

Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy Update

Red Bank Neighbourhood, Victoria North, Manchester

Creation of Future Development Platforms and Green Infrastructure

July 2023

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Appendix I Biodiversity Net Gain Report

Prepared By: Ed Harvey

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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy has been prepared by Avison Young (AY) on behalf of Manchester City Council (MCC) (the Applicant). The original version of the report (dated March 2022) was submitted in support of a full planning application (ref: 133143/VO/2022) (referred to as 'Application 2') proposing new green space and infrastructure works which benefit from £51.6m Government funding through the Homes Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to prepare the land at Red Bank for new strategic residential-led development.
- 1.2 That was the second planning application submitted by the Applicant at the site, following the grant of planning permission (Ref: 132252/VO/2021) (referred to as 'Application 1') on 23 December 2021 for advanced enabling works including tree and vegetation removal, creation of a temporary haul road and demolition of the Creamline Dairies buildings in association with the future delivery of the residential masterplan by MCC and its Joint Venture (JV) Partner, Far East Consortium International Ltd (FEC).
- 1.3 Application 2 (ref: 133143/VO/2022) was approved in July 2022, with full planning permission granted for the following works::

"City Council Development for the creation of development platforms, including remediation and earthworks, and change in site levels, to allow delivery of future residential-led development at the Red Bank Neighbourhood, together with the construction of a new road and priority junction from Red Bank, new drainage infrastructure, utility and services connections and diversions, street works for new utilities including ducting up to the Queens Park substation, preparatory tree and shrub clearance, and demolition of certain existing structures, along with the creation of new and improved green infrastructure and landscaping including the improvements of St Catherine's Wood to form part of a City River Park, and other associated works."

- 1.4 A third application (ref: 135190/VO/2022) was subsequently submitted by the MCC team relating to the HIF enabling and infrastructure works. This 'Application 3' also now has full planning permission granted in December 2022 for: *'City Council Development for utility and services connections and diversions to Dantzic Street, Dalton Street and Collyhurst Road associated with the delivery of future residential-led development at the Red Bank Neighbourhood, Victoria North.'*
- 1.5 The works consented under MCC Applications 1, 2 and 3 will create the development platforms and ready the site for the delivery of future residential development, applied for in separate planning applications (refs: 136812/OO/2023 & 136814/FO/2023) submitted by MCC's JV Partner, Far East Consortium in April 2023. The outline planning application (136812/OO/2023) proposes residential-led

mixed use development at Red Bank Neighbourhood, Victoria North, and the full planning application (136814/FO/2023) proposes residential led development at plots NT02-04. The two applications are referred to in the planning submissions as 'Application 4 – Red Bank Neighbourhood Outline' and 'Application 5 – Plots NT02-NT04 Full'. These five applications are referenced collectively within this report as the Red Bank Neighbourhood Masterplan.

- 1.6 This iteration of the Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy updates a previous version submitted (and subsequently approved) with Application 2. It is submitted as part of a Section 73 application seeking amendments to that permission (133143/VO/2022), namely, to introduce phasing to the planning permission and condition wording, to allow the phased discharge of planning conditions/ implementation of development at the site.
- 1.7 Following discussion with the LPA it was determined that this report should be updated to reflect the current BNG position at Red Bank following the submission of FEC's applications (Applications 4 and 5) for residential led development at Plots NT02-04, and across the wider masterplan the subject of the outline application. The BNG strategy for the MCC and FEC applications is interlinked. Therefore this report has been updated to take account of that. When Application 2 was submitted/ approved it was envisaged that off-site mitigation would be required to deliver the necessary BNG credits. That is no longer the case and it has now been demonstrated through landscaping updates associated with the FEC applications that BNG provision in excess of 10% net gain can be accommodated on site.

Summary of Strategic Regeneration Context

- 1.8 The Victoria North initiative (formerly referred to as 'Northern Gateway') is an area of approximately 155 hectares to the north of Manchester City Centre and Victoria Station offering an opportunity to deliver approximately 15,000 new homes over the next 15-20 years, along with a range of employment, social, community, cultural and ancillary uses. Victoria North will establish a series of new, sustainable and integrated residential neighbourhoods, with a balanced mix of housing types and tenures, making it a desirable place for a variety of new and existing Manchester residents. Victoria North is one of the largest regeneration projects in the UK as well as being the largest single opportunity for residential redevelopment in Manchester, effectively a new town within the heart of an established, popular and growing city.
- 1.9 In April 2017, MCC appointed Far East Consortium International Ltd (FEC) as its Joint Venture (JV) investment and delivery partner, to accelerate the delivery of the Victoria North opportunity. This appointment was the conclusion of an international marketing exercise that commenced in April 2016. Since making this appointment, MCC has approved the Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF), which provides an updated vision, core objectives and development framework to

guide the regeneration of Northern Gateway (now known as Victoria North), with a focus on the provision of housing and supporting infrastructure investment. In February 2019, MCC Executive approved the Northern Gateway SRF as a material consideration in the determination of all future planning applications relevant to the area.

- 1.10 Victoria North is a unique opportunity to deliver transformational regeneration on an unprecedented scale in Manchester and helps to fulfil its potential as a truly innovative, sustainable, and world-class city. The regeneration of this area to the north-east of the city centre has the potential to unlock significant residential-led development that will positively contribute to the growth of Manchester and the wider city region. Victoria North is one of the UK's largest residential-led regeneration schemes and a unique opportunity to deliver 15,000 new homes and a world-class City River Park for Manchester.

