



Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street, Heywood
Biodiversity Net Gain Report

Document Control

Client:	KLASH Properties Ltd
Project Title:	Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street, Heywood
Report Title:	Biodiversity Net Gain Report
Report Ref.:	P2549/1
Version:	V0
Status:	Final
Revision Comments:	-
Author:	CM BSc (Hons), MSc
Technical Review:	PH BSc (Hons), MSc
Final Review:	TE BSc (Hons) MCIEEM
Issued to Client:	12 February 2024

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1. Summary

Table 1: Summary

Report Purpose	The objective of the present Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report is to provide an assessment as to whether the proposed development can deliver BNG or not for the design option(s) being considered.
Methodology	- A UKHab and condition assessment survey was carried out of the site on the 24th January 2024 with reference to best practice guidelines by a suitably qualified ecologist. - A biodiversity metric calculation was made, using the prevailing biodiversity metric calculation spreadsheet at the time of writing (DEFRA Statutory Metric).
Results & Conclusions	Via the proposed scheme of habitat creation, assessment has shown that a biodiversity net gain in habitats (3888.57%) can be delivered at the site, subject to the implementation of a detailed plan for the management and creation of the proposed habitats (such as via a Landscape Ecological Management Plan or similar with ref to British Standard BS 42020:2013). No hedgerow baseline units were present and therefore a % change cannot be calculated. A gain of 0.03 hedgerows units can be achieved on site.

2. Introduction

Background

- 2.1. Elton Ecology Ltd was commissioned by KLASH Properties Ltd to conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Study of the site known as Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street, Heywood.

Relevant Documents

- 2.2. The present assessment has been informed by the following documents:
- Location Plan (Drawing No: 1001) (Klash Properties Ltd, 4th September 2023)
 - Existing Site Plan (Drawing No: 1002) (Klash Properties Ltd, 4th September 2023)
 - Proposed Site Plan (Drawing No: 1004) (Klash Properties Ltd, 4th September 2023)
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (Report Reference: P2549) (Elton Ecology, February 2024)

Site description

- 2.3. The site is located Tower Street, Heywood, OL10 3AA (Figure 1: Site Location Plan) (central OS grid reference: SD 85195 10707). The site comprises an area of hardstanding at the site of a recently demolished building in an urban environment.

Development Proposals

- 2.4. The development proposals include the erection of 11 new residential dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping.

Planning status of project, certainty of design and assumptions made

- 2.5. The present strategy has been prepared to support a planning application, based on the Proposed Site Plan.
- 2.6. As stated in the 'Limitations' section, necessary assumptions have been made at this stage regarding the types and extents of habitats that will and can be created. It is accepted that re-submission of an updated BNG Report will typically be required with subsequent application(s), unless there are no significant changes to the original design proposed. This would include an updated BNG calculation using an appropriate metric to demonstrate how the net gain will be achieved.

Aims, Objectives & Scope

- 2.7. With reference to the Development Proposals and best practice BNG reporting guidelines (CIEEM, 2021), the objectives & scope of the present strategy are to provide:
- An assessment as to whether the project can feasibly deliver BNG or not for the options being considered;
 - Advice for the project to maximise its ability to deliver BNG considering factors such as location, design, construction methods and programme (where known/relevant);
 - If on-site BNG can't be achieved, consideration of the potential for off-site delivery of BNG, either securing land in close proximity to the project site or other

alternatives, including more distant land under direct control or a brokered agreement; and

- Where, following a review of the BNG Principles, the delivery of project-wide BNG as an outcome is not considered possible (e.g., as a result of impacts to irreplaceable habitats or other site constraints), a record of the reasons and next steps towards delivering biodiversity gains elsewhere through the project.

Planning Policy and Legislation

- 2.8. A summary of biodiversity planning policies and wildlife legislation relevant to the site is provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.9. Rochdale Borough Council do not have mandatory BNG set within their local planning policy.
- 2.10. The site is covered by the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan, which includes:
 - Urban managed greenspace habitat (including private gardens)

3. Methodology

Personnel

- 3.1. The UKHab & condition assessment survey and BNG metric calculation were carried out by CM BSc (Hons), MSc. CM is a Qualifying member of CIEEM, has attended formal training in Biodiversity Net Gain and botanical species identification, and is experienced in assisting and undertaking ecology surveys, GIS mapping and report writing.

Desk Study

Important Ecological Features

- 3.2. A desk study was carried within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Elton Ecology, 2024), and should be read in conjunction with the present report.

