

# **STAIRFOOT ROUNDAABOUT/GRANGE LANE BRIDGE, BARNSELY**

**UPDATE PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL  
AND PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT**

## **STAIRFOOT ROUNDABOUT/GRANGE LANE BRIDGE, BARNSELY UPDATE PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT**

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Ramboll - Stairfoot roundabout/grange lane bridge, Barnsley  
Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and preliminary roost assessment

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ramboll was commissioned in February 2026 by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council ('the Client') to carry out an update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), and protected species assessment of land around Stairfoot roundabout/Grange Lane Bridge, Doncaster Road, Barnsley (henceforth referred to as 'the Site'). The update PEA/PRA is required to due to an amended red line boundary (RLB) and scope, to inform a planning application for proposed works to Stairfoot roundabout, including the demolition of Grange Lane bridge. The main findings are as follows:

- The Site comprised an urban area of busy 'A roads' (Grange Lane and Doncaster Road), within the vicinity of Stairfoot roundabout, Barnsley. Encircled by the roads were areas of grassland, woodland, mixed scrub, and introduced shrub. The Trans Pennine Trail crosses the Site from northwest to southeast, passing over Grange Lane via a former railway bridge with stone abutments and vegetated embankments.
- The habitats present are considered to be of ecological importance at the Site level only. Due to the network of busy roads, urban location, limited connectivity and wider landscape, the site also has low-negligible suitability for most protected and notable species.
- The bridge that crosses Grange Lane was considered of low suitability for roosting bats and a single dusk emergence survey is recommended (May-August) to confirm the presence/likely absence of roosting bats within Potential Roost Features (PRFs) identified, (that are too high to inspect from ground level) and/or the vegetation overgrowing the supporting abutments. A bat activity survey is also recommended in conjunction with this, with surveyors observing any bat passes on top of the bridge to record any evidence of bats using it as a commuting corridor.
- It is recommended that ponds 1 and 2 are subject to updated HSI and eDNA surveys (15th April and 30th June) to record the likely presence/absence of GCN in these ponds.
- A Precautionary Working Method Statement should be produced to cover bats (depending on bat survey results and potential licence requirements), reptiles, nesting birds, hedgehog, GCN (depending on eDNA results), and the proposed demolition of the former railway bridge.
- Three different species of cotoneaster (invasive species) were recorded within the Site. Removal of these if required, should be conducted under a working method statement and supervised, with any waste material disposed of in accordance with associated regulations.
- Vegetation removal should ideally be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (March – September inclusive) or otherwise following nest checks by an experienced ecologist. Mitigation to protect any retained and adjacent trees, including outside of the red line boundary along the Trans Pennine Trail, should also be implemented.
- Opportunities should be explored to maintain or enhance the connectivity of the Trans-Pennine Trail that runs across the Site which is a key link between the Dearne floodplain to the north and habitat to the southeast. Enhancements for the Site should be consistent with the previous reports, including installing bat boxes, bird boxes and tree planting.

- An updated Biodiversity Net Gain assessment may be required in support of the updated scheme proposals and boundary.

This update PEA/PRA concludes ecological importance at site level only. Bat and GCN surveys are however recommended to determine use of the site by these species groups. If significant populations are identified an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) may be required to determine the predicted impacts of the proposed scheme.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Ramboll UK Limited ("Ramboll") was commissioned by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (the "client"), to carry out an update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the land at the former railway bridge that crosses Grange Lane, Stairfoot, Barnsley (the "site"). This was to inform a planning application for a proposed widening scheme of the roundabout to improve traffic congestion in the area, which would include the demolition of the former railway bridge that crosses Grange Lane (the proposed development, as shown in Appendix 1, Figure 3).
- 1.1.2 This appraisal of the updated red line boundary follows previous ecological assessments associated with a wider site boundary including an Update PEA & PRA Report conducted by Temple in 2024<sup>1</sup>, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal<sup>2</sup> (Brooks Ecological 2023) and Preliminary Roost Assessment Temple (Temple 2023<sup>3</sup>).

## 1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 The aim of this report is to provide an update PEA of the site with reference to good practice guidelines (CIEEM, 2017<sup>4</sup>). PEA is the term used to describe a rapid assessment of the ecological features present, or potentially present, within a site and its zone of influence (ZOI). The ZOI is the area over which ecological features may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by the proposed development and its associated activities. The structure and content of the report is based on current ecological report writing guidance (CIEEM 2017<sup>5</sup> and BSI Standards Institution 2013<sup>6</sup>). The PRA was undertaken to Bat Conservation Trust current guidance<sup>7</sup>.
- 1.2.2 The content of this report is therefore based on the findings of:
- a UK Habitat Classification survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023<sup>8</sup>)
  - a protected species assessment including a preliminary roost assessment for bats, and
  - a desk study, including a data search from Barnsley Biological Records Centre
- 1.2.3 The specific objectives of this 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<sup>4</sup>;
  - record the main habitats and features of ecological interest on the site;
  - assess the overall ecological importance of the site;
  - provide recommendations for any additional further surveys (if required); and
  - provide preliminary recommendations for the protection and enhancement of the site's ecological features.

<sup>1</sup> Temple (2024) Stairfoot Roundabout Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment Memo Report. [Issued July 2024]

<sup>2</sup> Brooks Ecological (2023) Stairfoot Roundabout Barnsley, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report.

<sup>3</sup> Temple (2023) Stairfoot Roundabout, Barnsley Preliminary Roost Assessment, Ground Level Tree Assessment and Habitat Suitability Index Report. [Issued November 2023]

<sup>4</sup> CIEEM (2017). *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), Winchester

<sup>5</sup> CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

<sup>6</sup> BSI Standards Institution (2013). BS 42020:2013. *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development*. BSI Standards Limited, London.

<sup>7</sup> Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 4th edition (Collins, J. (ed.) 2023).

<sup>8</sup> UKHab Ltd (2023) UK Habitat classification version 2.0 (at <https://www.ukhab.org/>) [accessed 19/03/2026].

1.2.4 The report is supported by the following appendices:

- Appendix 1: Figures;
- Appendix 2: Site Photographs; and
- Appendix 3: Species List
- Appendix 4: Target Notes

1.2.5 It should be noted that under normal circumstances it is not appropriate to submit a PEA in support of a planning application because the scope of a PEA is unlikely to fully meet planning authority requirements in respect of biodiversity policy and implications for protected species. In particular, further surveys are recommended in this PEA report, which would be required in advance of a planning application being determined. The further surveys recommended in Section 5 of this report should be completed and an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) produced, detailing the results of any further surveys, outlining the impacts of the detailed proposed development on ecological features and making commitments to appropriate mitigation.

1.2.6 However, in this instance, provided the recommendations for further surveys for bats and GCN eDNA are followed and the vegetation clearance can be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (March to September inclusive) and kept low throughout the development. Then due to the low ecological importance of the site and the ZOI, along with the minimal potential impacts predicted, a full EcIA is not recommended and this PEA report contains sufficient information on which the application can be determined.

### **1.3 Site Context**

1.3.1 The survey was undertaken to an updated Site boundary supplied by the client, which is centred on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SE 37278 05598. The Site comprised an urban area of busy A roads (Grange Lane and Doncaster Road), within the vicinity of Stairfoot roundabout, Barnsley. Encircled by roads were areas of grassland, woodland, mixed scrub, and introduced shrub. The Trans Pennine Trail crossed the Site from northwest to southeast, passing over Grange Lane by a former railway bridge. The wider area is dominated by commercial and residential properties, particularly to the north and west, with a more open mixture of commercial and residential, interspersed with farmland and areas of woodland to the south, east and northeast (Appendix 1, Figure 1). The Stairfoot Disused Railway Local Wildlife Site (LWS) lies 50m to the northeast of the Site (Appendix 1, Figure 2). The Trans-Pennine Trail provides an extensive wildlife corridor with connectivity to woodland, ponds, farmland, scrub, hedgerows, and the River Dearne floodplain corridor to the north, and the southeast, including Netherwood Country Park.

### **1.4 Proposed Development**

1.4.1 The proposals for the Site, based on plans provided by the client (Barnsley District Council) are for a road widening scheme and junction improvements to alleviate traffic congestion. It is understood that the bridge which crosses Grange Lane is to be demolished and replaced as part of the proposed works.

### **1.5 Legislation and Policy Framework**

1.5.1 The following key pieces of nature conservation legislation are relevant to this appraisal:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017<sup>9</sup> (as amended);
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981<sup>10</sup> (as amended);
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006<sup>11</sup>;
- Environment Act 2021<sup>12</sup>; and
- Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996<sup>13</sup>.

1.5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024<sup>14</sup>) requires public authorities to minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. The Environment Act 2021 has strengthened the duty to conserve biodiversity within the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, such that all public authorities are required to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

1.5.3 Other planning policies at the local level of relevance to the proposed development include Policy GI1, GS2 and BIO1 of the Barnsley Local Plan (2019<sup>15</sup>), and relevant habitat and species plans within the Barnsley Local Biodiversity Action Plan (Barnsley Council, 2010<sup>16</sup>).

## 1.6 Legal

1.6.1 This report has been prepared by Ramboll exclusively for the intended use by the client in accordance with the agreement dated February 2026 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.

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1.6.3 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.

## 1.7 Nomenclature

1.7.1 A botanical species list, including scientific names in accordance with Stace (2019<sup>17</sup>), is provided in Appendix 3. Common names of species, in accordance with the Natural History Museum Species

<sup>9</sup> The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

<sup>10</sup> The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

<sup>11</sup> Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, c. 16.

<sup>12</sup> Environment Act 2021

<sup>13</sup> Wild Mammals Protection Act, 1996

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [accessed 20/03/2026].

<sup>15</sup> Barnsley Local Plan (2019), <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/17249/local-plan-adopted.pdf> [accessed 20/03/2026]

<sup>16</sup> Barnsley Biodiversity Trust (2010) Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan. Barnsley LBAP Edition 2008 (barnsleybiodiversity.org.uk) [accessed 19/03/2026]

<sup>17</sup> Stace, C.A. (2019). *New Flora of the British Isles (4th Ed.)*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Dictionary (Natural History Museum, undated<sup>18</sup>), are used throughout this report with scientific names given at first mention only for fauna.

<sup>18</sup> Natural History Museum (undated). *UK Species Inventory*. Available at: <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/our-science/data/uk-species/index> [accessed 19/03/2026]

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 Data sources from Barnsley Biological Records Centre, the local Biological Records Centre (operated by Sheffield BRC) and MAGIC were reviewed to inform the desk study. 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 value such as woodland and ponds. 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: Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) up to 2 km from the site;
- records of protected species up to 2 km from the site; and
- international and national statutory designated sites with bats as a qualifying feature for designation, up to 10 km from the site.

### 2.2 UK Habitat Classification Survey

2.2.1 A UK Habitat Classification survey of the Site was undertaken by Mark Gough, an ecologist with four years' experience, on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026, the weather during the survey period was cool and dry with a light breeze, mostly sunny, with occasional cloud.

2.2.2 The survey involved a site walkover and preliminary assessment of key habitats, land use and ecological features to the revised Site boundary. The main habitats present were recorded using UK Habitat Classification survey methodology as described in the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 Handbook (UKHab Ltd, 2023<sup>8</sup>). In addition to general habitat classification, a list was compiled of observed plant species (using the nomenclature of Stace (2019<sup>17</sup>) with common names referred to within the report text. The abundance of each species was estimated for each habitat respectively using standard 'DAFOR' codes:

- D = Dominant
- A = Abundant
- F = Frequent
- O = Occasional
- R = Rare

### 2.3 Protected and/or Notable Species Assessment

2.3.1 The site was assessed for its potential to support protected and notable species such as bats, reptiles, amphibians, and nesting birds, 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. The likelihood of the Site supporting protected and/or notable species was ranked on a scale from 'negligible' to 'present' as described in Table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1: Protected and/or notable species assessment**

Category	Description
Present	Presence confirmed by the current survey or by recent and/or desk study records.
High	Habitat present provides all of the known key requirements for a given species/species group. Local records are provided by desk study. The Site is within or close to a national or regional stronghold for a particular species. Good quality surrounding habitat and good connectivity.
Moderate	Habitat present provides some of the known key requirements for a given species/species group. Several desk study records and/or the Site are within known national distribution and with suitable surrounding habitat. Factors limiting the likelihood of occurrence may include small habitat area, barriers to movement and disturbance.
Low	Habitat present is of relatively poor quality for a given species/species group. Few or no desk study records. Presence cannot be discounted on the basis of national distribution, nature of surrounding habitats or habitat fragmentation.
Negligible	Habitat is either absent or of very poor quality for a particular species or species group. No desk study records. Surrounding habitat unlikely to support wider populations of a species/species group. Outside or peripheral to the known range of a species.

- 2.3.2 The findings of this assessment establish the need for protected species surveys that are required to achieve compliance with relevant legislation. Surveys may be required where a site is judged to be of low suitability for a particular species/species group. However, in some cases there may be opportunities to comply with legislation, without further survey, through precautionary measures prior to and during construction.

## 2.4 Site Evaluation

- 2.4.1 Where sufficient baseline data are available, the importance of the Site's ecological importance has been evaluated broadly following guidance issued by CIEEM<sup>4</sup> which ranks the nature conservation importance of a site according to a geographic scale of reference: international, national, regional (Northeast England), metropolitan, county (South Yorkshire), vice-county or other local authority-wide area (Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley); and of importance at the zone of influence of the Site only. In evaluating the nature conservation importance of the Site, the following factors were considered: nature conservation designations; species/habitat rarity; naturalness; fragility and connectivity to other habitats. Where no importance has been assigned this is due to insufficient information.
- 2.4.2 Where potential ecological constraints to development are identified, further survey requirements and/or design considerations that are proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development are described. In addition, with reference to the Environment Act 2021, NPPF and local/regional planning policies, a range of opportunities to enhance or create benefits for wildlife are provided where this is possible based on the information available to date. These measures may be appropriate for the attainment of net gains in biodiversity, although this assessment does not provide a formal measure of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

## 2.5 Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 2.5.1 The PRA consisted of an external inspection of all features/surfaces from ground level, of the former railway bridge that crosses Grange Lane, and was undertaken on the 4<sup>th</sup> march 2026. Stewart Hirst, an ecologist with four years' experience, and holder of a Level 1 Bat licence (2025-

85799-C117-BAT), undertook the assessment, assisted by Mark Gough, an ecologist with over four years' ecological consultancy experience.

- 2.5.2 The aim of the survey outlined below was to establish the suitability of the buildings within the site to support bat roosts. The suitability of structures to support roosting bats, ranging from negligible to the presence of a confirmed roost, is assessed using the findings of the survey and the desk study. The following criteria were used to determine the suitability of the buildings for roosting bats (taken from Collins, 2023<sup>19</sup>):

**Table 2.2: Categories for bat roost suitability (Collins, 2023)**

Potential Suitability	Description of roosting habitats in structures
None	No habitat features likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices / suitable shelter at all ground / underground levels).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	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 and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by large 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).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites 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 (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).
High	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, and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts e.g., maternity or classic cool / stable hibernation site.

- 2.5.3 The gathered information has been used to inform whether further survey is required in the form of endoscope survey or dusk emergence and/or dawn re-entry surveys to fully understand how bats are using the site and the potential impacts of the proposals on bats, or whether an assessment can be made on the basis of the building inspection alone.
- 2.5.4 The survey comprised an external inspection of the structures within the site, involving a detailed search of all accessible architectural features for bat droppings, urine staining, scratch marks, staining around suitable crevices and feeding remains. External surfaces were checked for droppings or other secondary evidence. Any features that could potentially provide access into internal areas (such as cavity walls) were noted.
- 2.5.5 The survey methodology followed best practice guidelines (Reason & Wray, 2023<sup>20</sup>; Collins, 2023<sup>19</sup>). Equipment used during the building inspection included close focusing binoculars and a torch.