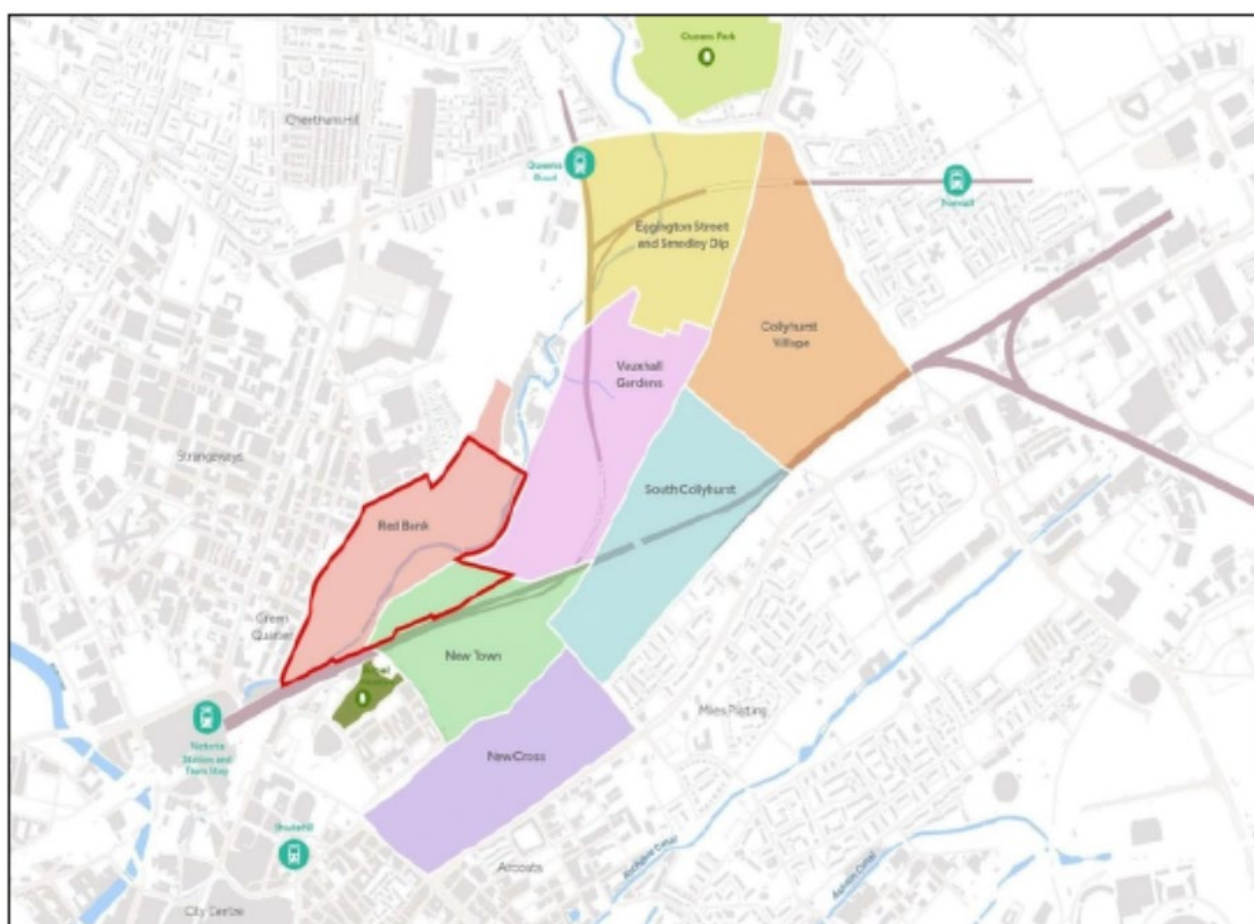


Figure 1: Boundary of the Initial Development Area in the context of the Northern Gateway SRF

- 1.11 Figure 1 presents the extent of the area related to the Victoria North initiative, inclusive of the seven inter-connected neighbourhoods identified within the SRF. An Initial Development Area has been identified by the JV as having the potential to deliver an estimated 5,550 residential units across 21 residential development plots, as well as delivering critical infrastructure works, which is essentially Phase 1 of the wider SRF (the red line imposed on Figure 1). This Initial Development Area comprises land owned/ controlled by MCC, FEC and third-party landowners, and it is anticipated that c. 4,000

residential units will be delivered on land owned/ controlled by the JV. The Initial Development Area shown is inclusive of the infrastructure enabling works and the subsequent built development.

- 1.12 The development project envisaged on land owned / controlled by the JV within the Initial Development Area is known as the “Red Bank Neighbourhood”, which will form a significant first phase of delivering the wider SRF vision. It comprises an area of approximately 20 hectares (ha) and is located within the Lower Irk Valley. Presently, the location is affected by the legacy of more than 150 years of industrial uses and Victorian / pre-Victorian infrastructure, with modified waterways; significant operational and redundant rail infrastructure; limited sewerage, water, electricity and gas infrastructure; and contaminated sites associated with textile manufacturing and other heavy industries. As a result, a comprehensive programme of infrastructure investment is required to facilitate development where works cannot be taken forward on a piecemeal, site by site basis, and are not viable for the private sector to fund in isolation.
- 1.13 Concurrent to the delivery of the key elements of the neighbourhood to be delivered by the HIF money, namely the creation of development platforms, formation of a new spine road (Phase 1), and new utilities and services connections that will allow for future residential-led development, together with new and improved green infrastructure, the JV will focus on plot development and housing delivery on land controlled / owned by the JV, which will form part of a future planning application (i.e., FEC’s “Red Bank Neighbourhood”).
- 1.14 To unlock the full potential of the Initial Development Area, JV has secured £51.6 million from the Government’s HIF to help unlock the potential at Red Bank. The funding will be used to address a series of up-front infrastructure requirements to support the delivery of the new homes and green spaces within the Initial Development Area.