Field Survey

UKHab & Condition Assessment Survey

- 3.3. A UKHab and condition assessment survey was carried out of the site on 24th January 2024 with reference to best practice guidelines from UKHab Ltd (2023). The site was walked over, and the habitats present classified based on key indicator species present.
- 3.4. The condition assessment was carried out with reference to guidance within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Sheets and Technical Supplement (Defra, 2023). The condition of each habitat was assessed by scoring each habitat parcel against the criteria set out in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets. A condition score was assigned to each habitat parcel based on a range of positive and negative indicators of quality against the optimum ecological state for the habitat, such as a grassland having species richness (positive) or the presence of invasive non-native plants (negative). This is used as an indicator for whether the habitat is a good or poor example of its habitat type/distinctiveness, and to inform future management for ecological enhancement where applicable.

Biodiversity Net Gain Metric Calculation

- 3.5. The prevailing biodiversity metric calculation spreadsheet at the time of writing was used, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, with reference to the Technical Supplement and User Guide (Natural England, 2023).
- 3.6. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculates the biodiversity units present as follows:

Baseline Habitats:

Size of Habitat Parcel x Distinctiveness x Condition x Strategic Significance = Baseline Biodiversity Units

Post-intervention Habitats are calculated as above, and then:

x Difficulty x Time to Target Condition x Spatial Risk = Post-intervention Biodiversity Units

The net gain or loss in Biodiversity Units is then calculated as:

Post-intervention units – Baseline units = (+/-) Net Change

- 3.7. As the basis of the calculations, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric requires the user to enter a series of variables for each baseline, enhanced or created habitat parcel. These variables and

decisions made are summarised in the sections below and presented in the results section. No river habitats were present at the site, and as such variables relating only to river habitats have not been included.

Classification and Measurement of Habitats

- 3.8. The UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab) (UKHab Ltd, 2023) was used during field surveys and converted to the appropriate habitat classification via the Statutory Metric guidance (Defra, 2023), to complete the broad habitat and habitat type variables of the Statutory Metric calculator.
- 3.9. The habitat areas were mapped via the QGIS 3.34.0 "Prizren" geographic information system application using a geo-referenced and ground-checked satellite image of the site.
- 3.10. Post-development habitat areas were measured from the illustrative Proposed Site Plans, georeferenced into QGIS.
- 3.11. Following the Statutory Biodiversity Metric QGIS Template and Import Tool User Guide (Natural England Joint Publication JP039), each habitat parcel was entered into the QGIS Template where the data was exported into the Import Tool to consolidate the data to be entered into the Statutory Metric calculator.

Strategic Significance

- 3.12. This is a score based on whether the location of the habitat is significant for nature. An assessment of this variable requires consideration as to whether the site is located within the relevant biodiversity local strategy, plan or policy, designated sites for nature conservation, and the sites position within the landscape. Strategic Significance was determined with reference to guidance from the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan and the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilot.
- 3.13. With reference to the Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Policy paper 'Local Nature Recovery Strategies', there are 48 local nature recovery strategy areas covering England¹. The relevant strategy area for the site is Greater Manchester and the relevant responsible body is the Greater Manchester Combined Authority¹.
- 3.14. If no LNRS is available for the local authority area applicable to the site, other relevant documents and criteria are used which can include local published plans, strategies or policies, as listed within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide Draft on page 25 and any other relevant documents. If the geographic location or type of habitat present is listed within the other relevant documents, a score of high is assigned to the given habitat area. These include:
 - Statutory Designated Sites
 - Non-Statutory Designated Sites
 - National BAP Priority Habitats
 - Local Plan
 - Neighbourhood Plan
 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan

¹

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166611/Map_of_local_nature_recovery_strategy_areas_and_responsible_authorities.pdf

- Local Biodiversity Action Plan
- Species and protected sites conservation strategies
- Green Infrastructure / Tree / Woodland Strategies
- River Basin Management Plans
- Catchment Plans and Catchment Planning Systems
- Habitats Supporting Populations of Notable/ Priority and/or Protected Species
- Biodiversity Opportunity Map (BOM)

3.15. Where there are no relevant documents, professional judgement was used to assign a strategic significance score of either 'medium' or 'low'. If a habitat location or type is not listed within a relevant document and there is a lack of evidence to support a professional judgement of 'medium' strategic significance, a score of 'low' is assigned.

