

Pigeon Triangle

Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Report

0046688

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Revision P02

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Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Ecological Appraisal	8
3	Biodiversity Net Gain assessment	13
4	List of appendices	16

Table of Tables:

Table 1 - Summary of HPI found within 1km of the site.	8
Table 2 - Habitats on site, their value and recommendations to retain and/or protect	10
Table 3 - Pre-development on-site habitat value	13
Table 4 - Landscape typologies and corresponding habitat classifications	13
Table 5 - Summary of post-development habitats	14
Table 6 - Change in biodiversity units	14

Table of Figures:

Figure 1 - Site Location within the wider landscape	5
Figure 2 - MAGIC Map showing the locations of HPI within 1km of the site. Deciduous woodland is outlined by a green polygon	9
Figure 3 - Baseline habitat map	11

1 Introduction

Buro Happold was commissioned by Mayfield Partnership to complete a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Biodiversity Net gain (BNG) assessment for the 'Pigeon Triangle' (hereafter referred to as 'site'). This report has been produced to summarise the findings of PEA undertaken in November 2025 and to outline the results of the BNG assessment to be submitted alongside a full Planning Application for public realm works.

Biodiversity net gain is embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Environment Act was enacted in 2021, and since the 12th February 2024, with the formal amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, new developments are required to reach a mandatory 10% gain in biodiversity units post-development.

This report aims to:

- Present the results of the preliminary ecological appraisal, including a desk-based study and site walkover.
- Evaluate any potential adverse or beneficial effects to ecological features on site or within the zone of influence of the site.
- Present the baseline habitat value of the development site, based on the preliminary ecological appraisal.
- Present the habitat value of the proposed landscaping incorporated into the post-development design; and
- Present the overall net habitat value change in both habitat units and a percent change.

1.1 Site context

'Pigeon Triangle', Baring Street, Manchester (central OS Grid reference is SJ 84941 97731, see figure 1) forms a part of the wider Mayfield Strategic Regeneration Framework development area. It is located within an urban area of Manchester, directly south of Piccadilly Train Station. Further south of the site there is Mayfield Park, which is comprised of a range of habitats including grassland, scrub, woodland and the River Medlock.

1.2 Development proposals

This document forms part of a Full Planning Application for public realm works including: re-grading and re-surfacing footpaths, highways, soft landscaping and planting of trees, replacement and reprovision of street lighting, CCTV, and street furniture, removal of car parking spaces, drainage, and associated works.

