownership restrictions in the reproduction of the WYES report (report ref: 20221121 K1049 LM, dated 22 November 2022), it is not appended to this document, but the information provided is summarised in the relevant sections. In addition, the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website[7] was searched for supplementary information on statutory sites. This included a search for European Protected Species licences issued within 2 km of the site. Supplementary information on the site and its surroundings were obtained from aerial images available from Google™ Earth.

2.2 UK Habitat Classification Survey / Baseline Biodiversity Assessment

2.2.1 A UKHab survey of the site was undertaken by Adam Levesley MRes on 14 October 2022. Adam has a BSc in Marine Biology and an MRes in Ecology and the Environment, and has worked professionally as a consultant ecologist since 2019. The weather during the survey period was mild (approximately 14°C) with sunny spells and little wind.

2.2.2 The survey involved a site walkover and preliminary assessment of key habitats, land use and ecological features. The main habitats present were recorded using standard UKHab methodology described in the UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 1.1[8] and identified the habitats present via the prescribed UKHab Field Key Version 2.1[9].

2.2.3 In addition to general habitat classification, a list was compiled of observed plant species (using the nomenclature of Stace, 2019[10], with common and Latin names referred to in the first instance after which only the common names are used).

[7] www.magic.gov.uk, accessed 24 November 2022
[8] Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. 2020. The UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 1.1 at http://www.ukhab.org/
[9] UK Hab 2020. UK Hab Field Key Version 2.1 at http://www.ukhab.org/
[10] Stace, C. 2019. New Flora of the British Isles 4th Edition. Cambridge University Press.

2.2.4 The site was assessed for its potential to support protected and notable species such as breeding birds and bats, and was inspected for signs of any invasive plant species subject to legal controls. This was in order to identify potential ecological constraints and to guide recommendations for further survey requirements for these species.

2.3 Daytime Building Inspection for Bats

2.3.1 A daytime inspection of the building to assess its suitability for bats was completed on 14 October 2022 during the site walkover by Adam Levesley. The exterior elevations and (where accessible) internal voids and attic spaces of the site's building was visually inspected for field evidence of roosting bats including droppings, urine staining, feeding remains and potential roosting points. In accordance with the guidance outlined in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition (Collins, 2016[11]) the building was assessed for its potential to support bats. The following building types and features are considered to be of particular suitability to support roosting bats:

- Buildings of pre-20th or early 20th century construction;
- Agricultural buildings of brick, stone or timber construction;
- Large and complicated roof void(s) with unobstructed flying spaces;
- Large (>20 cm) roof timbers with mortise joints, cracks and holes;
- Entrances into buildings for bats to fly through;
- Poorly maintained buildings such that they provide access points for bats into roofs, walls, bridges, but at the same time not being too cool and draughty;
- Roof warmed by the sun e.g. south facing;
- Weatherboarding and/or hanging tiles with gaps;
- Undisturbed building roofs and structures;
- Buildings and built structures in proximity to each other providing a variety of roosting opportunities throughout the year; and
- Buildings and built structures close to good foraging habitat e.g. mature trees, parkland, woodland or wetland.

2.3.2 The building was classified into a category dependent on the presence of features suitable to support bat roosts. The categories assigned were: Confirmed Roost, High, Moderate, Low and Negligible Potential for use by bats. Table 2.1 provides criteria for each of these categories.

Table 2.1: Building Bat Roost Potential Categories

Roost Potential	Description
Confirmed	A building that is confirmed to support a bat roost.
High	A building with one or more potential roost site that is obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
Moderate	A building with one or more potential roost site that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
Low	A building with one or more potential roost site that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection and / or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a large number of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for hibernation or maternity).
Negligible	Negligible habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats and bats very unlikely to be present.

Notes: Category descriptions drawn from Collins (2016)

[11] Collins J, 2016. Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition). Bat Conservation Trust (BCT)

2.3.3 In addition, the suitability of the site for foraging and commuting bats was assessed.

2.4 Importance Criteria

2.4.1 The importance of ecological features (i.e. designated sites, habitats and species), identified within the zone of influence has been assessed using a scale that classifies ecological features within a defined geographic context in accordance with CIEEM guidelines (2019). The following frame of reference has been used for the site, adapted to suit local circumstances:

- International and European Importance;
- National Importance (England);
- Regional Importance (Yorkshire);
- County Importance (West Yorkshire);
- Local Importance (Huddersfield);
- Site-level[12] Importance (limited to the site boundary or ZOI); and
- Negligible Importance.

2.4.2 Various characteristics contribute to the importance of ecological features. These include recognised and published criteria (e.g. Wray et al. 2010[13]) where the ecological features are assessed in relation to their size, diversity, naturalness, rarity, fragility, typicalness, connectivity with surroundings, intrinsic value, recorded history and potential importance.

2.4.3 A wide range of sources can be used to assign importance to ecological features, including legislation and policy. In the case of designated sites, their importance reflects the geographic context of the designation. For example, sites designated as SACs are recognised as being of importance at an International level. Ecological features not included in legislation and policy may also be assigned importance, due to, for example, local rarity or decline, or provision of a functional role for other ecological features. Professional judgement is used to assign such importance.

Table 2.2 provides examples of how the importance of ecological features has been assigned at different geographical scales.

Table 2.2: Geographic Ecological Importance

Importance	Examples
International	Internationally designated sites including SPAs/potential SPAs, SACs/candidate SACs, Ramsar Sites/potential Ramsar Sites, Biogenetic Reserves, World Heritage Sites and Biosphere Reserves. Discrete areas which meet the published selection criteria for international designation, but which are not themselves designated as such. Resident or regularly occurring populations of species which may be considered at an International level, the loss of which would negatively affect the conservation status or distribution of the species at an International level; or where the population forms a critical part of a wider population; or the species is at a critical phase of its life cycle.
National	Nationally designated sites including SSSIs, NNRs, Marine Protected Areas; discrete areas which meet the published selection criteria for national designation (e.g. SSSI selection guidelines) but which are not themselves designated as such; or areas of a key habitat type identified in the UK or National BAPs. Resident or regularly occurring populations of species which may be considered at the International/ European level, or at the UK or National level, the loss of which would negatively affect the conservation status or distribution of the species across Britain or the Country; or where the

[12] Note that Site-level is not defined in CIEEM, 2019. It is used here to define ecological features which contribute to the biodiversity importance of the site, but not at a level which can be considered locally important or higher. It is important in the context of biodiversity net gain.

[13] Wray S, Wells D, Long E, Mitchell-Jones T, 2010. Valuing Bats in Ecological Impact Assessment, CIEEM In-Practice. 23-25.

Importance	Examples
	population forms a critical part of a wider population; or the species is at a critical phase of its life cycle.
Regional	Viable areas of key habitat identified as being of Regional importance in the appropriate Natural Area Profile (or equivalent); or smaller areas of such habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole. Resident or regularly occurring populations of species which may be considered at an International/European level, or at the UK/National level, the loss of which would negatively affect the conservation status or distribution of the species across the Region; or where the population forms a critical part of a wider population; or the species is at a critical phase of its life cycle.
County	Features of county importance, which may include LWSs, local BAP species and habitats, and species and habitats of greater than Local Level importance.
Local	Features of local importance include areas of habitat or populations/communities of species considered to appreciably enrich the habitat resource within the local context, for example, species-rich hedgerows.
Site	Areas of habitat considered to appreciably enrich the habitat resource within a site. Includes viable populations of species which are of importance within a site.
Negligible	Areas of a site considered to have no ecological importance such as built development or hardstanding with no species of importance present or using the area.

2.5 Method of Assessment

2.5.1 The EcIA has been undertaken by means of existing best practice tools and techniques as recommended by CIEEM. As such, potential impacts and effects on ecological features (as defined by baseline conditions) have been assessed taking into consideration mitigation measures integral to the proposed development; consideration has been given to the need for additional mitigation to reduce or off-set potential significant effects, and finally all residual effects have been assessed as either significant or not significant at the relevant geographic level. As part of this, consideration was given to the avoidance, mitigation, restoration, compensation and enhancement measures (the 'mitigation hierarchy') integral to the proposed development.

2.6 Significance

2.6.1 The potential impacts and likely effects on ecological features were considered in relation to the proposed development at the site. The assessment was made by reference to the pre-development baseline conditions at the site. The impacts and effects have been characterised according to several variables, as detailed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Impact Characterisation

Importance	Examples
Direction	Impacts have either adverse (negative) or beneficial (positive), or no impacts (no change) on the environment.
Magnitude (severity)	Magnitude of impact is defined as high, medium, low or negligible, with these being classified using the following criteria: • High – total/near total loss of a population due to mortality or displacement or major reduction in the status or productivity of a population due to mortality or displacement or disturbance. Total/near total loss of a habitat. • Medium – partial reduction in the status or productivity of a population due to mortality or displacement or disturbance. Partial loss of a habitat. • Low – small but discernible reduction in the status or productivity of a population due to mortality or displacement or disturbance. Small proportion of habitat lost. • Negligible – very slight reduction in the status or productivity of a population due to mortality or displacement or disturbance. Reduction barely discernible, approximating to the 'no change' situation. Slight loss of habitat that is barely discernible from the habitat resource as a whole.
Extent	The spatial extent over which the impact/effect occurs.

Importance	Examples
Duration	The time for which the impact/effect is expected to last prior to recovery of the ecological feature or replacement of the feature by similar resource (in terms of quality and/or quantity). This is expressed as an immediate, short-term, medium-term or long-term effect relative to the ecological feature that is impacted. Duration will vary based on the ecological feature affected but as a general guide the following parameters are identified: • 'Immediate' – within approximately 12 months. • 'Short-term' – within approximately 1 to 5 years. • 'Medium-term' – within approximately 6 to 15 years. • 'Long-term' – more than 15 years.
Reversibility	Reversible impact/effect: temporary changes in which spontaneous recovery is possible or for which effective mitigation (avoidance/cancellation/reduction of effect) or compensation (offset/recompense/ offer benefit) is possible. Irreversible impacts/effects: permanent changes from which recovery is not possible within a reasonable time scale or for which there is no reasonable chance of action being taken to reverse it.
Frequency and Timing	The number of times an activity occurs will influence the resulting effect (if appropriate, described as low to high and quantified, where possible). The timing of an activity or change may result in an impact if it coincides with critical life-stages or seasons e.g. the breeding season of a particular species.