3.16. The relevant planning policy documents are:

- Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy October 2016
- Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council Local Development Framework Biodiversity and Development Supplementary Planning Document Adopted January 2008 (Updates added February 2017)
- GMCA Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance for Greater Manchester February 2021

3.17. The site is not included within the planning policies as a nature conservation priority.

3.18. As detailed in the Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy October 2016, the relevant Local Biodiversity Action Plan for the site is the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.

Bespoke Compensation Agreed for Unacceptable Losses

3.19. This is a yes/no decision cell to indicate whether bespoke compensation has been agreed with decision makers for any losses in very high distinctiveness habitats.

Temporal Multiplier

3.20. Within the temporal multiplier for each created/ enhanced habitat parcel the metric requires the user to enter the following variables:

- Habitat created in advance/ years: The Statutory Metric rewards habitat creation in advance of losses by reducing the temporal risk multipliers added.
- Delay in starting habitat creation/ years. If there will be a significant delay in the creation of a habitat type relative to any losses (e.g. phased development), the number of full years that the creation will be delayed is entered. The Statutory Metric then adds the number of years to the pre-populated time to target condition, which increases the effect of the risk multiplier.

Limitations

3.21. The accuracy of habitat area measurement is limited by the methods by which the baseline data was collected and resolution of development proposal plans. In this instance, baseline habitat areas have been calculated by cross referencing illustrative habitat plans mapped in

the field with georeferenced aerial imagery. Post-development habitat areas were measured from the concept landscape plans, georeferenced into QGIS.

- 3.22. Reasonable assumptions have been made with regards to the type/condition of habitats that could be created, which would need to be informed by a detailed Landscape Ecological Management Plan.
- 3.23. The Biodiversity Metric uses habitats as a proxy for biodiversity, which is a simplification of the real world. Although informed by evidence and reasoning, the outputs of the Metric are not scientifically precise or absolute values. The generated biodiversity unit scores are a proxy for the relative biodiversity worth of a habitat or site. The metric and its outputs must be interpreted with ecological expertise and a common-sense approach. The metric is an aid to biodiversity decisions.
- 3.24. All dimensions and distances provided are approximate.
- 3.25. The present study has been informed by Proposed Site Plan (Klash Properties Ltd, 4th September 2023), and as such assumptions have been made regarding the final planned design including the precise extent of proposed landscaping and property boundaries.

4. Results

Baseline Habitats

- 4.1. The baseline habitat areas and condition assessments at the site including the data entered into the biodiversity metric are given in the following tables and mapped on Figure 2a: Baseline Habitat Plan. The baseline habitat condition scores and post-development retentions are shown in Figures 2b and 2c. The 'consolidated' data is provided in the present report. Non-

consolidated data is provided within the completed Biodiversity Metric. Photographs of the habitats referred to are presented in Appendix 2: Photographs.

- 4.2. Hedgerow and river habitats were not present on site.
- 4.3. The baseline habitat date was taken to be 24th January 2024, the date of the habitat survey. Historic satellite and street-level imagery demonstrated that prior to the demolition of the building, the urban habitats on site were of the same type and distinctiveness as the date of the survey.

Table 2: Site Habitat Baseline Areas

UKHab Habitat Code	UKHab Habitat Classification	Data Entered into Metric					Description	Photograph Ref No. (Appendix 2: Photographs)
		Unique Polygon Reference No.	Area (hectares)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Habitat retained/enhanced/lost		
g4	Modified grassland	1	0.0017	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Lost	A section of modified grassland was present in the western boundary of the site. The habitat had an average of 4 species per m² and had a sward height of approximately 5-10cm. Species present included abundant annual meadow-grass <i>Poa annua</i> , frequent unidentified moss, occasional Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> , unidentified <i>Geranium sp.</i> , and unidentified willowherb <i>Epilobium sp./Chamaenerion angustifolium</i> , rarely present dandelion <i>Taraxacum officinale agg.</i> , ribwort plantain <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , and creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> .	1
u1b	Developed land; sealed surface	2	0.1935	N/A - Other	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.1337 ha retained 0.06 ha lost	The majority of the site comprised an area of hardstanding on the site of the recently demolished Heywood pub building and associated car park. Rubble was present at the boundary of the site of the former building and car park and vegetation growth was present at the north habitat margins. Species present included rarely present annual meadow-grass, Yorkshire fog, dandelion, creeping thistle, young hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , young alder <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> , ragwort <i>Senecio jacobaea</i> , herb-Robert <i>Geranium robertianum</i> , unidentified clover <i>Trifolium sp.</i> , moss, willowherb, and <i>Geranium sp.</i>	2-3

