
**Land to the rear of 292 Henley Road
Reading**

Report for:
Mrs M Kehoe
97 Haddon Drive
Woodley
Reading
RG5 4LY

INTRODUCTION

AA Environmental Limited (AAe) has been commissioned by Mrs Kehoe to complete a revised Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculation for the above site. The purpose of the assessment is to provide a comparison between the biodiversity value of the site before and after development. This revised BNG report has been produced in order to address the comments received from the council's ecologist (RBC Ecology Consultations, dated October 2024) regarding the existing baseline conditions on the site, with the existing habitat baseline amended to include colonising bramble scrub. The BNG assessment has been completed based on the existing and proposed habitats for the site (Figures 1 and 2).

The development proposals are to construct a new residential property within the rear garden of No. 292 Henley Road, with associated hard and soft landscaping, requiring the clearance of some garden vegetation.

METHODOLOGY

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government released an updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2024, which encourages new developments to secure measurable 'net gains' for biodiversity. The Environment Bill gained Royal Assent in November 2021, which mandates Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as a condition of planning permission, meaning that all future developments in England will have to provide a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity on site, once development is complete.

In order to calculate BNG for a site, existing and proposed habitats are entered into DEFRA's Statutory Small Sites Biodiversity Metric and are automatically 'scored' on their relative biodiversity value and are then classified according to their condition and location, to calculate site specific 'biodiversity units'. The pre-development biodiversity unit is then compared to the proposed, post-development biodiversity unit, allowing the difference in biodiversity to be measured.

NET LOSS

If the development results in a biodiversity loss then this becomes an 'offset requirement' and compensation will be required. At the moment there are two main options to compensate for the loss of biodiversity, as detailed below:

1. Identify an area of land off-site and enter into an agreement with the landowner to create and manage the site for nature conservation value.
2. Make a financial contribution via a Section 106 legal agreement to the Council (if they have a scheme in place) or another offsetting provider such as the Environment Bank.

In the event that compensation is required then the preference would be to enter into an agreement with the local planning authority, who may have specific initiatives in the area which will benefit local wildlife.

DEFRA's Statutory Metric is the metric that underpins the Environment Act's provisions for mandatory biodiversity net gain in England.

RESULTS

Site Description

The site is a residential garden plot, located to the rear of 292 Henley Road in Reading, Berkshire, centred at National Grid Reference: SU 733756 and covers 334.90 m². It is bordered by Maytree Walk to the north, with residential properties to all other sides.

Habitats

The site comprised a residential garden plot, with no buildings or other structures present. There are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals. The habitats will be removed to create a mixture of hard and soft landscaping, which will be enhanced by providing new shrub, hedgerow, grassland and tree planting. However, in accordance with the updated user guide any new planting has been recorded under the 'Vegetated Garden' habitat type.

The planting will include species and habitats to benefit local wildlife. Areas of native species mixed scrub will be created at the site boundaries, along with new shade tolerant wildflower areas and a green roof to the new bike store, all managed sensitively for wildlife. In addition, the site could be further enhanced by providing new roosting, nesting and sheltering opportunities for a range of species, such as some of those recommended by the Chartered Institute of Ecology Environment and Management's published Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Guidance, and listed below:

- Nest boxes
- Bug hotels
- Bat boxes
- Hedgehog houses

Details of existing and proposed habitats have been provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Habitat Areas

Existing Habitat Baseline		
Habitat	Area (m ²)	Comment
Bramble Scrub	334.90	Existing overgrown garden
Total Site Area	334.90	
Habitat Units	0.1340	Taken from headline results
Proposed Habitat Creation		
Habitat	Area (m ²)	Comment
Vegetated garden	173.00	Proposed garden, with lawns and new planting
Developed land; sealed surface	104.80	Proposed dwelling
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	52.90	Proposed driveway, patio and paths
Other green roof	4.20	Proposed green roof to bike store
Total Site Area	334.90	
Habitat Units	0.0342	Taken from headline results
Results	Unit Change	-0.0998
	Percentage Change	-74.47%

Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

The assessment has resulted in an overall net loss of -0.0998 habitat units, the equivalent decrease of -74.47% (a copy of the Headline Results has been attached at Appendix A). Although the scheme does not achieve a net gain, it is important to note that new habitats will be created and managed sensitively for wildlife along with a range of other enhancement measures, such as the provision of wildlife boxes and new tree planting, which are not factored in on the DEFRA Metric but will provide additional opportunities and benefits for local wildlife.

