

THE ORACLE CENTRE – DEBENHAMS

Client: Hammerson Ltd.

HDA Ref: 1092.1

Date: 12th December 2022

TECHNICAL NOTE TO ACCOMPANY BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT CALCULATION

1. This briefing note accompanies the Biodiversity Impact Assessment calculation prepared in relation to development proposals at Debenhams, Oracle Centre, Reading.
2. The Biodiversity Impact Assessment calculation is based on an adaptation of the *Yield Hall Place 01 – Amenity Roof Terraces – General Arrangement Plan* and the *Public Realm – General Arrangement Key Plan* represented by the following plans: *BIA Broad Habitats Proposals* and *BIA Linear Habitats Proposals (Appendix 1)*.
3. The Biodiversity Impact Assessment calculator used was Defra's May 2022 Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Calculation Tool. The plans associated with the calculation are provided within *Appendix 1* and extracts from the assessment calculator are included within *Appendix 2*.

Broad habitats

4. The calculation for the losses and gains in broad habitats (e.g. grassland, scrub) indicated on the *Yield Hall Place 01 – Amenity Roof Terraces – General Arrangement Plan* and the *Public Realm – General Arrangement Key Plan*, are summarised in *Table 1* below.

Table 1: Summary of losses and gains in broad habitats

Habitat group	Baseline		Post development on site		Onsite Change	
	Existing area (ha)	Existing value (biodiversity units)	Proposed area (ha)	Proposed value (biodiversity units)	Area change (ha)	Onsite Unit change (biodiversity units)
Grassland	0	0	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00
Urban	0.40	0.47	0.41	0.67	0.01	0.20

5. The calculations for the losses and gains in broad habitats (e.g. grassland or scrub) indicated on the plans in *Appendix 1* identify that the emerging development proposals would result in a net gain of biodiversity units for broad habitats of +0.25 units. This is a 49.79% gain compared to the baseline value of the site, thereby providing a strong indication that the proposed development would deliver a substantial biodiversity net gain for broad habitats.

6. In addition, the value of the site for biodiversity could be further enhanced through delivery of measures which are not represented in the Biodiversity Impact Assessment calculation¹. These measures include:
- Provision of features for bats and breeding birds on buildings and existing trees;
 - Use of fruit and nut producing species, and pollen and nectar-rich species in the formal landscape planting scheme;
 - Provision of log and brash piles around scrub edges and on rooftops to provide habitat for invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles; and
 - Sensitive use of lighting to avoid adverse effects on nocturnal wildlife.

Linear habitats

7. The Linear Impact Assessment calculation based on the loss/gain of 'linear features' (e.g. hedgerows or treelines) arising from the emerging proposals identifies a total increase in biodiversity units for linear habitats of +0.08 units (gain). This is a 100% increase over the baseline value of the site, thereby providing a strong indication that the development proposals would deliver a substantial biodiversity net gain for linear habitats.