<sup>19</sup> Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 4th edition. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

<sup>20</sup> Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield

## 2.6 Data Validity and Limitations

- 2.6.1 The ecological assessment has been undertaken based on CIEEM's 2017 Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, with elements of 2019 Ecological Impact Assessment Guidelines<sup>21</sup>, taking a proportional approach to the level of survey effort and reporting required due to the size and suburban nature of the site.
- 2.6.2 The UK Habitat Classification walkover survey and protected species assessment provides a snapshot of ecological conditions and does not record plants or animals that may be present at the site at different times of the year. It does not constitute a full botanical survey, and it should not be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group. It is only valid at the time that the survey was carried out.
- 2.6.3 The UK Habitat Classification walkover survey was undertaken just outside the optimum April to September survey period when plants are generally visible. Given the extent and urban nature of the habitats, it is not considered to have had a significant impact on the results.
- 2.6.4 It is important to note that even where data are held, a lack of records for a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of ecological interest; the area may be simply under-recorded.
- 2.6.5 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)<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> 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

<sup>22</sup> 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 22/10/2025]

### 3. BASELINE CONDITIONS

#### 3.1 Desk Study

##### Statutory Designated Sites

- 3.1.1 The Site is not subject to any statutory nature conservation designations. There are no internationally important sites within a 2km radius of the Site. There are two nationally important sites within 2km of the Site, and one locally important site. The results are shown in table 3.1 below.
- 3.1.2 The Site falls within the 2km Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for the Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI. Development at the Site falls into the category of “infrastructure – any transport proposal including road” and therefore meets criteria requiring the Local Planning Authority to consult Natural England in relation to potential impacts.

**Table 3.1: Statutory Designated Sites**

Site Name	Distance from Site	Qualifying features/Description
Stairfoot Brickworks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1km SE	Geological Interest
Dearne Valley Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	1.1km NW	Acid oak woodland, with a mosaic of wetland habitats
Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI	1.9km SE	A network of 22 wetland, scrub and woodland habitats, with assemblages of breeding birds of Lowland damp grasslands, Lowland scrub and a mixed assemblage of Lowland open waters and their margins and Lowland fen.

##### Non-Statutory Designated Sites

- 3.1.3 There are three Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within the 2km search radius (Appendix 1, Figure 2), with the results shown in table 3.2 below. Of these, one is of potential relevance to the survey Site:
- 3.1.4 Stairfoot Disused Railway lies within 60m of the site’s northern extent. This LWS contains habitats of broadleaved woodland, scrub, neutral grassland, bracken and swamp. It also includes a stretch of the River Dearne.
- 3.1.5 Stairfoot Disused Railway is designated a LWS due to the presence of UKBAP breeding bird species (linnet, reed bunting, dunnoek, bullfinch, and song thrush) and ancient woodland indicator plants (great woodrush, bush vetch, sessile oak, bluebell, dog’s-mercury, and wood millet).

**Table 3.2: Non-Statutory Designated Sites**

Site Name	Distance from Site	Qualifying features/Description
Stairfoot Disused Railway (LWS) Site Code 28	60m NE	Area formed by disused railway lines adjacent to the River Dearne. Mosaic of habitats including broadleaved woodland, scrub, neutral grassland, bracken and swamp.
Cliff Wood (LWS) (Part of Dearne Valley Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR))	1km NW	Acid oak woodland, with a mosaic of wetland habitats, including wet woodland, neutral grassland, and swamp. Site contains UKBAP breeding birds such as willow tit ( <i>Poecile montanus</i> ), dunnock ( <i>Prunella modularis</i> ), bullfinch ( <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> ) and song thrush ( <i>Turdus philomelos</i> ).
Sunny Bank, Horse Carr and Storrs Wood LWS Site Code 31	1.58km E	Five areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland on both sides of the River Dearne. Areas are likely to be used by a range of species that favour woodland habitats such as woodland birds and bat species.

## 3.2 Habitats

- 3.2.1 A description of dominant and notable species and the composition of each habitat is provided below (see also Appendix 1, Figure 3 for habitat map), with a species list (including all scientific names) provided in Appendix 3. Photographs are located in Appendix 2.

### General Site Description

- 3.2.2 The land within the updated site boundary comprised a roundabout, several busy 'A' roads, with footpaths, and a former railway bridge that crossed Grange Lane, and carried a section of the Trans-Pennine Trail. Habitats within the updated Site boundary comprise hardstanding roads and pavements with surrounding grassland, introduced shrub, woodlands, mixed scrub and individual trees. The Site has only minimal habitat changes since the previous surveys (Temple, 2024<sup>1</sup> and Brooks Ecological, 2023<sup>2</sup>), with some habitat designations being amended to grassland, introduced shrub and mixed scrub, due to changes in habitat composition. Areas of cotoneaster (several species of which are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)), were present across the Site, and have been highlighted as Target Notes on the habitat map (Appendix 1, Figure 3).

### Hardstanding (u1b Developed land; sealed surface)

- 3.2.3 Areas of hardstanding made up a significant proportion of the Site and consisted of the road network, associated pavements and pedestrian paths and an area that was part of a demolished pub. The section of the Trans-Pennine Trail footpath which crosses the Site from northwest to southeast, was also hardstanding (Appendix 2, Photo 4 & 11).

### Buildings (u1b5 Buildings)

- 3.2.4 A single-storey timber, sloping-roofed building was present within an area of hardstanding that was part of a demolished pub (Appendix 2, Photo 9). The building was enclosed in its entirety by a steel, fine-meshed fence with an intruder alarm fitted. No features suitable for roosting bats or nesting birds were present on the building. The other structure was the former railway bridge that spanned Grange Lane (Appendix 2, Photo 11) which is discussed under the PRA in section 3.4.

### Modified grassland (g4 modified grassland) Secondary code (108)

- 3.2.5 Areas of typical, well-mown modified grass were present across the Site and featured as open spaces (Appendix 2, Photo 1), grass verges, and areas also existed alongside the Trans-Pennine Trail (Appendix 2, Photo 5). All were regularly mown, except for a neglected area adjacent to the demolished pub. The sward was typically dominated by perennial rye-grass, with occasional red

fescue, Yorkshire fog, white clover, daisy, dandelion, yarrow, chickweed, greater and ribwort plantains. The area adjacent to the demolished pub was previously identified as u1f-sparsely vegetated urban land but has been changed due to an increase in the vegetative cover.

Other neutral grassland (g3c other neutral grassland) Secondary codes (10, 16, 128, and 202)

An area of neutral grassland was present on the surrounding the demolished pub site. The sward was unmanaged and estimated to be 50cm tall, and composed of dominant creeping bent, false oat-grass, red fescue and cock's-foot, with various forbs including frequent ribwort plantain, dandelion, spear and creeping thistles, broad-leaved dock, and cleavers, and occasional ox-eye daisy, common vetch, narrow-leaved ragwort, white deadnettle, common bindweed, tansy, mugwort, and feverfew. Scrub species such as bramble, and sapling goat willow, ash, and alder, were establishing in parts, as were cotoneaster species (Appendix 2, Photo 8).

Introduced shrub (u1 built-up areas and gardens) Secondary code (847)

- 3.2.6 Areas of introduced/ornamental shrub planting were present on the Site. One section bordered Grange Lane and Doncaster Road (Appendix 2, Photo 1), whilst other areas were present adjacent to the Trans-Pennine Trail in the southeast of the Site. Ornamental shrub species included honeysuckle sp., laurel, coralberry, snowberry, hebe, pyracantha and cotoneaster species. Much of the stonework and banking associated with the former railway bridge supports were densely covered in wall cotoneaster and ivy species (Appendix 2, Photos 6, 12, 16 & 17).

Mixed scrub (h3h mixed scrub)

- 3.2.7 Two areas of mixed scrub were identified within the revised Site boundary during the survey. One was adjacent to Doncaster Road, where a footpath led up to a section of the Trans-Pennine Trail in the northeast of the Site. On the previous update PEA report (Temple, 2024), it had been identified as part of the w1g habitat, but with the reduction in the Site boundary the habitat was changed to mixed scrub due to the lack of trees. The other area was adjacent to the area of modified grassland associated with the demolished pub in the southwest of the Site. Formerly identified as u1f, the designation was changed due to an increase in woody species within the area (Appendix 2, Photo 7). There was a difference in species composition between both areas, but generally, species included bramble, dogrose, dogwood, elder, and honeysuckle, with a ground layer of common nettle, ivy and cleavers.