Planning Application Strategy

- 1.15 The JV’s proposals at Red Bank are envisaged as a single development project, including the HIF infrastructure and enabling works, and the residential plot development associated with FEC’s proposed residential masterplan, which will deliver approximately 4,000 of the 5,500 new homes envisaged for the Red Bank Neighbourhood. A series of planning applications have been/ are being submitted to MCC for approval as follows:

Phase *	No.	Description of Proposals	Extent of Ecological Works	Timescale for Submission	Timescale for Delivery
1		Advance HIF Enabling Works (Application 1)	Removal of trees and habitat to plateau area	Approved December 2021	June '22

2	Main HIF Preparatory Works (Application 2)	• Removal of trees and habitat to plateau area and embankments • New tree planting and ecological enhancements to St Catherine's Wood • River enhancement works	Approved July 2022	March '24
3	HIF Flood Defence and Alleviation Measures	• River naturalisation. • New ecological enhancements and habitat creation along river.	TBC	TBC
4	Red Bank Neighbourhood Application (Applications 4 (outline application for Red Bank Neighbourhood) and 5 (full application for Plots NT02-04))	• New ecological enhancements with new tree planting, greening and enhancements to new streets.	Submitted April 2023	'23 – '33

Figure 2: Overview of Applications

2. Site Context

- 2.1 This section sets out the historic context and provides a detailed description of the site and surrounding area.

The Site

- 2.2 The application site extends to approximately 15.74ha and comprises an irregular shaped parcel of land to the south of Red Bank Road, Manchester. A Site Location Plan is shown below outlining the extent of the application red line boundary. The majority of the works proposed will be undertaken in the Red Bank area. The red line has also been extended to the north-east to cover the utility works/new ducting required in the street up to the Queens Park substation.



Figure 3: HIF Site Location Plan

- 2.3 As noted in Section 1, the site is located within the Initial Development Area of the Northern Gateway SRF, and within the Red Bank and New Town neighbourhoods proposed by the SRF. Figure 4 below

shows the infrastructure works application site boundary (shown in red) in the context of the wider SRF.

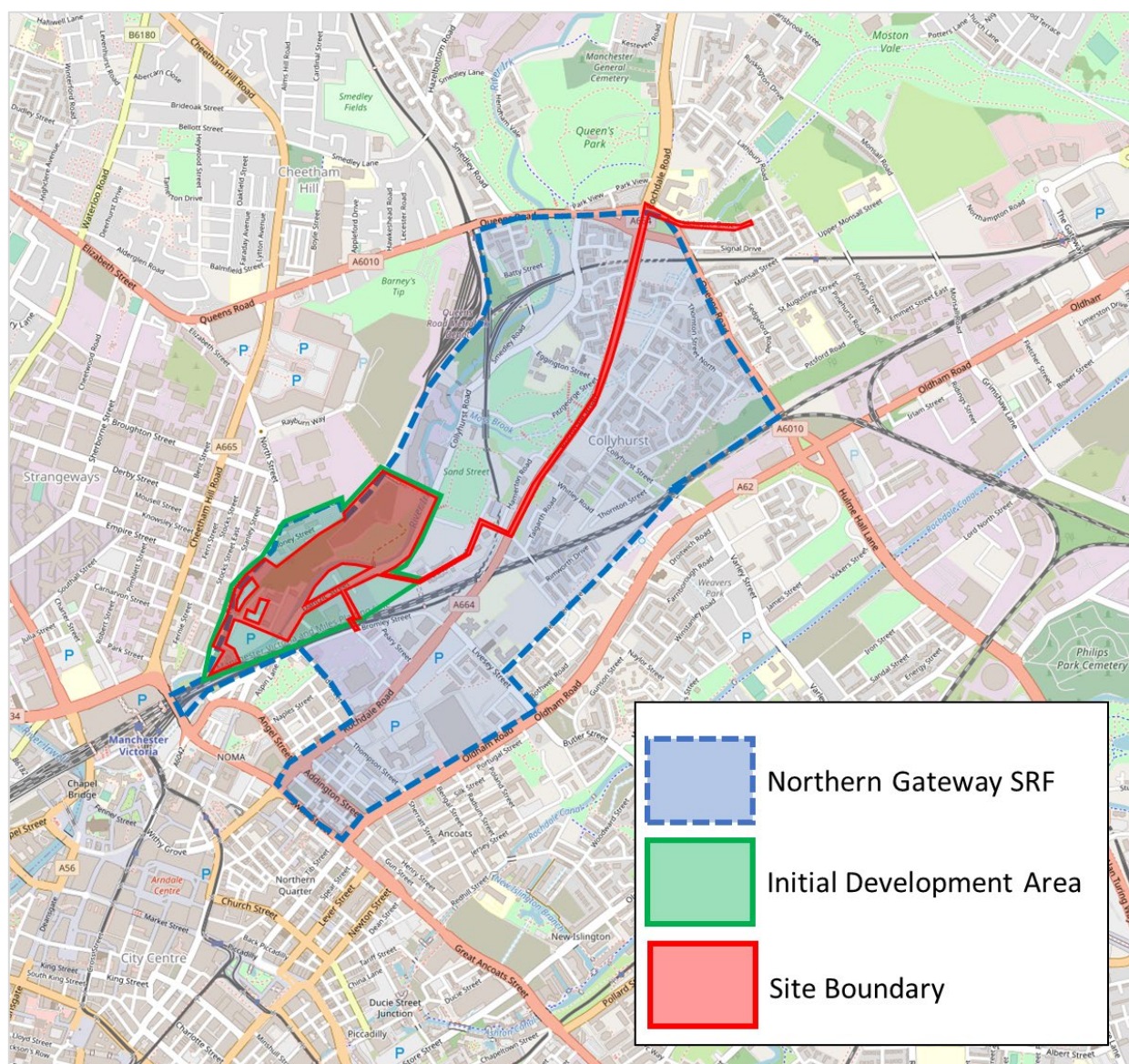


Figure 4: Site Location in context of Initial Development Area and wider Northern Gateway SRF

2.4 For the purposes of this Statement, the Initial Development Area, within which the site sits, is divided into the following areas:

- Red Bank Plateau;
- Red Bank Viaduct;
- St Catherine's Wood;
- Travis Island;
- New Town Plots.

