



# Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

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|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Report</b>        | Preliminary Ecological Appraisal |
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## Executive Summary

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Janus Architecture to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Huddersfield Bus Depot. This was required in order to identify any potentially important ecological features that may be affected by the proposed development. As part of this assessment, the following surveys were undertaken:

- Desktop survey using freely available resources;
- Walkover survey with UK Habs habitat assessment; and
- Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the buildings on site.

The following important ecological features were identified on site following the conclusion of the above survey work and may be subject to adverse impacts in the absence of suitable mitigation / compensation:

- Low potential for commuting and foraging bats along the site boundary hedgerow;
- Low potential for breeding and nesting birds within the site boundary hedgerow; and
- Low potential for commuting and foraging badgers and other terrestrial mammals.

In the absence of any mitigation measures, the proposed development is anticipated to result in, ***potential adverse impacts***. Mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are set out within **Section 6.0** of this report to ensure the protection of features and a net gain for biodiversity.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Brief

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Janus Architecture to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Huddersfield Bus Depot (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The purpose of this survey was to assess any ecological impacts that may arise as a result of the proposed development. The objectives of the survey were as follows:

- Identify and classify any priority habitats;
- Assess the ecological value of the site;
- Identify any signs of protected species and potential features that may support them
- Make recommendations for further survey work as necessary; and
- Make recommendations for any necessary ecological avoidance and mitigation where possible at PEA stage.

***NB: If the works do not take place within 18 months of this report<sup>1</sup> then the findings of this survey will no longer be considered valid and may require updating.***

### 1.2 Site Description & Location

The site comprises of a bus depot and hardstanding located at the Huddersfield Depot, Old Fieldhouse Lane, Huddersfield, HD2 1AG (centred on OS grid reference SE 15898 18681) (**Fig 1**). The site is bound by Old Fieldhouse Lane to the south, industrial estate buildings to the east and west, and a Huddersfield Broad Canal to the north. The immediate wider environment is predominantly urban, with the site situated on the northeastern outskirts of the town of Huddersfield.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>

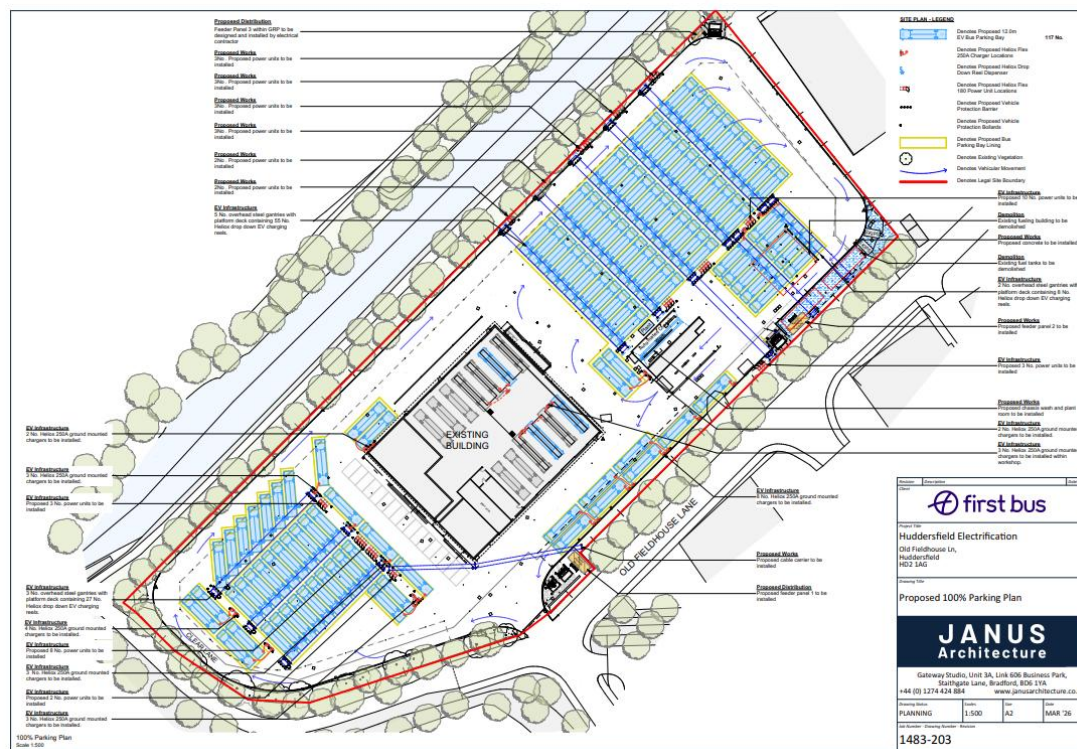
**Figure 1.** Approximate redline boundary of the site (Google Satellite, 2026).