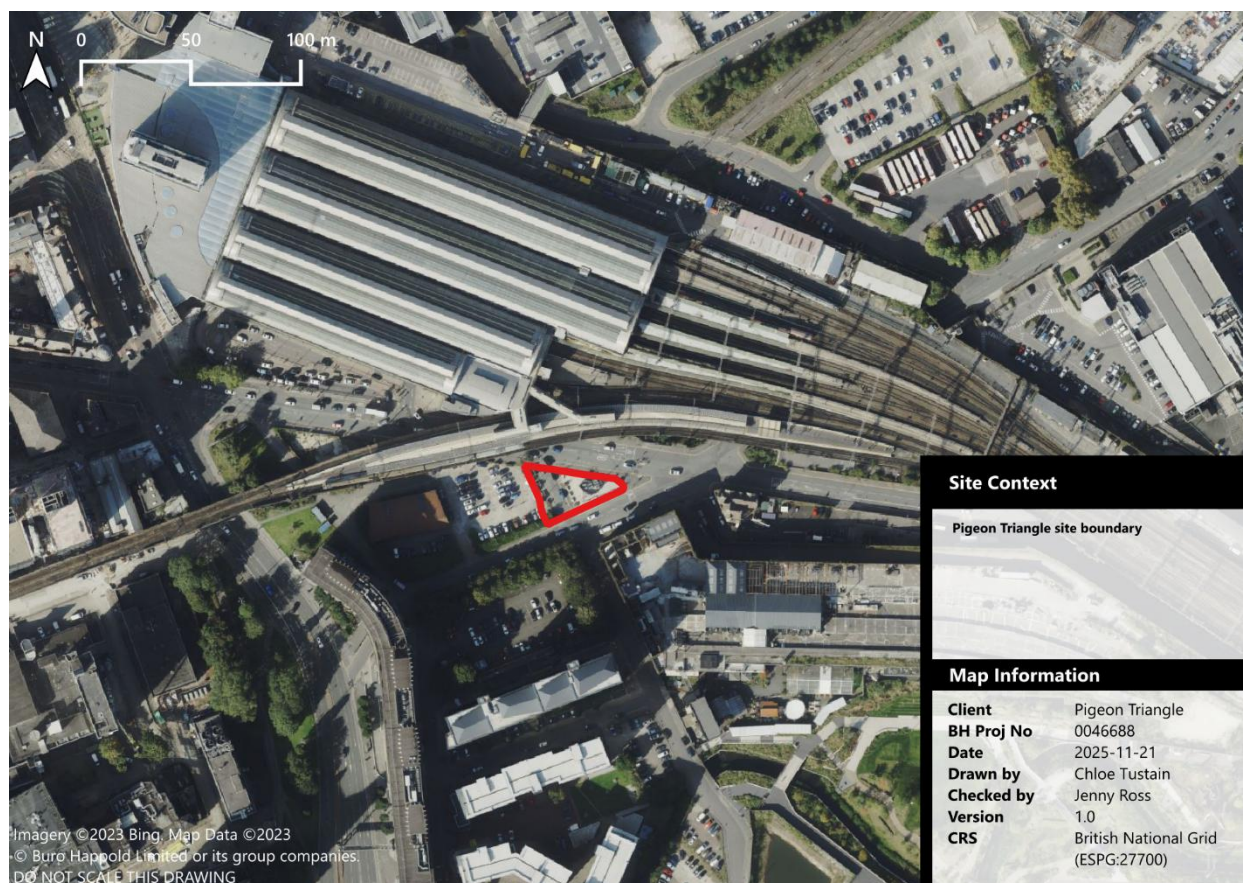


Figure 1 - Site Location within the wider landscape

1.3 Methods

1.3.1 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

In November 2023 two experienced ecologists from Buro Happold conducted a detailed survey of a wider area of the Mayfield site, including the Pigeon Triangle site, in accordance with published best practice guidance¹. On the 17th November 2025 Buro Happold conducted a site walkover to confirm the ecological status of the site and whether there were changes in habitat area and condition.

In November 2025 an updated desk study was also conducted, comprising an ecological data search from Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC). The site visit included a UK Habitat Classification System survey (UKHab)² and a search for the presence, or the potential for presence, of protected and priority species within all accessible areas of the site.

The data from GMEU was used to identify the presence of non-statutory designated sites, priority habitats and protected and priority species within 1km of the site. The data from MAGIC was used to identify statutory designated sites, priority habitats and records of granted protected species licenses within 1km of the site.

¹ CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

² UKHab Ltd (2023) *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* Available at <https://www.ukhab.org>

1.3.2 Assessment of effects

Where ecological features are identified on or within a zone of influence of the site, the potential for the proposed development to result in adverse or beneficial effects will be considered in line with the process identified in published guidance³.

Where effects are considered likely, the value of the feature will be considered, and the characteristics of the effect will be identified. This includes considering the conservation status of the habitat or species at different geographical scales as well as the extent, magnitude, duration, reversibility and frequency of the potential effect. Where a significant effect is considered likely, the requirement for secondary mitigation will be identified and a residual effect will be presented taking into account of the application of the mitigation proposals.

The potential for effects will be supported by a review of legislation and national, regional and local planning policy outlined in Appendix A of this report.

1.3.3 Biodiversity Net Gain assessment

The Natural England Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used to assess the net change in biodiversity. It is designed to provide a quantitative approach to assessing the changes in biodiversity value brought about by development or changes in land management. It is a habitat-based approach and uses the attributes of a habitat to provide a biodiversity value based on components such as distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance of the existing habitat, as well as time to establish and difficulty of creation for proposed habitats.

The following information sources have been used to prepare the BNG calculations:

- The results of the site walkover survey (November 2025), presented in section 2.2 of this report.
- 0424_Landscape General Arrangement – Studio Egret West (2025), included in Appendix B.

Pre-development habitat baseline approach

The baseline BNG calculations, as outlined in Section 3.1, provide a numerical habitat value which indicates the existing value of the habitats present on the site based on the identified habitat types and their condition score as assessed by experienced ecologists.

The habitat baseline used to support the BNG assessment has been taken from the site visits conducted by Buro Happold in November 2023 and 2025. The site was surveyed in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab Ltd., 2023)⁴ and in line with the Biodiversity Metric requirements, each habitat parcel was assessed against the respective habitat condition criteria presented within the Condition Sheets in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Technical Supplement document⁵.

The habitats were mapped using QGIS software, supported by onsite topographical survey information, and the areas of each habitat were then measured and input into the baseline worksheets of the metric.

A summary of the habitats identified on site, a description of their condition and a plan showing their location are provided in Section 2 of this report. Further details of the survey methodology and an ecological evaluation of the site can also be found in Section 2 of this report.

³ CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine, CIEEM, Winchester.

⁴ UKHAB Ltd (2023) The UK Habitat Classification User Manual, version 2.0.

⁵ Natural England Joint Publication JP039. The Biodiversity Metric 3.0 auditing and accounting for biodiversity Technical Supplement 7th July 2021. www.gov.uk/natural-england

Post-development habitat approach

The post-development biodiversity net gain calculations, as outlined in Section 3.2 , provide a proposed numerical habitat value based on the designed areas and targeted planting types designed into the development. This includes consideration of habitat retention, enhancement and creation, where relevant, which have been built into the calculations presented in the metric.

The landscape proposals were reviewed to determine the type of proposed planting which was subsequently converted to the most appropriate UK Habitat and BNG metric category for the purpose of determining the post-development biodiversity value. Section 3.2 includes a description of the habitat categories, area and target conditions, along with a plan showing their location.

