

Planning Application Supporting Document

September 2026

De Minimis

The proposed development comprises a new substation associated with the installation of a Net Zero Pod incorporating air source heat pumps, which will support the decarbonisation of Buxton Leisure Centre.

The proposed substation has a footprint of approximately 40.74m² (5.19m × 7.85m) and is located entirely on existing tarmac car-parking hardstanding. The development therefore does not result in the loss or degradation of any habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero, and no priority habitat is impacted by the proposal.

On this basis, the development is considered to fall within the de minimis exemption from the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024. The Regulations provide an exemption where development does not impact onsite priority habitat and does not impact 25m² or more of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero, or 5 metres or more of onsite linear habitat.

The Government's Biodiversity Net Gain guidance specifically confirms that development located solely on an existing sealed surface, such as a car park, can benefit from the de minimis exemption where that surface has a biodiversity value of zero.

The proposal will also incorporate the planting of mature yew trees approximately 2m in height, providing additional vegetation and ecological value within the site. These planting measures will complement the existing landscape and provide additional opportunities for nesting birds and other urban wildlife.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to have no measurable adverse impact on onsite biodiversity and is appropriately treated as de minimis for the purposes of the statutory BNG requirements.