Other broadleaved woodland (w1q other broadleaved woodland) secondary code (202)

- 3.2.8 Four sections of broadleaved woodland were present on either side of the Trans-Pennine Trail on the former railway embankment in the northwest and southeast of the Site. In the northwest of the Site, the woodland was primarily dominated by ash and hawthorn, with occasional silver birch and sycamore present. The majority of the trees were semi-mature or young, with some young stands of self-seeded ash growth. There was a shrub layer and ground flora of mixed native and ornamental species which included cotoneaster species, coralberry, St. John's wort, dogwood, ivy, common nettle, cleavers, wood avens, and dandelion (Appendix 2, Photos 4 and 5).
- 3.2.9 The woodland areas to the southeast of the Site featured more semi-mature aged trees, with some shrub understorey, species included ash, alder, sycamore, cherry, willow, sweet chestnut and hazel. The shrub layer and ground flora included ivy, cleavers, cow parsley, cotoneaster, bramble, yarrow, dogrose and flowering currant (Appendix 2, Photo 5).

#### Non-native ornamental hedgerow (h2b non-native ornamental hedgerow)

- 3.2.10 A single section of this linear habitat was identified to the southeast of the Site along the boundary. It began as a section of ornamental beech hedge and ended as a section of leylandii adjacent to the demolished pub area. The beech hedge showed signs of being managed, but the leylandii appeared to be unmanaged (Appendix 2, Photo 10).

#### Individual trees

- 3.2.11 A small number of urban trees were present across the Site, with all of them within either introduced shrub or modified grassland areas. Species included alder, sweet chestnut and silver birch. All were considered to fall into the 'small' urban tree category, and were either semi-mature or young. Some management of the trees was evident, although it did not appear to be having an adverse effect on tree health. No features suitable for roosting bats were present (Appendix 2, Photo 1).

### **3.3 Species**

#### **Bats**

- 3.3.1 The Desk study returned 9 records for bats within the last ten years, with two records from 2023 for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) foraging approximately 500m west of the Site. There were four records from 2016 of pipistrelle species foraging along or in the vicinity of the Trans-Pennine Trail, approximately 600m west of the Site.
- 3.3.2 There were four granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSM) from 2016, 925m east of the Site. This was for the destruction of a soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) roost at the former Ardsley House Hotel, which was demolished to make way for a small housing development.
- 3.3.3 Bats roosting: The trees within the amended red line boundary survey area were semi-mature or young, with no observable features suitable for roosting bats. The former railway bridge that crosses Grange Lane was subject to a PRA survey with the results detailed in subsection 3.4 below.
- 3.3.4 Bats foraging and commuting: The Site was urban based and therefore had low quality suitable foraging habitat. However, the linear habitat adjacent to the Trans-Pennine trail provided connectivity to larger areas of suitable commuting/foraging habitat, including hedgerows, woodland and grassland. As a result the Site is unlikely to provide an important foraging source for bats, but does provide a commuting corridor to suitable foraging habitat. Bats are considered further in Section 4 of this report.

#### **Great crested newt**

- 3.3.5 The desk study returned no records for GCN within a 2km radius of the Site.
- 3.3.6 There was limited suitable habitat on the Site with the potential to support GCN, with the areas of grassland and edge habitat within the ground/shrub layer of the woodland present alongside the Trans-Pennine Trail being the most suitable, however this was limited in its extent. Pond 2 (Grid Reference SE 37142 05753) (discussed below) had unbroken habitat connectivity to the Trans-Pennine Trail to the northwest of the Site, which provided connectivity to the habitats present within the survey Site boundary adjacent to the Trans-Pennine Trail. Connectivity to other suitable habitat within the wider area was deemed unlikely due to the network of busy roads close to the survey Site.
- 3.3.7 The reduction in the size of the Site boundary means only two ponds (ponds 1 and 2) are now present within 250m of the Site. Pond 1 (Grid Reference SE 37418 05336) was declared unsuitable in the 2023 PEA report, no further information was provided (Brooks Ecological, 2023<sup>2</sup>). Pond 2 was subject to a HSI assessment, scoring average (Temple, 2023<sup>3</sup>). Given the above, GCN are considered further in Section 4 of this report.

## **Birds**

- 3.3.8 There were 906 records for bird species within the last ten years within the 2km radius of the Site. Several species listed as red or amber species on the Birds of Conservation Concern 5 Report (2021), including bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), willow tit (*Poecile montanus*), willow warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*), and wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), were recorded.
- 3.3.9 Common species of birds were seen and heard during the update survey, and the woodland, introduced shrub and individual trees within the Site were assessed as having low potential for nesting birds. The Site has negligible suitability to support species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It was noted that feral pigeons were present within the structure of the former railway bridge and were most likely nesting there. It is likely that common species breeding birds will occur at the Site in low numbers and as such they are considered further in Section 4 of this report.

## **Reptiles**

- 3.3.10 The desk study returned five records for reptile species within the last ten years, with grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) being the most recent from 2018. The grid reference was insufficient to give an accurate location.
- 3.3.11 The grass verges and ground flora/shrub layer within the woodland adjacent to the Trans-Pennine Trail footpath had low suitability for foraging and refuge for more common species of reptiles, such as slow worm and common lizard. The Trans-Pennine Trail does provide connectivity to more suitable habitat within the wider area, particularly to the northwest. Suitable habitat to the northeast and southeast is separated from the Site by busy roads. Reptiles are considered further in Section 4 of this report.

## **Terrestrial invertebrates**

- 3.3.12 There were 13 records for small heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*) butterfly from the last ten years, but the grid references were insufficient to give an accurate location.
- 3.3.13 Small heath is listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act, which calls for the maintenance of their favourable conservation status. The Site contains grassland habitats, which contain the larval foodplants of small heath butterfly.

## **Hedgehog**

- 3.3.14 The desk study returned three records for hedgehog within the last ten years, all from 2018. The grid references were insufficient to give an accurate location.
- 3.3.15 There was suitable habitat across the Site for hedgehog, including areas of grassland, mixed scrub, and woodland. The areas adjacent to the Trans-Pennine Trail footpath were particularly suitable, with providing habitat for foraging and shelter, and connectivity unencumbered by busy roads. Whilst other areas of suitable habitat were present, the heavily urbanised and busy road layout away from the trail, would make it difficult to access. Hedgehog are considered further in Section 4 of this report.

## **Invasive species (plants)**

- 3.3.16 Three species of cotoneaster present on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) were identified across the Site during the walkover survey (small-leaved, wall and Himalayan), with their locations recorded as Target Notes (Appendix 1, Figure 3. Please also see Appendix 2, Photos 3 and 6), and as such invasive plants are considered further in Section 4 of this report.

### **3.4 Preliminary Roost Assessment**

- 3.4.1 The most recent records of bat activity from the desk study are recorded in paragraph 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 above.
- 3.4.2 A PRA of the former railway bridge that crosses Grange Lane was undertaken on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026. The survey identified eight potential roost features (PRFs). The bridge (including the steel bridge itself and the stone supporting pillars) was assessed as having moderate suitability to support roosting bats however, when taking into consideration factors influencing suitability for bats, this assessment has been reduced to low suitability.
- 3.4.3 Supporting photographs of key features are provided in Appendix 2. Table 3.3 provides an assessment of the former railway bridge.