### 1.3 Proposed Development

The proposals entail the installation of EV infrastructure at the Huddersfield Bus Depot to support electric buses (**Fig 2**).

**Figure 2.** Proposed site layout (Drawing No: 1483-203) (Janus Architecture, March 2026).



## 2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

### 2.1 Legislation

#### 2.1.1 *The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019)*

This instrument makes changes to the three existing instruments which transpose the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives so that they continue to work (are operable) upon the UK's exit from the European Union (EU). These include The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This instrument also amends section 27 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to ensure existing protections continue. The intention is to ensure habitat and species protection and standards as set out under the Nature Directives are implemented in the same way or an equivalent way when the UK exits the EU.

This transposes the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into UK domestic law. It provides protection for sites and species deemed to be of conservation importance across Europe. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or injure species listed in Schedule 2 or to damage or destroy their breeding sites or shelter. It is also illegal to deliberately disturb these species in such a way that is likely to significantly impact on the local distribution or abundance or affect their ability to survive, breed and rear or nurture their young.

In order for activities that would be likely to result in a breach of species protection under the regulations to legally take place, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence must first be obtained from Natural England.

#### 2.1.2 *The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)*

This is the primary piece of legislation by which biodiversity is protected within the UK. Protected fauna and flora are listed under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. They include all species of bats, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost or to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost. Similarly, this Act makes it an offence to kill or injure any species of British reptiles and also makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to take, damage or destroy their eggs and nests (whilst in use or being built).

The Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) states that it is an offence to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild' any plant listed in Schedule 9 part II of the Act. This list over 30 plants including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Parrot's Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).

#### 2.1.3 *The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)*

This Act strengthens the Wildlife & Countryside Act by the addition of "reckless" offences in certain circumstances, such as where there is the likelihood of protected species being present. The Act places a duty on Government Ministers and Departments to conserve biological diversity and provides police with stronger powers relating to wildlife crimes.

#### 2.1.4 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires that public bodies have due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. This means that Planning authorities must consider biodiversity when planning or undertaking activities. Section 41 of the Act lists species found in England which were identified as requiring action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the *UK Post – 2010 Biodiversity Framework*.

#### 2.1.5 Protection of Badgers Act

The Protection of Badgers Act (1992) relates to the welfare of Badgers (*Meles meles*) as opposed to nature conservation considerations. The Act prevents:

- The wilful killing, injury, ill treatment or taking of Badgers and / or
- Interference with a Badger sett
- Damaging or destroying all or part of a sett
- Causing a dog to enter a set and
- Disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett

Provisions are included within the Act to allow for the lawful licensing of certain activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under the Act.

#### 2.1.6 The Environment Act (2021)

The Environment Act 2021 is the UK's new legislation for environmental protection in the UK, which includes protection of water quality, clean air, and biodiversity among other key protections. This Act provides the government power to set targets to reach long-term aims relating to the environment, which will be periodically reviewed and updated. This legislation also establishes a new environmental watchdog organisation, the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP), which will hold the government accountable on environmental issues.

Part 6 of The Environment Act relates to nature and biodiversity. This section makes provision for biodiversity net gain to be a condition of planning permission in England and a requirement for nationally significant infrastructure projects. Biodiversity net gain will require maintenance for a period of at least 30 years after the completion of enhancement works to be achieved.

The legislation also includes updates to existing environmental legislation, such as the NERC Act 2006, to strengthen biodiversity enhancement rather than just conservation and includes a requirement for local, or relevant, authorities to publish biodiversity reports. Further, The Environment Act places a requirement on responsible authorities to prepare local nature recovery strategies, which will outline nature conservation sites and priorities and opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity within the local area. Within England, the legislation also provides Natural England with the power to publish 'species conservation strategies' and 'protected site strategies' to identify activities that may affect a species or site's status and outline their opinions on measures that would be appropriate to avoid, mitigate or compensate any adverse impacts.

## 2.2 Policy

### 2.2.1 National

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

Chapter 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity, the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, minimising impacts on and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity including by incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.

The NPPF states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and land should be allocated with the least environmental or amenity value and take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale.

To protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation and promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF states determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a SSSI, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should

be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Potential SPAs and possible SACs, listed or proposed Ramsar sites and sites required as compensatory measures for the previous should be given the same protection as habitats sites.

### *2.2.2 Local – Kirklees Council*

The site falls within the jurisdiction of Kirklees Council, and therefore follows the policies outlined within Kirklees Local Plan (Adopted February 2019). The following policies have been deemed relevant to protecting and enhancing biodiversity on site:

#### **Policy LP30 – Biodiversity & 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.

#### **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.

### **Habitat 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 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
- (v) incorporate biodiversity enhancement measures to reflect the priority habitats and species identified for the relevant Kirklees Biodiversity Opportunity Zone.