2.6.2 The assessment only describes those characteristics relevant to the ecological effect and determining the significance. For example, timing of when a habitat is destroyed may not be relevant in relation to the assessment of the effect on the habitat. However, it may be relevant to assessing the impact to the species that occur within the habitat (e.g. roosting bats).

2.6.3 In accordance with CIEEM guidance, each impact has been assessed as having a significant effect or not having a significant effect upon each ecological feature qualified with reference to the appropriate geographic scale. The importance level of the ecological feature concerned may be a determinant of the geographical level at which the effect is significant. For example, a significant effect to a SSSI is likely to be significant at a national level. However, it may be the case that the effect could be considered significant at a lower or higher geographical level than that at which the feature is important, depending on the magnitude of the impact. A significant effect is an effect that either enhances or undermines the conservation objectives of an ecological feature. Conservation objectives may be specific (e.g. for a designated site) or broad (e.g. national conservation policy).

2.7 Biodiversity Net Gain

2.7.1 BNG is a process whereby development leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before and is a policy requirement under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; 2019)[14]. BNG will soon become a legal requirement in England[15] with the Environment Act (2021) setting out a mandatory 10 % net gain in biodiversity for new development[16].

[14] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2019. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), last updated 20 July 2021. Accessed from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf

[15] Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs, 2020. Environment Bill 2020: Policy Statement. Accessed from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020/30-january-2020-environment-bill-2020-policy-statement

[16] Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs, 2020. Environment Bill 2020: Nature and conservation covenants (parts 6 and 7). Accessed from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020/10-march-2020-nature-and-conservation-covenants-parts-6-and-7

2.7.2 The BNG process is governed by a set of UK good practice principles (2016)17 along with industry guidance which outlines the practical implementation of the principles (2019)[18]. The key principle is the application of a mitigation hierarchy, which sets out that development should first avoid biodiverse habitats, then mitigate/minimise impacts upon habitats, then restore/reinstate habitats. As a last resort, once the mitigation hierarchy has been maximised on-site, the project may use biodiversity offsetting to compensate for any residual biodiversity impacts due to the project. The principles require use of a metric e.g. Natural England Biodiversity Metric v3.1, to assess and quantify net biodiversity change. Applying this process enables transparent reporting on biodiversity outputs to demonstrate delivery against the current policy requirement for BNG.

2.8 Baseline Biodiversity Assessment

Habitat Condition Assessment

2.8.1 A habitat condition assessment (HCA) was not required, given that all habitats present on the site have condition 'N/A' in this instance, determined by the pre-set values within the Metric.

Habitat Distinctiveness and Strategic Significance

2.8.2 Distinctiveness per habitat type was determined by the pre-set values within the Natural England Biodiversity Metric v3.1.

2.8.3 The strategic significance rating was assigned based upon the biodiversity value of the local surroundings, as determined by the desk study with checks of local biodiversity plans and sites (Local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP), Nature Recovery Areas, LNRs, SINCs etc.) and checking if any of the habitats were strategically significant for rare species (e.g. critical for home range, functionally important for the species, etc). The following significance levels apply:

- Within area formally identified in local strategy = high significance
- Location desirable but not in local strategy = medium significance
- Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy = low significance

Baseline Biodiversity Calculation

2.8.4 The biodiversity unit (BU) score per area-based habitat was calculated via the Metric using the quality factors (distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance) and their assigned values. The sum of all the BUs provided the area-based habitat biodiversity baseline.

2.8.5 No linear features (hedgerows or rivers) or individual street trees are present on the site itself; therefore, detailed methodology relating to these habitat types is not included within this report, but would adhere to that which is detailed the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 User Guide[19], if applicable.

[17] CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2016. Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development. Accessed from: https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Biodiversity-Net-Gain-Principles.pdf

[18] CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2019. Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development. A practical guide. Accessed from: https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/C776a-Biodiversity-net-gain.-Good-practice-principles-for-development.-A-practical-guide-web.pdf

[19] Natural England, 2022. Biodiversity Metric 3.1: User Guide. Accessed from: http://nepubprod.appspot.com/publication/6049804846366720

2.9 Post-Development Biodiversity Assessment

Post-Development Habitats and Target Condition

2.9.1 Post-development landscape drawings are not available at the time of writing; however, the client seeks to deliver a green roof of 30 m^2, to be included on top of new build lift/stair core (as stated within email correspondence from J. Ross, dated 07/12/2022; Appendix 4). This has been taken as a minimum commitment and has informed the post-development habitats. For the purposes of the Metric, 'green roof' has been translated to the habitat type 'Other green roof'.

2.9.2 The target condition of the post-development area-based habitats has been determined by the pre-set values within the Metric in this instance (the condition for 'Other green roof' is 'N/A').

Habitat Distinctiveness and Strategic Significance

2.9.3 The distinctiveness was assigned by the Natural England Biodiversity Metric v3.1 based upon the habitat types entered in the post-development sections of the Metric. Strategic significance values were assigned following the same methodology described in Section 2.8.3.

Temporal and Difficulty Risk Factors

2.9.4 The relevant risk factors for the 'time to target condition' and the 'difficulty to create' were automatically assigned by the Natural England Biodiversity Metric v3.1 and are deemed appropriate for the proposed development.

Habitat Creation, Enhancement and Accelerated Succession

2.9.5 The BNG process includes a consideration of whether habitats will be newly created, retained and enhanced or, in limited cases, will undergo accelerated succession. The following actions were considered for each habitat polygon on-site and the action entered into the Metric, as appropriate:

- Habitat lost to permanent development;
- Habitat lost during construction and created post-development;
- Habitat retained (no improvement); and
- Habitat retained and enhanced.

Biodiversity Metric

2.9.6 The assessment was undertaken using Natural England Biodiversity Metric v3.1.

2.10 Consultation

2.10.1 A remote meeting was held between J. Molesworth (Ramboll ecologist), G. Hey (Kirklees Council Biodiversity Officer), J. Ross (Bowman Riley Architects Ltd) and S. Collins (Kirklees Council) on 17 November 2022, the purpose of which was to discuss ecological requirement in relation to the proposed development. The following points were raised/clarified:

- Kirklees Council confirmed that an EcIA report with a BNG assessment included would be sufficient to inform the planning application;
- Kirklees Council confirmed that a minimum 10% BNG will be required for this application, as per the requirements for major developments (this applies to urban sites, even if they have a very low ecological baseline);

- Kirklees Council would accept use of the latest Natural England Metric (version 3.1);
- Kirklees Council would prefer a BNG to be achieved through habitat creation on-site, with off-setting or a financial contribution a last resort (as per the mitigation hierarchy); and
- Kirklees Council advocate the provision of green infrastructure habitats (such as green/brown roofs or living walls) in an urban setting, for habitat creation.

2.11 Limitations

2.11.1 It should be noted that availability and quality of the data obtained during desk studies is reliant on third party responses. This varies from region to region and for different species groups. Furthermore, the comprehensiveness of data often depends on the level of coverage, the expertise and experience of the recorder and the submission of records to the local recorder. Accordingly, the conclusions in this report are valid only to the extent that the information provided to Ramboll was accurate, complete and available to Ramboll within the reporting schedule.

2.11.2 The UKHab survey and site walkover provides a snapshot of ecological conditions and does not record plants or animals that may be present on-site at different times of the year. The survey was undertaken just outside of the optimum April to September period for undertaking habitat surveys, when plants are generally less visible. However, this was not considered to be a significant limitation given that the site is predominately hardstanding and buildings. Furthermore, no dead/dying/remnants of invasive plants were noted during the UKHab survey.

2.11.3 The daytime inspection of the building for suitability for bats was undertaken under suitable weather conditions. The main staircase within the George Hotel building could not be accessed during the inspection due to health and safety constraints. This is not considered a significant limitation due to the lack of suitable roosting locations for bats within this central staircase, owing to its structure and the nature of the interior of the building in this area. Additionally, due to the cladding that surrounded the site, only the western side of the roof along the eastern aspect of the building could be closely inspected. All remaining areas of the building were fully accessible to the surveyor, and pre-existing scaffolding allowed a detailed external inspection of the upper floors of the building, which would typically not be possible to achieve from ground level. The daytime inspection of the building does not take into any physical changes to a building after the survey date due to weathering, maintenance, deterioration or material replacements. The absence of a particular species cannot definitely be confirmed by a lack of field signs and only concludes that an indication of its presence was not located during the survey effort.

2.11.4 All polygon areas were input into the Metric in hectares (ha), rounded up to four decimal places, for the purposes of the BNG assessment. This was to ensure small area (25 m^2 and above) were captured). The output of the BNG assessment is automatically rounded up to two decimal places.

2.11.5 Ramboll is satisfied that this report represents a robust appraisal of the site. If any action or development has not taken place on this land within 12 months of the date of this report, the findings of this survey should be reviewed by a suitably qualified ecologist and may need to be updated in line with CIEEM's 'Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys' (2019)[20].

[20] Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), 2019. Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. CIEEM, Winchester. Available online: https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf [Accessed 04/09/2019].

3. BASELINE CONDITIONS

3.1 Desk Study

Landscape Context

3.1.1 The site is located within Huddersfield town centre; an urbanised area predominantly characterised by commercial development, as well as community, transport and entertainment uses. The ZOI is also urban with little to no semi-natural habitats. Huddersfield town centre is entirely encircled by the A62, a major road.