2.5 Figure 5 below shows the extent of these areas:

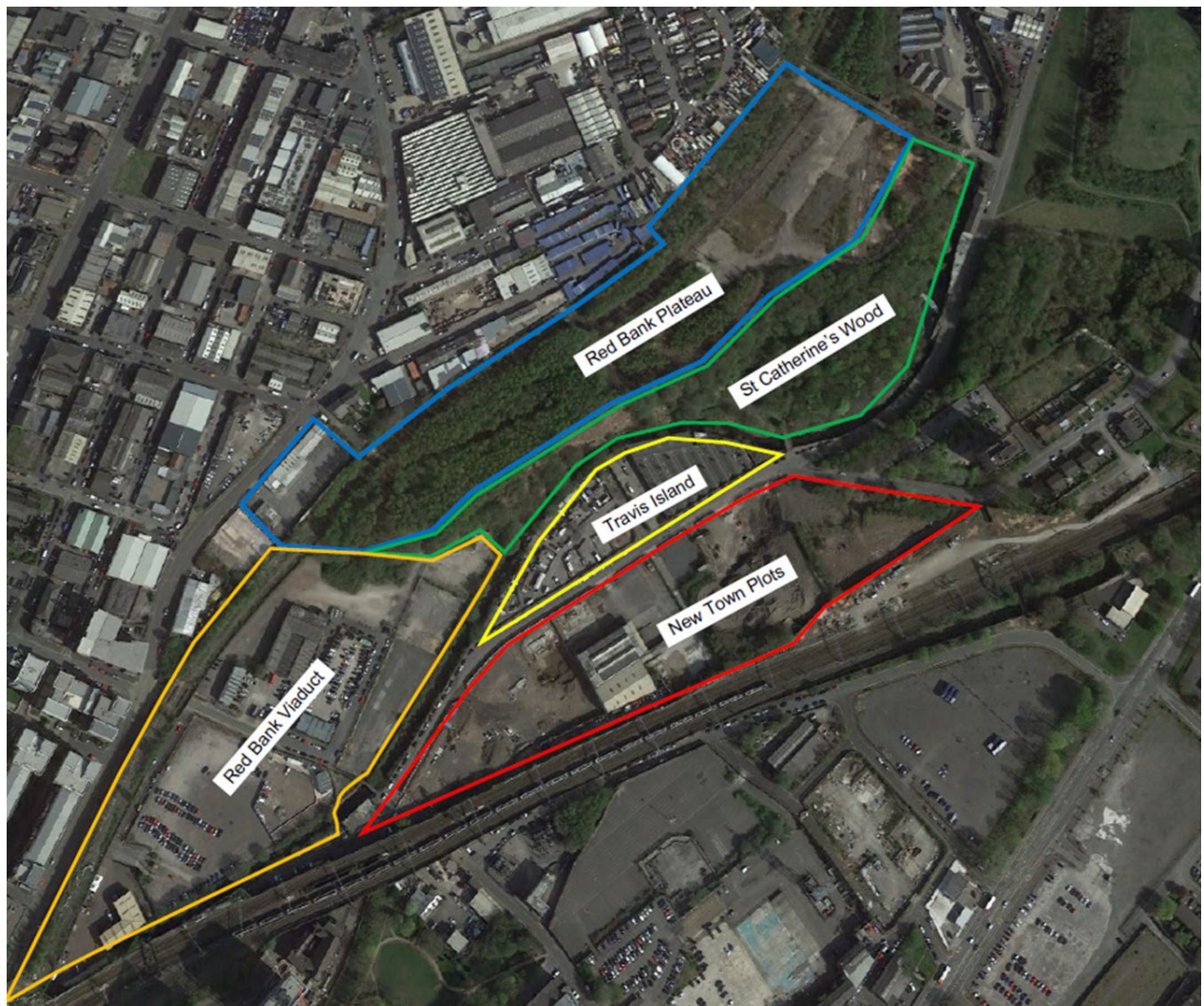


Figure 5: Existing Site Areas

2.6 It should be noted both the Travis Island and New Town Plots areas, as well as parts of the Red Bank Viaduct area, were excluded from the Application 2 site area.

Site Overview / History

2.7 The Victoria North site has a legacy of more than 150 years of industrial uses and Victorian and pre-Victorian infrastructure, with modified waterways; significant operational and redundant rail infrastructure; limited sewerage, water, electricity, and gas infrastructure; and contaminated sites associated with textile manufacturing and other heavy industries.

2.8 Historically the area was used as railway sidings, following the route of the former Prestwich Branch of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, which started at Victoria Station to the south-west before heading north-west. This is now disused and forms a plateau above the River Irk valley to the south-

east. Historical mapping shows how the River Irk was manipulated to create multiple waterways for its industrial usage to power Mills. However, the artificially created waterway disappeared in the late 19th century as the neighbouring railway was developed. In the mid to late 20th century, residential and school buildings were developed on the site.

- 2.9 We understand the use of the railway line ceased in the 1950s or early 1960s and the site has been vacant and unused for a significant period of time. Following the demolition of the railway sidings, industrial and residential buildings that once occupied the site, self-seeded vegetation took hold and screened the site's past from view.

Red Bank Plateau

- 2.10 The north of the site is characterised by Red Bank viaduct and former railway sidings. It comprises a cleared post-industrial site, which became dominated by self-seeded birch trees, a natural pioneer species. To the north-east of the site is extensive open hardstanding.

St Catherine's Wood

- 2.11 To the south of the site is St Catherine's Wood, which is on the site of the former Travis Isle Mill and house and St Catherine's School and Church, from whom it takes its name. The majority of the woodland is of planted origin; however, it is a locally extensive habitat and provides habitat value in the local context. There is a dominance of non-native species, such as sycamore, and dense areas of bracken are present in the south of the site. Invasive species, such as Japanese Knotweed and Indian Balsam are locally dominant along the river.
- 2.12 There are significant level changes in this area with steep embankments across dense areas of bracken. There are no formal footways across this area which is disconnected from its surroundings presently. The area also feels unwelcoming, is known for anti-social behaviour, is unmanaged and has been subject to fly-tipping and vandalism.
- 2.13 St Catherine's Wood is bound by the River Irk to the south. There is also very little/ only restricted access to the River Irk frontage. Inaccessible or incomplete footpaths are overgrown or have had access blocked completely by falling trees, vegetation or other obstacles.
- 2.14 The Grade II Listed Union Bridge is located at the southern boundary of the site, spanning the River Irk between Dantzic Street and Roger Street. However, it should be noted that the bridge is outside the planning application boundary.

