

St Mary's Street, Penistone
Ecological Impact Assessment
12th February 2025



Prepared by:

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Contents

1. Summary	3
2. Introduction	4
3. Site Description	4
4. Methodology	6
5. Ecological Baseline	9
6. Assessment	27
7. References	30
Appendix 1. Proposed Site Layout	31
Appendix 2. Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy	32
Appendix 3. UK Habitat Classification Plan	35
Appendix 4. Designated Sites Plan	36
Appendix 5. Plant Species Recorded on Site	37
Appendix 6. Pre-Clearance Site Plan	39
Appendix 7. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Headline Results	40
Appendix 8. Proposed Site Habitat Plan Converted For Metric Input	41
Appendix 9. Bats and Roofing Membranes	42
Appendix 10. Bat Records	44

Site Name St Mary's Street	Location St Mary's Street, Penistone, S36 6DT
Local Authority Barnsley Council	Grid Reference SE 24472 03398
Surveyor Robert Bell MCIEEM	Date of UK Habitat Classification Survey 04/09/2024
Soilscape Slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soil	Designation of Site None

UK Habitat Classification habitats on Site <u>Habitats:</u> g3c – other neutral grassland, h3d – bramble scrub, u1b5 – buildings, u1b6 – other developed land, u1c – artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, u1f – sparsely vegetated land <u>Secondary codes:</u> 32 – scattered trees, - 81 ruderal or ephemeral
Protected/Notable Species, Constraints on Site Location adjacent to Trans-Penning Trail, nesting birds
HPIs and SPIs under NERC Act 2006 Potentially hedgehog, foraging bat (soprano pipistrelle) and some red listed bird species (house sparrow and starling)

1. Summary

- 1.1.1 This ecological impact assessment of land off St Mary's Street in Penistone was commissioned by Alex Sewell of Fairbank Investments Ltd on 31st July 2024. The survey was commissioned to inform proposals to redevelop the site as a mixed use development, to include the construction of new retail, hospitality and office buildings, together with the re-development of an existing dwelling. The new development includes proposals for a green roof on one building and 14 new trees, together with several small areas of amenity planting.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this report is to present the findings of a UK Habitat Classification survey and an assessment of the site's potential to support protected and notable species. The report considers the ecological value of the site, presents an assessment of the impacts of the proposed development, and provides details of the mitigation and compensation necessary to avoid or reduce these impacts. The scheme's ecological impact is also calculated using The Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- 1.1.3 The application area comprised a 0.34 ha plot of land encompassing a former rail siding adjoining the southern edge of the Trans-Pennine Trail. The former rail sidings included a two-storey former signal house, together with a Grade II listed former coal drops structure. At the time of survey, the site comprised a mixture of hardstanding, other neutral grassland, sparsely developed land and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface. Habitats within the application area were not considered to be of more than site level importance. Bird and bat populations using the site were expected to be of up to local importance.
- 1.1.4 Daytime inspection and nocturnal surveys showed the probable absence of summer roosting bats from site structures, with hibernation survey visits also showing the probable absence of overwintering bats in the coal drops.
- 1.1.5 Some of the site had been cleared of vegetation during late 2023/early 2024, with the pre-clearance baseline used in the Biodiversity Metric calculations. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculations show the development is projected to result in a net loss of 75.1 % of the existing Habitat Units (a loss of less than 0.84 Habitat Units). A net loss in Habitat Units cannot be avoided for the proposed scheme. As a result, it is proposed that the net loss is mitigated and that a 10 % level of biodiversity net gain is achieved through the purchase of Habitat Units from a third party landbank.
- 1.1.6 In order to safeguard the existing appeal of the adjacent Trans-Pennine Trail to nocturnal wildlife, an ecologically sensitive lighting scheme should be developed for the site.
- 1.1.7 Recommendations have also been made in relation to nesting birds, wildlife friendly landscaping and the fitting of bird and bat boxes.
- 1.1.8 The scheme will result in an ecological net loss, although this is not anticipated to be of significance to the wider cause of nature conservation at greater than the site level, including to any species or species group, providing new external lighting is of an ecologically sensitive design.
- 1.1.9 The results of this survey are considered to be valid for 24 months. After this time Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the need for update survey.

2. Introduction

- 2.1.1 This ecological impact assessment of land off St Mary's Street in Penistone was commissioned by Alex Sewell of Fairbank Investments Ltd on 31st July 2024.
- 2.1.2 The survey was commissioned to inform proposals to redevelop the site as a mixed use development, to include the construction of new retail, hospitality and office buildings, together with the re-development of an existing dwelling. A proposed plan for the development is provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.1.3 The purpose of this report is to present the findings of a UK Habitat Classification survey and an assessment of the site's potential to support protected and notable species. The report considers the ecological value of the site, presents an assessment of the impacts of the proposed development, and provides details of the mitigation and compensation necessary to avoid or reduce these impacts. The scheme's ecological impact is also calculated using The Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- 2.1.4 Key legislation relating to designated sites, protected species and habitats is detailed in Appendix 2. The implications of legislation are detailed in the body of the report where necessary.

3. Site Description

- 3.1.1 The application area comprised a 0.34 ha plot of land encompassing a former rail siding adjoining the southern edge of the Trans-Pennine Trail (Figure 1; Plate 1). The former rail sidings included a two-storey former signal house (B1, Appendix 3), together with a Grade II listed former coal drops structure (B2, Appendix 3). At the time of survey, the site comprised a mixture of hardstanding, other neutral grassland, sparsely developed land and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface.
- 3.1.2 The site was located on the western edge of the town of Penistone. The site was bordered to the north by the (other neutral grassland) verge of the Trans-Pennine Trail, with housing beyond the trail. Mixed commercial and residential development bordered the site to the south. St Mary's Street bordered the site to the east, with a bridge carrying the Trans-Pennine Trail across this road. The site was bordered to the west by a commercial building, with Penistone showground (permanent grassland) beyond that.
- 3.1.3 The site falls within National Character Area (NCA) 37 – the Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe. The Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe is a transitional landscape from the upland areas of the Southern Pennines NCA in the west through to the low-lying land of the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield NCA to the east. The most striking aspect of the landscape is the mingling of predominantly 'gritstone' industrial towns and villages with the strong valley forms and pastoral agriculture of the Pennine foothills.
- 3.1.4 Natural soils in the area comprised slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soil.

Figure 1. The site location, as indicated by red outline



Plate 1. Looking east along site into Penistone



4. Methodology

4.1 Data Consultation

4.1.1 Barnsley Biological Records Centre (BBRC) and South Yorkshire Bat Group (SYBG) were contacted to request the following information for locations within a 1.5 km radius of the site:

- Protected and notable species records.
- The boundaries of non-statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest.

4.1.2 A search of the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was undertaken to determine the following:

- The boundaries of statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest
- The locations of historic European Protected Species licences granted by Natural England.
- The presence of great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* records included in either the Class Survey Licence Returns or 2017-2019 Pond Surveys datasets.

4.2 Field Survey

UK Habitat Classification Survey

4.2.1 The UK Habitat Classification Survey was conducted by Robert Bell (MCIEEM; Bat Survey Class license WML-A34-Level 4, 2016-25236-CLS-CLS) on 4th September 2024 using UK Habitat Classification habitat survey methodology (UK Hab Ltd., 2023).

4.2.2 Notable, rare or scarce plant species were highlighted if present. Evidence of protected species or species of nature conservation importance was recorded where present at the time of survey. Species recorded are included within the report as appropriate. Information is presented on the UK Habitat Classification plan, using target notes to identify particular features of interest, where appropriate.

4.2.3 Aerial photographs (Google Earth) were studied to place the site in its wider context and to look for ecological features that would not be evident on the ground during the walkover survey. This is particularly useful for identifying wildlife corridors and ponds but because the latter are often not apparent on aerial photographs, OS 1:25 000 scale maps are also used.

4.2.4 Habitats of Principal Importance and Species of Principal Importance are included on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 were noted.