Designated Sites

Statutory Sites

3.1.2 One statutory site is located within 2 km of the site boundary, as listed in Table 3.1. Gledholt Woods Local Nature Reserve (LNR) lies 1.1 km west of the site and is separated from the site by major barriers (major roads and developed land); therefore, there is no connectivity between the LNR and the site.

Table 3.1: Statutory Designations within 2 km of Site

Name	Type	Location	Distance from Site	Reason for Designation
Gledholt Woods	LNR	SE 131 165	1.1 km west (at nearest point)	Areas of mature woodland and rough meadow. White clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* have been found in the pond here.

Non-Statutory Sites

3.1.3 In Huddersfield there are the following two tiers of non-statutory sites:

1. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS); and
2. Local Geological Sites (LGS)

3.1.4 WYES identified three LWS located within 2 km of the site, as listed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation within 2 km of the Site

Name	Type	Location	Area (ha)	Distance from Site	Reason for Designation
Sir John Ramsden Canal	LWS	SE 155 185	7.04	0.5 km east (at nearest point)	A 6 km stretch of canal between Huddersfield and Colne bridge, supporting a wide variety of plant species, including the nationally scarce floating water-plantain *Luronium natans*.
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	LWS	SE 083 141	16.8	0.7 km south-east (at nearest point)	Canal supporting large assemblage of aquatic plants in additional to various fauna including otter *Lutra lutra*. The canal and its tow path provide excellent opportunities for people both on the water and on the bank to see a wide variety of wildlife and the site qualifies under the selection criteria for West Yorkshire.
Gledholt Woods	LWS	SE 131 165	9.40	1.1 km west (at nearest point)	Areas of mature woodland and rough meadow. White clawed crayfish have also been found in the pond here.

3.1.5 It is noted that all LWS are separated from the site by major barriers (major roads – notably the A62 which encircled Huddersfield town centre – and developed land); therefore, there is no connectivity between the LWS listed in Table 3.2 and the site.

Ancient Woodland

3.1.6 There is no ancient woodland present on or adjacent to the site.

Wildlife Corridors

3.1.7 The site does not lie within the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network.

Priority Habitats/ Irreplaceable Habitats

3.1.8 There are no UK Priority Habitats/Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) present on or adjacent to the site.

3.1.9 There are no irreplaceable habitats within the site boundary.

3.2 Habitats

3.2.1 The following descriptions of habitats should be read in conjunction with Figure 2: Baseline UKHab Plan in Appendix 1. Site photographs are included in Appendix 3.

General Site Description

3.2.2 The site, approximately 0.11 ha in size, comprises the entirety of the George Hotel and surrounding hardstanding. The George Hotel is a stone fronted building with multiple rooflines and a slate tile and lead roof. The site contains very little habitat, with the exception of some small non-native/introduced shrubs growing on the building roof at the northern-most extent. Individual street trees are located off-site but adjacent to the southern and western site boundaries.

Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface

3.2.3 The site is dominated by developed land. A small quantity of hardstanding surrounds the existing hotel building along the western, southern and eastern boundaries. This is predominantly paving that was observed to be in good condition with minimal cracks or throughout and no pioneer vegetation noted.

3.2.4 There is one building present on site, which comprises the majority of the site's overall footprint. This is the existing George Hotel, which is a large, stone fronted building with three distinct rooflines.

Urban – Introduced Shrub

3.2.5 Butterfly bush *Buddleia davidii*, a neophyte, is present at the northern-most extent of the site, growing on top of the disused public toilet roof.

3.2.6 This habitat is considered to be of Site level importance. It should be noted, however, that species such as butterfly bush can be detrimental to the ecological value of a site if it spreads and overtakes the site, outcompeting native species. However, given that this is the only vegetation

on the site, and due to the nature of the site (otherwise developed/sealed land which is scarce of vegetation), this is not currently considered to be the case.

3.3 Species

Invertebrates

3.3.1 WYES returned records for several invertebrate species within 2 km of the site boundary, including individual sightings of Species of Principle Importance (SPI), previously known as Biodiversity Action Plan Species (BAP), which are white-letter hairstreak *Satyrium w-album* and cinnabar moth *Tyria jacobaeae*.

3.3.2 During the site visit, the small area of habitat identified on the site (butterfly bush) was considered unlikely to support a significant assemblage of invertebrates (or rare or protected species). It is therefore unlikely that the species recorded in the data search will be present on the site. However, it may be suitable for supporting very small populations of common terrestrial invertebrates.

3.3.3 The site is therefore considered to be of Site level importance for invertebrates.

Amphibians

3.3.4 During a search for granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) within a 2 km radius of the site boundary, no licence applications for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* were found.

3.3.5 WYES returned two records of amphibians within 2 km of the site boundary, which are two common toads *Bufo bufo* (this species is a SPI).

3.3.6 No potential ponds/waterbodies or other aquatic habitat suitable for amphibian breeding was identified within a 250 m radius of the site. A 250 m search radius was deemed most appropriate for the site given urban nature of the site and surroundings, and therefore the lack of connectivity for amphibians. During the site visit, no habitat was identified on or adjacent to the site which could support amphibians. It is therefore considered unlikely that the common toad or other amphibians will be present on the site.

3.3.7 The site is therefore considered to be of Negligible importance for amphibians.

Reptiles

3.3.8 WYES did not return any records for reptiles within 2 km of the site since 2000. On this basis, there are no reptile records which are considered pertinent to this study. In addition, there is an absence of suitable habitat on or close to the site, and in the wider environment, given the highly urbanised and disturbed setting. It is therefore considered unlikely that reptiles will be present on the site.

3.3.9 The site is therefore considered to be of Negligible importance for reptiles.

Birds

3.3.10 WYES returned numerous records of birds within 2 km of the site boundary including the following Schedule 1 species: kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* and peregrine *Falco peregrinus* (the nearest of which

was recorded approximately 360 m to the east, in 2015). A number of SPI's have also been recorded, including swift *Apus apus*, goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*, dunnock *Pyrrhula modularis*, bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, starling *Sturnus vulgaris* and song thrush *Turdus philomelos*.

3.3.11 Peregrine are increasingly recorded nesting in urban environments; however, this species typically favours higher structures such as cathedrals, phone masts and skyscrapers. The George Hotel is therefore sub-optimal for this species. Furthermore, no evidence of nesting peregrines was observed during the site visit. On this basis, this species is unlikely to be present on the site.

3.3.12 The site is unlikely to be suitable as a foraging and/or nesting resource for many of the SPIs previously recorded within 2 km of the site, due to the urban context, with the exception of swift and starling which are typical of this environment (although no evidence of these species was observed during the site visit). The building was identified as being utilised by nesting feral pigeons *Columba livia domestica* at the time of the site visit. It is considered unlikely that the site is used by rarer urban bird species (and is outside the known distribution of black redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*).

3.3.13 The limited area of vegetation (butterfly bush) in the north of the site provides very limited foraging and nesting suitability for common urban birds, with a single robin *Erithacus rubecula* observed in this area during the site visit.

3.3.14 The site is therefore considered to be of up to Site level importance for foraging and breeding use by a common assemblage of birds, typical of the urban environment.

Bats

3.3.15 During a search for granted EPSML within a 2 km radius of the search boundary, three licence applications were found. These are detailed below:

- 2014-856-EPS-MIT – Impacting on common pipistrelles *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* at a location approximately 0.6 km to the southeast (granted 2014);
- EPSM2011-3176 – Impacting on common pipistrelles at a location approximately 0.9 km to the south (granted 2011); and
- EPSM2010-1750 – Impacting on common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and brown long-eared bats *Plecotus auritus* at a location approximately 1.4 km southeast (granted 2010).

3.3.16 WYES returned 134 records for bats within a 2 km radius of the site boundary, including 82 for common pipistrelle, five for soprano pipistrelle, four for lesser noctule *Nyctalus leisleri,* three for brown long-eared bat, two for Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii*, two for unknown myotis species *Myotis spp.*, and one for whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, the remaining records are of unidentified bat species. The closest record to the site was for an unidentified bat dated from the year 2005 and located 350 m to the west of the site's boundary. WYES also returned records for 42 bat roosts within a 2 km radius of the site boundary, however, no roosts have been recorded within 1 km of the site within the last 10 years. These roosts are for common pipistrelle/ unidentified pipistrelle species or unidentified bat species.

3.3.17 No SACs with bats as their qualifying feature were identified within 10 km of the site boundary.

Daytime Building Inspection for Bats

3.3.18 The daytime inspection of the hotel building for suitability for roosting bats was undertaken by Ramboll in October 2022. Photographs are included in Appendix 3.

3.3.19 At the time of the inspection, maintenance activities were ongoing throughout much of the building and scaffolding was affixed to the exterior of the building, and completely covered some of the roof areas.

3.3.20 A hipped roof runs west to east and is located on the buildings southern facing aspect. This roofline was constructed from slate tiles which had been removed at the time of the inspection, revealing the rafters and insulation. No evidence of bats was found during an inspection of this roofline and, despite the exposed roof structure, due to high levels of light infiltration and the noise and vibration disturbance arising from the ongoing works, this portion of the building was considered to provide suboptimal conditions for roosting bats.

3.3.21 The second roofline runs north to south along the buildings eastern aspect and is a box gable shape that connects in its southern extent to the hipped roof section. This box gable roofline is also constructed of slate tiles which were still intact and in good condition. The mortar running along the centre of this roofline was also in good condition, showing minimal cracks. On this basis, no significant opportunities for crevice-dwelling bats were identified. Furthermore, no potential ingress points which could be potentially used for access by void-dwelling bats were noted. Noise and vibration disturbance arising from the ongoing works was also noted in this portion of the building, further reducing the suitability for roosting bats.

3.3.22 The third roof runs northeast to southwest along the western aspect of the building, and is a flat, lead roof. The roof also appears in good condition and was being used to store building supplies at the time of the inspection. There was also a number of skylights embedded into this roof; however, these were not in good condition, with multiple cracks in the glass allowing for birds (such as feral pigeon) to enter the building. No evidence of bats was noted in the interior of this portion of the building, and the levels of light ingress were noted to be high, although it is feasible that bats could access this western aspect of the building, it is deemed to provide sub-optimal roosting conditions on this basis.