Conclusion

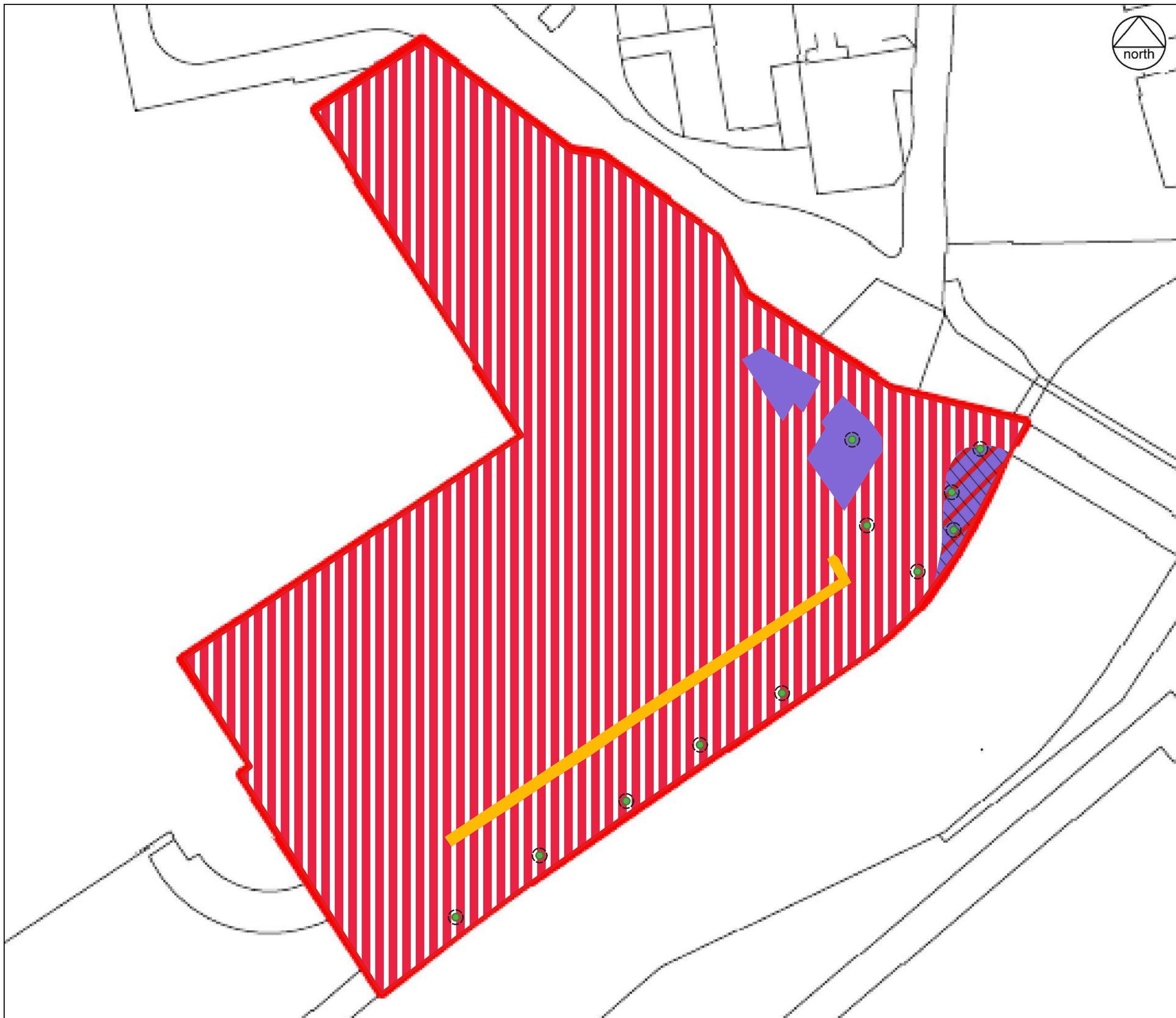
8. The Biodiversity Impact Assessment calculation based on the emerging landscape scheme therefore indicates that a net gain for both 'broad habitats' and 'linear habitats' will arise as a result of the proposals².

¹ This is due to inherent limitations in the Defra metric calculator.

² Please note that the calculation is provisional and should be reviewed at appropriate design stages.

Appendix 1

Supporting plans



KEY

-  Site Boundary
- Urban Trees Baseline
 -  Existing Small
- Habitats Baseline
 -  Developed land; sealed surface
 -  Ground level planters
 -  Introduced shrub
 -  Mixed scrub
- Baseline Habitat Condition
 -  Fairly Poor

CLIENT:
Hammersons Ltd.