### **Policy LP33 - Trees**

The Council will not grant planning permission for developments which directly or indirectly threaten trees or woodlands of significant amenity.

Proposals should normally retain any valuable or important trees where they make a contribution to public amenity, the distinctiveness of a specific location or contribute to the environment, including the Wildlife Habitat Network and green infrastructure networks.

Proposals will need to comply with relevant national standards regarding the protection of trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Where tree loss is deemed to be acceptable, developers will be required to submit a detailed mitigation scheme.

### **Policy LP34 – Conserving and enhancing the water environment**

Proposals must:

1. Ensure no deterioration of water courses or water bodies (including groundwater) by conserving and, where practicable, enhancing:

- a. the natural geomorphology of watercourses, including reinstating watercourses to their natural state through removal of modifications resulting from past industrial uses;
  - b. water quality; and
  - c. the ecological value of the water environment, including the functionality of habitat networks.
2. Ensure Source Protection Zones are protected from contamination as a result of the proposal in line with national guidance.
3. Dispose of surface water appropriately (in accordance with the Local Plan drainage policy) adhering to the following networks in order of preference:
  - a. to an infiltration based system wherever possible (such as soakaways);
  - b. discharge into a watercourse with the prior approval of the landowner, navigation authority or Environment Agency, where applicable. To comply with part 1 of this policy this must be following treatment where necessary or where no treatment is required to prevent pollution of the receiving watercourse;
  - c. discharge to a public sewer.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Desk Study

##### 3.1.1 Waterbodies

Any ponds located within 250m of the proposed development were searched for using Ordnance Survey maps and available aerial images.

##### 3.1.2 Designated Sites, Priority Habitats & Protected Species

A search for designated sites and granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) within 1km of the site was undertaken using freely available online resources. In addition, a search was undertaken for any priority habitats on or nearby to the site.

#### 3.2 Field Survey

##### 3.2.1 Habitats

The field survey work which forms the basis of the findings of this report was carried out by Assistant Project Ecologist with Ecosupport Ltd Laura Chidlow MSci (Hons) on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2026.

Habitats on site pre-development were identified in accordance with the categories specified for a UK Habitats survey, using Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). This was chosen as an appropriate habitat categorisation system as it fits within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation. Where appropriate primary habitat codes were used although for some habitat types, the use of secondary habitat codes was necessary as well.

##### 3.2.2 Badger

The site was thoroughly searched for evidence of use by Badgers (*Meles meles*), with the specific aim of identifying the presence and location of any setts. In accordance with the *Badgers and Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing* (Natural England, 2011) guidance, the survey accounted for a 30m from the site's boundary (observed where possible i.e. does not conflict with private dwellings). Evidence of Badgers could include latrines, dung pits, feeding remains and foraging evidence, trails and setts.

##### 3.2.3 Bats

###### 3.2.3.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

A preliminary roost assessment of the building on site was undertaken by Laura Chidlow of Ecosupport in March 2026 (working under Darla Brown NE class level 2 Bat Licence). This followed BCT (Collins (ed) 2023) best practice survey guidelines searching for any PRFs / evidence of bat occupation and assigning a roost potential assessment as outlined in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1.** Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of a built structure for roosting bats (reproduced from BCT (Collins (ed) 2023).

| Suitability                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Description of Roosting Habitats                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Negligible</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Low</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions <sup>2</sup> and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e., unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats <sup>3</sup> . |
| <b>Moderate</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions <sup>2</sup> and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).                                                                 |
| <b>High</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions <sup>2</sup> and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g., maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.                                                                                                      |
| <p><sup>2</sup> For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten et al., 2016 and Jansen et al., 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

### 3.3 Assessment Methodology

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

The methodology for the assessment of the likely ecological effects of the proposed development is based on CIEEM's *Guidelines for Ecological Assessment in the UK* (CIEEM 2018). Although this assessment does not constitute a formal Ecological/ Environmental Impact Assessment, the CIEEM guidelines provide a useful framework for assessing ecological impacts at any level.

#### 3.3.2 Valuation

Features of ecological interest are valued on a geographic scale. Value is assigned on the basis of legal protection, national and local biodiversity policy and cultural and/or social significance.

### **3.4 Limitations**

#### **3.4.1 Habitats**

Although the survey was taken outside the optimum timing for the identification of botanical interest species, it was considered that the majority of species present could be suitably identified; this was therefore not considered to represent a significant limitation to the overall assessment. This survey does not constitute a full site assessment for invasive species, such as Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*).