Nocturnal Bat Survey

4.2.5 The following personnel conducted two nocturnal surveys of the former signal house (B1, Appendix 3):

- Robert Bell (RB)
- Ian Wright (IW) (Bat Survey Class license WML-A34-Level 2, 2023-11218-CLS-CLS)
- Amanda Murphy (AM) (QualCIEEM; Bat Survey Class license WML-A34-Level 2, 2020-47913-CLS-CLS)
- John Pearse (JP)

4.2.6 The following activities were carried out by the team of two surveyors in compliance with relevant Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins 2023):

- Dusk emergence survey on 7th August 2024 – IW & JP
- Dusk emergence survey on 17th September 2024 – RB & AM

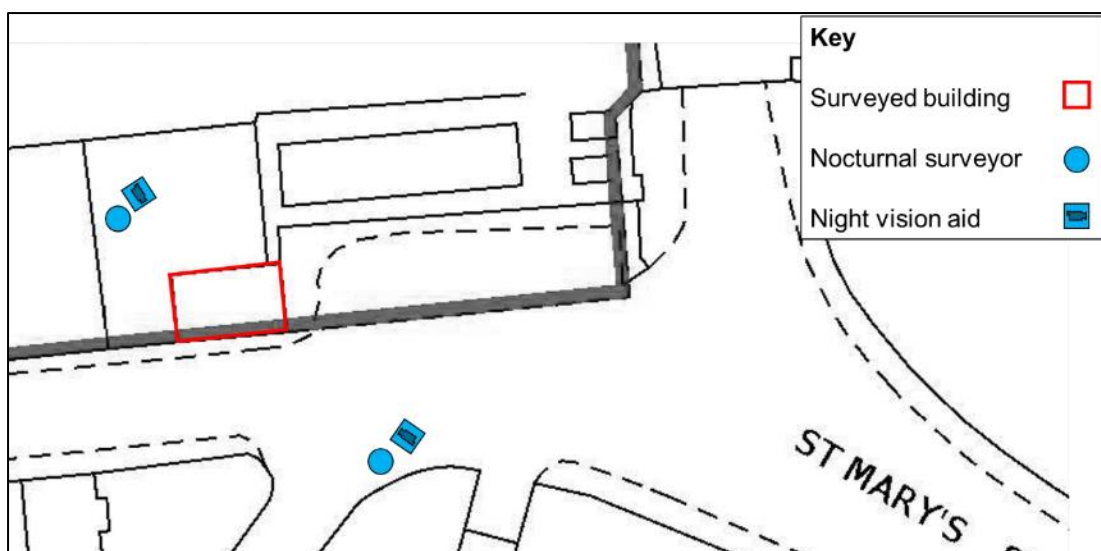
4.2.7 The dusk emergence surveys continued from 15 minutes prior to sunset until 1.5 hours after this time. Nocturnal surveyor positions are shown on Figure 2.

4.2.8 The following equipment was used during the surveys:

- Wildlife Acoustics EM Touch bat detectors and iPad/iPod recorders.
- Two night vision aids were used during each visit, comprising a mix of a Guide TK612 thermal sight and Canon XA10 and/or Panasonic VX980 infra-red video cameras (with external floor lights).

4.2.9 Only sections of video footage relating to roosting bats were watched back from the night vision aids.

Figure 2. Nocturnal survey plan



Bat Hibernation Survey

- 4.2.10 Bat hibernation survey visits to the coal drops were undertaken by Robert Bell and Amanda Murphy on 17th January and 10th February 2025. These survey visits comprised a visual inspection, with a torch and Rigid CA300 endoscope used to fully inspect all crevices within this structure.

4.3 Method of Assessment

- 4.3.1 The value and sensitivity of ecological features present on site were determined based on the guidance given in 'Guidelines on Ecological Impact Assessment' (CIEEM, 2018). Individual ecological receptors (habitats and species that could be affected by the development) for the scheme were assigned levels of importance for nature conservation. The highest level is international, then decreasing in order of importance through national, regional, county, local and lastly site.

4.4 Biodiversity Calculation

- 4.4.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2023) was used to calculate the ecological impact of this scheme. This metric uses habitat as a proxy for wider biodiversity with different habitat types scored according to their relative biodiversity value. This value is then adjusted depending on the condition and location of the habitat, to calculate 'biodiversity units'. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric incorporates similar but separate calculations for habitats that require a different method of measurement such as hedgerows, lines of trees, rivers, streams and street trees. Calculations are undertaken in a purpose designed spreadsheet, which provides the main output of the process.

4.5 Survey Limitations

- 4.5.1 Vegetation on the site had been largely cleared prior to survey. As a result, assessment of habitats present prior to clearance had to be undertaken through a combination of review of historic Aerial images (Google Earth) and other images online together with the survey of remaining sections of habitat.

5. Ecological Baseline

5.1 Designated Sites

5.1.1 The designated site present within 1 km of the site is shown in Appendix 4 and detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Designated sites

Designation	Name	Interest	Distance and direction to site
Local Wildlife Site	Scout Dike Reservoir	Open water bordered by varied habitats including inundation vegetation, scrub grassland and woodland.	1.3 km northwest

5.1.3 The closest ancient woodland to the site comprised Cubley Wood, located 960 m south of the site.

5.1.4 The section of the Trans-Pennine Trail adjacent to the northern edge of the application area was not designated for its importance to nature conservation. It was however acknowledged that the Trans-Pennine Trail was likely to comprise an important ecological linkage in the landscape, comprising a largely tree-lined bridleway passing through built sections of Penistone. The section of the Trans-Pennine Trail adjacent to the site was however open, with grassy verges, and a high level of use by a variety of users including dog walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

5.2 Habitats

5.2.1 The arrangement of site habitats is shown on the UK Habitat plan in Appendix 3, whilst a full list of plant species recorded is provided in Appendix 5.

5.2.2 Habitats within the application area were not considered to be of greater than site level importance to nature conservation.

5.2.3 A detailed description of the site and adjacent habitats and the site's potential to support protected and notable species is provided below.

g3c – other neutral grassland

5.2.4 Other neutral grassland was present in a location immediately north of the coal drops (B2) and in a narrow strip bordering the Trans-Pennine Trail on its southern side. Grassland along the northern edge of the site extended into the verge of the Trans-Pennine Trail.

5.2.5 The area of other neutral grassland present to the north of the coal drops (Plates 2 & 3) had established since the clearance of secondary woodland. The clearance of this secondary woodland occurred approximately one year prior to the survey, as could be determined from dated Google Earth imagery. This grassland appeared to be quite irregularly managed but had been cut during the growing season and was of even height. Grass species present in the sward included abundant Yorkshire fog *Holcus*

lanatus, frequently occurring cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, and creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, together with occasional perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*. A fairly wide range of herb species was present. White clover *Trifolium repens* was abundant in the sward with frequently occurring herb species comprising broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* and red clover *Trifolium pratense*. Occasionally occurring herbs included nettle *Urtica dioica*, ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, common mallow *Malva sylvestris*, nipplewort *Lapsana communis*, black medick *Medicago lupulina*, rosebay willowherb *Chamerion angustifolium*, and perforate St John's wort *Hypericum perforatum*. Occasional regenerating hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* saplings were also present. This area of grassland had a species diversity averaging 8.25 spp./m² across four quadrats.

- 5.2.6 Other neutral grassland within the verge of the off-site Trans-Pennine Trail, and the belt of grassland to the south of the boundary fence (within the site), were very similar in terms of their botanical composition (Plates 4 & 5). This grassland aligned quite closely to the Level 5 habitat g3c5 – *Arrhenatherum* neutral grassland. Grass species present included abundant false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, together with frequently occurring cocksfoot, red fescue, perennial rye grass, and Yorkshire fog. Creeping bent and annual meadow grass *Poa annua* were occasionally present. Herb species present included frequently occurring broad-leaved dock, nettle, cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, white clover, and white dead nettle *Lamium album*. Occasionally present herb species included ragwort, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, ribwort plantain, bush vetch *Vicia sepium*, creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, and broad-leaved plantain *Plantago major*. These areas of other neutral grassland had a slightly lower species diversity (7 spp/m²) relative to the grassland north of the coal drops. This lower species diversity was expected to be the result of nutrient enrichment from dog walking and the more established and less frequently managed nature of these areas of grassland.
- 5.2.7 All areas of other neutral grassland present on site were assessed as being in moderate condition based upon the Condition Assessment Criteria stated in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2023). All areas of grassland were considered to be good examples of the habitat type, with a level of bare ground between 1% & 5%. The areas of grassland were of an even height and lacked scrub cover. However, all areas of other neutral grassland had more than 5% cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition (nettle, broad leaved dock, creeping thistle, creeping buttercup, white clover, cow parsley). No areas had 10 or more species of vascular plant per m².

h3d – bramble scrub

- 5.2.8 A very small area of predominantly bramble scrub was present at the northwestern end of the site (Plate 6). The only abundant species in this area was bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., however, dog rose *Rosa canina* was occasionally occurring. A single small ash *Fraxinus excelsior* tree was also present growing in the scrub, with the grass species creeping bent frequently occurring in this area. Occasionally present grass and herb species included false oat grass, nettle, mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris*, creeping thistle, and creeping cinquefoil.
- 5.2.9 Bramble scrub is assigned a default condition level in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2023).