1.3.4 Limitations

The desk study data is used to provide context on ecological receptors that could be affected by proposed development. As per the majority of data that relies on public participation, species data records returned by GiGL may not provide an accurate and current representation of species distribution and abundance in the area. Species not being recorded in the area does not necessarily mean they are absent.

The UK Habitat survey is not intended to produce a comprehensive list of plants and animals for the site as any ecological surveys will be limited by factors which affect their presence. These factors include time of year, weather conditions, variation in rates of germination and establishment, migration patterns and behaviour. However, it is considered that the survey findings and other information gathered for this assessment are sufficient for determining the importance of ecological features identified in this assessment.

2 Ecological Appraisal

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 Designated sites

Statutory Designated Sites

No statutory designated sites are located within or adjacent to the Site. Approximately 360m north is the Ashton Canal which connects to the Rochdale Canal. Certain stretches of the canal have been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because it supports a significant population of floating water-plantain (*Luronium natans*) in a botanically diverse water plant community which also holds a wide range of pondweeds (*Potamogeton spp.*). The canal also has predominantly mesotrophic water. This population of *Luronium* is representative of the formerly more widespread canal populations of north-west England. There are no other statutory designated sites within a 1km search area of the site.

Non-statutory Designated Sites

The records returned from GMEU identified that there are two Sites of Biological Interest (SBIs) within 1km of the site:

- Rochdale Canal, Stott's Lane - Ducie Street Basin SBI, 440m north of the site
- Ashton Canal SBI, 360m north of the site

The Rochdale Canal provides habitat for regionally important species, such as floating water plantain (*Luronium natans*), and the Ashton Canal is recognised as important for its submerged aquatic flora.

Due to the location of the site and the presence of significant urban infrastructure between the site and the identified designated sites, it is considered that the proposals for the Pigeon Triangle will not result in an adverse effect on the designated sites.

2.1.2 Habitats of Principal Importance

Results of the data search via the MAGIC website identified that there are no Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) on site or intersecting the site boundary. However, there are 44 parcels of deciduous woodland HPI within a 1km radius of the site, summarised in Table 2 and shown in Figure 2.

Table 1 - Summary of HPI found within 1km of the site.

Priority habitat	No. of habitat parcels identified	Distance to nearest habitat parcel
Deciduous Woodland	9	Approximately 600m south east

Due to the location of the site and the presence of significant urban infrastructure between the site and the identified HPIs in the local area, it is considered that the proposals for the Pigeon Triangle will not result in an adverse effect on the HPIs.