SUMMARY

The BNG assessment has been completed based on the existing and proposed habitats for the site (Figures 1 and 2). The development proposals are to construct a new residential property within the rear garden of No. 292 Henley Road, with associated hard and soft landscaping, requiring the clearance of some garden vegetation.

Although the scheme results in a loss in habitat units, the scheme has been sensitively designed with a range of new/replacement habitats created along with other enhancement measures such as the provision of wildlife boxes that will provide additional opportunities and benefits for local wildlife. These measures if managed appropriately will result in an overall ecological benefit in comparison to the existing onsite conditions.

In the event that the scheme is not acceptable to the Local Planning Authority in terms of biodiversity, then any loss can be compensated by off-site replacement habitat through the purchase of BNG credits. The Applicant is willing to accept a condition requiring the full details of the proposed biodiversity strategy to compensate for the loss of biodiversity to be submitted and approved by the LPA prior to commencement of the development. The details relating to obtaining BNG credits can be secured via a Section 106 agreement.

Author:

Harry Simpson
BSc (Hons) MSc
Senior Ecologist
E harry.simpson@aae-ltd.co.uk

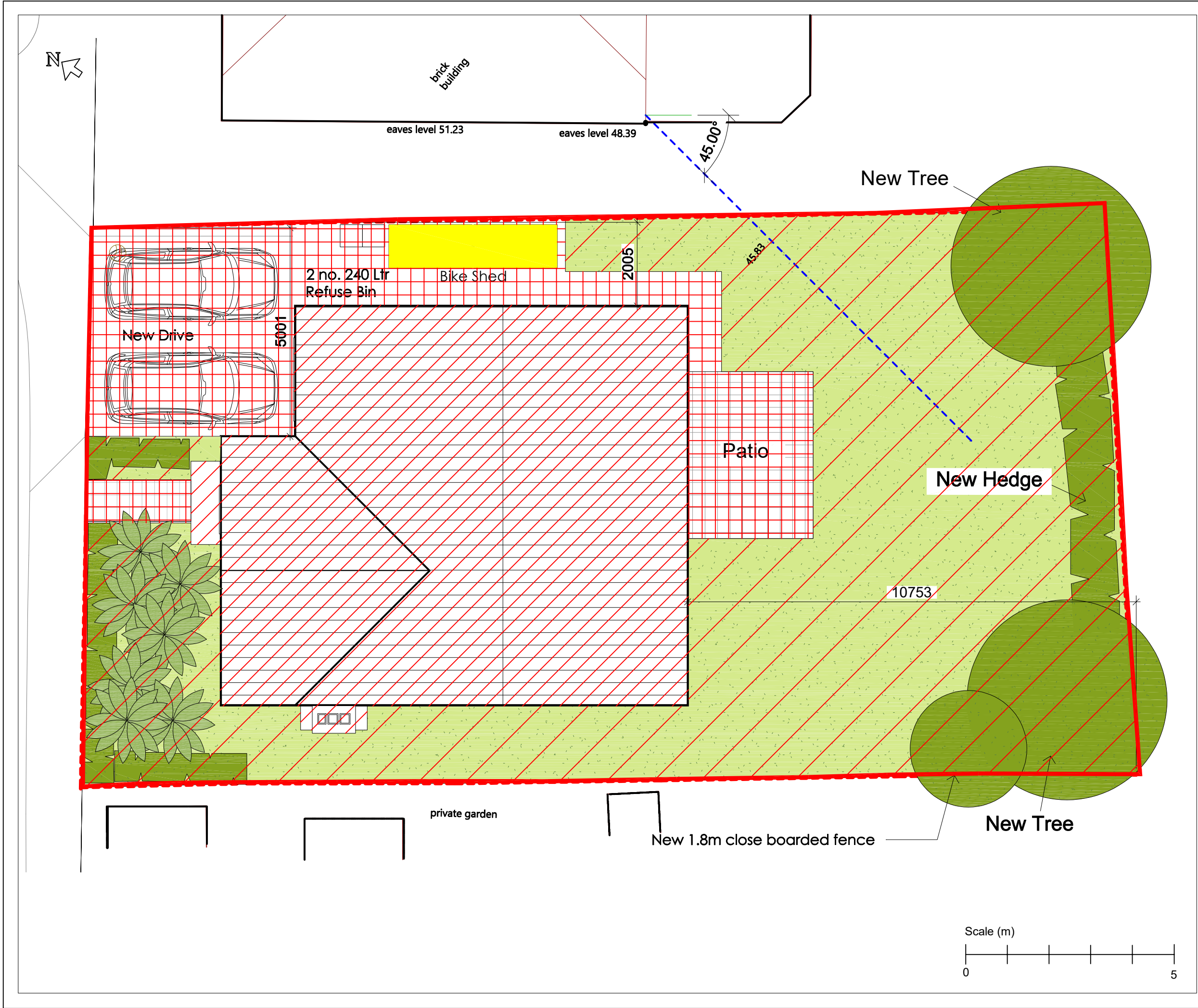
Office:

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon
Oxon OX13 6HX

Company No. 8474322

E info@aae-ltd.co.uk
T 01235 536042
F 01235 523849

Figures



UK HABS KEY

- Site Boundary*
- Vegetated Garden*
- Developed Land; Sealed Surface*
- Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface*
- Other Green Roof*

* Indicative Location

Proposed Habitat Areas

Vegetated Garden = 173.0 m²
Developed Land; Sealed Surface = 104.8 m²
Artificial Unvegetated, unsealed Surface = 52.9 m²
Other Green Roof = 4.2 m²

Total Site Area = 334.9 m²

It should be noted that although new tree and hedgerow planting will be carried out on the site, as this is to occur within a private residential garden, the new planting cannot be included within the BNG calculations. Despite this, it is still considered that the new tree and hedgerow planting will provide long-term ecological benefits on the site, particularly for species of invertebrates and nesting birds.

Rev.	Modifications to the existing habitats recorded in the site baseline.	NAB	18.12.24
A		HRS	

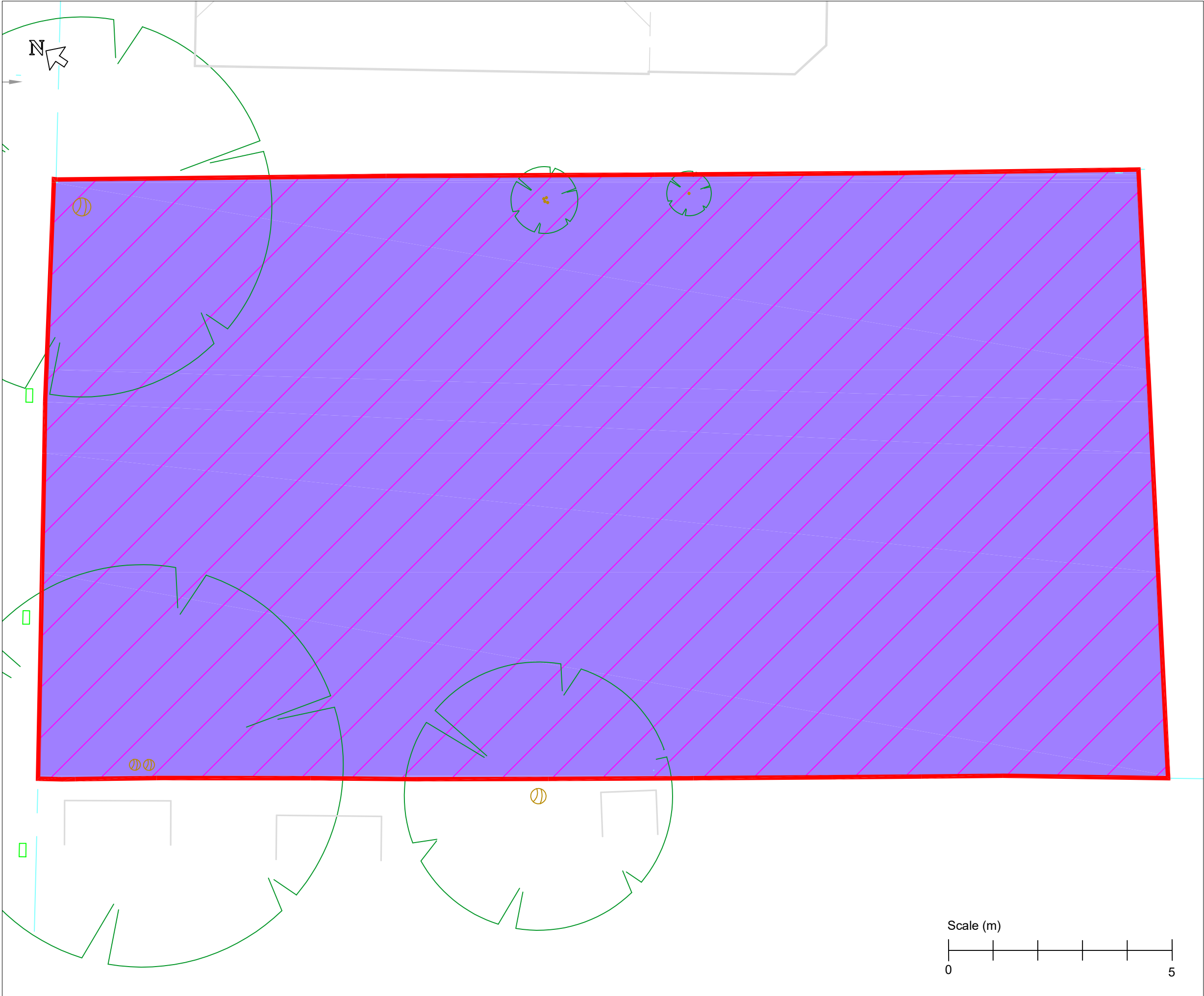
Project
243185
Land to the Rear of 292 Henley Road
Reading

Title
Proposed Habitats Plan



AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX
T: (01235) 536042
F: (01235) 523849
info@aae-ltd.co.uk
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Scale	Date	28.08.24	Drg. No.	Rev.
As shown	Drawn	Chkd.	Figure 2	A
	HRS	ARB		



UK HABS KEY



Site Boundary*



Bramble Scrub*



Individual Tree*

* Indicative Location