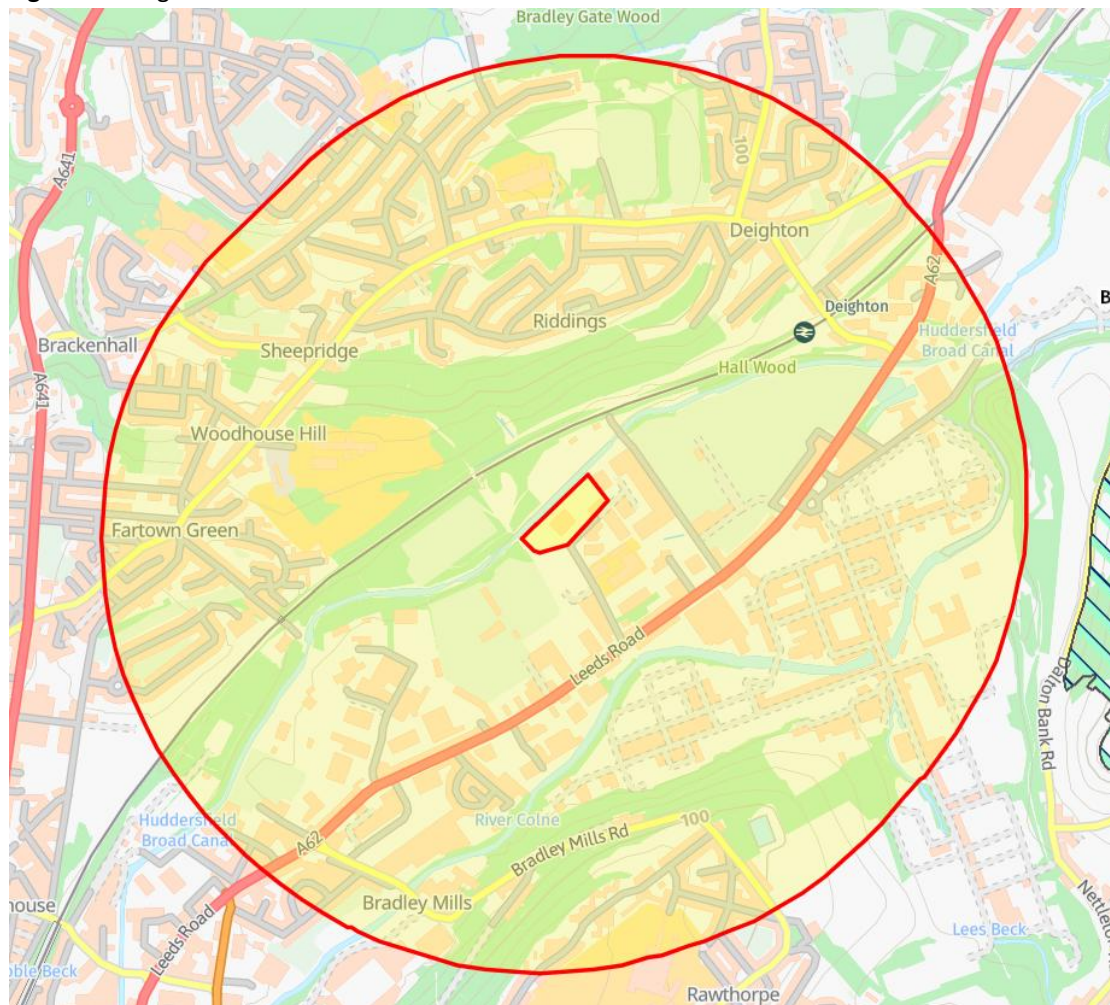
## 4.0 ECOLOGICAL BASELINE

### 4.1 Desktop Search

#### 4.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

Using freely available online resources, there were no designated sites identified from within 1km of the site (**Fig 3**).