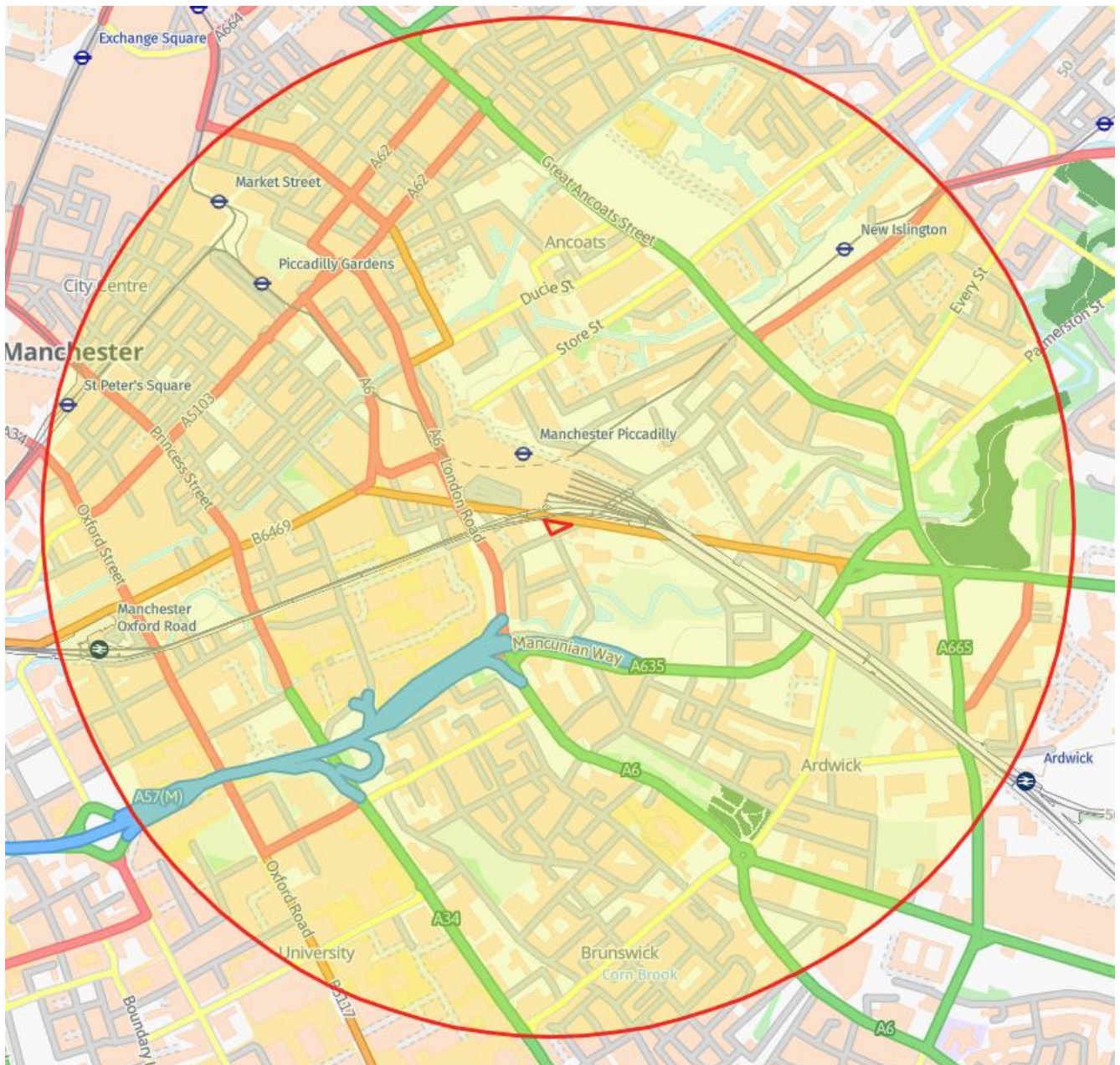


Figure 2 - MAGIC Map showing the locations of HPI within 1km of the site. Deciduous woodland is outlined by a green polygon

2.1.3 Species

The data search from GMEU did not return any records for protected or notable species within the site. It did return records for bats, birds and invertebrates within 1km. Further information on relevant species are included in the assessment below.

MAGIC returned no records for protected species license returns within 1km of the site, which indicates an absence of issued protected species licenses within the locality of the site.

2.2 Field Survey

2.2.1 Habitats

The UK Habitat Classification survey identified that the site is dominated by developed land; sealed surface, with some small planters and individual trees. The habitats recorded on site are illustrated in Figure 3 and described in Table 2 below, which summarises the habitat types along with the corresponding habitat distinctiveness level.

Table 2 - Habitats on site, their value and recommendations to retain and/or protect

Habitats	Description	Distinctiveness	Aim to retain and/or protect
Developed land; sealed surface	The majority of the site is hardstanding. The main area consists of a gravel surface with no vegetation. At the edge of the site boundary paved roads, pavements and the edge of car park are present.	V. Low	No
Ground level planters	In total there are 13 ground level planters within the site boundary, planted with a mix of ornamental flowering species, such as geraniums and some native species, including black medick. In some of the planters invasive <i>buddleia sp.</i> and cotoneaster shrubs have established. Some of the plants in the planters seem to have died.	Low	No
Introduced shrub	A small patch of a non-native laurel shrub extends into the site, although the majority falls outside of the red line boundary.	V. Low	No
Urban trees	There are four small urban trees on site. The largest of these is an apple tree in the northwest corner of the carpark. The other three trees are confined to planters and are younger and smaller.	Medium	The apple tree will be retained.