Plate 2. Looking west across area of other neutral grassland north of coal drops



Plate 3. Close view of sward in other neutral grassland north of coal drops



Plate 4. Strip of other neutral grassland within site, which bordered the same habitat within the verges of the TPT. These two sections of the same habitat were separated by a post and rail fence



Plate 5. Looking east along TPT as it passed the site, located on the opposite side of the post and rail fence, on right of image



Plate 6. Linear area of bramble scrub at northwest end of site



u1b5 – buildings

- 5.2.10 The site included a building and a built structure. The building comprised a C19th two storey stone former signal house (B1), with a pitched and hipped roof covered with Welsh slate (Plates 7-9). The ridge and hips of the roof comprised sheet lead. A large stone chimney was built into the east gable. The windows had been removed and openings boarded over with wood sarking lining the eaves. A set of stairs led from the road to the south into the site under a recessed section in the western end of the building.
- 5.2.11 The built structure comprised the Grade II listed coal drops (B2; Plates 10-11). The coal drops were built in the mid C19th and comprised six bays. Each bay comprised stone walls on three sides with an arch across the entrance with horizontal timbers running parallel to the arch in some bays. The individual bays had a width of 1.2 m and a length of c.7m with a maximum height of 3 m.
- 5.2.12 Buildings are assigned a default condition level in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2023).

Plate 7. Southeast corner of former signal house (B1), with coal drops (B2) behind fence to right of image



Plate 8. Northwest corner of B1



Plate 9. Stairs from road, recessed into west end of B1



Plate 10. Coal drops and former signalling house from above



Plate 11. Looking south within example bay in coal drops, with arch visible above entrance



u1b6 – other developed land

5.2.13 Hardstanding was present to the north of B1 and also in the centre of the site, where it comprised the footprint of a former and now demolished building (Plate 12).

5.2.14 Other developed land is assigned a default condition level in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2023).

Plate 12. Looking east through centre of site, with hardstanding to right of image



u1c – artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

- 5.2.15 Artificial unvegetated ground on the site comprised an access track of crushed stone running east to west through the centre of the site (Plate 12) and an area of compacted gravel to the south of the coal drops (Plate 13).
- 5.2.16 Artificial unvegetated ground is assigned a default condition level in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2023).

Plate 13. Compacted gravel to south of coal drops



u1f – sparsely vegetated urban land

- 5.2.17 An area of sparsely vegetated urban land was present in the centre of the site. Vegetation in this small area graded from other neutral grassland through to bare ground (Plates 14 & 15).
- 5.2.18 Grass species present included frequently occurring creeping bent and red fescue, together with occasional cocksfoot. Herb species present included frequently occurring white clover, black medick *Medicago lupulina*, broad-leaved plantain, ribwort plantain, prickly sow thistle *Sonchus asper*, and dandelion.
- 5.2.19 Assessed against The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2023), this habitat was considered to be in moderate condition. This habitat was considered to lack structural variation, however, it did support a range of plant species beneficial to wildlife and lacked invasive species.

Plate 14. Looking west through the site with sparsely vegetated urban land to left of crushed stone path and other neutral grassland to right



Plate 15. Close view of sparsely vegetated land



5.3 Species and Species Groups

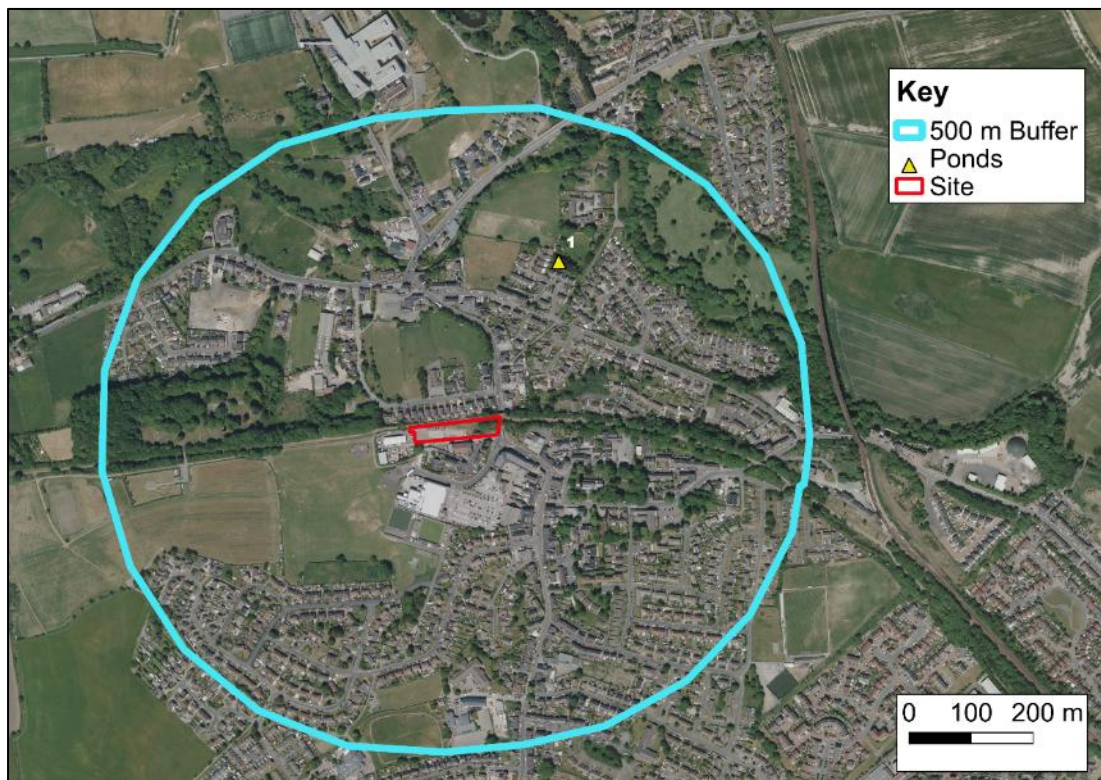
5.3.1 Given the presence of the Trans Pennine Trail adjacent to the site, bird and bat populations using the application area were expected to be of up to local level importance. It was considered unlikely that populations of other faunal groups or species would be of no more than site level importance.

Amphibians

5.3.2 No great crested newt records were provided by BBRC. In addition, no former great crested newt mitigation licences, or great crested newt presence records, included in either the Class Survey Licence Returns or 2017-2019 Pond Surveys datasets, were identified for locations within 2 km of the site during the MAGIC search.

5.3.3 A single pond was identified within 500 m of the site during the pond search. This pond (P1, Figure 3) was located 275 m northeast of the site. This pond was located on private land and was separated from the proposed development area by a minimum of one busy B-road, two minor roads and extensive residential housing. As a result, it was considered that even in the event that great crested newt were able to breed in P1, they would not be likely to move from it onto the proposed development site.

Figure 3. Pond located within 500 m of the site



5.3.4 Taking these considerations into account great crested newt were not considered a potential receptor to the scheme.

5.3.5 A total of six recent (within 30 years) amphibian records were provided by BBRC. Species covered in these records included common frog *Rana temporaria*, common toad *Bufo bufo*, and smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*. The closest of these records

comprised a common frog observation made in 2012 from a location 400 m south of the site.

- 5.3.6 Taking into account the lack of local waterbodies, it was considered the application area would be of no more than site level importance to amphibians, if present.

Badger

- 5.3.7 Due to data sensitivity, badger *Meles meles* records received from BBRC are not discussed in this report. No badger presence records were however received for locations within a 500 m radius of the site.

- 5.3.8 No signs of badger presence were noted from the site. It was considered possible that badger that may use the adjacent Trans-Pennine Trail as a commuting route, may also occasionally move onto the site if present locally. It was however considered unlikely that the site would be used with any regularity by animals of this species, both due to the habitats present (which include much hardstanding and compacted gravel) and disturbance from dog walkers using the Trans-Pennine Trail.

Bats

Historic records

- 5.3.9 A total of 74 bat records were received from BBRC. Two of these records related to the site itself, with common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* passes recorded during surveys of the site in June and August 2012. Bat species positively identified in the records received comprised common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*, and Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*.
- 5.3.10 A total of 121 bat records were received from SYBG. None of these records related to the site. Bat species positively identified in the records comprised common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri*, whiskered bat, Brandt's bat and Daubenton's bat. The closest bat record to site comprised a bat roost of an unidentified species, recorded in 2005 from a dwelling 240 m northwest of the site.

Visual inspection – B1

- 5.3.11 Potential bat roost features recorded from the exterior of the former signalling house (B1) included the following:
- Gaps present around the edge of window boarding, creating crevice between timber boards and glass (Plate 16).
 - Gaps between rafters and masonry below eaves (Plate 17).
 - Lifted section of flashing on hip of roof.
- 5.3.12 The roof of B1 was unlined and suspended on a ridge beam, hips, rafters and battens (Plate 18). The roof lacked insulation and was dusty and dirty with no signs of bats recorded. The internal face of all window boards was also inspected, with no signs of current or past bat presence recorded.
- 5.3.13 Building 1 was considered to display a moderate level of bat roost suitability.