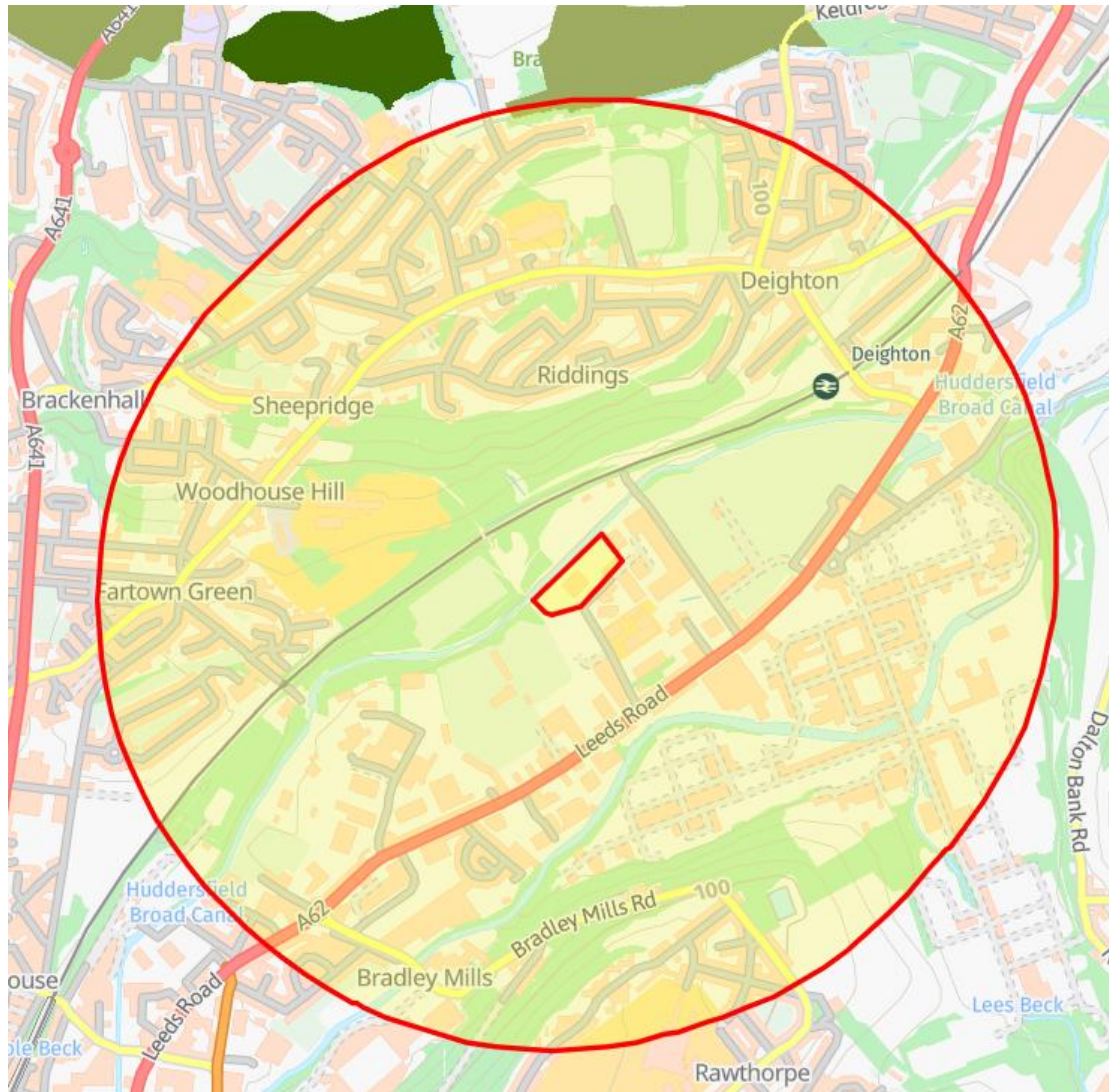
**Figure 3.** Designated sites identified within 1km of the site.



#### 4.1.2 Priority Habitats and Ancient Woodland

No priority habitat was identified on or immediately adjacent to the site, with the closest area being Ancient woodland, located approximately 960m north of the site (**Fig 4**).