Table 3: Condition Assessment – Low Distinctiveness Grassland (Adapted from Defra, 2023)

Condition Sheet:			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Polygon Ref No. 1	
		Condition Achieved (Y/N)	Notes/Justification
1	"There must be 6-8 species per m². If a grassland has 9 or more species per m² it should be classified as a medium distinctiveness grassland habitat type. NB - this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition."	N	Four species per m².
2	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Y	Sward height varied between 5-10cm.
3	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	No scattered scrub present.
4	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Y	Damage caused by littering present but less than 5%.
5	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	N	No bare ground present.
6	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	No bracken present.
7	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Y	None observed.
Essential criterion 1 achieved (Y/N)		N	
Number of criteria passed		5	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Ref No. 1 Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion 1	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion 1	Moderate (2)		
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion 1	Poor (1)	✓	

Proposed Design

- 4.4. The proposed design comprises 11 new residential dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping.
- 4.5. The proposed 'consolidated' values for post-development created habitats and hedgerows at the site entered into the Biodiversity Metric are given in the following Tables and mapped on Figure 3.1: Proposed Habitats Plan. The target conditions for the habitats are shown in Figure 3.2: Proposed Habitat Target Condition Plan. For unconsolidated data please see the completed Biodiversity Metric.
- 4.6. Other proposed biodiversity enhancements are given within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Elton Ecology, 2024)

Table 4: On-site Habitat Creation

Data Entered into Metric						
Broad Habitat	Proposed Habitat	Area (hectares)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Habitat created in advance/years	Delay in starting habitat creation/years
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.0004	N/A - Other	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0	0
Urban	Vegetated garden	0.0611	Condition Assessment N/A	Formally identified in local strategy	0	0

Table 5: On-site Hedgerow Creation

Data Entered into Metric						
New Hedge Number	Hedgerow Type	Length (km)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Habitat created in advance/years	Delay in starting habitat creation/years
1	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.006	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0	0
2	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.005	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0	0
3	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.001	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0	0
4	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.005	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0	0
5	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.006	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0	0
6	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.006	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0	0

Biodiversity Metric Results

- 4.7. The completed biodiversity metric excel spreadsheet has been issued with the present report and should be read in conjunction with it. The 'headline results' output of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Summary of Biodiversity Metric Output

	Habitat / Hedgerow	Unit
On-site Baseline Units	Habitat	0.00 (rounded down via metric)
	Hedgerow	0.00
On-Site Post-Intervention Units	Habitat	0.14
	Hedgerow	0.03
Total Net Unit Change	Habitat	0.13
	Hedgerow	0.03
On-site net % change	Habitat	3888.57%
	Hedgerow	N/A
Trading rules satisfied?		Yes

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Via a scheme of habitat creation, assessment has shown that a biodiversity net gain in habitats (3888.57%) can be delivered at the site, subject to the implementation of a detailed plan for the management and creation of the proposed habitats (such as via a Landscape Ecological Management Plan or similar with ref to British Standard BS 42020:2013). Trading rules were satisfied.
- 5.2. No hedgerow baseline units were present and therefore a % change cannot be calculated. A gain of 0.03 hedgerows units can be achieved on site.

6. References

Baker, J. Hoskin, R. Butterworth, T (2019) *Biodiversity Net Gain. Good Practice Principles for Development. A Practical Guide*. CIRIA. ISBN: 978-0-86017-791-3

British Standards Institute (BSI) (2013). *BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity. Code of practice for planning and development*. British Standards Institute, London.

British Standards Institute (BSI) (2021). *BS 8683:2021 Biodiversity. Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain — Specification*. British Standards Institute, London.

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

CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in The UK and Ireland*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2021). *Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Audit Templates*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester, UK.

Defra, 2023. *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - User Guide (draft)*. Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, November 2023.

Elton Ecology (2024) *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*, Report Reference: P2549_01, February 2024

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

7. Figures

Figure 1: Site Location Plan (Overleaf)