PROJECT:
Oracle Centre - Former Debenhams

TITLE:
BIA Broad Habitats Baseline

SCALE AT A3:
1:350

DATE:
December 2022

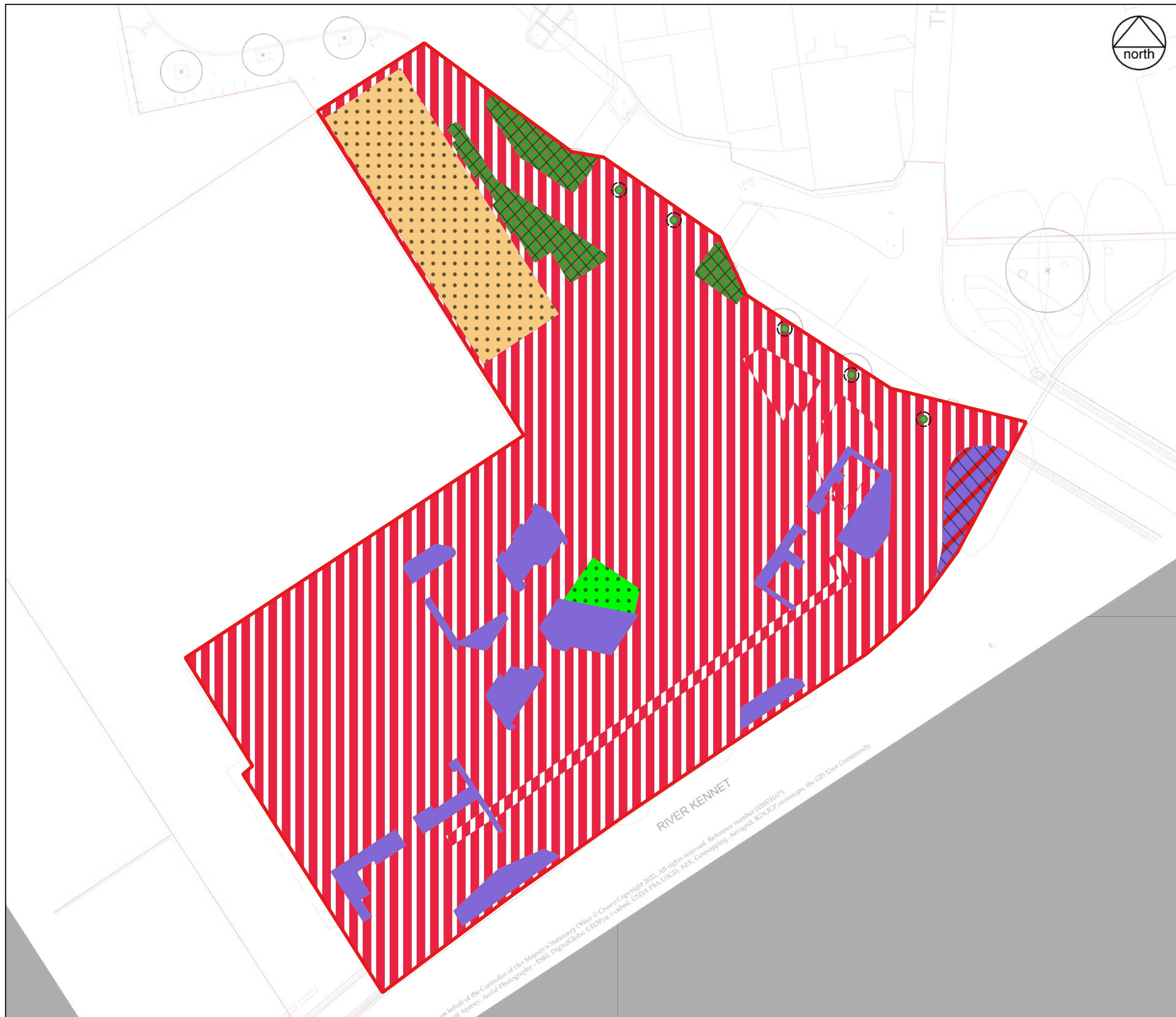
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The Stables, Howbery Park, Benson Lane, Wallingford, OX10 8BA
t 01491 838175 e consult@hda-enviro.co.uk w www.hda-enviro.co.uk

Landscape Architecture
Masterplanning
Ecology





KEY

- Site Boundary
- URBAN TREES**
- Urban Trees Proposed
 - Proposed Small
- Habitats Proposed**
- Biodiverse green roof
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Introduced shrub
- Mixed scrub
- Modified grassland
- Other woodland; broadleaved
- Proposed Habitats Condition**
- Moderate
- Fairly Poor
- Poor

CLIENT:
Hammersons Ltd.