Visual inspection – B2

5.3.14 Within the coal drops occasional open joints, up to c. 10 cm deep x c. 3 cm wide, were recorded between stone blocks. Some of these joints displayed potential to support roosting bats, with an old probable blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* nest recorded from one such joint (See target note 1, Appendix 3). It was considered that the coal drops displayed low suitability for use by summer roosting bats, with the September visual inspection comprising a sufficiently robust level of survey to determine the probable absence of bats during the active season. These arches would however be considered to display particular suitability for use by hibernating bats, due to their high thermal mass.

Plate 16. Gap between window board and masonry



Plate 17. Gap between protruding rafter and masonry



Plate 18. Interior of B1 roof void



Nocturnal surveys

Dusk emergence survey 1 - 7th August 2024

5.3.15 The temperature at the beginning of monitoring was 15 °C, with a gentle breeze (Beaufort Scale Force 3) and six oktas of cloud (6/8). The temperature dropped to 14 °C by the end of the survey with the wind remaining the same but the cloud cover decreasing to 1 okta. The weather was dry throughout. Sunset was at 20:50.

5.3.16 No bat roosting activity was recorded during the survey.

5.3.17 A single bat pass was recorded by the surveyor to the south of B1, with a common pipistrelle noted foraging around the St Mary's Street site entrance at 21:49 (one minute before sunset).

Dusk emergence survey 2 - 4th September 2024

5.3.18 The temperature at the beginning of monitoring was 13 °C, with a light breeze (Beaufort Scale Force 2) and full cloud cover. The temperature dropped to 12 °C by the end of the survey with the wind dropping to a light air (Force 1) and full cloud cover remaining. The weather was dry throughout. Sunset was at 19:48

5.3.19 No bat roosting activity was recorded during the survey.

5.3.20 The first bat pass recorded comprised a distant common pipistrelle, heard by the surveyor north of B1 at 20:15. This was followed by several further common pipistrelle passes to the north of the site. At 20:34 a noctule pass was heard by both surveyors, with a soprano pipistrelle pass heard by the surveyor north of B1 at 21:05.

Hibernation survey 1 - 17th January 2025

5.3.21 No bats or signs of bats were recorded during this hibernation survey with all crevices within the coal drops able to be fully examined.

Hibernation survey 2 – 10th February 2025

- 5.3.22 No bats or signs of bats were recorded during this hibernation survey with all crevices within the coal drops able to be fully examined.

Summary of roosting interest

On the basis of work undertaken to date, the site does not appear to be used by roosting bats. It is considered that the probable absence of roosting bats during both the activity and hibernation seasons has been confidently demonstrated.

Foraging and commuting habitat

- 5.3.23 Habitats within the site offer relatively little suitability for foraging bats due to their lack of structural diversity.
- 5.3.24 It would however be expected that the Trans-Pennine Trail would be of value to bats as a commuting route, due to this former rail-line comprising a green and largely tree-lined corridor through the centre of Penistone. No evidence of notable use of the Trans-Pennine Trail by bats was recorded during either nocturnal survey, however, it is noted these only comprise relatively short spells of monitoring during two individual nights.

Birds

- 5.3.25 A total of 2775 bird records relating to 110 species was provided by BBRC. None of these records were collected from the site itself, with the closest record comprising a chiffchaff recorded from the Trans-Pennine Trail c.70 m east of the site in 2014.
- 5.3.26 No birds were recorded using the site during the UK Habitat Classification Survey, however a former probable blue tit nest was recorded from the coal drops.
- 5.3.27 With the exception of potential nest features (open joints) present in the coal drops and former signal house, the site was considered to largely lack suitability for nesting birds.
- 5.3.28 The site displayed some suitability for use by foraging birds of common species, however, it was considered unlikely to be regularly used by any rarer bird species.

Hedgehog

- 5.3.29 A total of 76 hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* records were received from BBRC. None of these records related to the site itself, however, a 2020 record noting regular use of a garden by this species was made in a location only 60 m south of the site. On the basis of the records search it appeared that hedgehog used the local area.
- 5.3.30 The site displays some suitability for use by hedgehog, which will readily forage over a variety of grassland types. The site was however quite small and adjacent vegetative habitats were considered to offer an equal or higher level of appeal to animals of this species group.

Invasive species

- 5.3.31 No records of invasive species, included on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), were received from BBRC in relation to the site or adjacent areas of land.
- 5.3.32 No specimen of invasive species, included on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), were recorded from the site.

Invertebrates

- 5.3.33 The site supported sparsely vegetated land, a habitat associated with use by some specialist invertebrate species. It was however noted that such areas of land were of very limited extent and lacked topographic variation or associated structural diversity. For these reasons it was considered unlikely the site would be of particular importance to any notable invertebrate species.

Plants

- 5.3.34 No records of rare plant species for the site were received from BBRC, with no rare plant species recorded during the site survey. For these reasons it was assessed the site was unlikely to support uncommon or rare plant species.

Reptiles

- 5.3.35 No reptile records were received from BBRC and no signs of reptile were recorded during the field survey. The site lacked structural diversity of habitats or cover that reptiles may use. Given the absence of local records and the lack of any particular suitability for use, as well as the frequent presence of dog walkers on the adjacent Trans-Pennine Trail, reptiles were considered an unlikely receptor to the proposed development.

Table 2. Ecological importance of each habitat, species or species group on site and adjacent

Habitat, Species or Species Group	Ecological value
g3c – other neutral grassland	Site
h3d – bramble scrub	Site
u1b5 - buildings	Site
u1b6 – developed land; sealed surface	Site
u1c – artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	Site
u1f – sparsely vegetated urban land	Site
Amphibians	Site (great crested newt unlikely receptor)
Badger	Site (if present)
Bats	Up to local
Birds	Up to local
Hedgehog	Site (if present)
Invasive species	Not present
Invertebrates	Site
Plants	Site
Reptiles	Unlikely to be receptor

5.4 Biodiversity Calculation

- 5.4.1 Some of the site had been cleared of vegetation during late 2023/early 2024. Prior to clearance Google Earth images (Figures 4 & 5) show that secondary woodland, which had developed since 2009 was growing immediately north of the coal drops. In addition, other neutral grassland was more widespread in the centre of the site, with a slightly different arrangement of sparsely vegetated land. This arrangement of habitats, as shown in Appendix 6, was used for the calculation of the site's baseline value in the Biodiversity Metric.
- 5.4.2 The other neutral grassland cleared from the site could reasonably be assumed to have the same condition as the surveyed grassland, given that part of this habitat still remains. Likewise it is reasonable to consider the condition of the sparsely vegetated urban land in 2020 would have been as recorded in 2024. The broadleaved woodland to the north of the coal drops has been felled, however, a picture of this woodland dated 31st May 2020 was found online (Plate 19). Based upon the aerial images and Plate 19, it was considered that based on a precautionary assessment, the cleared broadleaved woodland would have been in moderate condition based upon the Condition Assessment Criteria stated in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2023). It was assumed this woodland would have scored good in relation to herbivore damage, invasive plant species, cover of native tree and shrub species, number of native tree species, tree health and woodland disturbance. Due to the woodland's young age, it was assumed that it could have scored no more than moderate in relation to age distribution of trees, woodland regeneration and woodland vertical structure. Due to woodland age, the woodland would also have scored poor in relation to veteran trees, amount of deadwood and ground flora. It was also evidence from aerial images that the woodland lacked open space.
- 5.4.3 The entirety of the site was considered to be a 'location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy', due to its position adjacent to the Trans-Pennine Trail. The site was considered to have a baseline value of 1.11 Habitat Units.

Figure 4. Google Earth image of the site dated April 2020



Figure 5. Google Earth image of the site dated May 2009, with woodland to north of coal drops (yellow rectangle) not yet developed. Two buildings in the centre of the site in 2009 were also demolished between 2009-2020



Plate 19. Image of woodland above coal drops taken on 31st May 2020 showing immature component trees. Image taken from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Coal_Drops,_Penistone.jpg



6. Assessment

6.1 Proposals

- 6.1.1 It is proposed to redevelop the site as a mixed use development. The coal drops are to be converted into retail and restaurant units, to comprise part of new building to the north, which is to have a green roof. The former signal house is to be redeveloped as a residential dwelling. A large new building complex, to comprise offices, is to be located in the centre of the site. A separate detached building, to comprise hybrid business units, is to be located at the western end of the site. Most of the remainder of the site is to comprise car parking for these buildings.
- 6.1.2 New vegetative habitats on site are to comprise the green roof on the eastern building and amenity planting to the south of the coal drops, together with small blocks of planting around the site car parking. A total of 14 new small trees are to be located across the site, with 6 of these to be planted alongside the Trans-Pennine Trail. A proposed plan for the development is provided in Appendix 1.

6.2 Biodiversity Calculations

- 6.2.1 The Headline Results output of The Statutory Biodiversity Metric are presented in Appendix 7, based on the proposed site habitats shown in Appendix 8. The metric shows a net loss of 75.1 % of the existing Habitat Units (a loss 0.84 Habitat Units).
- 6.2.2 A net loss in Habitat Units cannot be avoided for the proposed scheme. As a result, it is proposed that the net loss is mitigated and that a 10 % level of biodiversity net gain is achieved through the purchase of Habitat Units from a third party landbank (i.e. Environment Bank).