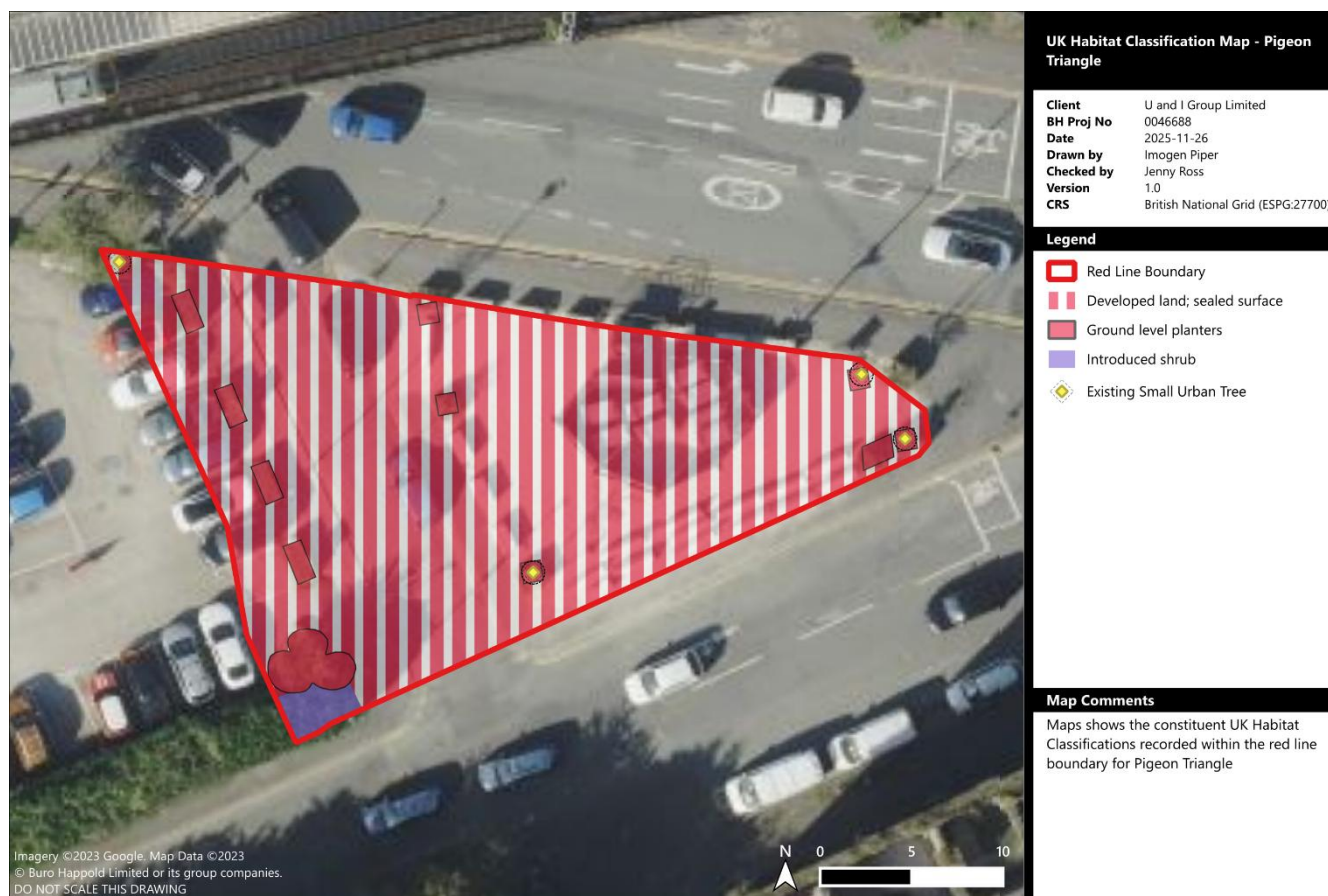


Figure 3 - Baseline habitat map

2.2.2 Protected Species Assessment

Bats – Roosting habitat

The data returned from GMEU found 15 records of roosting bats within 1km of the site. Species included common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and *Myotis sp.* This included roosts in the viaduct 20m north and 90m south in the Mayfield Depot Piccadilly building.

The survey identified that the site has no suitable roosting features. Roosting bats are therefore not considered to provide an ecological constraint in relation to the proposed development and are not considered further in this assessment.

Bats - Foraging and commuting habitat

The data returned from GMEU found 35 records of foraging and commuting bats. Species included common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and a noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*).

The site itself offers low suitability for foraging and commuting bats. The site is primarily hard standing and lacks any natural or semi-natural features except for four small trees and a non-native laurel shrub. The site is situated in an urban area next to a busy road and is brightly lit at night, making it very unlikely to be of value for commuting or foraging bats.

The surrounding landscape is heavily urbanised and although there are several green spaces within 1km of the site, including the nearby Mayfield Park, it is poorly connected due to the urban landscape and lack of natural features suitable for commuting or foraging bats, such as tree lines, hedgerows or woodland. Therefore, commuting and foraging bats are not considered further within this assessment.

Birds

The data returned from GMEU had records of Schedule 1⁶ species including black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*), kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*) and peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) within 1km of the site. In addition, Section 41⁷ species within 1km include bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), dunnoek (*Prunella modularis*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) and yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*).

Feral pigeons (*Columba livia domestica*) were the only species recorded on site during the site visit. The site does not provide opportunities for Section 41 species as it is dominated in hard standing, with a lack of semi-natural habitats and suitable features for nesting. The apple tree and laurel shrub could be used by common and widespread nesting birds, although both are directly adjacent to a road, incurring high levels of lighting and disturbance, makes it highly unlikely to be preferred nesting habitat. No other parts of the site are suitable for nesting birds.

Badger

The data returned from GMEU had records of badger (*Meles meles*) signs within 1km. The site does not support suitable habitat for badgers and the records are separated from the site by heavily urbanised areas with no commuting corridors to the site. Therefore, badgers are not considered further within this assessment.

Invertebrates

The data returned from GMEU had records of Schedule 41 moths approximately 20m south of the site. The site has minimal vegetation to support significant assemblages of invertebrates. However, the ground level planters could provide low ecological value for pollinator species. Invertebrates are not considered further within this assessment due to the sites lack of suitable habitat for Schedule 41 invertebrates.

Other species

There have been records for hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within 1km of the site. However, no evidence of hedgehogs was recorded on site, nor any features that would be of value to hedgehogs. No other protected/priority/notable species were recorded on site. It is considered that the site has low potential to support protected/priority/notable species.