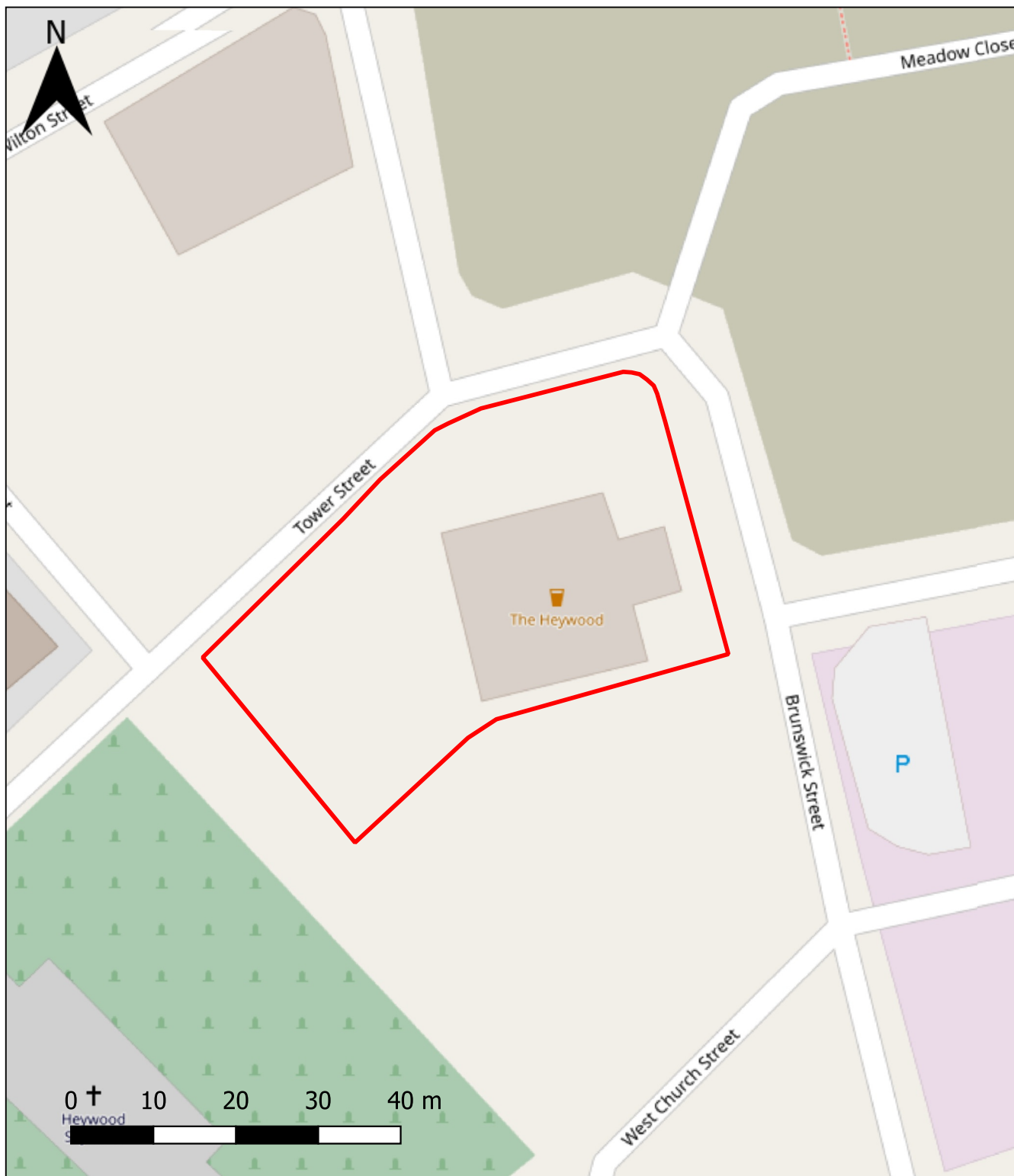
Figure 2a: Baseline Habitat Plan (Overleaf)

Figure 2b: Baseline Habitat Condition Plan (Overleaf)

Figure 2c: Baseline Habitat Retention Plan (Overleaf)

Figure 3a: Proposed Habitat Plan (Overleaf)

Figure 3b: Proposed Habitat Condition Plan (Overleaf)