3.3.23 A detailed inspection of the exterior walls and existing windows/window frames revealed a relatively tight structure throughout. Venting slots were evident above some of the window frames; however, these were partially obstructed by the surrounding scaffolding, were largely clad with cobwebs and no evidence of bats was found around or below these potential features.

3.3.24 It was determined that the building has limited availability of features potentially suitable for roosting bats (limited to potential ingress points along the western aspect of the building and some partially-suitable venting slots on the exterior walls). Taking into account the urban context of the site (with high levels of street level lighting, noise disturbance, lack of commuting and foraging habitat, and isolation from the wider environment), significant disturbance caused by the extensive and ongoing maintenance works (leading to increases in artificial light/light infiltration, exposure, noise and vibration), and the absence of any evidence pertaining to bats being found during the detailed inspection, it was concluded that the building provides Negligible bat roosting potential and it is highly unlikely that the building supports roosting bats.

3.3.25 On this basis, the site is considered to be of Negligible importance for use by roosting bats.

3.3.26 The site is considered to be of Negligible importance for use by foraging and commuting bats, taking into account the high levels of disturbance (noise and light) and isolated nature of the site, associated with the urban setting.

3.4 Ecological Importance

3.4.1 Table 3.3 presents the ecological importance of habitats and species present on the site, in accordance with CIEEM guidance. Species assessed as being unlikely to be present/Negligible importance on the site are not considered further in this assessment.

Table 3.3: Ecological Importance of Features Present on the Site

Feature	Ecological Importance	Rationale
Urban: Introduced Shrub	Site Level	Contributes to biodiversity importance of the site, and provides potential habitat for common invertebrates and birds but is unlikely to extend beyond the site level.
Urban: Developed Land; Seales Surface Hardstanding	Negligible	Does not contribute to the ecological importance of the site.
Urban: developed land; sealed surface (Buildings)	Negligible	Has little intrinsic biodiversity value; however, may provide suitable habitat for common breeding birds.
Invertebrates	Site Level	The site contains a limited amount of habitat potentially suitable to support a very small assemblage of common terrestrial invertebrate species.
Amphibians	Negligible	The habitat on-site is unlikely to support amphibian populations.
Reptiles	Negligible	The site is not suitable for use by reptiles.
Breeding Birds	Site Level	Limited amount of vegetation may be used by common foraging bird species, such as robin. The George Hotel itself is used for nesting by feral pigeons and provides some suitability for use by other 'urban' birds, such as swifts (although no evidence of swifts or other notable bird species was found).
Bats	Negligible (foraging and commuting)/ Negligible (roosting)	Roosting bats are considered unlikely to be present within the building on the site. The site is not considered to provide foraging or commuting opportunity for bats, given the urban context.

3.5 Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Baseline (Pre-Development)

3.5.1 The baseline habitats found within the site are shown in Figure 2: Baseline UKHab Plan (Appendix 1) and detailed in Table 3.4, with the UKHab type and code, as determined during the UKHab survey. The condition rating and score and distinctiveness (as assigned by the Metric) of each habitat is also shown. The baseline score (Biodiversity Units – BU), as determined by the Metric, is also shown. Habitats are listed in order of BU value.

Table 3.4: Baseline Habitats, Distinctiveness, Condition and Biodiversity Baseline Score

UKHab Code	UKHab Habitat Type	Habitat Distinctive-ness	Area (ha) of Habitats	Condition Rating	Condition Score	Biodiversity Units (BU)
1160	Urban – Introduced Shrub	Low	0.0025	N/A	1	0.01

UKHab Code	UKHab Habitat Type	Habitat Distinctive-ness	Area (ha) of Habitats	Condition Rating	Condition Score	Biodiversity Units (BU)
u1b/ u1b5	Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (including Buildings)	V.Low	0.1119	N/A	0	0.00
	Total:	-	0.11*	-	-	0.01

*The total site area is 0.11 ha to the nearest 2 decimal places – this is applied automatically by the Metric. The total site area to the nearest 4 decimal places is 0.1119 ha. Introduced shrub sits on top of the building therefore this habitat is included as an addition to the total site area.

3.5.2 It should be noted that the strategic significance of all habitat types on the site is Low ('Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy').

3.5.3 Suggested action to address habitat losses is listed in Table 3.5, for each habitat type.

Table 3.5: Suggested Action to Address Habitat Losses for each UKHab Type

UKHab Code	UKHab Habitat Type	Suggested Action to Address Habitat Losses
1160	Urban – Introduced Shrub	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required
u1b/ u1b5	Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (including Buildings)	Compensation not required

3.5.4 There are no linear habitats (hedgerows or watercourses) or individual street trees within the site baseline

Post-Development Biodiversity

3.5.5 This section assesses the post-intervention biodiversity of the proposed development. The opportunities for new and enhanced habitats have been determined based upon the professional judgement of the ecologist.

3.5.6 The proposed development would result in the loss of the small area of introduced shrub growing on the roof in the northern portion of the site, which would effectively be reinstated to back to developed land (building).

3.5.7 Post-development landscape drawings are not available at the time of writing; however, the client seeks to deliver a green roof of 30 m^2, to be included on top of new build lift/stair core (as stated within email correspondence from J. Ross, dated 07/12/2022; Appendix 4). This has been taken as a minimum commitment and forms the basis of post-development habitat creation. For the purposes of the Metric, 'green roof' has been translated to the habitat type 'Other green roof'.

3.5.8 No linear habitats (hedgerows or watercourses) or individual street trees are proposed to be created within the site, post-development.

3.5.9 The baseline habitats and the intervention undertaken is listed in Table 3.6. The resulting post-development UKHab habitat types are also listed, based upon the commitments as detailed in Section 3.5.6, above, and using the professional judgement of the ecologist. The target habitat condition assigned to each UKHab habitat type is captured within the Metric.

Table 3.6: Habitats, Proposed Intervention and UKHab Translation Post-Development

UKHab Habitat Type (Baseline)	Habitat Intervention	UKHab Habitat Type in Same Location (Post-Development)
Urban – Introduced Shrub	Baseline habitat lost during construction and habitat beneath retained post-development	Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (Condition N/A)
Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (including Buildings)	Habitat retained (no improvement)	Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (Condition N/A)
Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (including Buildings)	Habitat created on top of Developed Land; Sealed Surface	Urban – Other Green Roof (Condition N/A)

3.5.10 Table 3.7 details the post-development habitats and their corresponding biodiversity unit score as determined by the metric, with the habitats shown in order of BU for each component.

Table 3.7: Post-Development Habitats, Habitat Action and Biodiversity Units Delivered

UKHab Habitat Type (Post-Development)	Area of Habitats (ha)	Habitat Intervention	Target Condition	Total BU Delivered or Retained
Urban – Other Green Roof	0.0030	Created	N/A	0.01
Urban – Developed land; sealed surface (including buildings)	0.1119	Retained	N/A	0.00
Total:	0.11*	-	-	0.01

*The total site area is 0.11 ha to the nearest 2 decimal places – this is applied automatically by the Metric. The total site area in to nearest 4 decimal places is 0.1119 ha. The proposed green roof would sit on top of the building therefore this habitat is included as an addition to the total site area.

Quantitative Biodiversity Change

3.5.11 Table 3.8 shows the calculation of change for area-based habitats at the site, pre-development and post-development, with the outcome for biodiversity. The final overall change is a 15.80% net gain for area-based habitats, with 0.01 BU retained post-development.

Table 3.8: Baseline Biodiversity, Post-Development Biodiversity and Biodiversity Change

Biodiversity Feature	Baseline (area (ha))	Baseline Units (BU)	Post-development (area (ha)	Post-development (BU)	Outcome
Area-based Habitats	0.11*	0.01	0.11*	0.01	+ 15.80% = Net gain

*The total site area is 0.11 ha to the nearest 2 decimal places – this is applied automatically by the Metric. The total site area in to nearest 4 decimal places is 0.1119 ha. The proposed green roof would sit on top of the building therefore this habitat is included as an addition to the total site area.

3.5.12 There are no changes in broad habitat types for area-based habitats – all habitats are included under the 'Urban' broad habitat type. 'Other green roof' is a Low distinctiveness habitat, and compensates for the loss of introduced shrub (which is also a Low distinctiveness habitat). Trading rules have therefore been satisfied.

Qualitative Biodiversity Change

3.5.13 The introduction of a green roof in the new development totally a greater area than the introduced shrub will would be lost, would bring additional benefits for biodiversity, especially for invertebrates. The provision of green infrastructure is also considered to enhance the currently poor connectivity through Huddersfield town centre.

4. ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS, MITIGATION MEASURES AND RESIDUAL EFFECTS

4.0.1 This section describes potential impacts that could arise from the proposed development on the site and outlines mitigation measures for inclusion into the redevelopment proposals to avoid significant impacts on ecological features and maximise biodiversity enhancement.

4.0.2 The proposed development would result in the loss of a small area of introduced shrub and structural changes to the existing George Hotel building. In line with planning policy (as described in Appendix 2), any development should aim for no net loss of biodiversity (and Kirklees Council state a mandatory 10% BNG for major development projects).

4.1 Embedded Mitigation

Creation of New Habitats

4.1.1 A green roof would be incorporated into the design (as per email correspondence from J. Ross, dated 07/12/2022; Appendix 4). This is anticipated to be an 'extensive' green roof. Extensive green roofs provide a light-weight, low maintenance solution and can be 'retro-fitted' onto existing buildings. This would cover an area approximately 5 m^2 larger than the existing area of introduced shrub on the site which is being lost.