Conclusion

Due to the urban nature of the site and lack of natural habitats or other features of interest to lack of records and on-site observations no impacts on protected, priority or notable species are expected. The most ecologically significant feature within the site is the apple tree in the northwest corner, and this is expected to be retained as part of the development.

2.3 Evaluation of potential effects

The site is dominated by hardstanding with limited ecological value. No statutory designated sites occur within or adjacent to the site, and potential impacts on nearby non-statutory SBIs are not anticipated. The site offers negligible suitability for protected species, with a very low likelihood that urban birds could nest the apple tree in the northwest of the carpark and laurel shrub in the south of the car park. It is recommended that this tree is retained and a precautionary approach to nesting birds is applied to the shrub removal. No adverse effects are considered likely as a result of the proposed development. Mandatory BNG applies, and the proposed pocket park presents an opportunity to enhance ecological value through tree planting, native habitat creation, and installation of features for pollinators and invertebrates.

⁶ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

⁷ Section 41 Species (Priority under NERC Act 2006)

3 Biodiversity Net Gain assessment

3.1 Baseline Biodiversity Value

A summary table of the habitat types, areas, and condition scores of the existing habitats on site is provided in Table 3. Full calculations are provided in the Biodiversity Metric calculator submitted alongside this report in Appendix C.

The Greater Manchester local nature recovery strategy was reviewed. Although urban trees are listed as a priority feature, the LNRS areas do not overlap with the site. Therefore, the strategic significance of all habitats, both pre and post development, is low.

As assessed using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, the on-site baseline habitat value is 0.07 habitat units.

Table 3 - Pre-development on-site habitat value

Habitat type	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Score	Strategic significance	Habitat units
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0596	V.Low	N/A	Low	0.00
Introduced shrub	0.0009	Low	N/A	Low	0.00
Urban tree	0.0163	Medium	Poor	Low	0.07
Ground level planters	0.0027	Low	N/A	Low	0.01
Total*					0.07

**Total produced by the statutory BNG metric tool. The perceived inconsistency in adding the individual unit values is due to rounding within the visible results in the metric.*

3.2 Post-development biodiversity value

3.2.1 Landscape proposal

The proposals for the site aim to increase its aesthetic, recreational and biodiversity value. The most valuable existing feature, the apple tree in the northwest corner of the site, will be retained. In addition, a diverse range of habitats will be installed, planted with a range of native and ornamental species. Nineteen trees will be planted on site, including native and non-native ornamental varieties. See Appendix B for full information on the landscaping proposal. Figure 5 illustrates the proposed landscaping for the site. Table 4 identifies the landscaping typologies and how they have been translated into the Biodiversity Metric, with a justification of the assigned habitat type and condition score.

Table 4 - Landscape typologies and corresponding habitat classifications

Landscape typology	Habitat type assigned	Proposed condition	Justification
Block garden Crevice garden Cascade garden	Introduced shrub	N/A	These landscape typologies represent areas of ornamental herbaceous planting. Some native species will be included, but exact proportions are unknown. Therefore, these typologies are categorised introduced shrub on a precautionary basis. A range of flowering species are proposed, which be beneficial for local pollinators.
Rain garden	Rain garden	Moderate	The rain garden mix is expected to contain a variety of flowering species with varied vegetation structure. Species will be suited to wet habitats. The planting will

Landscape typology	Habitat type assigned	Proposed condition	Justification
			contain native species (proportion unknown). It is therefore assigned as moderate condition.
Baring street verge	Other neutral grassland	Poor	The Baring street verge will be planted with a Pre grown mix from Pictorial Meadows 'Woodland Fringe'. This wildflower mix consists of 18 native species, approximately 65% of the mix. Therefore, it has been classified as ONG, although it is unlikely to contain enough characteristic species to represent a good example of this habitat. It is thus assigned as poor condition.
Urban tree	Urban tree	Poor	19 proposed trees to be planted. These include native species (<i>Betula pendula</i> – silver birch, <i>Salix alba</i> – white willow) but the majority are non-natives (e.g., <i>Betula nigra</i> – river birch, <i>Broussonetia papyrifera</i> – paper mulberry). Trees will have low connectivity to surrounding landscape and limited root space, therefore assigned as poor condition on a precautionary basis.

3.2.2 Habitat value calculation

As detailed in Table 5 and Appendix C, the development is expected to deliver a total of 0.29 habitat units.

Table 5 - Summary of post-development habitats

Habitat retained/created	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Post-development habitat units
Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	0.0379	V. Low	N/A	Low	0
Grassland - Other neutral grassland	0.0052	Medium	Poor	Low	0.02
Urban – Introduced shrub	0.0107	Low	N/A	Low	0.02
Urban – Rain garden	0.0096	Low	Moderate	Low	0.03
Individual trees – Urban tree	0.0774	Medium	Poor	Low	0.22
Total					0.29

3.3 Change in biodiversity units

The proposed development is expected to result in a **325.05%** net gain in habitat units based on current landscape proposals.