Structure	Description	Potential Roost Features (PRFs)	Factors Influencing Suitability for Bats	Structure Suitability	Recommendations
Grange Lane Bridge	Former railway bridge consisting of a steel riveted section that spans Grange Lane and sits on two stone abutments.	PRF 1 vertical crack in stone abutment on western side of bridge (Photograph 12)	exposed to light pollution and heavy traffic/noise pollution- No bat evidence (droppings, staining or feeding remains) identified	Overall, the bridge was considered to be of Moderate suitability, however when taking into consideration wider factors influencing suitability for bats (eg lighting, disturbance, connectivity), this assessment has been reduced to Low.	Further survey required, comprising a single dusk emergence survey carried out between May to August inclusive, as per best practice guidelines <sup>7</sup> .
		PRF 2 gap/void where western stone abutment meets steel structure of bridge span (Photo 12)	exposed to noise pollution, presence of feral pigeon roost and droppings, potential water ingress.		
		PRF 3 ivy overgrowing stone abutment on western side of bridge adjacent to Doncaster Road (Photo 12)	exposed to light pollution and heavy traffic/noise pollution		
		PRF 4 vertical crack in stone abutment on eastern side of bridge (Photo 13)	exposed to light pollution and heavy traffic/noise pollution-No bat evidence (droppings, staining or feeding remains) identified		
		PRF 5 gap/void where eastern stone abutment meets steel structure of bridge span (Photos 14/15)	exposed to noise pollution, presence of feral pigeon roost and droppings, potential water ingress.		

		PRF 6 vertical crack in stonework where eastern abutment meets further supporting stonework (Photo 17)	exposed to light pollution and heavy traffic/noise pollution-use of torch revealed crack blocked with mortar, cobwebs, and of insufficient depth-no longer considered a PRF.		
		PRF 7 ivy overgrowing stone abutment on eastern side of bridge adjacent to Grange Lane (Photo 17)	exposed to light pollution and heavy traffic/noise pollution		
		PRF 8 wall cotoneaster overgrowing stone abutment on eastern side of bridge adjacent to Doncaster Road (Photos 6/16)	exposed to light pollution and heavy traffic/noise pollution, stones wet adjacent to feature indicating water ingress/egress from above.		

## 4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.0.1 This section collates the information gained during the desk study and UK Habitat Classification survey and protected species assessment, presenting the ecological constraints and opportunities and making recommendations for mitigation and further surveys. It has been prepared in view of the proposed development of the Site.

### 4.1 Assessment of Important of Ecological Features

- 4.1.1 Table 4.1 presents the ecological importance of habitats and species present on the site, in accordance with CIEEM guidance.

**Table 4.1: Ecological Importance of Features Present on the Site (in accordance with CIEEM, 2016)**

Feature	Ecological Importance	Rationale
Hardstanding	Negligible	Does not contribute to biodiversity value of the site.
Buildings (including bridge)	Negligible	Does not contribute to biodiversity value of the site.
Introduced shrub	Site level	Horticultural shrubs selected for amenity planting, which do provide greenery, and some degree of pollution and noise control. It provides potential habitat for birds, invertebrates and hedgehog, but also contains invasive non-native species. Its ecological value is unlikely to extend beyond Site level.
Modified Grassland	Site Level	Provides low species diversity, reduced through intensive management and is a common habitat type in the locality.
Other neutral grassland	Site level	Provides moderate species diversity but will continue to succeed into scrub with no management. Poorly connected to other similar habitat, contains some food plants of small heath butterfly. Its ecological value is unlikely to extend beyond Site level.
Individual Trees	Site Level	Nine trees fall within the site boundary. Due to the use of the site, their ecological value is unlikely to extend beyond Site level.
Other broadleaved woodland	Local level	Contributes to biodiversity value of the Site and provides potential habitat for nesting birds, hedgehog, common reptiles. Also acts as a wildlife corridor, and is a priority habitat listed in the Barnsley BAP <sup>23</sup> , its ecological value is unlikely to extend beyond Local level.
Mixed Scrub	Site Level	Contributes to biodiversity value of the site and provides potential habitat for nesting birds but its ecological value is unlikely to extend beyond the site Level.
Non-native ornamental hedgerow	Negligible	Provides low species diversity and contains leylandii species. Contributes minimally to the biodiversity value of the Site.

### 4.2 Impact Assessment and recommendations

- 4.2.1 The Site has undergone some change since the previous surveys were conducted, and it is anticipated that there will be some loss of habitat, particularly in relation to the proposed demolition of the former railway bridge. These losses have the potential to impact a range of protected species, including bats and nesting birds. For each constraint identified, all mitigation options provided follow the established Mitigation Hierarchy as set out in Section 5.2 of BS42020:2013<sup>24</sup>. This seeks as a preference to avoid impacts then to mitigate unavoidable impacts, and, as a last resort, to compensate for unavoidable residual impacts that remain after avoidance and mitigation

<sup>23</sup> Biodiversity Action Plan, (Barnsley Biodiversity Trust, updated 2023) [online accessed 20/03/2026] [Habitats | Barnsley Biodiversity Plan](#)

<sup>24</sup> British Standards Institution (2013) Biodiversity. Code of practice for planning and development: 42020. BSI, London.

measures. All ecological constraints, including additional ones identified during this survey, are discussed below:

### **4.3 Designated Sites**

- 4.3.1 It is considered unlikely that there will be any impacts from the proposed works on any designated sites, due to the nature and size of the proposed works, and the distance from the Site to any designated sites.
- 4.3.2 The nearest site is Stairfoot Disused Railway LWS. The majority of this site lies to the northeast of the proposed works, with only the southern-most point being 60m from the works boundary at its closest point, from which it extends approximately 1km north within a more wooded and agricultural setting. Adjacent to the site it is high urbanised with existing traffic/anthropogenic disturbance. Subject to standard construction good working practices, no significant impacts on the reasons for this sites designation are predicted.
- 4.3.3 The Site's separation and distance from the two other LWSs means any direct and indirect impacts from the proposed works are further unlikely.

### **4.4 Habitats**

- 4.4.1 The woodland, mixed scrub, other neutral grassland, and individual trees should be retained where possible and protected throughout the demolition and construction phases of the development, owing to their value to local wildlife and ecosystem services they provide. Retained trees should be protected during construction activities in accordance with BS 5837: 2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction', in order to reduce the possibility of any damage, to both crown and roots of the trees.
- 4.4.2 Working under the principle of net-gain as supported by planning policy, any habitats removed should be compensated for through soft landscaping proposals including wildlife planting schemes.
- 4.4.3 An updated Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment should be conducted with reference to statutory guidelines in order to demonstrate a minimum of 10% Net Gain in biodiversity

### **4.5 Species**

#### Bats

- 4.5.1 All British species of bat are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to deliberately disturb bats and their roosts so as to impair their ability to survive, breed, reproduce or nurture young, to hibernate or migrate to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species. Some species of bat are also Species of Principal Importance, and all species are included within the Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan<sup>16</sup> (Barnsley biodiversity trust, 2010).
- 4.5.2 A single dusk emergence survey is recommended for the former railway bridge that crosses Grange Lane, in light of the results of the PRA survey on that structure, with a bat activity survey of the Trans-Pennine Trail where it crosses the bridge undertaken at the same time. The survey should be undertaken during May to August inclusive and follow best practice guidelines<sup>7</sup>.
- 4.5.3 Following completion of the surveys relevant recommendations for mitigation should be proposed including any licensing, precautionary working method statements (PWMS) and appropriate landscaping and lighting schemes, with reference to (Jones, 2000<sup>25</sup>).

<sup>25</sup> Jones, J. (2000). Impact of lighting on bats. Bat Conservation Trust, London

#### Great crested newt

- 4.5.4 Great crested newt and their habitats are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 4.5.5 Limited suitable habitat to support GCN with connectivity to a pond is present within the northwest of the site associated with grassland and ground/shrub layers of woodland along the Trans-Pennine Trail (see paragraphs 3.3.5, 3.3.6, and 3.3.7). Connectivity to other suitable habitat within the wider area was deemed unlikely due to the network of busy roads close to the survey Site. A rapid risk assessment with reference to the area of habitat to be affected by the works and its distance from the pond suggests that an offence with reference to wildlife legislation would be unlikely, provided that the works could be conducted in such a way as to present no risk of disturbance to GCN. This would require detailed working methods and timings, (e.g. fingertip searches, avoiding hibernation periods, etc) and in view of wider ecological considerations (e.g. potential for breeding birds) it is therefore recommended that ponds 1 and 2 are subject to an updated HSI assessment and an eDNA survey to determine the presence/likely absence of GCN in these ponds.