4.1.2 Two bird nest boxes would be provided at suitable locations on the building, to provide enhancement for breeding birds, proposed to be installed at the roof level. These can be integrated into the fabric of the building or retro-fitted to existing elevations. A selection of bird box types/suggested positioning is provided below:

- integrated swift bricks (such as the Vivara Pro Cambridge Brick Faced Swift Nest Box), which are integrated into the fabric of a building, on elevations between north and east, at eaves height and not directly over windows and doors;
- starling nest boxes (e.g., Vivara Pro WoodStone Starling Nest Box), which are wall-mounted and typically positioned 4 m – 5 m above ground-level; and
- other wall-mounted bird boxes suitable for a range of other urban bird species (e.g., traditional boxes with a 32 mm entrance hole such as the Vivara Pro Seville 32mm WoodStone Nest Box), which are typically installed between 1.5 m – 5 m above ground-level and orientated to avoid harsh weather conditions.

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

4.1.3 A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) would be prepared by the appointed contractor with input from a suitably experienced ecologist to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place. The CEMP would include following mitigation measures:

- adherence to best practice construction methods which would be maintained for the duration of the proposed works;
- implementation of dust suppression measures during construction
- physical protection of off-site but nearby street trees by barriers or ground protection around the calculated Root Protection Area (RPA), in accordance with BS 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction', if/where required;
- details for the implementation of protected species mitigation measures (such as breeding birds); and

- appointment of responsible personnel to carry out inspections, to implement and manage the CEMP.

4.2 Potential Effects

Habitats

4.2.1 Redevelopment of the site will lead to the direct loss of all introduced shrub during the construction stage of the proposed development. This habitat may support a small assemblage of common terrestrial invertebrates and provides limited foraging/nesting opportunity for common urban birds. No other semi-natural habitats are present on the site itself. Permanent loss of introduced shrub on the site is assessed as an adverse, short-term, reversible impact of high magnitude on a feature valued at Site level importance; resulting in negative effects significant at the Site level upon on-site habitats. This effect is likely to be temporary, until new habitats have established.

4.2.2 A number of individual street trees are located adjacent to the site and could be indirectly impacted during the construction stage (such as through dust deposition or physical damage). Taking account of embedded mitigation (implementation of dust suppression and tree protection measures), no significant effects on off-site habitats would occur during the construction stage.

4.2.3 Taking account of embedded mitigation (provision of an extensive green roof to replace the habitat lost on the site which is slightly larger in area than the existing stand of introduced shrub) and with an anticipated BNG of 15.80%, there would be positive effects significant at the Site level on habitats during the operational stage, once the extensive green roof has established (estimated to be one year to reach target condition) and provided it is managed appropriately.

Species

Invertebrates

4.2.4 During the construction stage, the proposed development would result in the permanent loss of a small area of introduced shrub which potentially supports a small assemblage of common terrestrial invertebrates. The loss of habitat would reduce populations of common invertebrates at the site, which may also slightly reduce the amount of prey available to higher taxonomic orders. Permanent loss of on-site habitat is therefore assessed as an unavoidable adverse, short-term, reversible impact of medium magnitude on a feature valued at Site level importance; resulting in negative effects significant at the Site level. However, this effect is likely to be temporary, until new habitats have established.

4.2.5 An extensive green roof would be provided to replace the habitat lost on the site. The green roof is slightly larger in area than the existing area of introduced shrub, and would provide suitable habitat for invertebrates. Taking account of this new habitat creation, it is anticipated that there would be positive effects significant at the Site level on invertebrates during the operational stage, once the green roof has established.

Breeding Birds

4.2.6 During the construction stage of the proposed development, internal and external works to the building (which supports nesting feral pigeons) and/or removal of introduced shrub (which provides very limited suitability for common nesting birds) could result in direct damage or destruction of bird nests, or abandonment of nests due to disturbance, if undertaken during the

bird nesting season (March – August inclusive). This is contrary to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In the absence of mitigation, this is assessed as an adverse, short-term, reversible impact on a feature valued at Site level importance; resulting in negative effects significant at the Site level.

4.2.7 The removal of the small area of introduced shrub, which has very limited suitability for common nesting birds, is not likely to significantly reduce the availability of potential nesting habitat. Bird box provision is proposed. Taking account of this, no significant effects on breeding birds are anticipated.

4.3 Additional Mitigation

Breeding Birds

4.3.1 To prevent negative impacts upon common breeding birds, any significant works to the building or vegetation removal would be timed to occur outside of the bird nesting season (the nesting season is taken as March – August inclusive; however, birds can nest outside of this time if the weather conditions are favourable). If this is not possible, a nesting bird check should be undertaken by an experienced ecologist prior to removal. If evidence of nesting birds is identified, work would stop and a suitable no-work buffer zone around the nest area should be installed, until such time as any chicks have fledged.

4.3.2 Nesting feral pigeons (producing large amounts of guano, which *could* be considered a public health and safety risk) are present within the building. Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 confirms that it is illegal to kill or to injure a wild bird or to interfere with a nesting bird, its eggs or its nest. The exception to this rule is where a species is listed under the relevant General Licences as a bird that can be taken (in this context meaning killed for the purposes of preserving public health or public safety), providing that the criteria of the Licence concerned is adhered to. A property owner experiencing problems with feral pigeons can instruct an agent or contractor (an authorised person) to kill pigeons and destroy nests on that specific site or building. Should the authorised person be unable to demonstrate that the problems being experienced have resulted in, or are likely to result in, a risk to public health or safety, or that all methods of non-lethal control have been tried and have failed, the action to kill birds would not be allowed under the terms and conditions of the General Licences and would be deemed illegal as a result.

4.4 Residual Effects

Habitats

4.4.1 Following the provision of a green roof at the site (and after an approximately one-year establishment period), considering embedded mitigation (measures to control dust and protection of off-site trees) and assuming a 15.80% BNG is achievable, the proposed development of the site is likely to result in positive residual effects significant at the Site Level on habitats.

Invertebrates

4.4.2 Following the establishment of the green roof (estimated one-year establishment period), the proposed development of the site is likely to result in positive residual effects significant at the Site level on invertebrates.

Breeding Birds

4.4.3 Following the implementation of additional mitigation (avoidance of nesting birds) and the provision of bird boxes, the proposed development is likely to result in no significant residual effects on birds.

4.5 Summary

4.5.1

4.5.2 Table 4.1 contains a summary of the potential effects pre-mitigation, and likely residual effects post-mitigation. As can be seen, provided mitigation and enhancements are incorporated, the scheme will likely lead to positive effects for habitat and invertebrates, significant at the site level, and no significant residual effects on breeding birds and bats. No significant residual impacts are anticipated for any other ecological features.

Table 4.1: Summary of Potential and Residual Effects

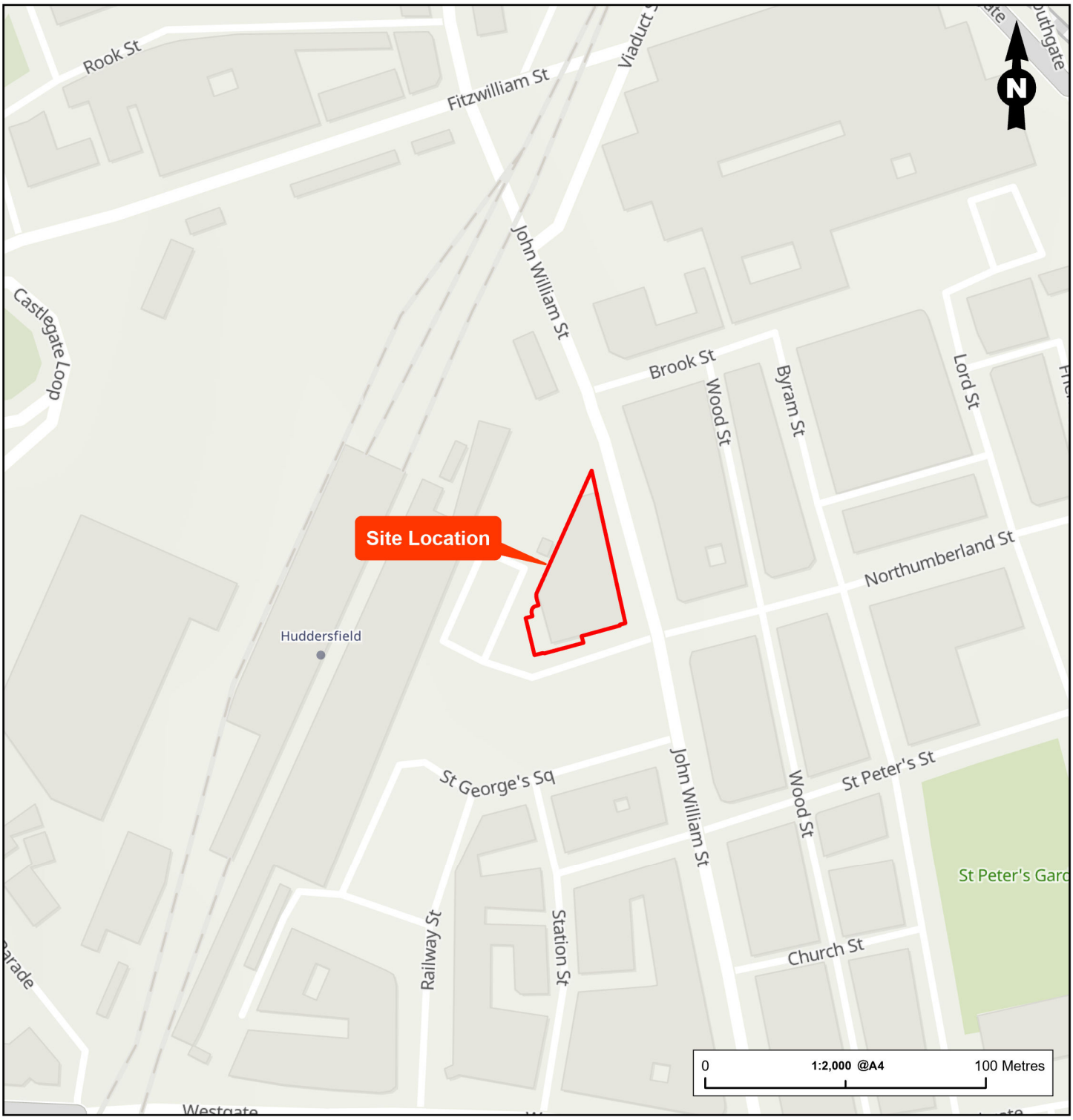
Feature	Ecological Importance	Potential Impact Without Mitigation	Proposed Mitigation/ Compensation/ Enhancement	Significance of Residual Effect
Urban: Introduced Shrub	Site Level	Complete loss of habitat area	Provision of new habitat (green roof)	Positive (significant at the Site level)
Invertebrates	Site Level	Complete loss of potentially suitable habitat	Provision of new habitat (green roof) suitable for invertebrates	Positive (significant at the Site level)
Breeding Birds	Site Level	Damage to active nests; removal of potential nesting habitat	Timing of habitat removal to avoid bird nesting season (or ecologist supervision); bird box provision	Not significant

4.6 Biodiversity Net Gain

4.6.1 The BNG assessment has demonstrated that it is possible to deliver a net gain of 15.80% for area-based habitats, via the like-for-like compensatory actions outlined within this report, which exceeds the 10% net gain mandated by Kirklees Council.