PROJECT:
Oracle Centre - Former Debenhams

TITLE:
BIA Broad Habitats Proposals

SCALE AT A3:
1:350

DATE:
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1092.1 / 02

Appendix 2

Extracts from Defra's 2022 Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Calculation Tool

Headline Results

[Return to results menu](#)

On-site baseline	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.50
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.75
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.08
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
On-site net % change (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	49.79%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	100.00%
	<i>River units</i>	0.00%
Off-site baseline	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.00
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.00
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
Total net unit change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.25
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.08
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
Total on-site net % change plus off-site surplus (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	49.79%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	100.00%
	<i>River units</i>	0.00%

A-1 Site Habitat Baseline									
Condense / Show Columns					Condense / Show Rows				
Main Menu					Instructions				
Habitats and areas				Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Suggested action to address habitat losses	Ecological baseline	
Ref	Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance		Total habitat units	
1	Heathland and shrub	Mixed scrub	0.0041	Medium	Fairly Poor	Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy	Same distinctiveness or higher distinctiveness habitat required	0.03	
2	Urban	Developed land/ sealed surface	0.3202	V Low	N/A - Other	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Compensation Not Required	0.00	
3	Urban	Ground level planters	0.0053	Low	Condition Assessment N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required >	0.01	
4	Urban	Introduced shrub	0.007	Low	Condition Assessment N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required >	0.01	
5	Urban	Urban Tree	0.0285	Medium	Poor	Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy	Distinctiveness habitat required	0.13	
6	Urban	Urban Tree	0.0266	Medium	Moderate	Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy	Same distinctiveness or higher distinctiveness habitat required	0.32	
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
Total habitat area			0.40					0.60	

Retention category biodiversity value						Biopole compensation agreed for unacceptable losses	Comments	
Area retained	Area enhanced	Baseline units retained	Baseline units enhanced	Area habitat lost	Units lost		Assessor comments	Reviewer comments
0.0041	0	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00		Passes criteria 2 and 3 only, therefore poor condition	
0	0	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.00		No condition assessment required	
0	0	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01		No condition assessment required	
0	0	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01		No condition assessment required	
0.0285		0.13	0.00	0.00	0.00		1 urban tree passing criteria 1 and or 2	
0.0266		0.32	0.00	0.00	0.00		9 urban trees passing criteria 1, 2 and either 3 or 6 with 1 tree to be lost	
0.02	0.00	0.47	0.00	0.33	0.08			

Total area lost (excluding area of Urban trees and Green roofs)	0.33
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A-2 Site Habitat Creation

[illegible]

B-2 Site Hedge Creation													
Condense / Show Columns				Condense / Show Rows									
Main Menu				Instructions									
		Proposed habitats		Habitat distinctiveness	Habitat condition	Strategic significance		Temporal multiplier		Difficulty risk multipliers	Hedge units delivered	Comments	
Baseline ref	New hedge number	Habitat type	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Standard or adjusted time to target condition	Final time to target condition/years	Final difficulty of creation			Assessor comments	Reviewer comments
1		Hedge Ornamental Non Native	0.009	V.Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Standard time to target condition applied	1	Low	0.01		Roof terrace hedgerows, no condition assessment required	
2		Hedge Ornamental Non Native	0.008	V.Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Standard time to target condition applied	1	Low	0.01		Roof terrace hedgerows, no condition assessment required	
3		Hedge Ornamental Non Native	0.023	V.Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Standard time to target condition applied	1	Low	0.02		Roof terrace hedgerows, no condition assessment required	
4		Hedge Ornamental Non Native	0.025	V.Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Standard time to target condition applied	1	Low	0.02		Roof terrace hedgerows, no condition assessment required	
5		Hedge Ornamental Non Native	0.009	V.Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Standard time to target condition applied	1	Low	0.01		Roof terrace hedgerows, no condition assessment required	
6		Hedge Ornamental Non Native	0.008	V.Low	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Standard time to target condition applied	1	Low	0.01		Roof terrace hedgerows, no condition assessment required	
7													
8													
9													
10													
11													
			0.08							0.08			