#### Reptiles

- 4.5.6 Reptile species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Small areas of suitable terrestrial habitat are present on Site to support reptiles, however due to the barriers of the roads intersecting the Site it is considered there is a low likelihood of common reptile species such as common lizard, slow worm and grass snake being present on Site. There was limited suitable habitat on the Site with the potential to support GCN, with the areas of grassland and edge habitat within the ground/shrub layer of the woodland present alongside the Trans-Pennine Trail being the most suitable, however this was limited in its extent.
- 4.5.7 It is recommended that works should proceed under a precautionary working method statement (PWMS) in regard to reptiles and hedgehog. The PWMS should include precautions such as a watching brief when working in or adjacent to habitats with potential to support great crested newt (the areas of grassland and edge habitat within the ground/shrub layer of the woodland present alongside the Trans-Pennine Trail), and storing materials in such a way that does not act as potential refugia. Any vegetation clearance should follow a phased approach with a two stage cut, in the direction of suitable off-site habitat. Any vegetation clearance would also need to take place during the active period for these species, so between March to October. This would be in the nesting bird season, so a nesting bird check would need to be undertaken prior to the commencement of any works.

#### Hedgehog

- 4.5.8 Hedgehog are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996 and are a species of principal importance<sup>26</sup>.
- 4.5.9 Small areas of suitable terrestrial habitat are present on Site for hedgehog, including the areas of grassland, mixed scrub, and woodland, with the better connectivity and more suitable habitat focused adjacent to the sections of the Trans-Pennine Trail, where no roads create a potential hazard for access.
- 4.5.10 It is recommended that works should proceed under a precautionary working method statement (PWMS) in regard to reptiles and hedgehog. The PWMS should include precautions such as a

<sup>26</sup> Section 41 (S41) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

watching brief when working in or adjacent to habitats with potential to support these species and storing materials in such a way that does not act as potential refugia.

#### Breeding Birds

- 4.5.11 All wild birds are protected whilst nesting (this includes the feral pigeons which might be nesting and rearing young within the former railway bridge that crosses Grange Lane), with disturbance and destruction of active nests constituting an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Loss of vegetation would remove suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds. Were this to take place during the breeding season (March to September inclusive), there would be a risk that nests would be damaged or destroyed during the process. The removal of any individual trees, woodland, shrubs and mixed scrub should therefore take place between October and January. If this is not possible, a nesting bird check should be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist no more than 48 hours prior to removal. If evidence of nesting birds is identified, work should stop and a suitable no-work buffer zone around the nest area of at least 5m should be installed, until such time as a suitably qualified ecologist can confirm the nest is no longer in use by breeding birds.

#### Other protected species

- 4.5.12 In the unlikely event that any protected species are found during Site clearance or construction, works must stop immediately, and advice sought from a suitably qualified ecologist on how to proceed.

### **4.6 Invasive Species**

- 4.6.1 The presence of three species of cotoneaster was noted within several areas of the amended Site boundary (see target notes in Appendix 1, Figure 3). The three species of cotoneaster identified on Site (small-leaved, wall, and Himalayan) are listed as invasive species on Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. If removal is required, then any waste material containing an invasive species is classed as controlled waste under section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and should be disposed of in accordance with the associated Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991.

### **4.7 Enhancement**

Planning policy at the national and local level and strategic biodiversity partnerships encourages inclusion of ecological enhancements in development projects. Ecological enhancements can also contribute to green infrastructure and ecosystem services such as storm water attenuation, noise and air pollution, and reducing the urban heat island effect. A range of measures should be undertaken to satisfy the requirement for ecological enhancement included in national and local planning policy such as Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan (2010<sup>16</sup>).

Enhancements for the Site should be consistent with the previous reports, including installing bat boxes, bird boxes and tree planting. Habitats should be retained wherever possible, opportunities to enhance any retained woodland, scrub and grassland should be undertaken. Efforts could be made to retain and enhance sections of the Trans-Pennine Trail within the Site, which is a key link between the Dearne floodplain to the north and habitat to the southeast. More detailed enhancements are provided within the Biodiversity Net Gain report (Temple 2024<sup>27</sup>) as relevant to the previous, larger site boundary. An updated BNG assessment should be conducted.

<sup>27</sup> Temple (2024) Stairfoot Roundabout, Barnsley\_Biodiversity Net Gain Plan. [Issued July 2024].