Red Bank Viaduct

- 2.15 To the south-west of the site is the Red Bank Viaduct area. In its current form this area is characterised by surface car parking and hardstanding. There are also some commercial units in this area, as shown below. However, it should be noted units occupying the western area of Red Bank Viaduct, which sit outside of the JV's ownership are excluded from this application site boundary.

Surrounding Area

- 2.16 The site is bounded by commercial and industrial uses to the north and west. To the east the site is bound by the River Irk, beyond which are existing commercial units located along Collyhurst Road and Dantzic Street. To the immediate south is further surface car parking, south of Roger Street, beyond which is the former Red Bank Viaduct.
- 2.17 As detailed at Section 1 of this Statement, the site sits within a wider strategic regeneration context, being part of the Victoria North initiative; one of the largest regeneration projects within the UK. Over the next 15 to 20 years, the surrounding area will be the subject of substantial change, with the delivery of approximately 15,000 new homes, in addition to employment, social, community, cultural and ancillary uses set to come forward.

3. The Proposed Development

- 3.1 A key condition of the HIF funding that has been secured by MCC is that the spend availability only runs for a certain time period (initially up until March 2024), by which time the infrastructure and enabling works must be completed. Therefore, the new landscaping, enabling, preparatory and flood and river works required at the site are being split into multiple planning applications. Planning permission for the initial HIF infrastructure advanced enabling works was granted in December 2021, and permission (Application 2) for the
- 3.2 creation of the development platforms and preparatory infrastructure to allow the delivery of future residential development was granted in July 2022. It is the Application 2 permission which is now the subject of a Section 73 application seeking to introduce phasing into the permission.

Summary Overview of Works

- 3.3 A high level overview of the infrastructure works approved by the Application 2 permission is provided below:

Permanent Green Infrastructure and Landscaping

- The enhancement of St Catherine's Wood to deliver c.4.5ha of the City River Park, including vegetation planting, lighting and security, and a new circulation route access for pedestrian and cyclists leading from St Catherine's Wood bridge, including some minor reprofiling of slopes to the rear of the park; and
- The creation of new public realm areas in the form of Red Bank Terraces, and Union Waterfront at the southern-most extent of the site, and connecting pedestrian and cycling circulation routes.

Preparatory Works to Create Development Platform

- Demolition of sections of retaining wall. Three sections of the existing river wall adjacent to the northern banks of the River Irk are proposed for removal to facilitate the proposed earthworks and landscaping in these areas.
- Tree and shrub clearance to facilitate the construction of the residential-led development platform (Red Bank Plateau), and as part of the park area / proposed landscape improvements.
- The reclamation of the development platform at Red Bank Plateau, Red Bank Terraces and the circulation route to Union Waterfront comprising.

- Cut and fill and remediation to the Red Bank Plateau and Red Bank Terraces, including the regrading/reprofiling of existing slopes and changing the Red Bank Plateau platform levels.
- The reprofiling of stretches of the northern bank of the River Irk and the erection of a bund to assist with flood alleviation.

Highways Works

- The formation of a new spine road (Phase 1) (Plateau Avenue) on Red Bank Plateau. This application is seeking planning permission for Phase 1 of the new road at Plateau Avenue. This road will be constructed with sacrificial highway and footpath finishes for Phase 1, which will be upgraded by FEC's residential led development. The detail of the road will be agreed through future reserved matters applications pursuant to FEC's prospective outline planning application (Application 4).
- The creation of a circulation route leading from 'Red Bank Terraces' and 'Union Waterfront', at the western extent of the site, to the Packaging Products access bridge, at the eastern-most point of the site, which will also be for emergency access.
- The formation of the new priority junction at Red Bank road.

Utilities Works

- New drainage installation including the creation of SuDS, including drainage for the future development plots (to be applied for by FEC as part of Application 4/ the residential masterplan).
- Utilities and services connections for all new development plots and park/landscape/public realm areas and highways.
- Utilities diversion and new installations on Dantzig Street and new drainage installation.
- Street Works for new utilities incorporating two trenches for HV ducting from Queens Park substation to the north-east of the site, and additional utilities needs within existing streets local to the Initial Development Area.

Temporary Works

- Temporary construction access from the eastern-most point of the site, adjacent to the Packaging Products site.
- Temporary site security including gates and fencing to be erected during construction works.

3.4 The proposed development is detailed fully at Section 5 of the Supporting Planning Statement submitted as part of this application.

4. Ecological Mitigation Strategy

- 4.1 At the outset, and as a result of consultation with Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), it was agreed that a comprehensive and holistic Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Mitigation Strategy would be implemented for the area. This Strategy was prepared by Avison Young and was developed and submitted to support Application 1; it was updated for Application 2. As part of this iterative process, a further BNG report has been prepared by TEP on behalf of FEC and provides a further update for Applications 4 and 5.
- 4.2 AY's original BNG assessment considered 3 of the proposed planning applications within the Red Bank Neighbourhood which at the time were Applications 1 and 2 (as described above), and a part outline / part full (hybrid) application for residential led development (which at that time was described as Application 4 and has now been separated out into 2 applications (separate outline and full applications as described at paragraph 1.5 above). Where details of the proposals were not known, assumptions were made so that assessments were undertaken on a worst-case basis.
- 4.3 To continue this comprehensive and holistic approach, the latest BNG Assessment prepared by TEP in support of Applications 4 and 5 provides a comprehensive BNG assessment which continues to assess the Red Bank Neighbourhood area. However the latest BNG report is based upon the current planning strategy described above which includes previous permissions acquired by MCC (under Applications 1-2) and current applications being prepared by FEC using the latest landscape masterplan. Works undertaken under Application 3 do not affect any habitats (lost under application 1 and 2) and so have not been considered in the BNG assessment. A BNG assessment is also undertaken of Application 5 in isolation.
- 4.4 The FEC design team were commissioned to produce a cohesive Illustrative Masterplan for Red Bank and New Town plots, including preparation of a Landscape Masterplan. These plans are based on a series of site wide strategies, including Biodiversity Net Gain, and also show MCC's intentions for Red Bank, including the works approved under Applications 1 and 2. The overarching vision for Red Bank is to create a community through the development of thriving neighbourhoods which will provide new homes for a diverse mix of people, alongside the long-term infrastructure to help these communities to develop sustainably.