Legend

 Site Boundary

Project:
Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street,
Heywood

Drawing:
Figure 1: Site Location Plan

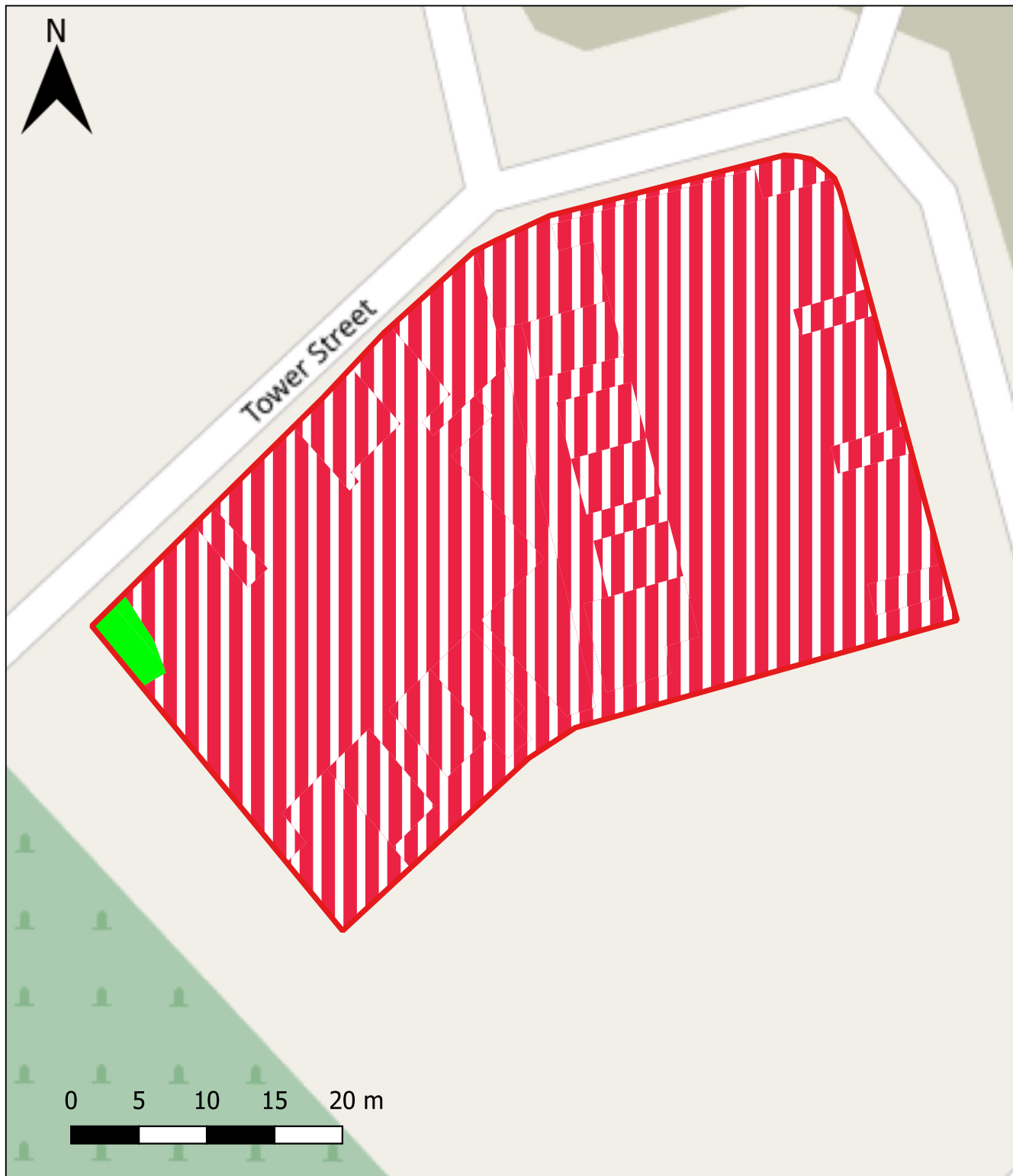
Date: 31-01-2024 Version: FINAL

Author: CM

Job No: P2549



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approximate.