4.6.2 Habitats delivered in the landscape scheme should be sympathetically managed for biodiversity to ensure they develop appropriately. Monitoring of the new created habitat would be required to ensure correct development/management, in line with the BNG principles.

APPENDIX 1
FIGURES



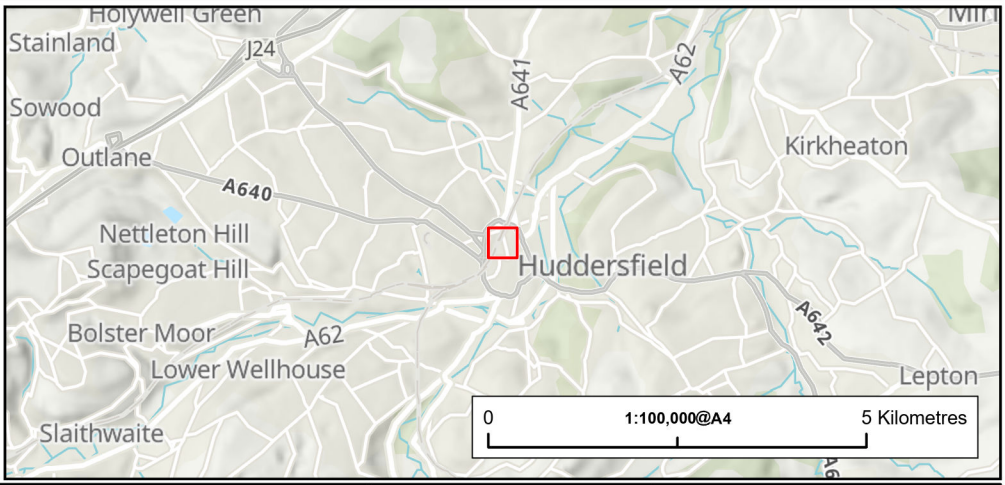
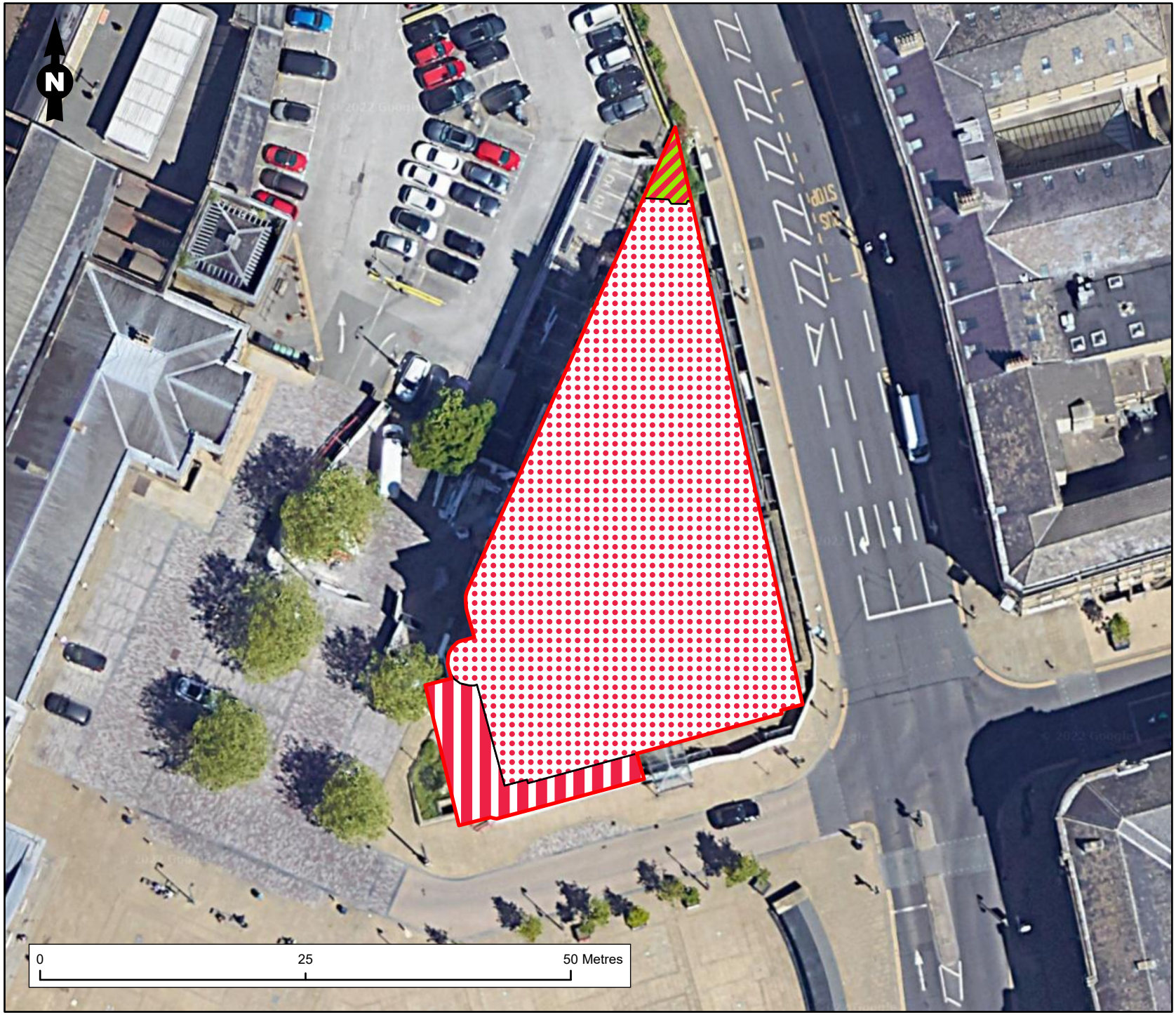


Figure Title: Figure 1: Site Location	Project Name: The George Hotel	Date: December 2022	
		Scale: As shown	
Project Number: 1620014217	Client: Bowman Riley Architects Ltd	Issue: 1	Prepared By: BE



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Introduced shrub
- Developed land, sealed surface
- Buildings

Figure Title
Baseline UKhab Plan

Project Name
The George Hotel

Project Number	Figure No.
1620014217	2
Date	**Prepared By**
December 2022	BE
Scale	**Issue**
1:500 @A4	1

Client
Bowman Riley Architects Ltd

RAMBOLL

APPENDIX 2
RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Ecological features are protected under various United Kingdom (UK) and European legislative instruments. These are described below. European legislation is not included as it is incorporated in UK legislation by domestic provisions.

Legislation

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)[21] came into force in 1992 and provides for the creation of a network of protected wildlife areas across the European Union (EU), known as 'Natura 2000'. The Natura 2000 network consists of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC)[22]. These sites are part of a range of measures aimed at conserving important or threatened habitats and species.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017[23] (commonly known as the 'Habitats Regulations') transposes the Habitats Directive into national law and set out the provisions for the protection and management of species and habitats of European importance, including Natura 2000 sites. The 2017 bill consolidated all previous versions of the regulations and subsequent amendments since initial transposition, bringing them all under the single heading, and made some minor amendments. It extends to England and Wales, and to a limited extent Scotland and Northern Ireland. Further amendments were made via The Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018[24] to ensure they reflect recent European case law (C-323/17 People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta) in relation to the assessment of plans and projects on sites protected under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats of wild fauna and flora (the 'Habitats Directive'). In Scotland, the Habitats Directive is transposed through a combination of the Habitats Regulations 2010 (in relation to reserved matters) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) transposes the Habitats Directive in relation to Northern Ireland.

In addition to providing for the designation and protection of Natura 2000 sites, the Habitats Regulations provide strict protection for plant and animal species as European Protected Species. Derogations from prohibitions are transposed into the Habitats Regulations by way of a licensing regime that allows an otherwise unlawful act to be carried out lawfully for specified reasons and providing certain conditions are met. Under the Habitats Regulations, competent authorities have a general duty, in the exercise of any of their functions, to have regard to the Habitats Directive and Wild Birds Directive including in the granting of consents or authorisations. They may not authorise a plan or project that may adversely affect the integrity of a European site, with certain exceptions (considerations of overriding public interest).

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, require the Secretary of State and Welsh Ministers to secure compliance with the requirements of the Nature Directives. Any

[21] European Commission, 1992. Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.
[22] European Commission, 1979. Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds.
[23] Her Majesty's Stationery Officer (HMSO), 2017. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. HMSO.
[24] Her Majesty's Stationery Officer (HMSO), 2018. The Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018. HMSO.

new powers in the 2019 Regulations must be exercised in line with the Directives and retained EU case law up to 1 January 2021.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019[25]

SACs and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in the UK no longer form part of the EU's Natura 2000 ecological network. The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 have created a national site network on land and at sea, including both the inshore and offshore marine areas in the UK. The national site network includes:

- existing SACs and SPAs; and
- new SACs and SPAs designated under these Regulations.