Previous BNG assessments

- 4.5 Comprehensive BNG assessments were undertaken for Applications 1 and 2, taking into account MCC's proposals within Application 2 for a new park at St Catherine's Wood and the overall Landscape

Masterplan for the Red Bank and New Town neighbourhoods with the residential led developments now the subject of Applications 4 and 5.

- 4.6 Given Landscape Masterplans for FEC's residential led mixed use developments were still emerging at the time of submission for Application 1, calculations were based on a reasonable worst-case scenario for both habitat losses and habitat creation/enhancement, which will accrue from all the proposed developments together.
- 4.7 The same approach as above was taken at the time of submission of Application 2. The BNG assessment submitted with Application 2 was updated to reflect the emerging Landscape Proposals for Application 2.

Current BNG Approach

- 4.8 TEP's approach for Applications 4 and 5 follows the methodology set out above, as previously agreed with GMEU. The latest Landscape Masterplan prepared for those applications shows FEC's illustrative landscape proposals for the residential led mixed use development at Red Bank Neighbourhood (proposed under Application 4) and their detailed landscape proposals for the New Town neighbourhood plots (NT02, NT03 and NT04) to the south of Dantzic Street (proposed under Application 5). The Landscape Masterplan also identifies MCC's intentions for Red Bank and shows the HIF infrastructure works and new park at St Catherine's Wood which have been granted full planning permission under Application 2.
- 4.9 The previous metric was completed in Metric 3.0 which was the most up to date metric at the time of completion. It has now been decided that Metric 3.1, the most up to date metric at the time of this Report, will be used, in line with Natural England advice and consultation with the Environment Agency. Consultation with GMEU was also undertaken by the FEC team to discuss the updated approach and confirm it was acceptable.

On-Site Mitigation Intent

Previous iterations of the BNG assessment completed by TEP for MCC's Applications 1 and 2, identified the likely net loss of units at the site and need for some off-site woodland enhancement. As such, a number of areas of off-site other broadleaved woodland were identified by MCC and surveyed by TEP in August 2022. Most recently the use of such areas of off-site woodland were discussed with GMEU in March 2023. However, following further updates to the Landscape Masterplan prepared in support of FEC's applications, it has now been demonstrated that this off-site provision is no longer required in order to achieve in excess of 10% net gain.

5. Commitment to Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10%

- 5.1 The joint venture partnership (JV) between Manchester City Council and the Far East Consortium are committed to significant ecological and biodiversity improvements on land controlled by the JV within the Red Bank Neighbourhood, and this needs to be read as a single development project.
- 5.2 The JV are committed to an increase in Biodiversity Net Gain across the completed “Red Bank Neighbourhood” development project of at least 10% in line with the Environment Act 2021.

What is Biodiversity Net Gain?

- 5.3 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Where a development has an impact on biodiversity it encourages developers to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected in such a way it is hoped that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted and ecological networks can be restored.
- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that planning should provide biodiversity net gains where possible. BNG is also referred to in the National Infrastructure Commission's Design Principles, National Policy Statements and the National design guide.
- 5.5 The Government announced it would mandate net gains for biodiversity in the Environment Bill in the 2019 Spring Statement. This followed a consultation on BNG from December 2018.
- 5.6 The Environment Bill was given Royal Assent on 9 November 2021 (becoming the Environment Act) and sets out the following key components to mandatory BNG that will follow in changes to planning legislation:
- Minimum 10% gain required, calculated using Biodiversity Metric and approval of net gain plan.
 - Habitat secured for at least 30 years via obligations/ conservation covenant.
 - Habitat can be delivered on-site, off-site, or via statutory biodiversity credits.

How is Biodiversity Net Gain measured?

- 5.7 In terms of measuring net gain, guidance states that using a metric is a pragmatic way to calculate the impact of a development and the net gain that can be achieved. The initial measurement of BNG for the Red Bank Neighbourhood project has been assessed using Biodiversity Metric 3.0, which is a tool designed to enable local authorities and developers to measure the change in biodiversity across their

site. It determines if there will be net gain, net loss or no net loss of biodiversity following completion of their development and any subsequent management regime.

- 5.8 In order to calculate the change in biodiversity across the site, a site survey is undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist to determine the habitats present on site, their location, size, and condition. This information is then digitised and the resulting information fed into Biodiversity Metric 3.0. It's resultant inputs are then converted to UK Habitat classification codes (referred to below as "Habitat Units") as a way of measuring the baseline position, any loss of biodiversity, and the amount of new habitat required to achieve the 10% improvement, be that on-site or off-site.

How will this Commitment be achieved?

- 5.9 The JV and its appointed Ecologists (TEP) have used a series of assumptions based on recognised methodology for calculating BNG, the current condition of the site (the baseline), and the emerging designs for the Red Bank Neighbourhood across the five separate planning applications / phases and applied this to the recognised Biodiversity Metric. This will allow the baseline position to be set and the requirements identified to achieve at least a 10% BNG. A BNG Report prepared by TEP is included in Appendix 1 of this Statement, which provides more detail on the methodology and assumptions used.