Table 6 - Change in biodiversity units

Post-Development Biodiversity Units		Pre-Development Biodiversity Units		Change in Biodiversity Units	Total net % change
0.31	minus	0.07	=	+0.24	325.05

3.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the biodiversity net gain calculations indicate that the proposed development will result in a 325.05% net gain in habitat units, which is significantly above the required 10% BNG. The design has also followed the BNG hierarchy and avoided the removal of existing habitats where possible.

The retained and created habitats on the site should be maintained for at least 30 years post-development to satisfy the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 and best-practice guidelines. The management will be adapted based on monitoring results to achieve the best desired outcomes.

4 List of appendices

Reference	Title
Appendix A	Planning Policy and Legislation
Appendix B	0424_Landscape General Arrangement – Studio Egret West (2025)
Appendix C	Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator

Appendix A - Legislation and Policy

A.1 National legislation

A.1.1 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)

The Habitat Regulations implement the EU Habitats Directive and EU Birds Directive in the UK and provide for the designation and protection of European sites and the protection of European protected species (EPS). For those animal species listed on Schedule 2, it is an offence to deliberately capture, kill, disturb or take or destroy the eggs of an EPS or to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an EPS.

It is also an offence under the Habitat Regulations to deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy a wild plant listed in Schedule 5. However, these actions can be made lawful through the granting of licenses by the appropriate authorities (Natural England (NE) in England) where deemed appropriate.

A.1.2 Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA)

The Wildlife & Countryside Act (WCA) is the principle mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain and provides for the designation, protection and management of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and for the establishment of National Nature Reserves (NNRs) in England and Wales for their flora, fauna or geological interests.

Under the Act, it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5; intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used by a Schedule 5 species for shelter or protection; or to disturb them while using such a place.

The WCA also provides for the legal protection of wild birds. All nesting birds including their nests, eggs and young are protected from killing, injury, taking or selling with additional protection offered to species listed on Schedule 1. For these species, adult birds and their young are protected from intentional or reckless disturbance while at or near the nest.

It is an offence to intentionally pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant included in Schedule 8.

The Act is also the principal mechanism for preventing the spread of non-native plant and animal species listed on Schedule 9 such as Japanese knotweed which may be detrimental to native wildlife.

A.1.3 Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Environment Act 2021

Biodiversity Net Gain was formally mandated on 12th February 2024. Developments must deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value. This requires the completion of the statutory metric published by DEFRA.

A.1.4 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRow Act)

The CRow Act (HM Government, 2000) amends and strengthens the protection given to certain species under the WCA, especially reckless actions regarding disturbance.

A.1.5 Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006 (the NERC Act)

Section 40 of the NERC Act (HM Government, 2006) requires public authorities, to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

Section 41 (S41) of the NERC Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity in England and to take or promote steps to further their conservation.

A.1.6 Protection of Badgers Act 1992

The Protection of Badgers Act (HM Government, 1992) makes it an offence to kill, injure or take a badger, or to damage or interfere with a sett unless a licence is obtained from NE.

A.2 National Planning Policy

A.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, 2024)

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 12 December 2024 and amended on 7 February 2025, replacing the previous NPPF published in September 2023. The NPPF framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The revised NPPF continues to stress the importance of the local authority contribution to improving and protecting the environment through development of a systematic approach to enhancing biodiversity, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigation/adaptation to climate change impacts.

Chapter 15 requires that local planning authorities, when considering planning applications, should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:

'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and sites of biodiversity, in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality and minimising impacts and providing net gains for biodiversity by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures';

'To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should identify and map components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them... and 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

'If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused';

'Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists'; and

'Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity'.

A.2.2 Planning Practice Guidance 2016 (Department for Communities & Local Government, 2016, updated 2017)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that:

"The NPPF is clear that pursuing sustainable development includes moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature, and that a core principle for planning is that it should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution".

“Biodiversity enhancement in and around development should be led by a local understanding of ecological networks, and should seek to include habitat restoration, re-creation and expansion; improved links between existing sites; buffering of existing important sites; new biodiversity features within development; and securing management for long term enhancement.”

“Where a development cannot satisfy the requirements of the ‘mitigation hierarchy’, planning permission should be refused as per paragraph 118 of the NPPF.”

“Sufficient green infrastructure should be designed into a development to make the proposal sustainable. If this green infrastructure helps to mitigate any significant harm to biodiversity (among other benefits) then this should be taken into account in deciding whether compensation may also be needed. ”

A.2.3 Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular 06/2005, (ODPM, 2005)

This circular provides further guidance with regards to statutory obligations relating to biodiversity within the planning system. It sets out the considerations to be taken into account when planning decisions may have a significant effect on protected sites and species.

A.3 Regional Planning Policy

A.3.1 Greater Manchester Resilience Strategy 2021 – 2031

The Greater Manchester strategy 2021 – 2031 sets out a route, over the next decade, to deliver a vision for the benefit of people, places and the planet. A focus of this strategy relates to creating a greener greater Manchester by responding to the climate emergency and recognising the role of the natural environment and utilizing nature-based solutions to reduce flood risk or creating better green spaces for nature, biodiversity and people.