Any references to Natura 2000 in The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended and in guidance now refers to the new national site network. Maintaining a coherent network of protected sites with overarching conservation objectives is still required in order to:

- fulfil the commitment made by government to maintain environmental protections; and
- continue to meet our international legal obligations, such as the Bern Convention, the Oslo and Paris Conventions (OSPAR), Bonn and Ramsar Conventions.

Designated Wetlands of International Importance (known as Ramsar sites) do not form part of the national site network. Many Ramsar sites overlap with SACs and SPAs, and may be designated for the same or different species and habitats. All Ramsar sites remain protected in the same way as SACs and SPAs.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 establish management objectives for the national site network. These are called the network objectives. The UK Government and devolved administrations (in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland) will cooperate to manage, and where necessary, adapt the network to contribute towards meeting the network objectives.

Any references in the 2017 Regulations to meeting the 'requirements of the Directives' includes achieving the network objectives.

The appropriate authorities may publish guidance relating to these requirements. The appropriate authorities are the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in England and the Welsh Ministers in Wales.

The network objectives are to:

- maintain or, where appropriate, restore habitats and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive to a favourable conservation status (FCS); and
- contribute to ensuring, in their area of distribution, the survival and reproduction of wild birds and securing compliance with the overarching aims of the Wild Birds Directive.

The appropriate authorities must also have regard to the:

- importance of protected sites;
- coherence of the national site network; and

[25] Secretary of State (2019) The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO)

- threats of degradation or destruction (including deterioration and disturbance of protected features) on SPAs and SACs.

The network objectives contribute to the conservation of UK habitats and species that are also of pan-European importance, and to the achievement of their FCS within the UK.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000[26] primarily extends to England and Wales. It provides a new statutory right of access to the countryside and modernises the rights of way system, bringing into force stronger protection for both wildlife and the countryside.

The Act is divided into five distinct sections, Part III is of relevance to ecology:

- Part III – Nature Conservation and Wildlife Protection: The Act details measures to promote and enhance wildlife conservation. These measures include improving protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and increasing penalties for deliberate damage to SSSIs. Furthermore, the Act affords statutory protection to Ramsar Sites which are wetlands designated under the International Convention on Wetlands[27].

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)[28] forms the basis of much of the statutory wildlife protection in the UK. Part I deals with the protection of plants, birds and other animals and Part II deals with the designation of SSSIs.

This Act covers the following broad areas:

- Wildlife – listing endangered or rare species in need of protection and creating offences for killing, disturbing or injuring such species. Additionally, the disturbance of any nesting bird during breeding season is also noted as an offence, with further protection for species listed on Schedule 1. Measures for preventing the establishment of non-native plant and animal species as listed on Schedule 9 are also provided;
- Nature Conservation – protecting those sites which are National Nature Reserves (NNR) and SSSIs;
- Public Rights of Way – placing a duty on the local authority (to maintain a definitive map of footpaths and rights of way. It also requires that landowners ensure that footpaths and rights of way are continually accessible; and
- Miscellaneous General Provisions.

The Act is enforced by local authorities.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006[29], public authorities must show regard for conserving biodiversity in all their actions. Public authorities

[26] Her Majesty's Stationery Officer (HMSO), 2000. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. HMSO.
[27] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 1971. Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, as amended in 1982 and 1987. Ramsar, Iran Published in Paris, 1994.
[28] Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), 1981. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 [as amended in Quinquennial Review and by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006]. HMSO.
[29] Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. HMSO.

should consider how wildlife or land may be affected in all the decisions that they make. The commitment to the biodiversity duty must be measured by public authorities.

Section 41 also requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992[30] consolidated previous legislation relating specifically to badgers. The Act makes it an offence to kill, injure or take a badger, or to damage or interfere with a sett unless a licence is obtained from a statutory authority (i.e. Natural England).

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996[31] makes it an offense for any person to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering. There are certain exemptions including acts of mercy and acts made lawful by means of hunting, shooting, coursing or pest control activities

Policy

Biodiversity in the Planning Process

Administrative and policy guidance on the application of some of these statutory obligations is provided through relevant government policy guidance and advice. In England, this includes National Planning Policy Framework 2012, National Planning Practice Guidance, Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System, Biodiversity 2020 and Natural Environment White Paper The natural choice: securing the value of nature.

Administrative and policy guidance on the application of some of these statutory obligations is provided through relevant Government policy guidance and advice. In England, this includes National Planning Policy Framework 2019, national Planning Practice Guidance, Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System, Biodiversity 2020 and Natural Environment White Paper 'The natural choice: securing the value of nature'.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[32] sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Objective 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *"…protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
- *recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; and*
- *minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity,*

[30] Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), 1992. Protection of Badgers Act 1992. HMSO.
[31] Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO), Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996. HMSO.
[32] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), last updated 20 July 2021. London: HMSO.

including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures…"

It furthermore advises local planning authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity when considering planning applications, by applying principles aimed at protecting and enhancing biodiversity and designated sites and incorporating biodiversity in and around developments.

Planning Practice Guidance (2019)

The Planning Practice Guidance[33] is a web-based resource launched in June 2019 (last updated 1 October 2019). This guidance is divided into sections, of which Natural Environment: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Green Infrastructure provides information on biodiversity issues within planning and guidance on where to find further information on biodiversity issues.

Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System

This circular[34] provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England. It complements the national planning policy in the NPPF and PPG.

Natural Environment White Paper. The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature

The Natural Environment White Paper[35] outlines the Government's vision for the natural environment over the next 50 years, shifting the emphasis to an integrated landscape-scale approach. It describes the actions that will be taken to deliver that goal.

Biodiversity 2020

The Biodiversity 2020[36] strategy for England builds on the Natural Environment White Paper and provides a comprehensive picture of how England is implementing its international and EU commitments. It sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea.

The mission for this strategy is to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.

It is anticipated that this will be delivered through:

- a more integrated large-scale approach to conservation on land and at sea;
- putting people at the heart of biodiversity policy;
- reducing environmental pressures; and
- improving our knowledge.

[33] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2019. Planning Practice Guidance [online]. Available at: http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/

[34] Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005. Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-and-geological-conservation-circular-06-2005

[35] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), 2011. Natural Environment White Paper. The natural choice: securing the value of nature. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-natural-choice-securing-the-value-of-nature

[36] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), 2011. Biodiversity 2020. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services

Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP)

In 1994, the Government produced the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)[37], a national strategy for the conservation of biodiversity. This led to the creation of the UK Biodiversity Steering Group, which has listed 1,150 Species Action Plans (SAPs) and 65 Habitat Action Plans (HAPs). Regional and District/Borough BAPs apply the UK BAP at a local level.

From July 2012, the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework'[38] succeeds the UK BAP. This is a result of a change in strategic thinking following the publication of the 'Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020'[39] and its 20 'Aichi targets'[40], at Nagoya, Japan in October 2010, and the launch of the new EU Biodiversity Strategy (EUBS) in May 2011. The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework constitutes the UK's response to these new 'Aichi' strategic goals and associated targets. The Framework recognises that most work which was previously carried out under the UK BAP is now focussed on the individual countries of the UK (and Northern Ireland) and delivered through each countries' own strategies.

Following the publication of the new Framework, the UK BAP partnership no longer operates. However, many of the tools and resources originally developed under the UK BAP remain of use. The UK list of priority species has been used to help draw up statutory lists of priorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. For England, this is in line with Section 41 of NERC.

Regional Policy

Kirklees Local Plan

The Kirklees Local Plan was adopted on 27 February 2019. It comprises the strategy and policies document, allocations designations document and associated policies map. The Local Plan covers the administrative areas of Kirklees Council, except for that part within the Peak District National Park, and covers the period 2013 – 2031. Policies relating to the environment are set out in Section 13 (Natural Environment) of the strategy and policies document, with those most relevant to ecology/biodiversity including:

Policy LP30 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)

"The council will seek to protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of Kirklees, including the range of international, national and locally designated wildlife and geological sites, Habitats and Species of Principal Importance and the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network.

South Pennine Moors

Proposals which may directly or indirectly compromise achieving the conservation objectives of a designated or candidate European protected site will not be permitted unless the proposal meets the conditions specified in Article 6 (3) - (4) of the Habitats Directive.

[37] Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), 1994. Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan. HMSO.
[38] JNCC and Defra (on behalf of the Four Countries' Biodiversity Group), 2012. UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. July 2012. jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/UK_Post2010_Bio-Fwork.pdf
[39] https://www.cbd.int/sp/
[40] https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/

Statutory Designated Sites

Statutory designated sites, including the South Pennine Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area for Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, are already highly protected through existing laws and legislation. In accordance with legislation, the Council will seek to ensure that harmful impacts to these areas as a result of development proposals are avoided.

Development proposed within or outside a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, likely to have an adverse effect on the site's special nature conservation features, will not normally be permitted. Exceptionally development will be allowed where the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the impacts on the site's special conservation features and measures are provided to mitigate harmful impacts.

The Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area

Proposals that contribute to the aims and objectives of the Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area will in principle be supported, subject to other policies in this plan. Development likely to have an adverse impact on the aims and objectives of the NIA will not be permitted.

Local Designated Sites & Important Local Ecological Features

Proposals having a direct or indirect adverse effect on a Local Wildlife Site or Local Geological Site, Ancient Woodland, Veteran Tree or other important tree, will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development can be clearly shown to outweigh the need to safeguard the local conservation value of the site or feature and there is no alternative means to deliver the proposal. In all cases, full compensatory measures would be required and secured in the long term.

Habitats and Species of Principal Importance

Proposals will be required to protect Habitats and Species of Principal Importance unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the importance of the biodiversity interest, in which case long term compensatory measures will need to be secured.