Legend

-  Site Boundary
-  Developed Land; Sealed Surface
-  Modified Grassland

Project:
Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street,
Heywood

Drawing:
Figure 2a: Baseline Habitat Plan
Date: 01-02-2024 Version: FINAL

Author: CM Job No: P2549



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Legend

 Site Boundary

Baseline Habitat Condition

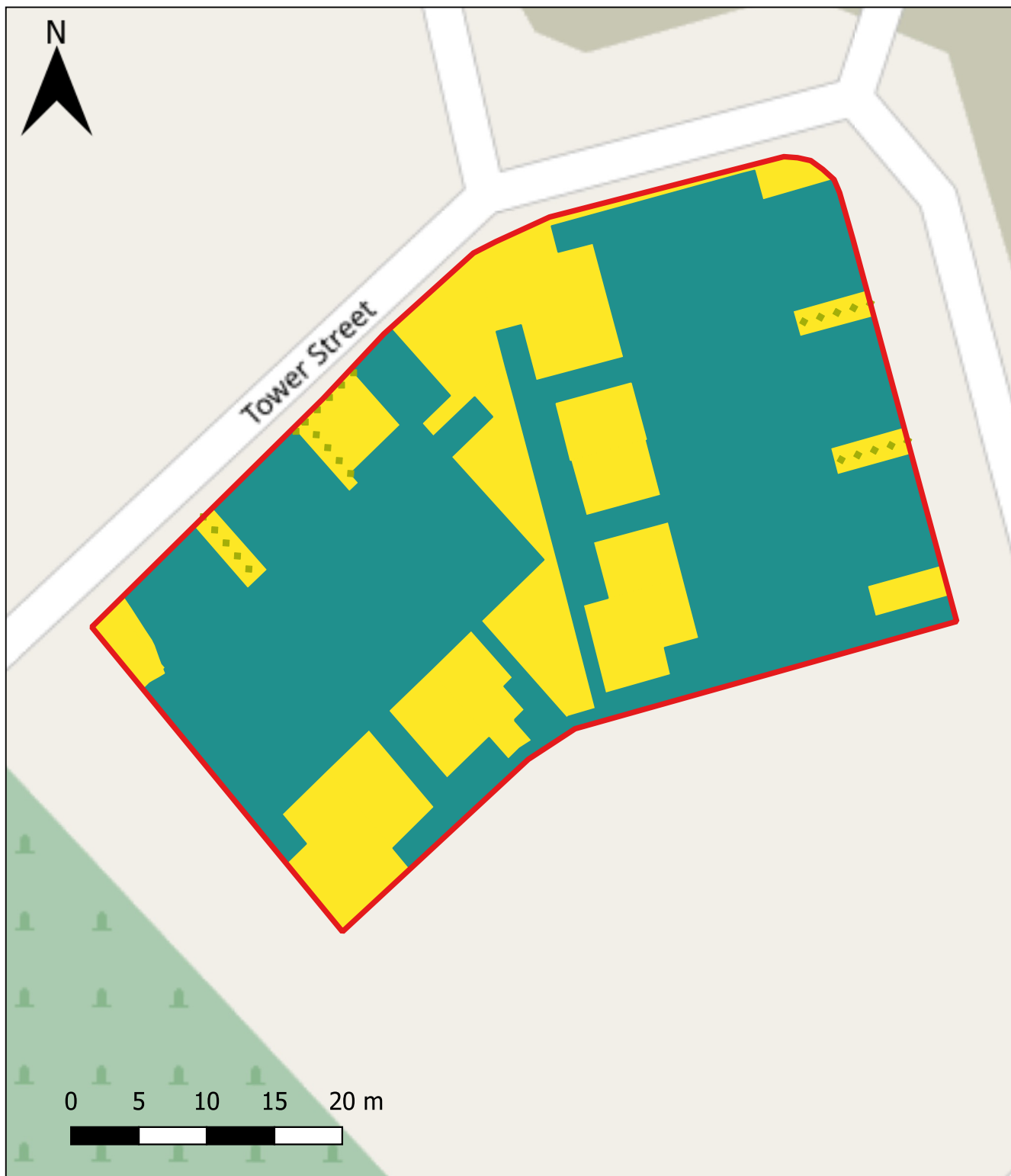
 Poor

 N/A - Other

Project:
Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street,
Heywood
Drawing:
Figure 2b: Baseline Habitat Condition Plan
Date: 01-02-2024 Version: FINAL
Author: CM Job No: P2549