- 5.10 Through planning conditions secured as part of Applications 1 and 2, the JV made the following commitments to be delivered as part of the overall Red Bank Neighbourhood development project:

- Submission of a 'Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy' prior to commencement of the enabling works, including a mitigation and implementation strategy (including a commitment to 10% biodiversity net gain) across all phases of the Red Bank Neighbourhood.
- A monitoring, management and verification strategy to ensure that the mitigation is achieved across all phases of development (and/or within the Northern Gateway SRF area).
- A requirement to submit an updated 'Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy' for approval with the planning application for each subsequent phase of the Red Bank Neighbourhood development. This will provide any updates required to reflect the detailed design proposals contained within that phase, and any subsequent updates to the ecological assumptions required to meet the overall target of 10% biodiversity net gain.
- Prior to first use of each phase a verification report must also be submitted conform to the recommendations of the approved Strategy for that phase, including its contribution towards the 10% biodiversity net gain.

- 5.11 As the second of four applications to be submitted for the "Red Bank Neighbourhood" development project, it was originally necessary to make best assumptions around the outline proposals in Application 4. Impacts on the River Irk associated with Application 3 were excluded from the BNG assessment. The BNG Assessment by TEP has been updated with each subsequent planning application

to reflect the actual design of the individual components of the “Red Bank Neighbourhood” development project being applied for, and to capture any subsequent amendments required to future applications to meet the overall commitment to 10% BNG. This commitment has already been secured through the planning permission for the enabling works (Application 1).

5.12 A summary of the current BNG position for the Red Bank Neighbourhood, and how the 10% BNG will indicatively be achieved on-site within the Red Bank Neighbourhood, is set out below based on current assumptions.

Summary of BNG Metric (March 2022*)	
On-site baseline (1) (the whole Red Bank Neighbourhood site today)	32.63 habitat units 0.00 hedgerow units 1.58 river units
On-site post-intervention (2) (conservative assumption for the whole Red Bank Neighbourhood site after delivery of Phases 1, 2 and 4. NB. this figure does not include the river naturalisation works (Phase 3) and reflects an assumed worst-case scenario that could be improved on during detailed design)	38.08 habitat units 0.33 hedgerow units 1.84 river units
Commitment to BNG Improvement for Red Bank Neighbourhood project	10% increase to be delivered on site. River and hedgerow units currently meet the commitment of 10% net gain on-site.

* based on best indicative assumptions for Phase 4 at this stage.

Table 2: Summary of Current Indicative Requirements to Meet 10% BNG in Red Bank Neighbourhood

Location	Description of Ecological Works
On-Site (Phases 2 & 4)	• New tree planting and ecological enhancements to St Catherine’s Wood • New ecological enhancements and habitat creation along the River Irk. • Enhancements to existing habitat • New ecological enhancements with new tree planting, hedgerow planting, greening and enhancements to new streets • New gardens • New green corridors, including street trees • Horticulture and productive gardens • SUDS and rain gardens • Commitment to inclusion of green and brown roofs

Table 3: Breakdown of Indicative BNG Measures Anticipated to Meet 10% BNG in Red Bank Neighbourhood

6. Securing the Mitigation and Implementation Strategy

- 6.1 This section sets out how MCC as the Applicant, and as a JV Partner with FEC, proposes to secure the ecological enhancement measures across the Red Bank Neighbourhood project, and the subsequent planning applications.
- 6.2 As previously stated, condition 12 of the enabling works planning permission (Ref: 132252/VO/2021) and condition 18 attached to the main infrastructure works permission (Ref: 133143/VO/2022) secure the following commitment to a mitigation strategy:

'Prior to the commencement of this development (excluding demolition, vegetation and tree clearance), an updated "Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy" for the four phases of development in the Red Bank Neighbourhood (and/or within the Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) area) on land that MCC has a freehold interest in, as indicated in the Ecological Enhancement Statement prepared by Avison Young stamped as received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, on the 8 March 2022, shall be submitted for approval in writing by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority.

This shall include:

- Ecological evaluation of the current condition and value of development hereby approved (both quantitative and qualitative);*
- Ecological evaluation of the current condition and value of the subsequent phases of development in the Red Bank Neighbourhood (both quantitative and qualitative);*
- A mitigation and implementation strategy (including a commitment to 10% biodiversity net gain) across all phases of the Red Bank Neighbourhood on land that MCC has a freehold interest in; and*
- A monitoring, management and verification strategy to ensure that the mitigation is achieved across the four phases of development (and/or within the Northern Gateway SRF area) including details to update the Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy following the completion each phase of development.*

(b) As part of a planning application for each subsequent phase of the Red Bank Neighbourhood development on land that MCC has a freehold interest in, an updated version of the "Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy" will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. This will provide any updates required to the document approved under part (a) of this condition to reflect the detailed design proposals contained within that phase,

and any subsequent updates to the ecological assumptions required to meet the overall target of 10% biodiversity net gain.

(c) Prior to the first use of each phase of development agreed within part (a) of this condition, a verification report will be required to validate that the works undertaken at that stage conforms to the recommendations and required approved within part of part (b) of this planning condition including its contribution towards the 10% biodiversity net gain.

(d) In instances of non-conformity, these shall be detailed along with mitigation measures required to ensure compliance with the Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy. A verification report and measures shall be agreed until such a time as all four phases of development comply with parts (a), (b) and (c) of this planning condition.

Any mitigation measures shall be implemented in accordance with a timescale to be agreed with the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, and thereafter retained and maintained in situ.

If within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting of any tree or shrub, that tree or shrub or any tree or shrub planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes, in the opinion of the local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, another tree or shrub of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place.

- 6.3 This document represents the updated Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy for Phase 2 as required by Condition 18, part (a). This is an updated version of the previously submitted Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Report (dated March 2022), revised to reflect the current BNG position across the Red Bank Neighbourhood, as per the TEP Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment submitted by FEC with Applications 4 and 5. The report is submitted as part of a current application seeking to discharge the relevant condition requiring an updated TREBNG Strategy to be submitted for approval.