**Figure 4.** Priority habitat and ancient woodland identified within 1km of the site.

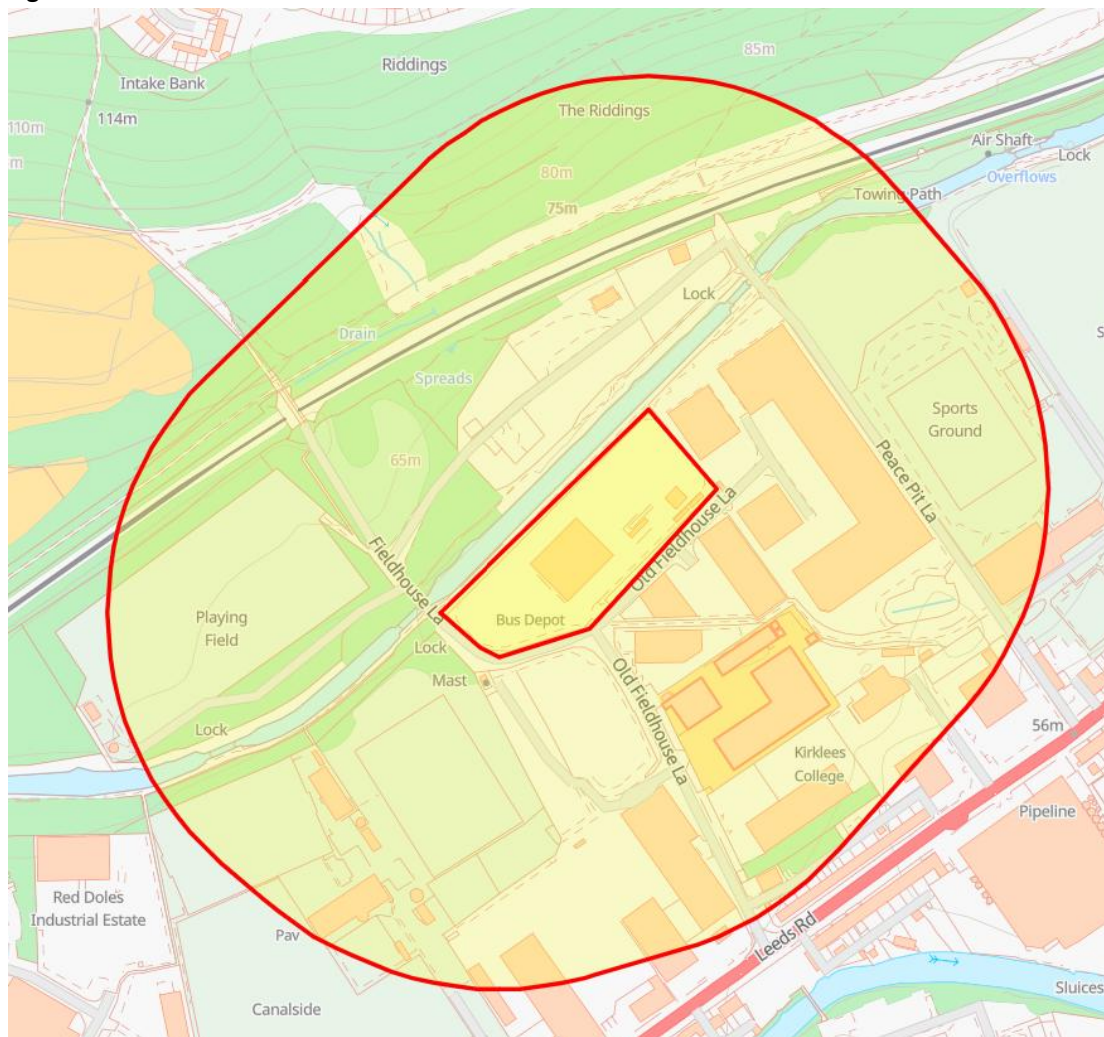


#### 4.1.3 Protected Species

No European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) or Great Crested Newt survey licence returns were identified within 1km of the site.

#### 4.1.4 Waterbodies

Using freely available online resources, no suitable (statutory) waterbodies were identified within 250m of the site (**Fig 5**). Notwithstanding this, Huddersfield Broad Canal lies to the north.

**Figure 5.** Waterbodies within 250m of the site.

## 4.2 Vegetation Survey Results

The vegetation within the site has been described below using the UK Habs Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). The below species noted should not be considered an exhaustive list and instead refer to dominant, characteristic and other noteworthy species associated with each community within the survey area. The habitat types on site comprise:

- Developed Land; Sealed Surface (u1b);
- Buildings (u1b5);
- Built-up Areas and Gardens (u1) with secondary codes (847) Introduced Shrub and (510) Bare Ground; and
- Native Hedgerow (h2a) with secondary code (11) Hedgerow with trees.

### 4.2.1 Developed Land; Sealed Surface

The majority of the site comprises hardstanding, developed land (u1b), which forms parking and access throughout the bus depot (**Fig 6**).

**Figure 5.** View of the hardstanding access and car parking area on site (March 2026).



#### **4.2.2 Buildings (u1b5)**

Three buildings are present on site, one larger warehouse building, a bus wash station and an open storage unit, further described in **Section 4.3.1**.

#### **4.2.3 Built-up Areas and Gardens (u1) with secondary codes (847) Introduced Shrub, and (510) Bare Ground**

To the southeastern corner of the site lies an area of introduced shrub, comprising Common Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and Privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*) (**Fig 6**). Additionally, an area of bare ground forms the southern boundary of the site, which is completely unvegetated and comprises only of soil (**Fig 7**).

**Figure 6.** View of the introduced shrub in the southeastern corner of the site (March 2026).



**Figure 7.** View of the strip of bare ground which runs along the southern boundary (March 2026).



#### 4.2.4 Native Hedgerow (h2a) with secondary code (11) Hedgerow with Trees

One native hedgerow with trees is present along the southwestern boundary of the site (**Fig 8**). Species comprised of Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

**Figure 8.** View of the native hedgerow with trees along the southwestern boundary (March 2026).



### 4.3 Bat Survey Results

#### 4.3.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

An assessment of the three buildings on site was undertaken with the results outlined below: a bus depot, a bus wash station and an open bus fueling station.