6.3 Assessment of Impacts

Designated sites

- 6.3.1 Given the nature and size of the scheme and distance from the only identified designated sites within 2 km of the scheme, no impacts to such sites are envisaged.
- 6.3.2 The Trans-Pennine Trail adjacent to the northern edge of the application area was not designated for its importance to nature conservation. It was however recognised this bridleway may form a valuable commuting route and foraging area for a variety of faunal groups. Prior to its recent fencing, the application area was used as a car park and its re-development is unlikely to greatly increase human presence on the already well-used Trans-Pennine Trail. It was however considered that the scheme had potential to negatively impact the trail through an increase in artificial lighting across this feature.

Other impacts

- 6.3.3 Without mitigation potential notable impacts of the development were considered to comprise:
- Loss of 0.13 ha of other neutral grassland and 0.06 ha of sparsely vegetated land.
 - Creation of 0.02 ha of other green roof, 0.02 ha of vegetated garden and the planting of 14 new small trees.
 - Potential for renovation of B1 and/or re-development of B2 to result in destruction of birds' nests. Birds' nests are subject to legal protection when active (Appendix 2).
 - Increased lighting affecting nocturnal species such as hedgehogs, bats, and nocturnal invertebrates.
 - The exclusion of hedgehogs from new areas of habitat. In light of the lack of accessible vegetative habitat and presence of cars, it is not considered advisable to create new hedgehog access onto the site.
 - Biosecurity risks as a result of bringing in plants, and seeds for landscaping.
- 6.3.4 The potential impacts could have a negative impact on bat populations at up to a Local level, through potentially insensitive artificial lighting. Other impacts would not be expected to be of significance at greater than the site level.

6.4 Further Survey, Mitigation and Enhancement

Safeguarding nesting birds

- 6.4.1 Nesting birds may use the former signalling house (B1) and/or coal drops (B2). Works on these structures should either commence outside the main nesting bird season (March - August). If this is not possible then works should be preceded (within 48 hours) by a nesting bird check, to be undertaken by an ecologist.

Wildlife friendly landscaping and addressing additional biosecurity risks

- 6.4.2 A landscaping plan should be developed for the site based on the planting proposals included in the proposed plan, included in Appendix 1. The proposed planting of six new trees along the northern site boundary (part of 14 new trees across the wider site), though not forming a treeline, is intended to help increase ecological connectivity along the Trans-Pennine Trail by reducing the area of open habitat that faunal species have to cross when moving along the trail. New trees to be planted on the site should comprise either native species (i.e. rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* or silver birch *Betula pendula*), or fruit trees (i.e. apple *Malus* or cherry *Prunus*).
- 6.4.3 All plants and seed should be bought from UK nurseries that adhere to national standards regarding plant health, with UK grown material used in preference wherever available. All imported material must conform with industry standards BS 8601 (Subsoil), BS 3882 Topsoil). Topsoil to be general purpose, 10 mm screened and locally sourced (unless otherwise stated). Only peat free compost should be used in landscaping.

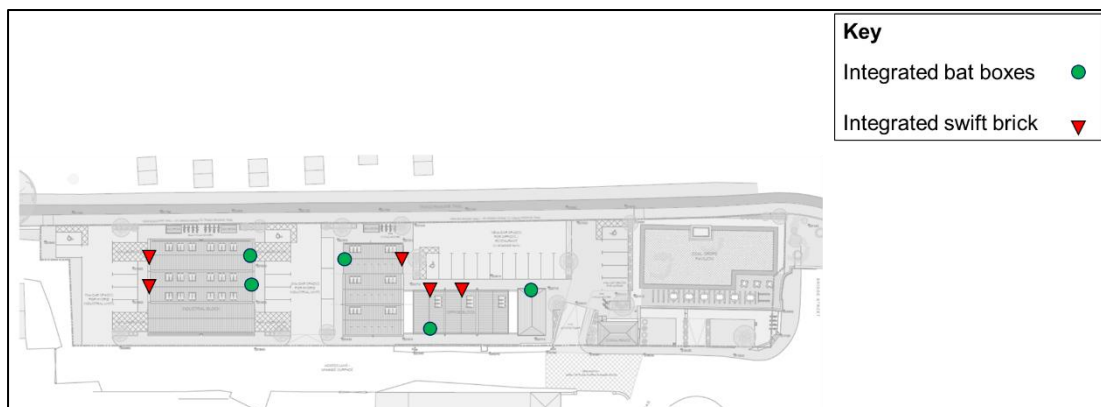
Ecologically sensitive external lighting

6.4.4 It is recommended that an ecological sensitive lighting plan should be developed for the site, with a particular focus on avoiding artificial light spill across the Trans-Pennine Trail. This lighting plan should be developed in line with good practice guidance (ILP, 2023), avoiding unnecessary external lighting and using passive infra-red sensors/or and timers to restrict times of illumination, where external lighting is required. In general, it is recommended that external lighting should be low level (less than 4 m), low power and downwards facing. Lighting with a warm white colour (<2700 Kelvin) is preferred.

Bat and bird boxes

6.4.5 A total of five integrated bat bricks and five integrated swift *Apus apus* bricks is required to accord with Barnsley Council’s Biodiversity and Geodiversity Supplementary Planning Document. It is recommended that a bat box design such as the PRO UK Build-in WoodStone Bat Box is used, with a suitable design of swift box comprising the AfS S-Brick. Studies have shown that swift boxes are used by the full range of nesting birds that utilise buildings; consequently, these boxes will also provide potential nesting space for house sparrow *Passer domesticus* and starlings *Sturnus vulgaris*. It is proposed that new bat and swift boxes are fitted close to wall top height, with proposed locations shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Bat and swift box plan



6.4.6 We recommend the use of bat safe roofing felt as standard. Standard breathable roofing felts are not safe for use in bat roosts. Further information on this issue is included in Appendix 9.

6.5 Conclusion

- 6.5.1 The scheme will result in an ecological net loss, although this is not anticipated to be of significance to the wider cause of nature conservation, including any species or species group at greater than the site level, providing new external lighting is of an ecologically sensitive design.
- 6.5.2 The proposals are expected to result in a net loss of 0.84 Habitat Units (a 75.1 % net loss). As a result, it is proposed that the net loss is mitigated and that a 10 % level of biodiversity net gain is achieved through the purchase of Habitat Units from a third party landbank (i.e. Environment Bank).
- 6.5.3 The results of this survey are considered to be valid for a period of 24 months. After this time Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the need for update survey.

7. References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust.

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CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

DEFRA (2023) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (draft). DEFRA.

ILP (2023) Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. Institute of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust.

UKHab Ltd (2023) UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (at <https://www.ukhab.org>)

Stanbury A, Eaton M, Aebischer N, Balmer D, Brown A, Douse A, Lindley P, McCulloch N, Noble D & I Win (2021) The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. British Birds 114, 723–747.

Appendix 2. Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

Wildlife legislation relating to statutory designated sites and species is summarised in Table A1 and A2 below. This legal information is intended for summary only, and the original legal documents should be consulted if a detailed understanding is required.

Table A1. Legislation relating to designated sites and habitats

Designated Site	Legal Status
Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	While they have no direct legal status, Local Wildlife Sites are considered important enough to receive recognition within the planning system. National planning policy requires local authorities to identify Local Wildlife Sites and provide for their protection through local policy.

Table A2. Legislation relating to species

Species	Legal Status
European protection	
European Protected Species (EPS) (including bats, Great Crested Newt (GCN), otter and hazel dormouse)	<p>These animal species and their breeding sites or resting places are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, which makes it illegal to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally or deliberately capture, injure or kill any such animal or to deliberately take or destroy their eggs. • Deliberately disturb such an animal. • Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal. <p>European Protected Species (EPS) licences can be granted by Natural England in respect of development to permit activities that would otherwise be unlawful under the Conservation Regulations, providing that the following 3 tests (set out in the EC Habitats Directive) are passed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development is for reasons of overriding public interest. • There is no satisfactory alternative; and • The favourable conservation status of the species concerned will be maintained and/or enhanced. <p>Under Regulation 9(5) of the Conservation Regulations, Planning Authorities have a legal duty to 'have regard to the requirements of the EC Habitats Directive in the exercise of their functions'. This means that they must consider the above 3 tests when determining whether Planning Permission should be granted for developments likely to cause an offence under the Conservation Regulations. As a consequence, Planning Applications for such developments must demonstrate that the 3 tests will be passed.</p> <p>Natural England also allow sites to be registered on the Bat Low Impact Class Licence to permit activities that would otherwise be unlawful under the Conservation Regulations where the 3 tests can be passed and the bat roosts to be impacted are of low conservation status.</p>

Species	Legal Status
National protection	
European Protected Species and other species including water vole and white clawed crayfish	These animals receive full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally kill, injure or take any such animal. • Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection by any such animal; and • Intentionally or recklessly disturb such animals while they occupy a place used for shelter or protection.
Common reptile species	These animals receive limited protection under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal to intentionally kill or injure any such animal.
Badger	The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it illegal to wilfully kill or injure a Badger or attempt to do so and also make it illegal to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a Badger sett. This includes damaging or destroying a sett, obstructing access to a sett and disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett. Licences can be granted by Natural England to permit sett closure and/or disturbance between July and November inclusive.
Schedule 1 birds	Special penalties relate to offences concerning birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In addition to the offences detailed above relating to all wild birds, it is illegal to intentionally or recklessly disturb any Schedule 1 bird or their dependent young while nesting.
All bird species	All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird. • Take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.
Invasive species	The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) contains measures for preventing the establishment of non-native species which may be detrimental to native wildlife, prohibiting the release of animals and planting of plants listed in Schedule 9 of the Act. In relation to Schedule 9 plants, it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause these plant species to grow in the wild.