7. Monitoring, Management and Verification Strategy

- 7.1 This section sets out the monitoring, management and verification strategy for the Red Bank Neighbourhood to ensure that the mitigation is achieved across the four phases of development (and/or within the Northern Gateway SRF area on land owned or controlled by MCC).
- 7.2 The overall commitment to at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) across the Red Bank Neighbourhood development project was secured under the Phase 1 planning application. This will be delivered under the four separate phases of development and will be monitored through the submission of updates to the Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy ("a Phase TREBNGM Strategy") to be provided with the submission of each planning application for a phase of the Red Bank Neighbourhood submitted by MCC and/or FEC. Each Phase TREBNGM Strategy will reflect the detailed design of that individual phase at the point it is submitted for planning approval, as well as its contribution to the over BNG commitment, and will be able to update any previous assumptions made for that phase.
- 7.3 Prior to the completion (or first use) of each phase of development a verification report will be submitted to MCC to validate that the works undertaken within that phase conform to the recommendations and requirements approved as part of the Phase TREBNGM Strategy, including its contribution towards the 10% BNG target. Should the verification report highlight that, for an individual phase, there are instances of non-conformity against the assumptions made, these shall be detailed along with mitigation measures required to ensure compliance.
- 7.4 To ensure that the ecological contribution of the individual development plots forming FEC's outline planning application can be monitored and verified, each reserved matters application or full 'drop in' planning application for a development plot will be accompanied by its own TREBNGM Strategy ("an RMA TREBNGM Strategy") to show how that plot contributes to the overall commitments made by the outline consent. Following the completion of all plots within Phase 4 a verification report will be submitted to MCC to validate that the works undertaken conform to the recommendations and requirements approved within its Phase TREBNGM Strategy.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 This Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy has been prepared by Avison Young (AY) on behalf of Manchester City Council (MCC) (the Applicant). The original version of the report (dated March 2022) was submitted in support of a full planning application (ref: 133143/VO/2022) (referred to as 'Application 2') proposing new green space and infrastructure works which benefit from £51.6m Government funding through the Homes Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to prepare the land at Red Bank for new strategic residential-led development.
- 8.2 That was the second planning application submitted by the Applicant at the site, following the grant of planning permission (Ref: 132252/VO/2021) (referred to as 'Application 1') on 23 December 2021 for advanced enabling works including tree and vegetation removal, creation of a temporary haul road and demolition of the Creamline Dairies buildings in association with the future delivery of the residential masterplan by MCC and its Joint Venture (JV) Partner, Far East Consortium International Ltd (FEC).
- 8.3 Application 2 (ref: 133143/VO/2022) was approved in July 2022, with full planning permission granted for the following works:

"City Council Development for the creation of development platforms, including remediation and earthworks, and change in site levels, to allow delivery of future residential-led development at the Red Bank Neighbourhood, together with the construction of a new road and priority junction from Red Bank, new drainage infrastructure, utility and services connections and diversions, street works for new utilities including ducting up to the Queens Park substation, preparatory tree and shrub clearance, and demolition of certain existing structures, along with the creation of new and improved green infrastructure and landscaping including the improvements of St Catherine's Wood to form part of a City River Park, and other associated works."

- 8.4 A third application (ref: 135190/VO/2022) was subsequently submitted by the MCC team relating to the HIF enabling and infrastructure works. This 'Application 3' also now has full planning permission granted in December 2022 for: *'City Council Development for utility and services connections and diversions to Dantzic Street, Dalton Street and Collyhurst Road associated with the delivery of future residential-led development at the Red Bank Neighbourhood, Victoria North.'*
- 8.5 The works consented under MCC Applications 1, 2 and 3 will create the development platforms and ready the site for the delivery of future residential development, applied for in separate planning applications (refs: 136812/OO/2023 & 136814/FO/2023) submitted by MCC's JV Partner, Far East Consortium in April 2023. The outline planning application (136812/OO/2023) proposes residential-led

mixed use development at Red Bank Neighbourhood, Victoria North, and the full planning application (136814/FO/2023) proposes residential led development at plots NT02-04. The two applications are referred to in the planning submissions as 'Application 4 – Red Bank Neighbourhood Outline' and 'Application 5 – Plots NT02-NT04 Full'.. These five applications are referenced collectively within this report as the Red Bank Neighbourhood Masterplan.

- 8.6 This iteration of the Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy updates a previous version submitted (and subsequently approved) with Application 2. It is submitted as part of a Section 73 application seeking amendments to that permission (133143/VO/2022), namely, to introduce phasing to the planning permission and condition wording, to allow the phased discharge of planning conditions/ implementation of development at the site.
- 8.7 Following discussion with the LPA it was determined that this report should be updated to reflect the current BNG position at Red Bank following the submission of FEC's applications (Applications 4 and 5) for residential led development at Plots NT02-04, and across the wider masterplan the subject of the outline application. The BNG strategy for the MCC and FEC applications is interlinked. Therefore this report has been updated to take account of that. When Application 2 was submitted/ approved it was envisaged that off-site mitigation would be required to deliver the necessary BNG credits. That is no longer the case and it has now been demonstrated through landscaping updates associated with the FEC applications that BNG provision in excess of 10% net gain can be accommodated on site.
- 8.8 The intention for the wider Red Bank Neighbourhood (across the four planning applications / phases) is to build upon the existing ecological and visual qualities of the area, particularly along the river, the new City River Park, and key routes, to provide significant new opportunities for ecological enhancements, new tree planting, and public access.
- 8.9 The JV are committed to significant ecological and biodiversity improvements within the Red Bank Neighbourhood, and this needs to be read as a single development project. The initial MCC planning permissions have already secured the JV's commitment to an increase in Biodiversity Net Gain across the completed Red Bank Neighbourhood development of at least 10% in line with the Environmental Act, which will be secured, monitored and verified through each phase of the overall development project.

Contact Details

Enquiries

Ed Harvey

+44 (0)7831 402 681

ed.harvey@avisonyoung.com

Visit us online

avisonyoung.co.uk

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