The main bus depot is a steel base structure, with a single-skinned metal exterior and a curved metal roof with transparent panels to allow light penetration into the building (**Fig 9**). Both the bus wash station (**Fig 10**) and the fueling station (**Fig 11**) are both open structures with a single-skinned metal exterior. The only building to be impacted by the works is the bus fueling station which is to be demolished under the current proposals.

No PRFs or any evidence of bats were identified in the buildings on site, with all three buildings being subject to high levels of activity and lighting. Therefore, the buildings on site are considered to be of **negligible potential** for roosting bats. The buildings can be seen in **Figures 9, 10 & 11**.

**Figure 9.** Bus Depot building with negligible bat potential (March, 2026).



**Figure 9.** Bus wash station with negligible bat potential (March 2026).



**Figure 10.** View of the bus fueling station with negligible bat potential (March 2026).



#### *4.3.2 Foraging and Commuting Habitat*

The main depot area is entirely built up, which is of negligible potential to bats. However, a native hedgerow with trees is present along the southwestern boundary, which has good connectivity to the woodland to the north of the site and could provide opportunities for commuting and foraging bats. Therefore, this site boundary offers **low potential** for commuting and foraging bats, however, it is not anticipated that the hedgerow is to be impacted by the proposals.

#### 4.4 Badgers & Other Terrestrial Mammals

During the walkover, no evidence of badgers was noted on site. The majority of the site is comprised of hard standing, which offers no value to badgers, with the surrounding environment being predominantly urban. Some woodland areas lie to the north of the site, which has some connectivity to the native hedgerow on site. Therefore, it is considered that the site is of **low potential** for Badgers and other terrestrial mammals.

#### 4.5 Reptiles

The majority of the site is hard standing, and there is no suitable grassland or other habitats that may support reptiles on site and no nearby connected habitats. Therefore, it is considered there is **negligible potential** for reptiles.

#### 4.6 Great Crested Newts

Similar to reptiles, the habitats on site are largely unsuitable for Great Crested Newts (GCN). There are no suitable waterbodies within 250m of the site and no connectivity to suitable habitat or waterbodies. Additionally, no GCN survey licence returns were identified from freely available online resources. Therefore, the site is considered to offer **negligible potential** for GCN.

#### 4.7 Hazel Dormouse

The native hedgerow on site does offer some suitability for Dormouse, which also appears to be connected to the woodland to the north of the site. However, the site is situated in a relatively urban environment and is subject to high levels of disturbance. Therefore, the site is considered to be of **negligible potential** for dormice, with no works anticipated to the hedgerow or trees on site.

#### 4.8 Breeding and Nesting Birds

The native hedgerow with trees along the boundary does offer suitable habitat for breeding and nesting birds, with connectivity to more suitable habitats within the wider environment. Therefore, the site is considered to be of **low potential** for breeding and nesting birds, however, the hedgerow is not anticipated to be impacted by the proposals.

## 5.0 LIKELY ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS IN ABSENCE OF MITIGATION

### 5.1 Introduction

The CIEEM guidelines (CIEEM 2018) require that the potential impacts of the proposals should be considered in absence of mitigation. In order for a significant adverse effect to occur, the feature being affected must be at least of local value. However, in some cases, features of less than local value may be protected by legislation and/or policy and these are also considered within the assessment. Although significant effects may be identified at this stage of the assessment, it is often possible to provide appropriate mitigation.

### 5.2 Site Preparation and Construction

#### 5.2.1 Impacts to Habitats

The works will be entirely restricted to the buildings and areas of hardstanding on site, with the hedgerow and trees to be fenced off. Therefore, it is considered that there will be **negligible impacts** to habitats of **site value**.

#### 5.2.2 Impacts to Wildlife

It is understood that the works will be restricted entirely to the buildings and areas of hardstanding on site. The native hedgerow with trees along the southwestern site boundary offers some potential for commuting and foraging bats and nesting birds, but this feature is to remain unaffected by the works; therefore, it is considered that there will be **negligible impacts** on bats and **negligible impacts** to nesting birds.

The works, however, may require the creation of excavations. This may lead to Badgers becoming trapped or injured during the works. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, **an adverse impact is possible** at the **local level**.

#### 5.2.3 Impacts to Designated Sites

The site does not lie within or adjacent to any designated sites. Considering the relatively low impacts of the proposed works and the considerable distance to the closest designated site, **impacts are negligible** on sites of **county - international value**.

### 5.3 Site Operation

#### 5.3.1 Impacts to Wildlife

Similarly, it is not expected there will be any impacts to wildlife during site operation. The layout will be relatively unchanged with the addition of EV infrastructure throughout, and it will be used in the same way. There is already flood lighting present throughout the developed area, and therefore any minor additions are unlikely to have a significant impact. Therefore, **negligible impacts** on wildlife are expected during operation.