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance

Planning authorities have a duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 to have regard to priority species and habitats in exercising their functions including development control and planning. In compliance with Section 41 of the NERC Act, the Secretary of State has published a list of species and habitats considered to be of principal importance for conserving biodiversity in England under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. This is known as the list of Habitats and Species of Principal Importance (HPI/SPI). The HPI/SPI list is used to guide planning authorities in implementing their duty under the NERC Act.

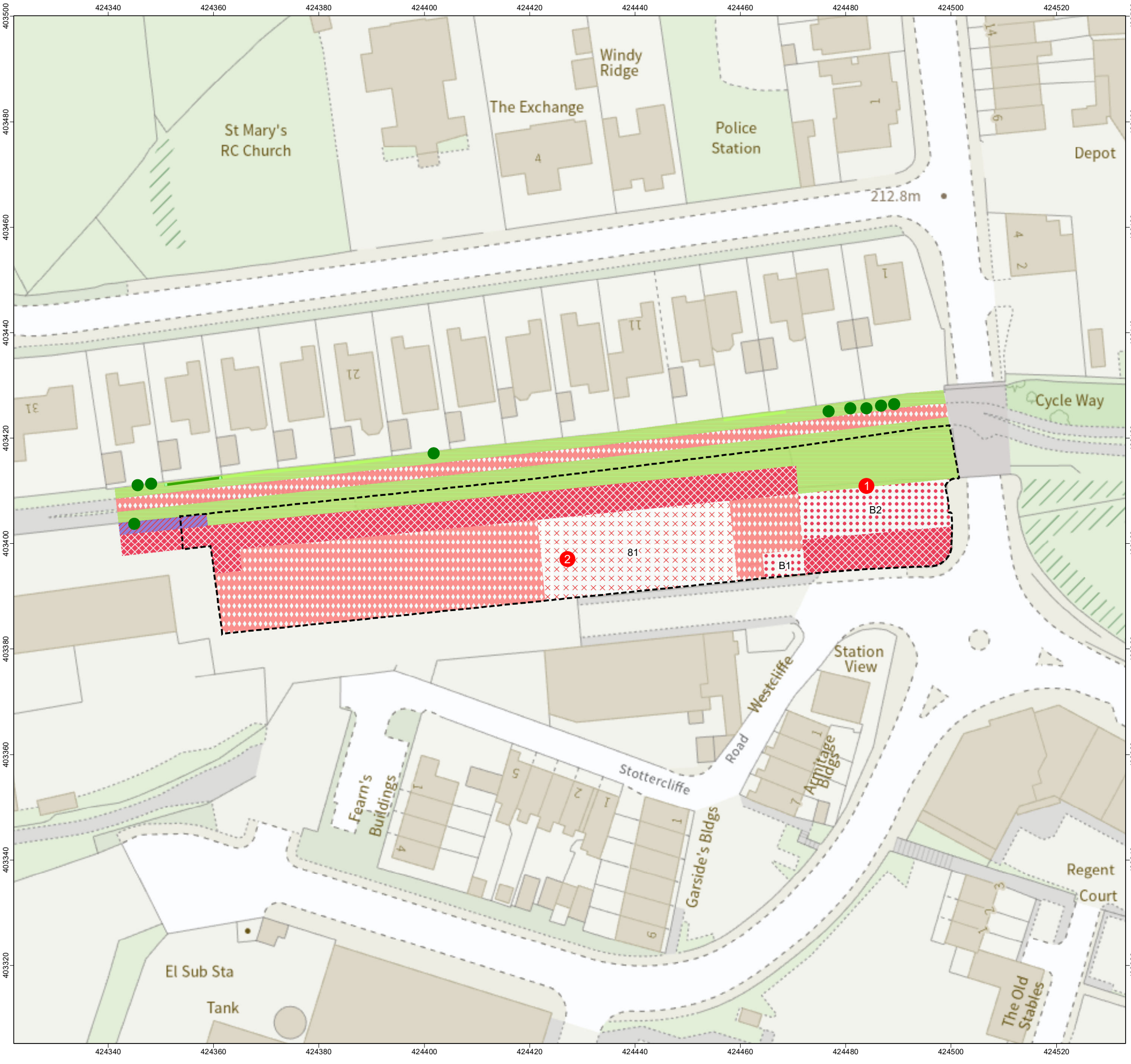
National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework for England was revised in 2023. This document states that plans should 'promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation 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'. It also puts an emphasis on refusing development which would result in the 'loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland)' unless there are 'wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable mitigation strategy exists'.

Local Biodiversity Action Plans

The HPI/SPI list included on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 is supported by a series of Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs), usually set up on a local authority local authority administrative boundary basis. Each LBAP identifies those habitats and species considered to be most important in that area (usually referred to as priority habitats and species). Commonly, an LBAP will identify a number of habitats and species for which "action plans" have been prepared.

Appendix 3. UK Habitat Classification Plan



Survey Information	
	Site boundary
UK Habitat Survey (Primary Habitats)	
	g3c - Other neutral grassland (1309.7m ²)
	h3d - Bramble scrub (38.2m ²)
	u1b5 - Building (285.6m ²)
	u1b6 - Other developed land (1,508.4m ²)
	u1c - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (863.2m ²)
	u1f - Sparsely vegetated urban land (564.3m ²)
	h2a6 - Other native hedgerow (11.0m)
	h2b - Non-native and ornamental hedgerow (43.7m)
	32 - Scattered tree (8)
	Target note

Secondary codes:

81 - Ruderal or ephemeral

Target notes:

1 - Blue tit roosting within third arch during survey on 4th September 2024.
 2- Separate piles of crushed masonry and wood.

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PROJECT TITLE
ST MARY'S STREET, PENISTONE

DRAWING TITLE
Figure 1. UK Habitat Survey Plan

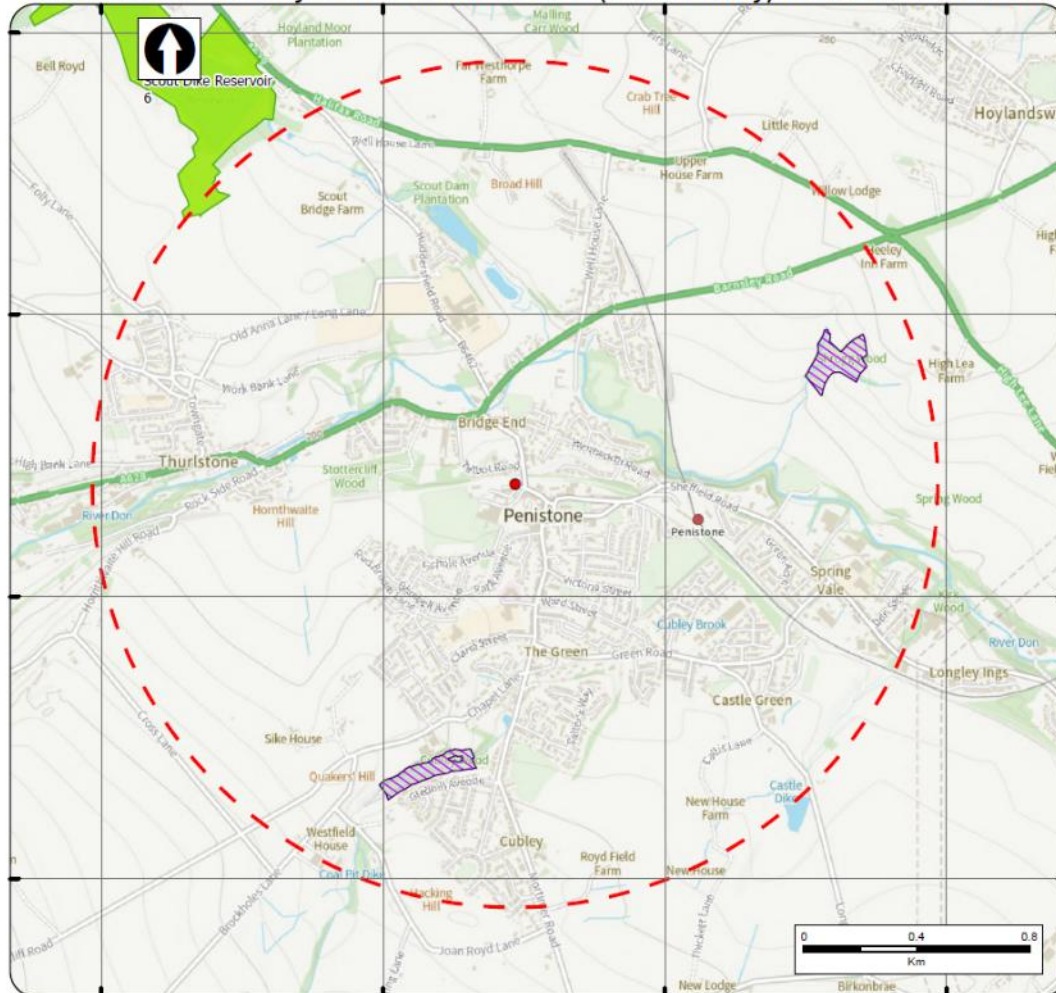
VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
2.1	27/01/25	UKHab	MP	RB