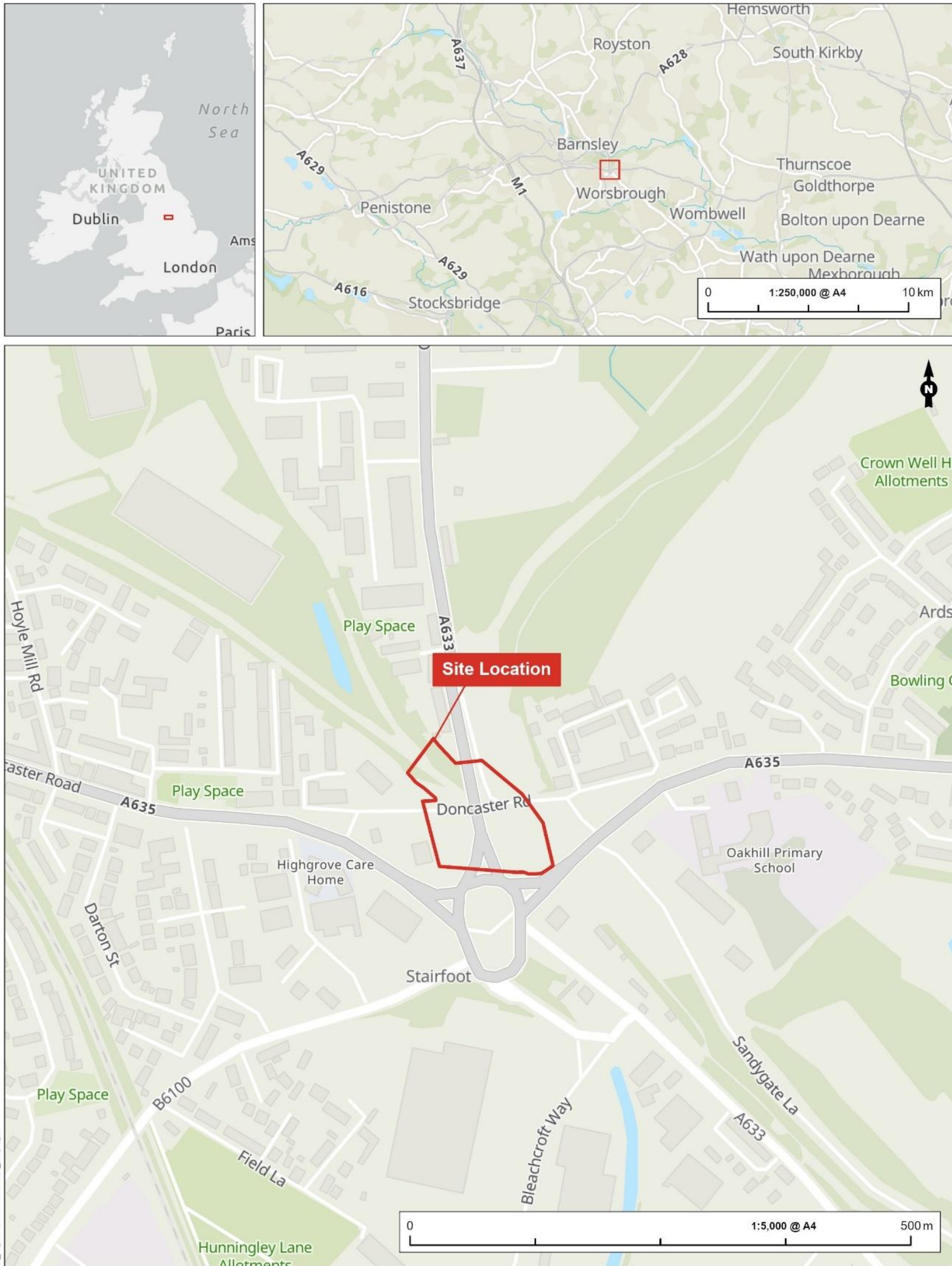
#### **4.8 Summary of Recommendations**


- 4.8.1 The PRA of the former railway bridge that spans Grange Lane identified several potential roost features (PRFs) that warrant further investigation due to their inaccessibility from the ground. A single dusk emergence survey is therefore recommended prior to the proposed demolition of the bridge. In conjunction with the emergence survey, surveyors should also be stationed above the bridge to conduct a bat activity survey to establish if bats are using the bridge as a commuting corridor along the route of the Trans-Pennine Trail. The survey will need to be undertaken between May to August inclusive and follow best practice guidelines<sup>7</sup>.
- 4.8.2 It is recommended that ponds 1 and 2 are subject to an updated HSI assessment and an eDNA survey to update the current status and to establish likely presence/absence of GCN in these ponds. Water samples for eDNA need to be collected between 15<sup>th</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> June.
- 4.8.3 A Precautionary Working Method Statement should be produced to detail an appropriate approach to works in respect of invasive species, reptiles, hedgehogs and breeding birds to comply with relevant wildlife legislation and planning policy. Depending on the outcome of the above surveys, consideration of GCN and Bats may need to be incorporated into the scheme design/proposals and the approach to works. The approach to construction activities should follow best practice to minimise the potential for disturbance to wildlife locally.
- 4.8.4 Retained trees should be protected during construction activities in accordance with BS 5837: 2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction', in order to reduce the possibility of any damage, to both crown and roots of the trees.
- 4.8.5 An updated assessment should be conducted to outline how the development will meet a minimum of 10% Net Gain in Biodiversity and where possible incorporate wider enhancements for biodiversity.



## **APPENDIX 1 FIGURES**

Figure 1: Site context map



	Figure Title Site Location	Project Name Stairfoot Update 2026	Date March 2026	
	Client Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	Project No./File ID REH2026N02195	Prepared By FC	Figure No. 1
			Scale As Shown	Revision 1.0

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Figure 2: Non-Designated Sites Map

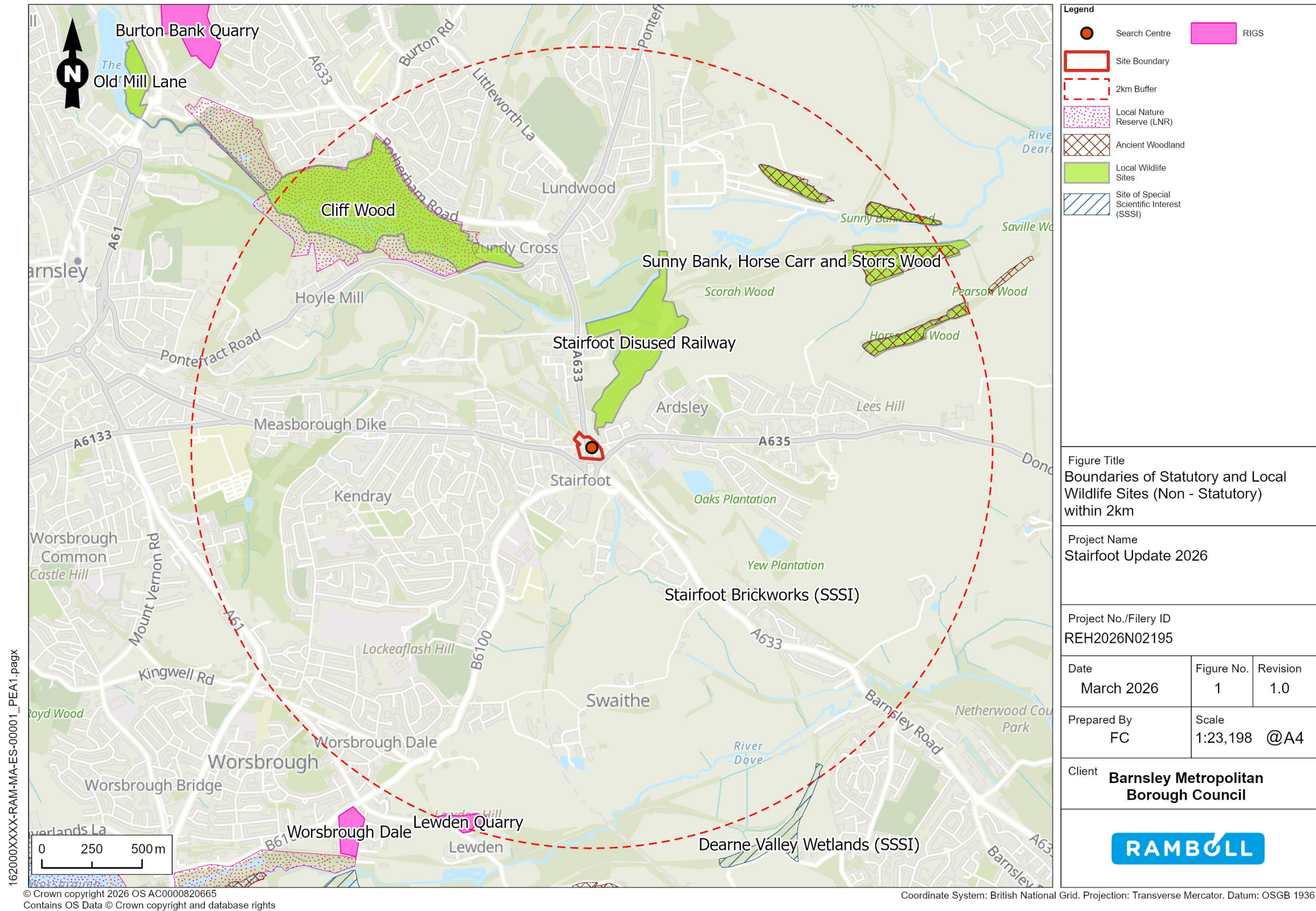


Figure 3: UKHab Survey Map



162000XXXX-RAM-MA-ES-00001\_PEA.pagx

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Coordinate System: British National Grid. Projection: Transverse Mercator. Datum: OSGB 1936.

Legend		
	Site Boundary	
	g3c - Other neutral grassland	10 - Scattered scrub
	g4 - Modified grassland	81 - Ruderal or ephemeral
	h3h - Mixed scrub	108 - Frequently mown
	u1 - Built-up areas and gardens	202 - Young trees - self-set
	u1b - Developed land, sealed surface	524 - Invasive non-native species
	u1b5 - Buildings	528 - Walking or cycling route
	w1g - Other broadleaved woodland	817 - Industrial building
		847 - Introduced shrub
	Target Notes	16 - Tall forbs
	Scattered tree	524 - Invasive non-native species
	h2b - Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	128 - Tall or tussocky sward
		128 - Tall or tussocky sward

Survey Date: 04/03/2026

Figure Title  
 Updated Preliminary Ecological Assessment Walkover

Project Name  
 Stairfoot Update 2026

Project No./Filey ID  
 REH2026N02195

Date	Figure No.	Revision
March 2026	1	1.0

Prepared By	Scale
FC	1:800 @A4

Client  
**Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council**

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **SITE PHOTOGRAPHS**

**Photograph 1:**

Area of modified grassland with a border of introduced shrub with individual trees, corner of Grange Lane and Doncaster Road.



**Photograph 2:**

Introduced shrub on Doncaster Road, adjacent to footpath leading up to the Trans-Pennine Trail.



**Photograph 3:**

Small-leaved cotoneaster (Target Note 2) where the access footpath from Doncaster Road meets the Trans-Pennine Trail (northwest area of Site).



**Photograph 4:**

Areas of other broadleaved woodland and modified grassland adjacent to the Trans-Pennine Trail in the northwest of the Site looking southeast towards the former railway bridge.