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Legend

 Red Line Boundary

Habitats Retention

 Retained

 Lost

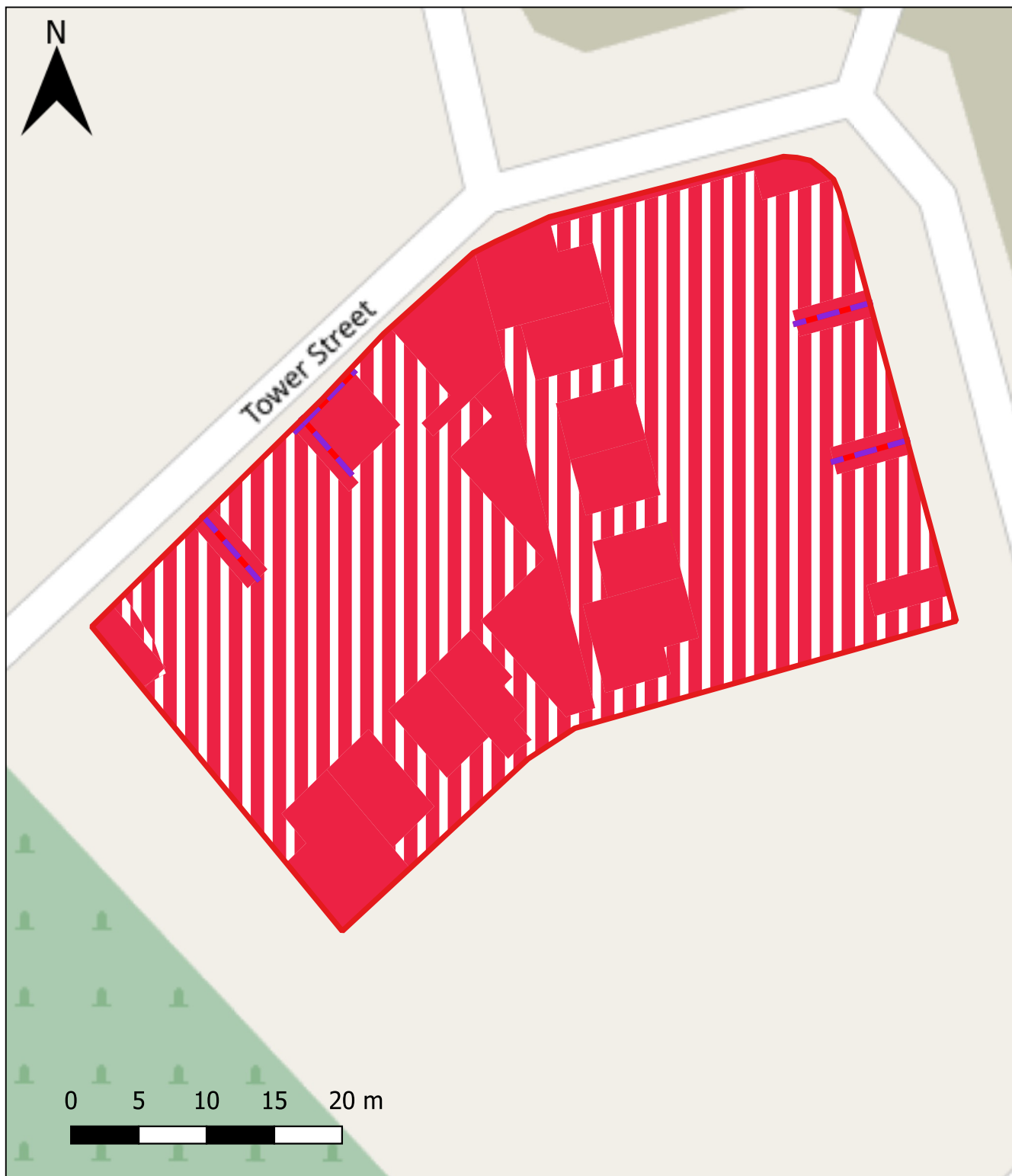
Hedgerow Retention

 Created

Project:
Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street,
Heywood
Drawing:
Figure 2c: Baseline Habitat Retention Plan
Date: 01-02-2024 Version: FINAL
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Legend

-  Red Line Boundary
-  Developed Land; Sealed Surface
-  Vegetated Garden
-  Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow

Project:
Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street,
Heywood

Drawing:
Figure 3a: Proposed Habitat Plan
Date: 01-02-2024 Version: FINAL

Author: CM Job No: P2549



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approximate.



Legend

 Red Line Boundary

Proposed Habitats Condition

| | N/A - Other

| | Condition Assessment N/A

Proposed Hedgerow Condition

 Poor

Project:
Former Heywood Pub, Tower Street,
Heywood

Drawing:
Figure 3b: Proposed Habitat Condition Plan

Date: 01-02-2024 Version: FINAL

Author: CM

Job No: P2549



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Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation Summary

This appendix serves as a summary of relevant policy and legislation. It is not intended to supersede the policy or legislation documents to which it refers, and the relevant full documents should always be consulted prior to decision making.

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Biodiversity is a material consideration under the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Relevant text to biodiversity from the NPPF is described below.

“174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

[...]

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;”

“179. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

[...]

b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement 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. “

“180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

[...]

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”

The Environment Act 2021

Schedule 14 makes provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England. The biodiversity net gain relevant percentage is currently set to 10% by the Act, which is projected to become mandatory in November 2023.

Appendix 2: Photographs



Photo 1: Modified grassland in the west of site.



Photo 2: Developed land; sealed surface on the site of the former building.



Photo 3: Developed land; sealed surface in the west of site.