Biodiversity and Development

Development proposals will be required to:
(i) result in no significant loss or harm to biodiversity in Kirklees through avoidance, adequate mitigation or, as a last resort, compensatory measures secured through the establishment of a legally binding agreement;
(ii) minimise impact on biodiversity and provide net biodiversity gains through good design by incorporating biodiversity enhancements and habitat creation where opportunities exist;
(iii) safeguard and enhance the function and connectivity of the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network at a local and wider landscape-scale unless the loss of the site and its functional role within the network can be fully maintained or compensated for in the long term;
(iv) establish additional ecological links to the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network where opportunities exist; and
(iv) incorporate biodiversity enhancement measures to reflect the priority habitats and species identified for the relevant Kirklees Biodiversity Opportunity Zone."

Policy LP30 is supported by the following resources/documents:

- West Yorkshire Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria (2011)
- West Yorkshire Ecology - Wildlife Habitat Network & Methodology (2015)
- Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plan (2009)
- Kirklees Biodiversity Strategy
- Kirklees Biodiversity Opportunity Zones Mapping

Policy LP30 of the Kirklees Local Plan requires development proposals to "provide net biodiversity gains through good design by incorporating biodiversity enhancements and habitat creation". A Biodiversity Net Gain Technical Advice Note on requirements for developments within Kirklees was produced in June 2021. The purpose of this Technical Advice Note is to provide guidance on how Biodiversity Net Gain should be achieved by development within Kirklees in accordance with Local Plan policy LP30 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) in the intervening time prior to the introduction of the Environment Bill. It states that, within Kirklees, development inside the scope of this guidance will be expected to deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain. At this time, in the absence of legislation, a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity is required.

Policy LP31 (Strategic Green Infrastructure Network)

"Within the Strategic Green Infrastructure Network identified on the Policies Map, priority will be given to safeguarding and enhancing green infrastructure networks, green infrastructure assets and the range of functions they provide.

Development proposals within and adjacent to the Strategic Green Infrastructure Network should ensure:
(i) the function and connectivity of green infrastructure networks and assets are retained or replaced;
(ii) new or enhanced green infrastructure is designed and integrated into the development scheme where appropriate, including natural greenspace, woodland and street trees;
(iii) the scheme integrates into existing and proposed cycling, bridleway and walking routes, particularly the Core Walking and Cycling Network, by providing new connecting links where opportunities exist;
(iv) the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological links, particularly within and connecting to the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network.

The council will support proposals for the creation of new or enhanced green infrastructure provided these do not conflict with other Local Plan policies"

Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plan

The Kirklees BAP identifies the local habitats and species of principal importance (also known as priority habitats and species). These are the species and habitats taken from the UK National BAP that occur in Kirklees or those that are of sub-regional importance. These habitats and species have individual action plans that enable prioritisation of biodiversity work in the district.

Kirklees Local Habitats of Principle Importance are:
- Arable field margins;
- Blanket bog;
- Hedgerows;

- Inland rock outcrop and scree habitats,
- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland;
- Lowland Heathland;
- Hay meadows
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland;
- Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land;
- Ponds
- Reedbeds;
- Rivers;
- Traditional orchards;
- Upland flushes, fens and swamps;
- Upland heathland;
- Upland mixed ashwoods;
- Upland oak woodland;
- Wet woodland;
- Wood-pasture and parkland;
- Scrub;
- Other semi-natural grassland (wet/rush pasture and rough grassland); and
- Riverine.

Kirklees Species of Principle Importance include (but are not limited to):

- Birds – including black grouse; common bullfinch; common cuckoo; common starling; corn bunting; corn crake; Eurasian curlew; Eurasian tree sparrow; reed bunting; song thrush; lesser redpoll; willow tit; wood warbler;
- Invertebrates – including Northern wood ant; small heath; wall brown; white-letter hairstreak;
- Fish – including Atlantic salmon, brook lamprey; European eel;
- Reptiles and amphibians – including adder; common lizard; common toad; great crested newt; slow-worm; grass snake; and
- Mammals – including brown hare; brown long-eared bat; soprano pipistrelle; noctule; water vole; otter.

These species are subject to a five-year review undertaken at a National level. Some species included are likely not present in Kirklees but with the potential to colonise.

The Kirklees BAP also includes species in decline within Kirklees, species for which Kirklees holds a significant part of the West Yorkshire populations, species scarce in Kirklees but more common elsewhere, sites in Kirklees important for scare invertebrate species, and known protected species occurring within Kirklees.

APPENDIX 3
SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1. A typical view of the George Hotel (northeast aspect)

Photo 2. Looking southwest at the northern corner of the site, showing the butterfly bush (circled).

Title: Photographic Log	Client: Bowman Riley Architects Ltd
Site: The George Hotel	Date: 13/12/2022

Photo 3. An aspect of the George Hotel roofline running east to west, showing scaffolding

Photo 4. An aspect of the east to west roofline showing further removal works.

Title: Photographic Log	Client: Bowman Riley Architects Ltd
Site: The George Hotel	Date: 13/12/2022

Photo 5. The roof which runs north to south, along the buildings eastern front, showing the scaffolding and cover which prevented a view of the western aspect

Photo 6. A section of the flat roof, facing north

Title: Photographic Log	Client: Bowman Riley Architects Ltd
Site: The George Hotel	Date: 13/12/2022

Photo 7. A section of the flat roof facing south

Photo 8. Typical interior of the George Hotel, with high levels of light ingress and no suitable bat roosting features

Title: Photographic Log	Client: Bowman Riley Architects Ltd
Site: The George Hotel	Date: 13/12/2022

Photo 9. No entry sign to central staircase

Photo 10. The broken skylight which facilitates bird entry into the building

Title: Photographic Log	Client: Bowman Riley Architects Ltd
Site: The George Hotel	Date: 13/12/2022

Photo 11. Modern, breathable roof felt, with little to no damage showing lack of suitability for roosting bats

Photo 12. Mounds of pigeon guano in the interior of the building, indicating long-term pigeon presence

Title: Photographic Log	Client: Bowman Riley Architects Ltd
Site: The George Hotel	Date: 13/12/2022

Photo 13. Close up shot of the George exterior, showing bricks, mortar, vent slots and window frames, in good condition

Title: Photographic Log	Client: Bowman Riley Architects Ltd
Site: The George Hotel	Date: 13/12/2022

APPENDIX 4
EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO PROVISION OF GREEN ROOF

Jonathan Molesworth

From: James Ross [redacted]
Sent: 07 December 2022 13:38
To: Jonathan Molesworth
Cc: [redacted]; Richard Manning
Subject: RE: George Hotel, Huddersfield - Planning Application Documents [Filed 08 Dec 2022 10:05]

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Filed by Mail Manager

Hi Jonathan

Comment below in red.

Kind regards

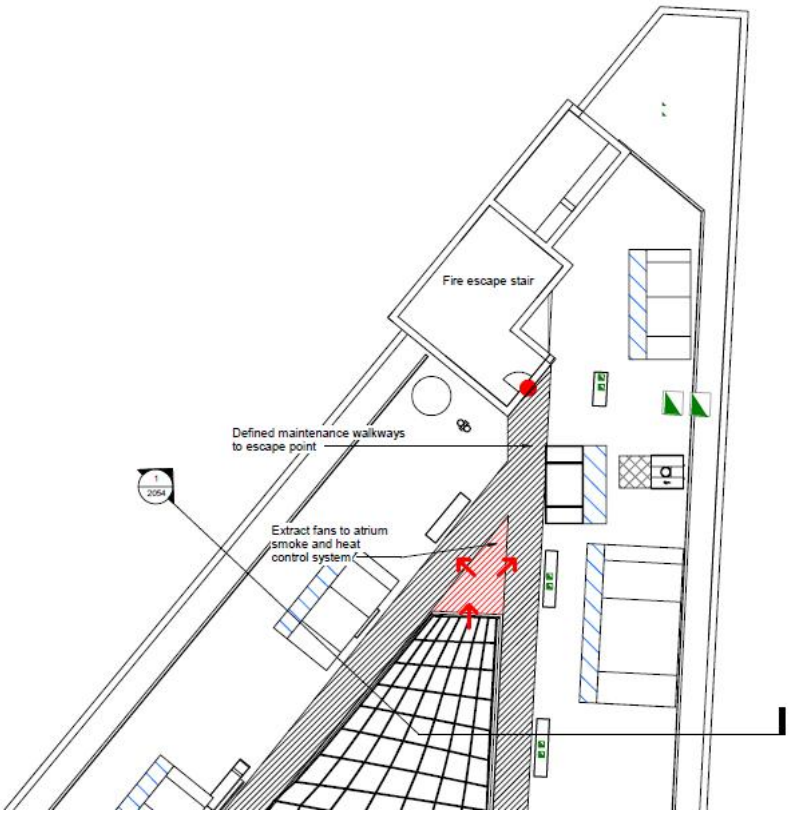
James Ross
Senior Architect
[redacted] | vCard
Leeds • London • Skipton • www.bowmanriley.com
T&C's

From: Jonathan Molesworth [redacted]
Sent: 07 December 2022 12:17
To: James Ross [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]; Richard Manning [redacted]
Subject: RE: George Hotel, Huddersfield - Planning Application Documents

Hi James,

We are mid-way through completing our EcIA and BNG report to accompany the submission. Please can I confirm a few details in order for us to complete these documents:

- Last we spoke, I suggested a 30 sqm green roof (see attached) to enable the required 10% net gain – please can you confirm whether this is achievable and will be included in your design? Please may I have a copy of the finalised plans (showing inclusion of green roof)? Green roof to be included on top of new build lift/stair core which is 30m2 – there is no roof plan (yet) showing green roof to share. Excerpt from fire strategy drawing as below.



- Will there be a construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in place for construction works? We will refer to it, if so, in our report, in the 'embedded mitigation' section. I assume it would include general measures like dust suppression, pollution prevention etc? yes - this will be for the contractor to produce when appointed.

Thanks,
Jon

Kind regards
Jonathan Molesworth
Senior Ecologist

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