Existing Habitat Areas

Bramble Scrub = 334.9 m²

Total Site Area = 334.9 m²

It should be noted that existing small trees recorded within private gardens do not need to be included within the BNG baseline calculations.

Rev.	Modifications to the existing habitats recorded in the site baseline.	NAB	18.12.24
A		HRS	

Project
243185
Land to the Rear of 292 Henley Road
Reading

Title
Existing Habitats Plan



AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX
T: (01235) 536042
F: (01235) 523849
info@aae-ltd.co.uk
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Scale	Date	28.08.24	Drg. No.	Rev.
As shown	Drawn	HRS	Chkd.	A
		ARB	Figure 1	

Appendix A

Headline Results

Site Name		Land to the Rear of 292 Henley Road, Reading
Sheet Name		Headline Results
Headline Results		
Headline		BNG Targets Not Met ▲
Trading Rules		Trading Rules Not Satisfied ▲
Next steps		Scheme alterations or offsite units required
Baseline Units	Habitat units	0.1340
	Hedgerow units	Zero Units Baseline
	Watercourse units	Zero Units Baseline
Post-development Units	Habitat units	0.0342
	Hedgerow units	0.0000
	Watercourse units	0.0000
Total net unit change	Habitat units	-0.0998
	Hedgerow units	0.0000
	Watercourse units	0.0000
Total net % change	Habitat units	-74.47%
	Hedgerow units	% target not appropriate
	Watercourse units	% target not appropriate
Habitats units required to meet target		0.1132
Hedgerow units required to meet target		0.0000
Watercourse units required to meet target		0.0000

Chart 1 - Unit change by habitat group