#### 5.3.2 Impacts to Habitats & Designated Sites

It is not expected there will be any changes in impact as a result of the site operation compared to its current use. However, the introduction of EV infrastructure, including power units, transformers and chargers could add some risks such as potential increased risk of fire, however no priority habitats or designated sites are within proximity to be affected should

this occur. Therefore, the risks are relatively low, and ***adverse impacts are negligible*** to designated sites of ***international value***.

## 6.0 MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENTS

### 6.1 Introduction

The below sections outline recommendations, proposed mitigation and compensation appropriate and proportionate. In addition to this, measures are outlined to protect the existing features of value and provide enhancements post-development.

### 6.2 Protection of Boundary Habitats

If any works are proposed near the hedgerow or trees along the site boundaries, then they will be fenced off using Heras fencing or similar to prevent damage from machinery. This will also protect any species that may be inhabiting the trees or hedgerows, such as nesting birds.

### 6.3 Badgers

During the construction phase, any open excavations left overnight will either be covered to prevent commuting badgers and other terrestrial mammals falling in, or escape ladders will be used to prevent them from becoming trapped. Any open pipework will be checked and then capped nightly.

### 6.4 Avoidance of Impacts to Breeding and Nesting Birds

In order to avoid disturbance of breeding and nesting birds or damage to their nests, any works within proximity to the trees along the site boundary should avoid bird nesting season (typically March – August, dependent on weather). If this is not possible, the habitat should be thoroughly checked by an ecologist immediately prior to works. If any active nests are found, they should be left undisturbed with a suitable buffer within which works cannot take place (ca. 5m) until nestlings have fledged.

### 6.4 Enhancements

#### 6.4.1 Bat boxes

To act as a biodiversity enhancement, a total of 1 no. bat box will be erected on a suitably retained tree within the hedgerow along the site boundary. The following model will be installed (if this is not available, alternative models can be used if agreed with the ecologist):

- 1 No Vivara Pro Large Multi Chamber WoodStone bat box

The woodstone bat box will be erected at a location on a mature tree at approximately 3-5m height, in a location that will receive at least partial sunlight, with clear flightlines.

#### 6.5.2 Bird boxes

In addition, a total of 1 no. bird boxes will be erected on a suitably retained tree along within the hedgerow along the site boundary. Vivara Pro Seville or Barcelona Bird Box are recommended models for general bird boxes. This will provide suitable nesting opportunities for a variety of bird species and will increase the nesting opportunities for birds on site. This will be installed on a mature tree in a sheltered location at an approximate height of 1.5-3m.

#### 6.5.3 Biodiversity Net Gain

Although the site lies within 10 m of the adjacent canal, the proposed works are confined entirely to existing hardstanding and will not result in any land-take, habitat loss, or alteration

of surface water pathways. As no impacts to the canal or its associated riparian habitats are anticipated, a River Condition Assessment is not required.

It is considered that this development is exempt from a biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment. There is an exemption for BNG if the following conditions are met:

- The Development must not impact on any onsite priority habitat; and
- If there is an impact on other onsite habitat, that impact must be on less than 25 square metres (e.g. less than a 5m by 5m square) of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero and on less than 5 metres of onsite linear habitat (such as a hedgerow).

A development 'impacts' a habitat if it decreases the biodiversity value. It is understood that all works will be limited to the existing developed area and buildings (i.e. u1b and u1b5 habitats) of negligible biodiversity value and all perimeter habitat will be retained and protected. Therefore, it is considered the site falls under the de minimis exemption for BNG and the site will not be required to demonstrate a net gain in habitats.

Recommendations for biodiversity enhancements have been outlined above. With these recommendations, it is considered the site will provide a sufficient net gain in biodiversity.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken of the site at Huddersfield Bus Depot, Huddersfield, for the proposed development for the installation of EV infrastructure for electric buses. The assessment has identified the potential for foraging and commuting bats, nesting birds and commuting and foraging badgers on site. Mitigation measures have been specified in this report, and targeted enhancements have been provided to ensure the site results in a net gain to biodiversity.

## 8.0 REFERENCES

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## Legend

- Site Boundary
- h2a - hedgerow (priority habitat)
- u1 - built-up areas and gardens
- u1b - developed land. sealed surface
- u1b5 - buildings
- Secondary Codes
  - 11 - Hedgerow with Trees
  - 32 - scattered Trees
  - 837 - introduced Shrub



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|        |                        |
|--------|------------------------|
| Map    | UK Habs Map            |
| Site   | Huddersfield Bus Depot |
| Client | Janus Architecture     |
| Date   | 15/04/2026             |

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