DRAWING NUMBER:
MIDDLETONBELLECOLOGY/StMary'sStreet/UKHab

SCALE 1:700 PLOT SIZE A3 DATUM OSGB PROJECTION BNG

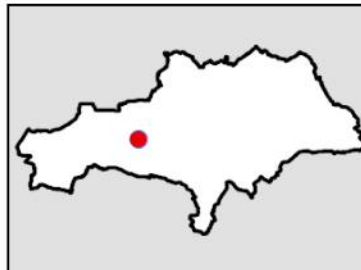
Appendix 4. Designated Sites Plan


Boundaries of Statutory and Local Wildlife Sites (non-statutory) Within the Search Area



St Mary's Street Penistone

- Local Wildlife Sites - Bamsley
- Centre of Search Area
- Bamsley Boundary
- 1.5km radius
- Ancient Woodland Natural England selection







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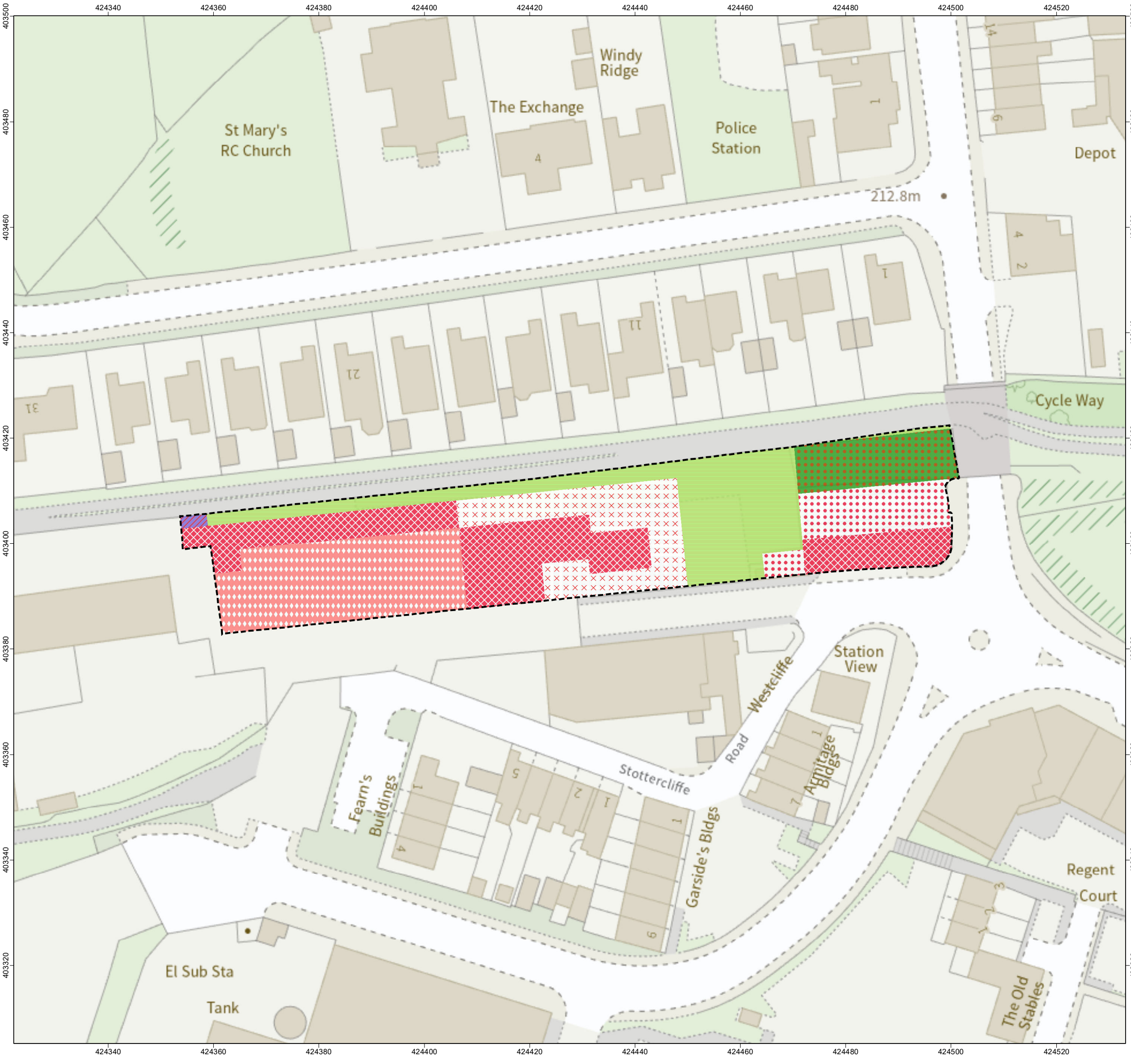
Appendix 5. Plant Species Recorded on Site









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

Common Name	Latin Name	g3c – other neutral grassland	h3d – bramble scrub	u1f – sparsely vegetated urban land
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	A		F
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	A		
Creeping bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	F	F	F
False oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	F	O	
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	F		F
Cocksfoot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	F		O
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	F		
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	F		
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	O	O	O
Creeping cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	O	O	
Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	O	O	
Black medick	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	O		F
Broad-leaved plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>	O		F
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	O		F
Annual meadow grass	<i>Poa annua</i>	O		
Bush vetch	<i>Vicia sepium</i>	O		
Common mallow	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	O		
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	O		
Nipplewort	<i>Lapsana communis</i>	O		

Common Name	Latin Name	g3c – other neutral grassland	h3d – bramble scrub	u1f – sparsely vegetated urban land
Perennia rye grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	O		
Perforate St John's wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	O		
Ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	O		
Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	O		
White dead nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	O		
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	O		
Mugwort	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	R	O	
Prickly sow thistle	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	R		F
Common Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	R		
Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	R		
Yellow toadflax	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>	R		
Bird's foot trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	R		
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	R		
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>		A	
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>		O	
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>		O	
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>			F

Appendix 6. Pre-Clearance Site Plan



Survey Information	
	Site boundary (3,376.6m ²)
UK Habitat Survey (Primary Habitats)	
	g3c - Other neutral grassland (743.9m ²)
	h3d - Bramble scrub (11.4m ²)
	u1b5 - Building (285.6m ²)
	u1b6 - Other developed land (710.7m ²)
	u1c - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (875.8m ²)
	u1f - Sparsely vegetated urban land (468.9m ²)
	w1g - Other broadleaved woodland (280.3m ²)

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PROJECT TITLE
ST MARY'S STREET, PENISTONE

DRAWING TITLE
Figure 2. Baseline Biodiversity Metric Plan

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
2.0	27/01/25	Biodiversity Metric	MP	RB