A.3.2 Greater Manchester Resilience Strategy 2020 – 2030

This Strategy sets out a vision for a resilient Greater Manchester. It describes five priority areas to guide work through to 2030 and sets out key themes within these priorities. The Strategy will be accompanied by an action plan, reviewed regularly to ensure the strategy is on track. Priority 4, Place, includes protecting and promoting the resilience value of the natural environment through tree planting, creating habitats for wildlife and enabling greater biodiversity.

A.3.3 Places for Everyone (Adopted 2024)

Places for Everyone (PfE) is the statutory joint development plan for nine Greater Manchester districts, setting out how the city region will grow and develop up to 2039. It replaces the previous draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF).

PfE places a strong emphasis on the environment, aiming to protect and enhance Greater Manchester’s natural assets and deliver measurable improvements in biodiversity. The plan aligns with the UK’s 25 Year Environment Plan and the Environment Act 2021, requiring developments to achieve at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Key principles include:

Applying the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimise, mitigate, compensate, offset).

Protecting and improving existing habitats, creating new habitats, and strengthening ecological connectivity.

Using the Defra biodiversity metric as the basis for calculating net gain, with a locally specific Greater Manchester metric to follow as supplementary guidance.

Relevant PfE policies:

JP-G 9 – Green Infrastructure and Ecological Networks: Safeguards and enhances green infrastructure to support biodiversity and climate resilience.

JP-G 10 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity Net Gain: Requires major net gains in biodiversity through habitat protection, creation, and connectivity improvements.

Green Factor Guidance: Sets expectations for on-site green infrastructure provision in new developments to meet occupant needs and contribute to the wider network.

PfE ensures that biodiversity and green infrastructure are integral to development planning, supporting Greater Manchester's ambition to become a greener, more resilient city region.

A.4 Local planning policy

A.4.1 Manchester Core Strategy (Adopted 2012)

Manchester's Core Strategy is the principal planning document guiding development in the city. It embeds environmental sustainability and biodiversity protection into spatial planning. Key policies include:

- Policy EN9 – Green Infrastructure: Requires development to protect and enhance green infrastructure, ensuring connectivity between habitats and access for people.
 - Policy EN15 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity, protect designated sites, and integrate habitat creation into new developments.
- The Core Strategy aligns with national planning policy and underpins Manchester's ambition to deliver a greener, more resilient city through habitat protection and enhancement.

A.4.2 Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025

This citywide vision sets out Manchester's ambition to be in the "top flight of world cities" by 2025, with sustainability and inclusivity at its heart. Environmental priorities include:

- Moving towards a zero-carbon future by improving energy efficiency and transport.
 - Protecting and enhancing parks and green spaces for health, recreation, and biodiversity.
 - Encouraging community involvement in climate action and nature recovery.
- The strategy emphasises partnership working and a "greener future" as a core pillar of Manchester's growth.

A.4.3 Manchester Climate Change Framework (2020–2025 and 2022 Update)

The Framework sets a science-based target for Manchester to become zero carbon by 2038, with a carbon budget of 15 million tonnes CO₂. Key principles:

- Mitigation and Adaptation: Reduce emissions and build resilience to climate impacts.
 - Nature-Based Solutions: Enhance green infrastructure and biodiversity as part of climate adaptation.
 - Just Transition: Ensure climate action benefits health, wellbeing, and equity.
- The 2022 update calls for urgent acceleration of emissions reductions and integration of nature recovery into climate planning.

A.4.4 A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester

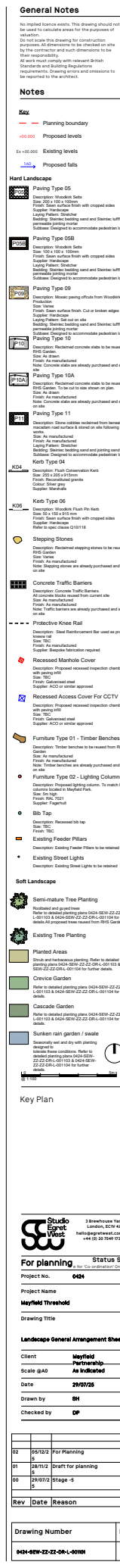
This strategy recognises green and blue spaces as a “life support system” for the city, providing health, climate resilience, and biodiversity benefits. Key objectives:

- Protect and Enhance GI Assets: Parks, rivers, canals, woodlands, and wetlands.
- Connectivity: Create a linked network of green and blue corridors across the city.
- Multi-Functionality: Deliver spaces that support wildlife, recreation, flood management, and carbon sequestration.

The strategy was refreshed in 2022 with an implementation plan and is considered a UK best-practice exemplar for urban green infrastructure planning.

Appendix B General landscape arrangement

Please see the following page for the Landscape General Arrangement (Studio Egret West 2025).



Appendix C Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator

Please see the separate Excel calculator for the full Biodiversity Metric calculations. The calculator is to be reviewed alongside this report.

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