**Photograph 5:**

Areas of woodland, introduced shrub and modified grassland towards the southeast of the Site along the Trans-Pennine Trail



**Photograph 6:**

Wall cotoneaster overhanging bridge abutment stonework on corner of Grange Lane and Doncaster Road, with rainwater seeping down stonework (Target Note 6).



**Photograph 7:**

Area of mixed scrub adjacent to site of demolished pub, with modified grassland and part of the non-native ornamental hedgerow in the background.



**Photograph 8:**

Area of other neutral grassland adjacent to the site of the demolished pub on the corner of Grange Lane and Doncaster Road, facing northwest.



**Photograph 9:**

Heavily fenced off timber building within the other neutral grassland



**Photograph 10:**

Part of the non-native ornamental hedgerow within the site of the demolished pub, facing west.



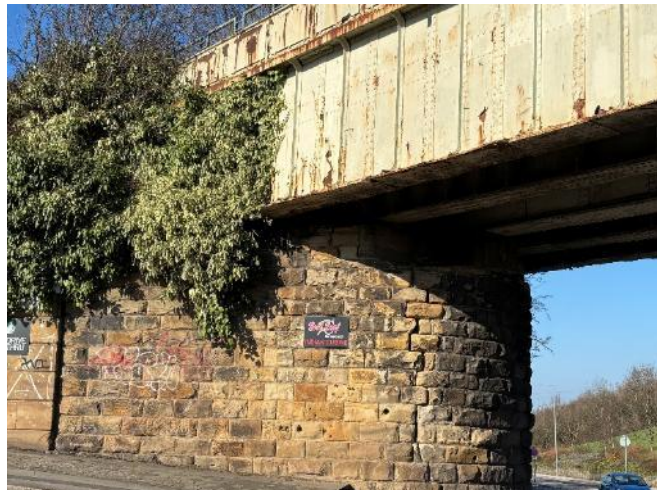
**Photograph 11:**

The former railway bridge which spans Grange Lane, facing northeast.



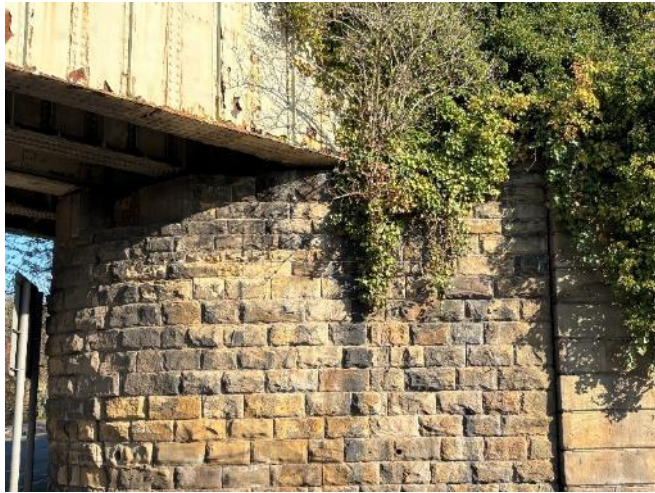
**Photograph 12:**

Western abutment of the railway bridge illustrating vertical crack in stonework and overhanging ivy.



**Photograph 13:**

Eastern abutment of bridge, illustrating cracks in stonework, overhanging ivy, and void where steel bridge sits atop the abutment.



**Photograph 14:**

Closeup of void where steel bridge span meets the eastern stone abutment. Note feral pigeons present.



**Photograph 15:**

Another closeup of void where the steel part of the bridge meets the eastern abutment.



**Photograph 16:**

Image of eastern abutment with overhanging cotoneaster and wet stonework.



**Photograph 17:**

Vertical gap in mortar between stonework on eastern abutment, with overhanging vegetation.



## **APPENDIX 3 SPECIES LIST**

**Botanical Species List for Stairfoot roundabout/Grange Lane bridge, Barnsley compiled from the UKHab Survey carried out on 04/03/2026.**

Scientific nomenclature and common names for vascular plants follow Stace (2019) and Blockeel and Long (1998<sup>28</sup>) for bryophyte species. Please note that this plant species list was generated as part of a habitat survey, does not constitute a full botanical survey and should be read in conjunction with the associated results section of this PEA.

**Abundance was estimated using the DAFOR scale and additional notes taken as follows:**

D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional, R = rare, L = locally

Scientific Name	Common Name	Abundance
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	sycamore	O
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	yarrow	F
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	creeping bent	O
<i>Alnus sp.</i>	alder sp.	O
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	cow parsley	F
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	false oat-grass	F
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	mugwort	O
<i>Berberis sp.</i>	barberry	R
<i>Betula pendula</i>	silver birch	O
<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	butterfly bush	R
<i>Capsella bursa pastoris</i>	Shepherd's purse	O
<i>Cardamine sp.</i>	bittercress sp.	F
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	sweet chestnut	O
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	common knapweed	O
<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>	sticky mouse-ear	R
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	creeping thistle	F
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	spear thistle	R
<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	dogwood	O
<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>	wall cotoneaster	O
<i>Cotoneaster microphyllus</i>	small-leaved cotoneaster	O
<i>Cotoneaster simonsii</i>	Himalayan cotoneaster	O
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	hawthorn	O
<i>Cupressus x leylandii</i>	leylandii	R
<i>Cytisus sp.</i>	broom	R
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	cock's foot	F
<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	teasel	R
<i>Erophila verna</i>	common whitlowgrass	O
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	beech	R
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	red fescue	A
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	ash	O
<i>Galium aparine</i>	cleavers	F
<i>Geranium sp.</i>	cranesbill sp.	O
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	wood avens	O
<i>Hebe sp.</i>	hebe	O
<i>Hedera helix</i>	ivy	A
<i>Holcus latanus</i>	Yorkshire fog	F
<i>Hypericum sp.</i>	St John's wort	R
<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	red dead-nettle	O
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye daisy	R
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	perennial rye-grass	A
<i>Lonicera pileata</i>	box-leaved honeysuckle	O
<i>Lonicera sp.</i>	honeysuckle sp.	F
<i>Plantago major</i>	greater plantain	O
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	ribwort plantain	O
<i>Prima rosa</i>	primrose	R
<i>Prunus sp.</i>	cherry sp.	O
<i>Prunus sp.</i>	laurel sp.	O
<i>Pyracantha sp.</i>	firethorn	R
<i>Quercus sp.</i>	oak	R
<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>	Flowering currant	R

<sup>28</sup> Blockeel, T.L. and Long, D.G. (1998). *A Check-list and Census Catalogue of British and Irish Bryophytes*. BBS, Cardiff.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Abundance
<i>Rosa canina</i>	dogrose	R
<i>Rosa sp.</i>	rose	R
<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	bramble	O
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	broad-leaved dock	O
<i>Salix sp.</i>	willow sp.	O
<i>Senecio inaequidens</i>	narrow-leaved ragwort	R
<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	Lamb's-ear	R
<i>Stellaria media</i>	chickweed	O
<i>Symphoricarpos orbiculatus</i>	coralberry	O
<i>Taraxacum agg</i>	dandelion	F
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	white clover	O
<i>Urtica dioica agg.</i>	common nettle	O
<i>Veronica sp.</i>	speedwell sp.	R
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	common vetch	R
<i>Vicia sepium</i>	bush vetch	R

## **APPENDIX 4 TARGET NOTES**

<b>Target Note</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location</b>
<i>Cotoneaster (INNS)</i>	small-leaved cotoneaster	W3W:plans.ballots.trout
<i>Cotoneaster (INNS)</i>	small-leaved cotoneaster	W3W:city.crest.lowest
<i>Cotoneaster (INNS)</i>	Himalayan cotoneaster	W3W:jaws.crust.guises
<i>Cotoneaster (INNS)</i>	wall cotoneaster	W3W:bounty.riders.harder
<i>Cotoneaster (INNS)</i>	wall cotoneaster	W3W:summer.them.spends
<i>Ivy species</i>	covering parts of railway bridge	W3W:brands.calms.tribes
<i>Ivy species</i>	covering parts of railway bridge	W3W:star.error.judges