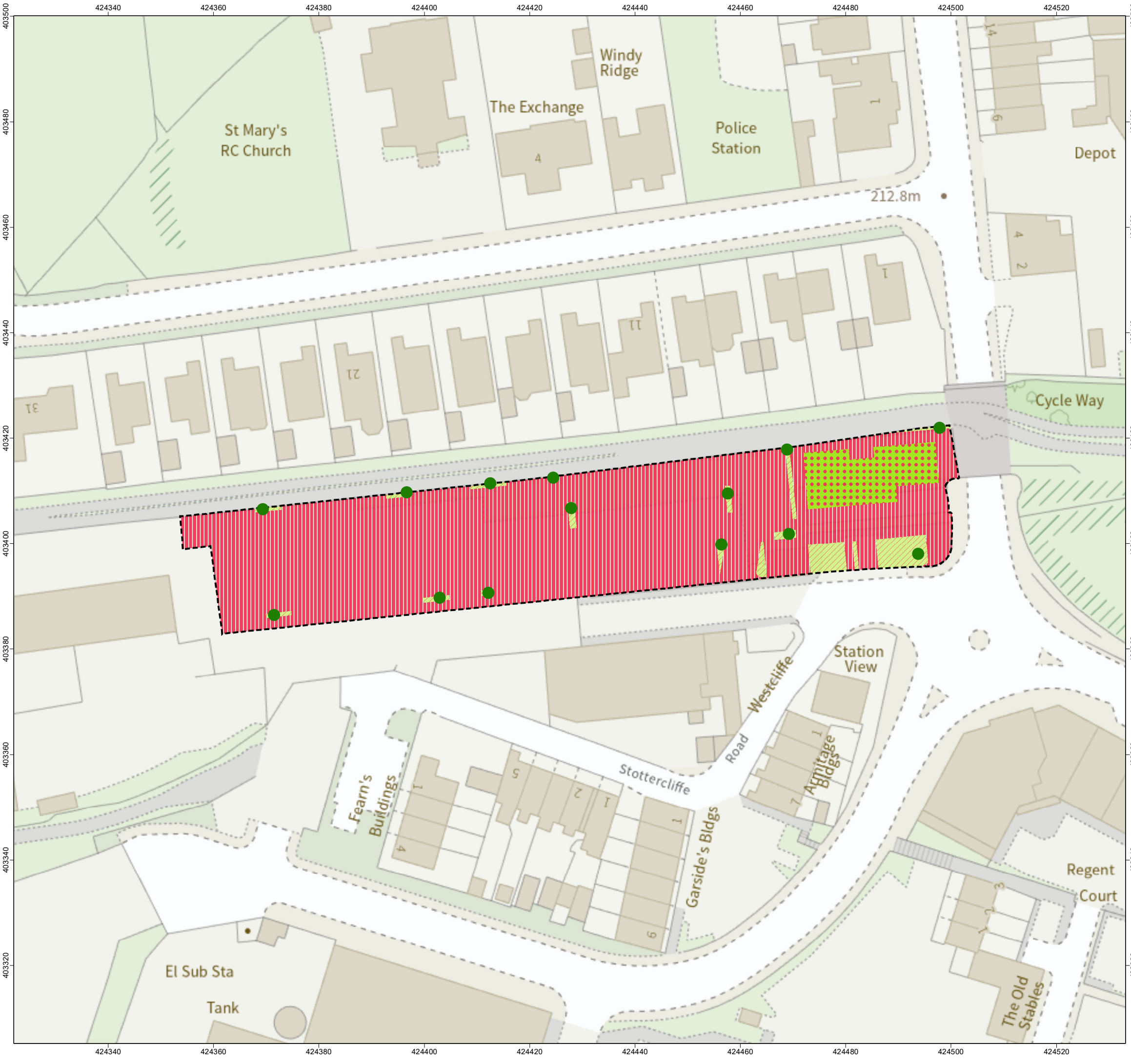
DRAWING NUMBER:
MIDDLETONBELLECOLOGY/StMary'sStreet/Metric






SCALE	1:700	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
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Appendix 7. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Headline Results

St Mary's Street, Penistone		Return to results menu	
Headline Results			
Scroll down for final results ▲			
On-site baseline	Habitat units	1.11	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	0.28	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Habitat units	-0.84	-75.10%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Habitat units	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Combined net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	-0.84	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
FINAL RESULTS			
Total net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	-0.84	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	-75.10%	Total net ga
	Hedgerow units	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	

Appendix 8. Proposed Site Habitat Plan Converted For Metric Input



Survey Information	
	Site boundary (3,376.6m ²)
UK Habitat Survey (Primary Habitats)	
	u1b - Developed land; sealed surface (2,974.2m ²)
	89 - Other green roof (236.2m ²)
	828 - Vegetated garden (166.1m ²)
	32 - Scattered tree (14)

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PROJECT TITLE
ST MARY'S STREET, PENISTONE

DRAWING TITLE
Figure 3. Proposed Biodiversity Metric Plan

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1.4	04/02/25	Biodiversity Metric Proposed	MP	RB

DRAWING NUMBER:
MIDDLETONBELLECOLOGY/StMary'sStreet/MetricProposed

SCALE	1:700	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
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Appendix 9. Bats and Roofing Membranes

Standard roof membranes can cause the death of significant numbers of bats. Traditional bitumen coated roofing felt is recommended where roosting bats are expected to be present.

The problem

Standard non-bitumen coated membranes (including almost all breathable membranes) used below roof slates and tiles present a significant problem for bats. Over time, strands are pulled away from the surface of these materials as bats crawl over them. These fuzzy strands are very strong and can tangle and trap bats, sometimes causing the death of bats over multiple years¹.

One example we have encountered comprised a pipistrelle roost which formed in a building extension constructed in 2009. Over the course of just 13 years the roofing felt degraded to the extent that it trapped and killed more than 10 bats. Fortunately, the problem in this roost was identified and remedial work was undertaken to replace the roofing membrane in 2022.

Plate A12.1. Four dead pipistrelles tangled in breathable roofing membrane



Although a new roof might be considered to lack potential bat access points, that is often not the case. Roofs covered with stone slates almost always have gaps large enough to be accessed by bats, this is often also the case where imitation stone slates are used. On older buildings the uneven roof timbers and/or building design also often results in gaps on wall tops and between slates. Even on new builds it is often possible for bats to access potential roosts via features such as dry verge capping. Some bats can access a space no wider than a biro pen, therefore it is not surprising that they can find their way into most buildings.

Safe roofing membranes (and membranes behind cladding)

From a bat perspective, the best membrane option for areas where roosts are expected comprises traditional hessian-backed Type 1F bituminous felt. This product has been widely and safely used as a secondary weather barrier since approximately the 1950s/1960s. Wooden sarking has also been used for many decades and if appropriately treated, is safe for use in bat roosts. Wooden sarking also has the benefit of providing adding additional insulation

¹ Wearing S. Essah E., Gunnel K. & Bonser R. (2013) Double jeopardy: the potential for problems when bats interact with breathable roofing membranes in the United Kingdom. Architecture and Environment

and it is usually breathable.

At the time of writing (and to our knowledge) two products have passed the ‘snagging propensity’ test; consequently these products are approved by Natural England for use in bat roosts. This test attempts to replicate the wear and tear which results from bats crawling over the membrane. The approved products are: TLX BatSafe^{2,3} and SIGA Majcoat 350. Although they have passed this test, it is unclear how these membranes will degrade in the medium-long term, particularly in larger bat roosts. Therefore we do not recommend that they are used for roosts with multiple bats, and particularly for large (maternity roosts). A third product, SIGA Majcoat 200 SOB Diffusion, passed the test for its upper surface only. This product should not be used in known bat roosts or locations where bat mitigation is to be installed. Although none of these products are considered to be as safe as traditional Type 1F bituminous felt, they may provide an option for roofs where future bat use cannot be ruled out, and a breathable solution is required.

Additional considerations

In recent years a fairly substantial proportion of the lofts we have surveyed which had existing breathable felt, were found to have been damaged by wasps. The wasps appear to have chewed holes in the felt and formed nests. This doesn’t appear to be a problem associated with traditional bitumen coated roofing felt. Any holes within roofing felt are likely to significantly reduce its functionality as a secondary weather barrier. Where bats or birds come into contact with breathable roofing membranes, they can also damage it causing it to leak, they can also significantly reduce the breathability of the felt in that location.

Plate A12.2. Damage to a breathable roofing membrane adjacent to a wasp nest



Traditional bituminous Type 1F roofing felt is a non-breathable product and therefore ventilation is required. Sufficient ventilation can be usually be achieved, even in buildings with vaulted ceilings, however, some consideration during the design stage is required. Products to increase the ventilation within roofs where bituminous Type 1F felt has already been installed are also available.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bats-apply-for-a-mitigation-licence#full-publication-update-history~:text=Use%20of%20safe%20roofing%20membranes>

³ TLX BatSafe requires all joints and cut edges to be taped in order to prevent the fraying of bare edges.

Appendix 10. Bat Records

In accordance with best practice and the requirements of bat licensing, bat records collected during surveys are supplied to the relevant biological record centres and bat groups. The records to be supplied in accordance with this survey are shown below. House names/numbers are not given out by record holding organisations except under very particular circumstances. Please let us know if you object to the distribution of these records.

Date	Species	Address	OS Grid Reference	Notes
04/09/2024	Common pipistrelle	St Mary's Street, Penistone	SE 24472 03398	Pass
04/09/2024	Soprano pipistrelle	St Mary's Street, Penistone	SE 24472 03398	Pass
04/09/2024	Noctule	St Mary's Street, Penistone	SE 24472 03398	Pass