

National Grid Proposals – Gould Street and Bilbrook Street

Arboriculture and Ecology Note

Introduction

This note is provided in support of planning application reference 128431/FO/2020 which has been submitted on behalf of National Grid Property Holdings Ltd. This note provides information on the site in respect to arboriculture and ecology to assist in the consideration of the application proposals.

The proposals relate to the installation of 2no. pressure reduction stations at two parcels of land on Gould Street and Bilbrook Street respectively. The two site parcels cover a relatively small area, together encompassing approximately 0.12 hectares.

The installations are necessary to rationalise and upgrade existing National Grid apparatus in the locality, required to allow for a comprehensive redevelopment scheme for the surrounding land, as planned for by the Manchester Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework. In line with the Strategic Regeneration Framework, proposals are being progressed under a separate planning application by MCR Property Group on the surrounding land for a residential-led scheme encompassing land bounded by Gould Street, Bromley Street and Bilbrook Street and Back St George's Street.

Arboriculture

Gould Street Parcel

A slender strip of overgrown vegetation is currently in situ on the site adjacent to the eastern side of the Gould Street highways. Figure 1 below provides an extract from the submitted drawings which plots the location of existing trees and shrubs within the landscape strip.

Figure 1 – Existing tree/vegetation Survey – Existing Site Plan

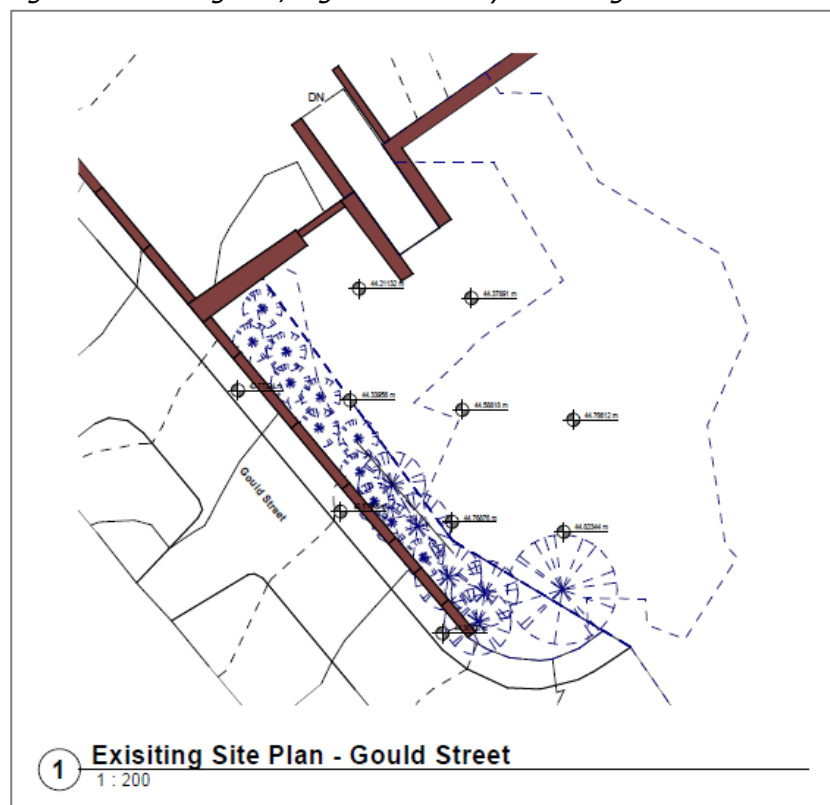


Figure 2 – Landscape strip, facing south-east on Gould Street



Figure 3 - Landscape strip facing north-west on Gould Street



A tree survey for the wider site has been undertaken. The following has been identified within the existing landscape strip alongside Gould Street:

- 1no. existing cherry tree – Category B2 Rating
- 1no. group of cherry trees – Category C2 Rating. Identified as a poor-quality group situated adjacent to the highway.

The existing vegetation is thought to be self-seeded and is currently in an overgrown and unmanaged state. As such the existing vegetation provides little amenity value.

No non-native invasive species have been identified on the site.

Tree Removal / Mitigation:

Due to the proximity of the existing trees to the proposed gas infrastructure installation, as well proposed surrounding development, the removal of this strip of vegetation would be necessary. A comprehensive and befitting soft landscaping and planting scheme will be delivered as part of the surrounding residential-led scheme which is being brought forward on the surrounding land through separate planning application proposals being progressed by MCR Property Group.

Bilbrook Street Parcel

There are no trees or vegetation in situ on the Bilbrook Street parcel and therefore there are no arboricultural impacts.

No non-native invasive species have been identified on the site.

Ecology

The application site is not the subject of any environmental designations or protections, with there being no designated sites for nature conservation within 1km of the site. There are no obvious connections to any neighbouring natural habitats within the locality. There is little ecological value or habitat potential within the area due to it being highly urbanised.

To support the separate surrounding residential scheme proposals which are being progressed, ecology habitat surveys have been undertaken covering the wider site between Gould Street and Bilbrook Street, the most recent appraisal being completed in December 2019. The assessments provided have found all site habitats across the wider site to be common and widespread, with their total loss being of no significant importance to local nature conservation.

In specific reference to the two land parcels which are the subject of National Grid's application proposals, the potential for nesting birds and hedgehogs within existing vegetation has been identified as a potential ecological constraint.

In order to protect nesting birds, it has been identified that any vegetation removal would need to be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season or following inspection and supervision by a qualified ecologist. To protect any hedgehogs, reasonable avoidance measures would be recommended to ensure minimal disturbance and harm is caused.

Summary

This note provides a summary of the arboriculture and ecology considerations for the two site parcels. As highlighted, existing trees/vegetation and potential habitat is limited to a small strip of landscaping adjacent to Gould Street. It is necessary to remove this landscaping strip to facilitate the development proposals.

Mitigation will be provided through a comprehensive planting and soft landscaping scheme to be delivered as part of the surrounding residential development proposals as envisaged within the Manchester Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework.