

LEIGHTON PARK SCHOOL

**LEIGHTON PARK SCHOOL,
PROPOSED ENTRANCE LODGE**

**PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL
APPRAISAL**

MARCH 2026



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Issue	Revision	Stage	Date	Prepared by	First review	Approved by	Signed
1	-	Draft for Review	06 February 2025	Daria Cechowicz (Senior Ecologist)	Daniel Jones (Associate Ecologist)		
2	Minor updates to BNG assessment. Updated Site Location and Proposed Plans	For Issue	26 February 2025	Daniel Jones (Associate Ecologist)		Dr. M Watts (Director)	M. WATTS
3	Updates to BNG Assessment in Section 5. Amended UK Habitat Classification Plans.	For Issue	26 March 2026	Daniel Jones (Associate Ecologist)		Dr. M Watts (Director)	M. WATTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Leighton Park School commissioned Soltys Brewster Ecology (SBE) to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for a small area of land adjacent to the Shinfield Road entrance at Leighton Park School (see Appendix I for Site Location Plan). The appraisal aimed to evaluate the site in preparation for a planning submission regarding the proposed entrance lodge (See Appendix II for Proposed Site Plan).
- 1.2 The wider school site is located at Shinfield Road, Reading RG2 7DE. The existing gate and entrance is situated along the north-western boundary of the school grounds, adjacent to A327 (Shinfield Road). The proposals will involve the installation of a new entrance lodge (see Proposed Site Plan and Elevations in Appendix II).
- 1.3 The current report presents the findings of an ecological desk study and preliminary ecological appraisal undertaken at the site in January 2025 and identifies any ecological constraints or opportunities associated with the proposal. The report also includes a Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain assessment.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 To establish the baseline ecological conditions of the site, a combination of desk-based study and field survey were conducted. The desk study assessment incorporated field records obtained in April 2024 for a separate application within the Leighton School site, whilst the baseline ecological conditions were assessed in January 2025.

Desk study

- 2.2 The desk study involved consultation with the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC)) and DEFRA 'MAGIC' interactive mapping tool¹ to identify any records of rare, protected or notable flora and fauna within 1km of the proposed site. The search criteria also included information relating to the location and citation details (where available) for any sites designated for their nature conservation interest such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservations (SACs) or Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). A summary plan of the data provided is included in Appendix III.

UK Habitat Classification

- 2.3 The fieldwork was undertaken on 13th January 2025 by a suitably experienced ecologist² and followed the standard UK Habitat Classification protocol (UKHab, 2023). All habitats within and immediately adjacent to the proposed site boundary were classified and mapped as accurately as possible. Habitats considered to have potential to support rare, protected or otherwise notable species of flora and fauna were also noted, as were any direct signs of these species (e.g. Eurasian Badger *Meles meles* setts and dung-pits). Incidental observations of birds on or flying over the site were recorded and any incidence of invasive weed species (e.g. Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*) noted.
- 2.4 A map of habitats was drawn up and target notes were used to identify features of ecological interest. Where possible, habitats were cross-referenced to any relevant Section 41 (NERC Act) or local priority habitats.
- 2.4 During the field survey any trees at the proposed site (or nearby) were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats and were categorised in relation to the bat roosting features (BCT, 2023). The categories are as follows:

¹ Magic Map Application: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>

² Associate members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) with experience of habitat and protected species surveys

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Trees:

- **PRF-I** – Potential Roost Feature (PRF) is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to their size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats;
- **PRF-M** – PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony;
- **Negligible** – Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bat.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

2.5 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment was undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool and as per the user guidelines (DEFRA, 2025). The calculation of on-site baseline habitat units was undertaken using data collected from the field survey on 13th January 2025. Baseline habitats identified during the survey were assigned to their comparable UK Habitat Classification (UKHabs) category and assigned any appropriate secondary codes. Habitat conditions (poor, moderate or good) were assessed using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric habitat condition assessment sheets (see Appendix V for condition sheets). Although the planning boundary is approx. 225m², the decision to use the full statutory metric (as opposed to small site metric) was based on the use of habitat condition assessment for baseline habitats. The Proposed Site Plan was used to calculate the change in biodiversity units post-development.

2.6 At the time of writing the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust have recently published a Nature Recovery Network plan. The school grounds falls within the wider *landscape zone* and was assigned to be of Low strategic importance.

Limitations

2.7 One limitation of surveying for plants in winter (sub-optimal time of the year) is that many species may have already entered dormancy, resulting in reduced visibility of their foliage and flowers. This can make it challenging to accurately identify flora to a species level, particularly those that are annual or herbaceous, as their above-ground structures may be diminished or absent. This however is not thought to impact survey findings based on low distinctiveness of habitats present.

3.0 RESULTS

Desk Study

- 3.1 Consultation with TVERC confirmed that the proposed site holds no designation for nature conservation. A total of 4no. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are located within 1km of the site including Whiteknights Park, Redhatch Copse, The Cowsey and Whitley Park Farm. However, based on the small nature of the proposed development, physical separation and existing dispersal barriers the LWSs were not considered to be of ecological relevance to the proposals. Summary plans illustrating the TVERC results are included in Appendix III.
- 3.2 The TVERC search returned >350no. recent bat records within 2km of the site, including 40no. bat roost records. The nearest of which is a Pipistrelle bat roost located approx. 180m south-east of the site. The data search also included a number of Common and Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus/ pygmaeus* and Brown Long-Eared bat *Plecotus auritus* roosts associated with the buildings at Reading University located between approx. 650 – 950m from the site. There were also records of foraging and commuting Common, Soprano and Nathusius' Pipistrelle *P. nathusii*, Brown Long-Eared bat, Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* and other unidentified *Myotis* species within 1km of the site.
- 3.3 The data search also included an extensive list of recent bird records within 1km of the site, the majority of which were associated with the habitats at Whiteknights Park at Reading University. Species of relevance to the habitats present at the site and recorded within 1km include Black-Headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*, Common Gull *Larus canus*, Lesser Black-Backed Gull *Larus fuscus*, House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*, House Martin *Delichon urbicum* and Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*.
- 3.4 The desk study included records of Common Frog *Rana temporaria*, Common Toad *Bufo bufo* and Smooth Newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* within 1km of the site, mainly associated with the habitats at Whiteknights Park (Reading University). There were no records of Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* included in the data search results, or any reptile records.
- 3.5 A single Badger *Meles meles* record was included in the data search results, associated with a sett located approx. 1km from the proposed site. There were also 39no. records of Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* recorded within close proximity to the site.

UK Habitat Classification

3.6 The distribution and extent of habitats recorded at the proposed site in January 2025 are illustrated on UK Habitat Classification Plan in Appendix IV. The proposed site supports a limited range of habitat types as described below. A site meeting, undertaken on 17th March 2026, confirmed that the habitats present within the site boundary remain consistent with those recorded in 2025.

w1h – Broadleaved and mixed woodland

3.7 The southernmost habitat within the red line boundary consists of broadleaved and mixed woodland (Figure 1). This mature woodland shows no signs of recent management and extends beyond the red line boundary, continuing south to form the western boundary of the school. Recorded species include Turkey Oak *Quercus cerris*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Yew *Taxus baccata*, Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica* (both mature trees and saplings) Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Hazel *Corylus avellana* and Common Ivy *Hedera helix*. It is not anticipated that any trees within this woodland will be impacted by the proposals with only the shrub layer and saplings at the edge (e.g. Holly, Hazel Yew, Laurel) requiring clearance for the lodge.

Figure 1 - Broadleaved woodland within the red line boundary.



g4 – modified grassland

3.8 Between the hard standing and woodland, where lodge is proposed to be installed a strip consisting of modified/amenity grassland (Figure 2) can be located. This grassland is regularly mown, resulting in a uniform short sward height and low botanical diversity. Species recorded include Moss, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Common Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, Annual Meadow Grass *Poa annua*, Common Daisy *Bellis perennis*, and

Perennial Rye Grass *Lolium perenne*. Overall, the grassland supports fewer than six species per square meter and has been classified as being in poor condition with low distinctiveness.

Figure 2 – Modified/amenity grassland.



u1b – developed land; sealed surface

- 3.9 The entrance to the school associated with Shinfield Road Gate comprises of hard surface consisting asphalt (see cover photo).
- 3.10 Other linear features at the site include existing concrete walls and timber fencing.

Fauna

3.11 During the course of the field survey a search for field signs of protected or notable species was undertaken and the potential of the habitats to support these species considered. In the context of this report, these species meet any of the following criteria:

- Species protected by British or international law;
- Species listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act;
- Nationally rare or nationally scarce species;
- Species of Conservation Concern (e.g. JNCC Red List, RSPB/BTO Red or Amber Lists);

Those considered of relevance to the current proposals include:

Badger

3.12 The field survey found no signs of badger activity on the proposed site, and its use by badgers is considered unlikely. However, the site's habitats are likely to support other small mammals, such as hedgehogs.

Bats

3.13 During the field survey a number of trees located within close proximity to the proposed scheme were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. All trees near the proposed scheme were assessed to be of negligible potential to support roosting bats.

3.14 The woodland within the site which extends beyond the red line boundary was considered likely to support commuting and foraging bats. As discussed in 3.7, there will be limited impacts to the woodland, with only the shrub layer and saplings cut back.

Birds

3.15 The woodland habitat at the proposed site was considered likely to support tree/shrub nesting bird species (including the shrub layer proposed to be cut back).

Reptiles and Amphibians

3.16 The habitats within the proposed site primarily consist of amenity grassland and hardstanding, both of which offer little to no suitable shelter or foraging opportunities for common reptiles and amphibians. While the woodland edge provides some basking opportunities, the high level of activity/disturbance in this area makes the presence of reptiles unlikely. Overall, the site's habitats are considered to have limited potential to support common reptiles

4.0 POLICIES AND PLANS

- 4.1 The following local and national planning policy relating to nature conservation and biodiversity are considered of relevance to the site.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

- 4.2 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (the NERC Act) places a duty ('the biodiversity duty') on every public authority - including a local planning authority – to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity (which also includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat). Of the key principles, the most relevant to this site are those directed at maintaining and promoting biodiversity, as well as preventing harm to biodiversity.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 4.3 This revised framework set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Chapter 15 deals with Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment and states:

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

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

Environment Act (2021)

- 4.4 The Environment Act 2021 sets out the mandatory biodiversity gain objectives for developers and planners. The biodiversity gain objectives for a new development are met when the post-development biodiversity value exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitats by at least 10%. Biodiversity units

attributable to the required 10% include biodiversity value delivered onsite, biodiversity value delivered at a registered offsite location and units delivered via purchased biodiversity credits.

Local Planning Policy

Reading Borough Council – Local Plan

- 4.5 The council's current planning policies are set out in the Reading Borough Local Plan, adopted in November 2019. Policies within the local plan relating to biodiversity are set out in chapter 4.2 Built and Natural Environment, with those of relevance to the current proposal summarised below:

EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK

- a) The identified Green Network, the key elements of which are shown on the Proposals Map, shall be maintained, protected, consolidated, extended and enhanced. Permission will not be granted for development that negatively affects the sites with identified interest or fragments the overall network. The Green Network comprises:

- Sites with identified biodiversity interest - Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, protected and priority species and their habitats, Priority and Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, and the River Thames and all its tributaries (including the River Kennet and the Kennet & Avon Canal); and
- Areas with potential for biodiversity value and which stitch the Green Network together – designated Local Green Space and open green spaces, and existing and potential Green Links.

New development shall demonstrate how the location and type of green space, landscaping and water features provided within a scheme have been arranged such that they maintain or link into the existing Green Network and contribute to its consolidation. Such features should be designed to maximise the opportunities for enhancing this network. All new development should maximise opportunities to create new assets and links into areas where opportunities are as yet unidentified on the Proposals Map.

- b) On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. Development should:
- Protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site, incorporating and integrating them into development proposals wherever practicable; and
 - Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (such as wildlife ponds, bird and bat boxes) wherever practicable. In exceptional circumstances where the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site, and it is demonstrated that the impacts cannot be: 1) avoided; 2) mitigated or; 3) compensated for on-site; then new development will

provide off-site compensation to ensure that there is “no net loss” of biodiversity. Provision of off-site compensation shall be calculated in accordance with nationally or locally recognised guidance and metrics. It should not replace existing alternative habitats, and should be provided prior to development.

EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLANDS

Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading’s vegetation cover will be extended. The quality of waterside vegetation will be maintained or enhanced.

New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. Measures must be in place to ensure that these trees are adequately maintained.

5.0 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)

Good Practice Principles for Development

- 5.1 The BNG Good Practice Principles for Development³ comprise of ten principles that must be applied to deliver well-designed and measurable net-gain and the best outcome for biodiversity. For example, this includes the application of the avoidance, mitigation and compensation hierarchy, the avoidance of impacts on irreplaceable habitats and the consideration of Net Gain within the early stages of the development design. The Proposed Site Plan was used to calculate the change in biodiversity units. Avoidance measures appropriate to the design of the proposed layout and relevant to BNG would include the retention of ‘medium’ distinctiveness habitats as far as practicable (e.g., shrub within the woodland) with the development focused within areas of negligible or ‘low’ distinctiveness habitats (e.g., modified grassland).

Proposed design

- 5.2 The scheme involves the installation of a small lodge structure within the amenity grassland area at the edge of the broadleaved woodland. The trees within the woodland will be retained. The lodge will be anchored using ground screws, carefully positioned to avoid the root protection zones of nearby trees. To accommodate the lodge, the understorey layer along the woodland edge will need to be trimmed back (including removal of approx. 10m² ornamental shrub species and tree saplings) as well as the loss of approx. 22m² of low distinctiveness modified grassland. Overall this is an impact of approx. 32m², which would trigger the requirement for a full BNG assessment (7m² above the current BNG exemption threshold of 25m²).
- 5.3 A copy of the BNG Statutory Metric will be issued separately to this report. A plan illustrating the baseline and post-development UK Habitat Classification is included in Appendix IV with a copy of the Habitat Condition Assessment sheets provided in Appendix IV.

Potential mitigation

- 5.4 Following an on-site meeting on 17th March 2026 it is anticipated that the required net-gain and trading rules can be achieved on-site (i.e., within the planning boundary), without the need to provide off-site mitigation, such as tree planting within the wider school grounds, as previously proposed. Mitigation proposals within the site boundary include the provision of a green roof, approx. 27m², on the new entrance lodge, ground-based green wall (12 linear metres/12m²) and ground level planters (5m²). The green roof would likely comprise of sedum (classified as u1b5.89 other green roof), with the ground-based green wall including native climbers such as common ivy (u1b5.842) and ground level planters featuring ornamental species (u1.845). In addition, planting of new native trees or transplantation of existing Hazel and Oak saplings is proposed to the east and

³ Baker, J. (2016) Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development.

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west of the new lodge (w1g other woodland; broad-leaved). Created habitats (woodland and green wall) have been assigned a target condition of Poor, with no condition assessments required for the green roof or ground level planters.

5.5 The mitigation planting discussed above are considered appropriate to the design and scale of the proposals and in accordance with the BNG Good Practice Principles for Development. In addition, the mitigation proposals will include the transplantation (where possible) of existing native tree saplings to reduce permanent impacts to the woodland edge. The accompanying metric indicates that these proposals would achieve trading rules and a net-gain of 10.18% in biodiversity units.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The combination of desk study and UK Habitat Classification survey identified a limited range of habitats within the site boundary including woodland, modified/amenity grassland, developed land sealed surface (existing hardstanding). Although the majority of the proposed site comprises of low and negligible value habitats (e.g., modified grassland and hardstanding). Other ecological features at the site include the shrub/understorey layer within the woodland.
- 6.2 The field survey found no evidence to suggest the use of the site by Badgers. In addition, the habitats at the site were considered of limited suitability to support reptiles and amphibian. The woodland corridor was considered likely to support small numbers of nesting birds along with foraging and commuting bats.
- 6.3 The proposed layout plan (Appendix II) indicates that the development will result in the loss of a small area of modified/amenity grassland along with a small section of ornamental shrubs and tree saplings within the woodland (approx. 32m² of impact). It is anticipated that no trees will be impacted by the scheme – all shrubs to be lost have a DBH <7.5cm. The following avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures are considered appropriate to the proposed development:

Badgers

- 6.4 As mentioned above, the field survey found no evidence of badger activity on the site. Additionally, the nearest badger record from the desk study was located approximately 1km away. The habitats on the site are considered likely to support other small mammals, such as hedgehogs. It is recommended that during the construction phase of any future development, measures be taken to minimize risks to hedgehogs and other small mammals. This can be achieved by covering any excavations overnight (or providing escape routes) and ensuring the proper storage of building materials.

Bats

- 6.5 The trees within the woodland will not be affected by the proposed scheme, furthermore trees closest to the development were assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats. Only a small section of the woodland shrub layer will need to be cut back and as a result this should not have any adverse impacts on commuting and foraging bats, as the woodland extends further south.
- 6.6 Any new lighting at the proposed site should be design to minimise artificial light spill onto retained habitats with any increase (over the existing levels) on retained habitats be minimised to ≤0.5 lux to reduce risks of disturbance and habitat fragmentation for foraging and commuting bats. Advice on how to minimise artificial light spill can be found within the published guidance by the BCT & ILP (2023).

Birds

- 6.7 The shrub layer within the woodland habitat at the proposed site is considered likely to support small numbers of nesting birds. All wild birds and their nests are protected from damage or destruction while in use or under construction, as outlined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended). It is recommended that any shrub clearance be carried out outside the breeding bird season, ideally during the winter months (between September and February), to minimize risks to nesting birds. If clearance during this period is not feasible, a thorough check for nesting birds should be conducted beforehand. If an active nest is found, it should remain undisturbed, with an appropriate buffer zone established until the nest is no longer in use and all chicks have fledged. Other enhancement features could include the provision of bird boxes on any retained trees in the wider school grounds.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 6.8 As discussed in section 5, the scheme impacts approx. 32m² of area-based habitats and would trigger the requirement for a full BNG assessment (exemption threshold of 25m²). With the implementation of the mitigation features discussed in section 5.4, the scheme would achieve a net-gain of 10.18% and trading rules.

Avoidance, mitigation and enhancement

- 6.9 The avoidance, mitigation and enhancements described in the sections above are summarised below.

Avoidance

- Retention of trees as far as practicable;
- Vegetation clearance to avoid the breeding bird season (typically March – August);

Mitigation

- Design of site lighting to minimise artificial light spill onto retained habitat features to minimise disturbance to foraging/commuting bats and other nocturnal wildlife;
- Provision of green roof (sedum/other green roof), ground-based green wall, ground-level planters and native tree/shrub planting within application boundary to achieve BNG;

Enhancement

- Management plan for created and retained habitat features; and
- Provision of bird boxes onto retained trees within the wider school grounds.

REFERENCES

Baker, J. (2016) Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development.

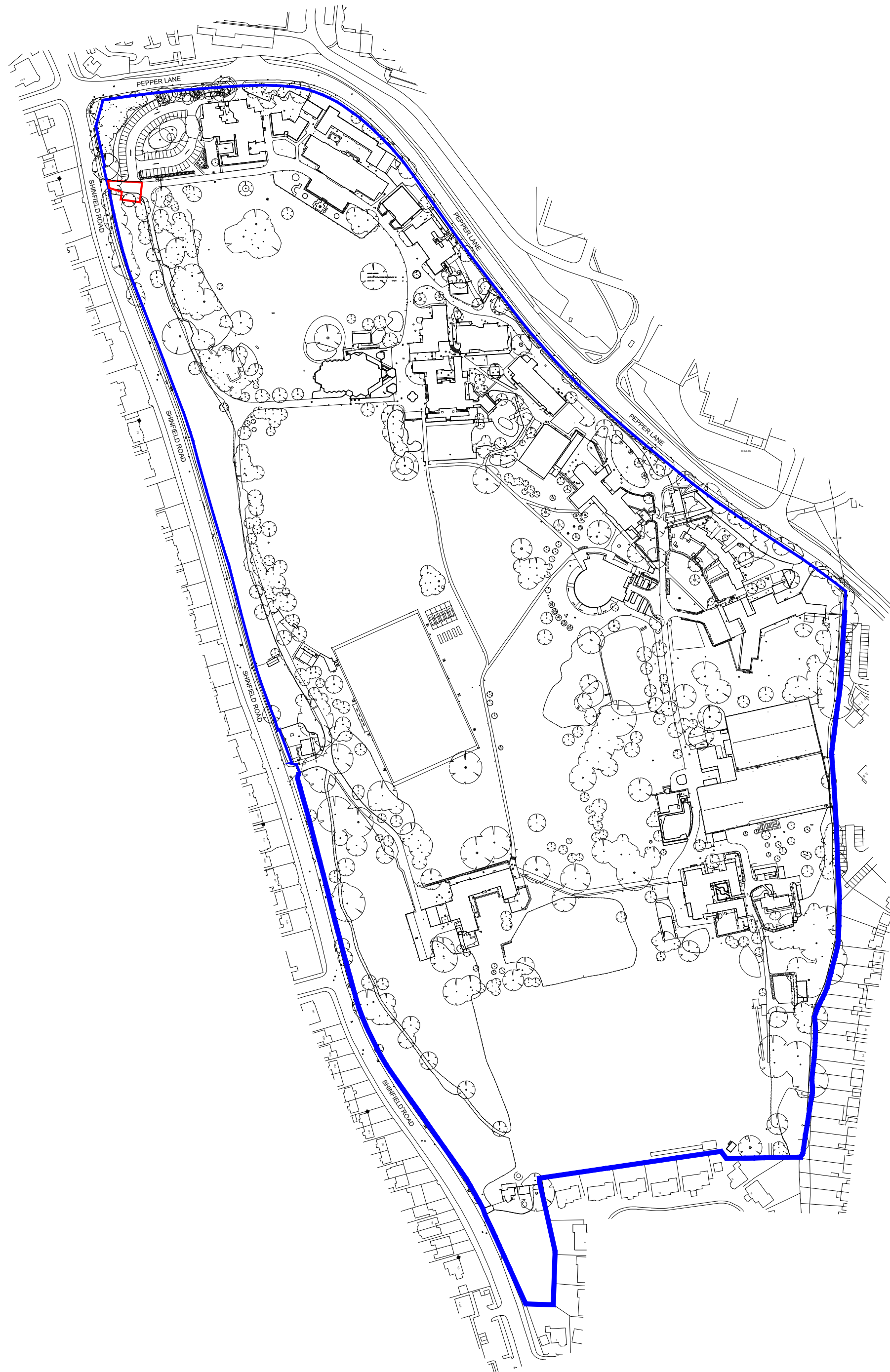
Bat Conservation Trust (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines*. 4th Edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Bat Conservation Trust & Institution of Lighting Professionals (2023) *Bats and artificial lighting in the UK. Guidance Note 08/23*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

DEFRA (2025) *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tool – User Guidelines*. July 2025.

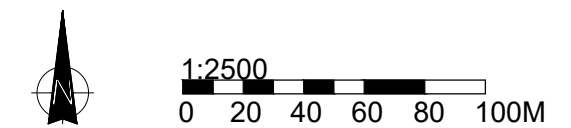
UKHab Ltd (2023) UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0. (at www.ukhab.org)

APPENDIX I SITE LOCATION PLAN

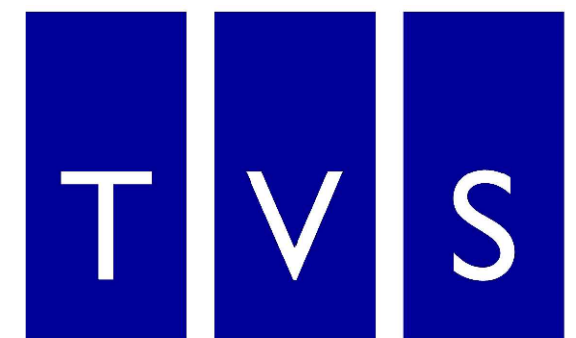


— SITE BOUNDARY

— LAND OWNERSHIP BOUNDARY



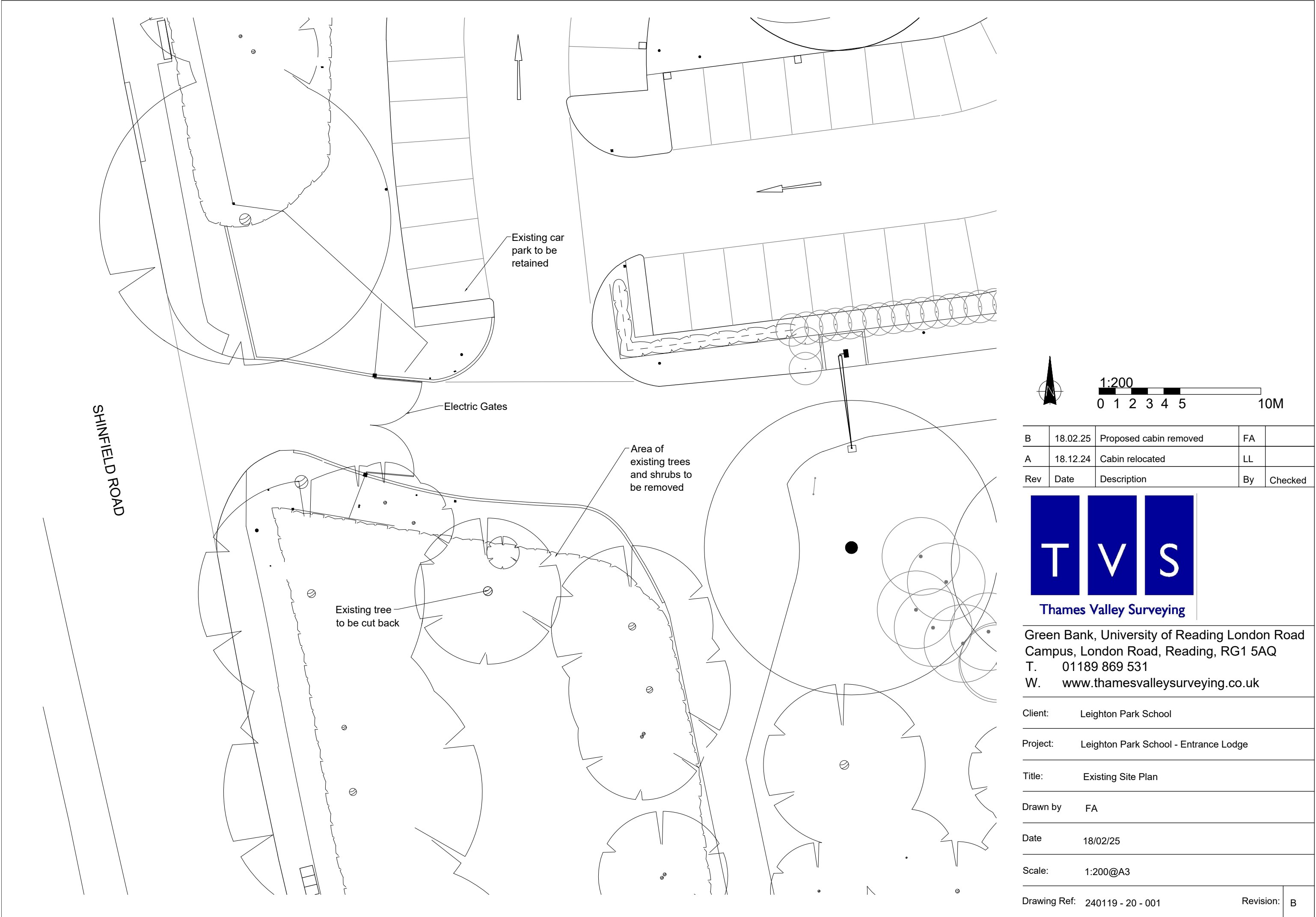
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A	18.12.24	Cabin relocated	LL	
Rev	Date	Description	By	Checked



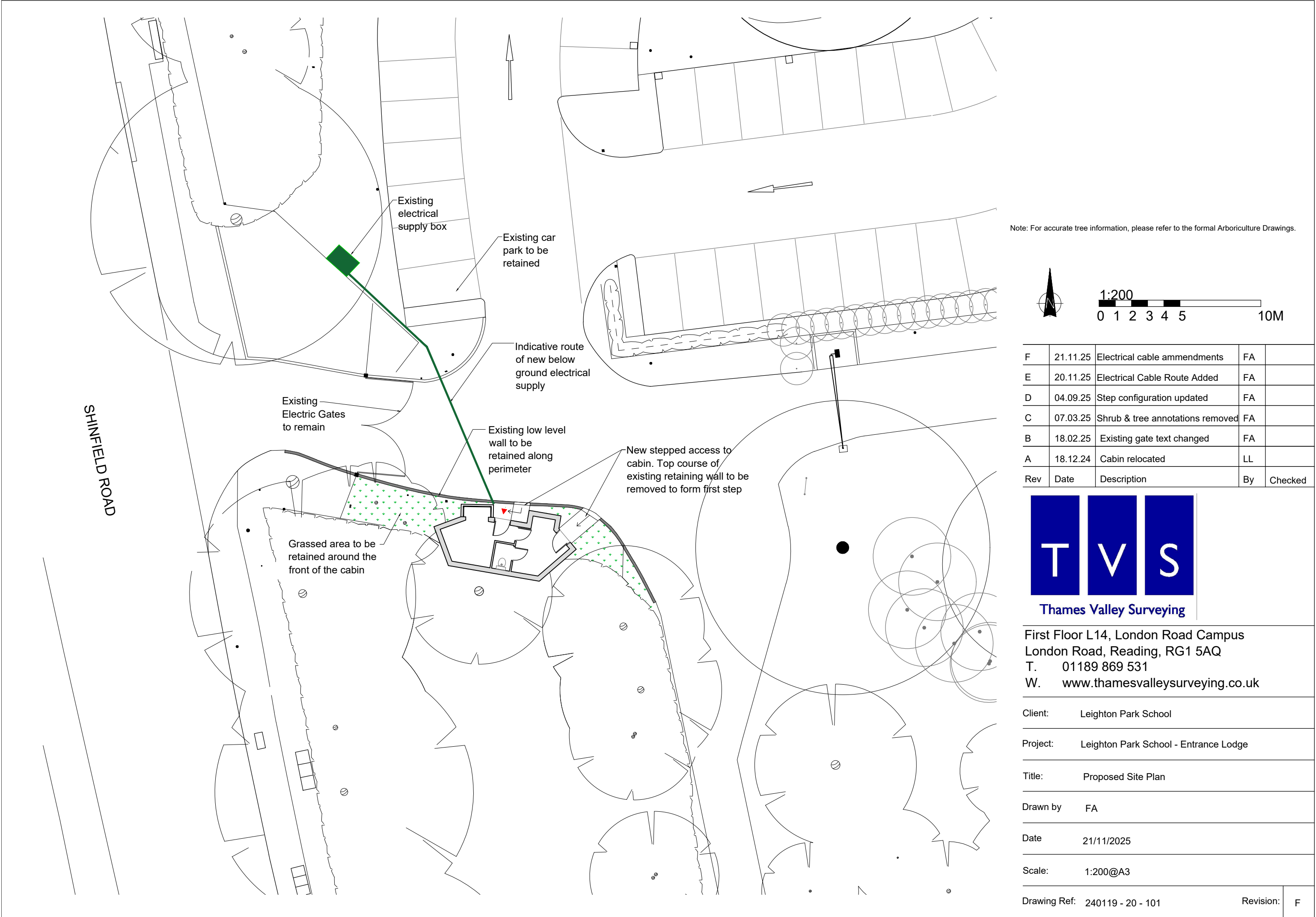
Thames Valley Surveying

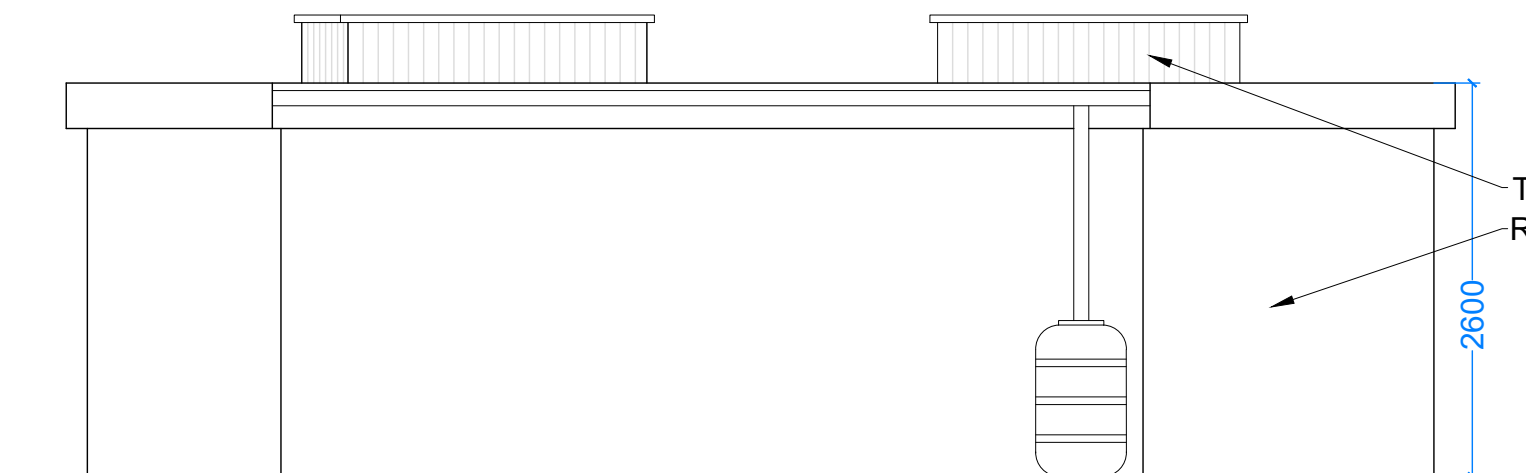
Green Bank, University of Reading London Road
Campus, London Road, Reading, RG1 5AQ
T. 01189 869 531
W. www.thamesvalleysurveying.co.uk

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Project:	Leighton Park School - Entrance Lodge
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Drawn by	FA
Date	18/02/25
Scale:	1:2500@A2
Drawing Ref:	240119 - 10 - 002
Revision:	B

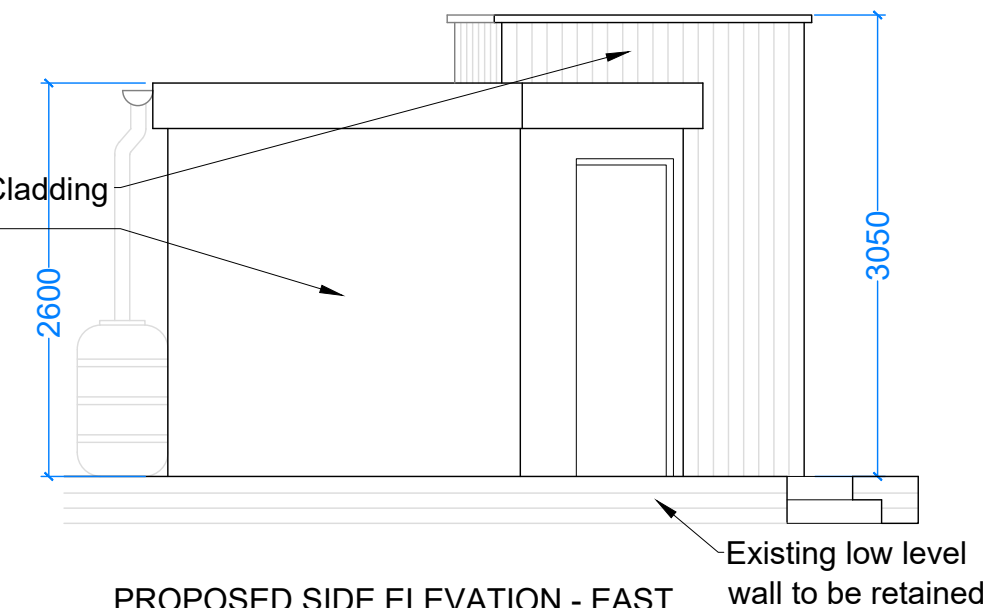


APPENDIX II PROPOSED SITE PLAN

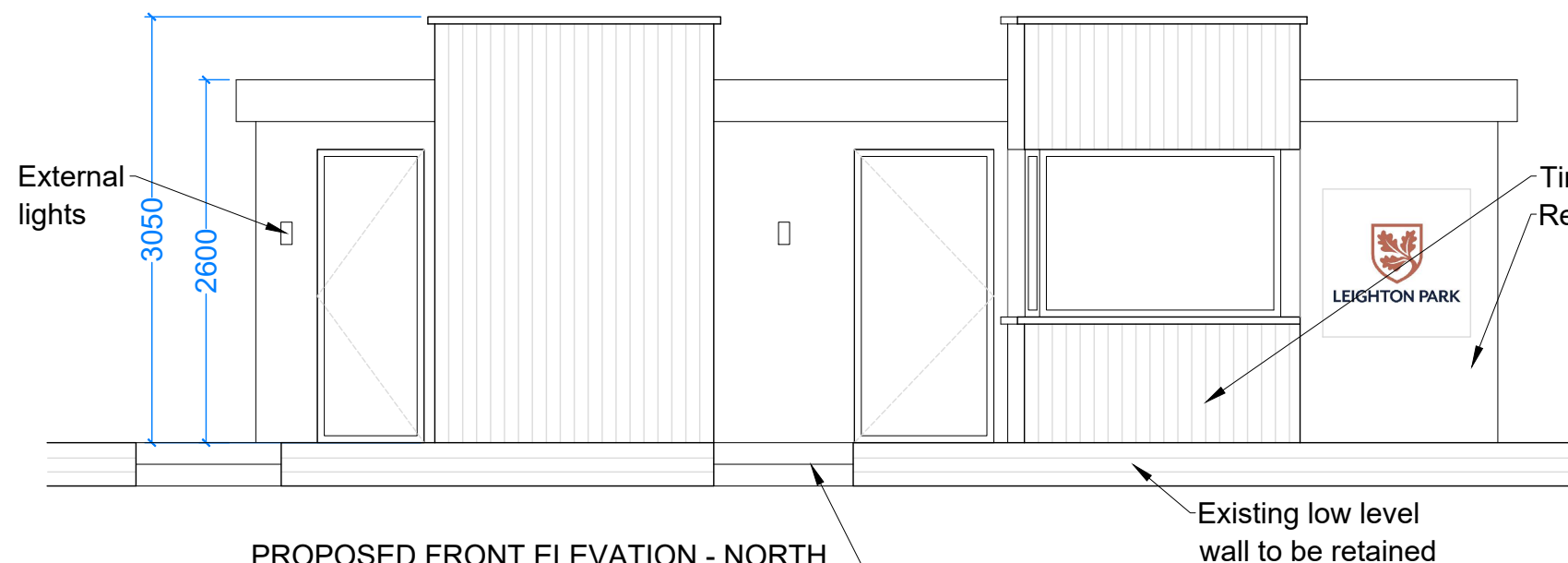




PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION - SOUTH

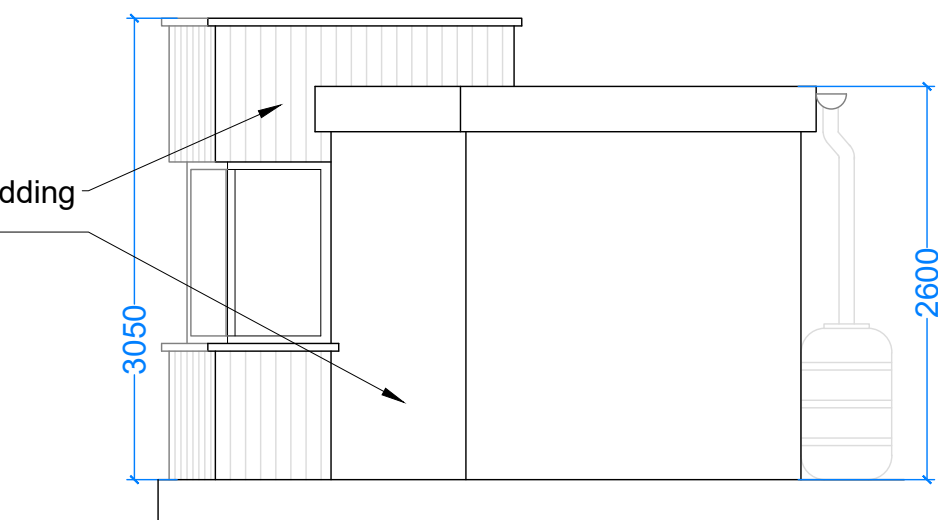


PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION - EAST

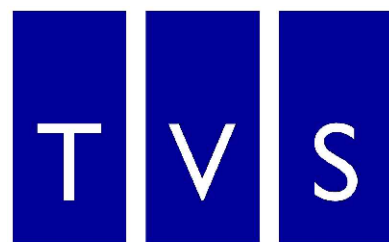


PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION - NORTH

New steps to cabin.
First step to be located on the second
course of the existing retaining wall



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION - WEST



Thames Valley Surveying

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B	04.09.25	Layout updated	FA	
A	18.12.24	Layout updated	LL	
Rev	Date	Description	By	Checked

Client: Leighton Park School

Project: Leighton Park School - Entrance Lodge

Title: Proposed Elevations

Drawn by FA

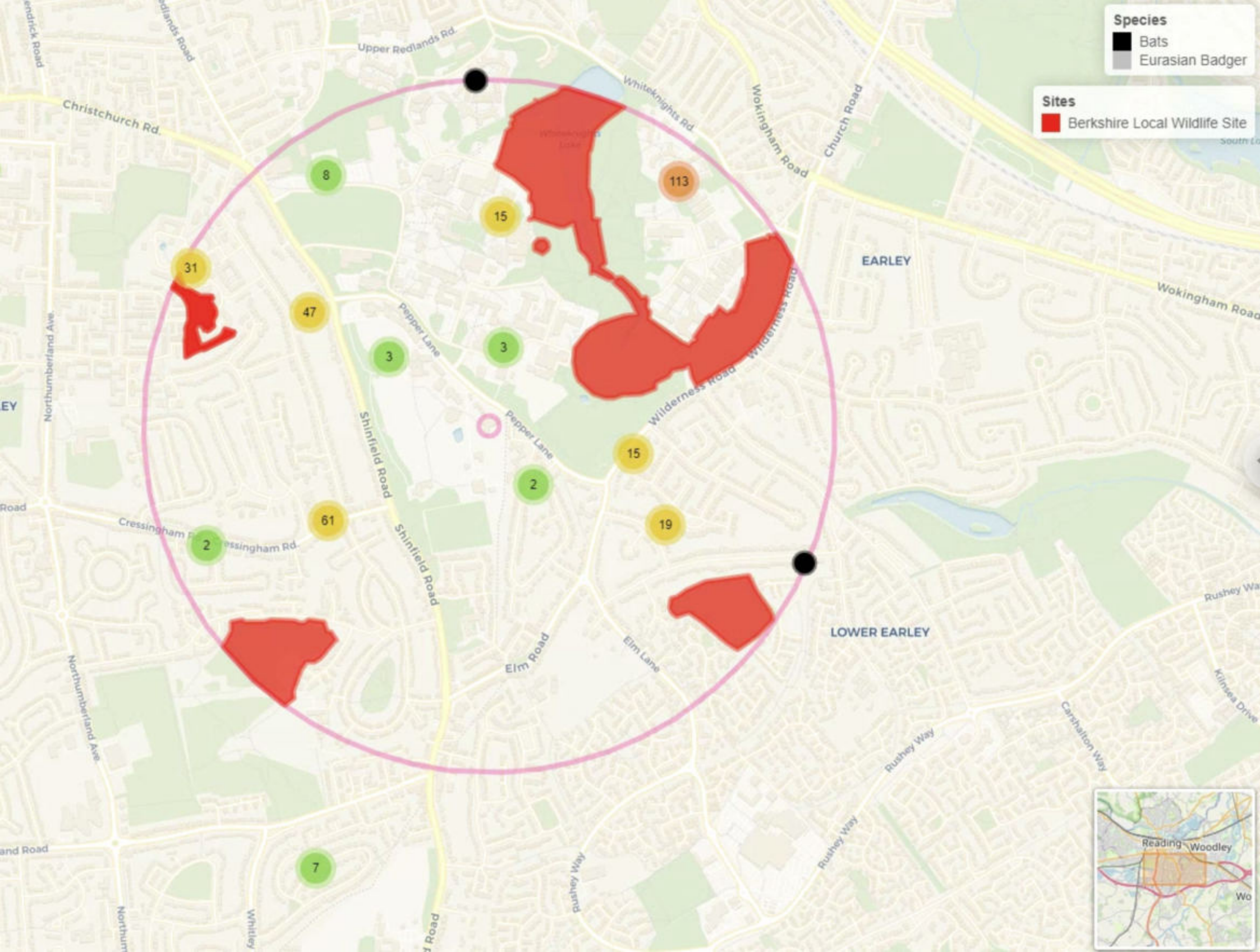
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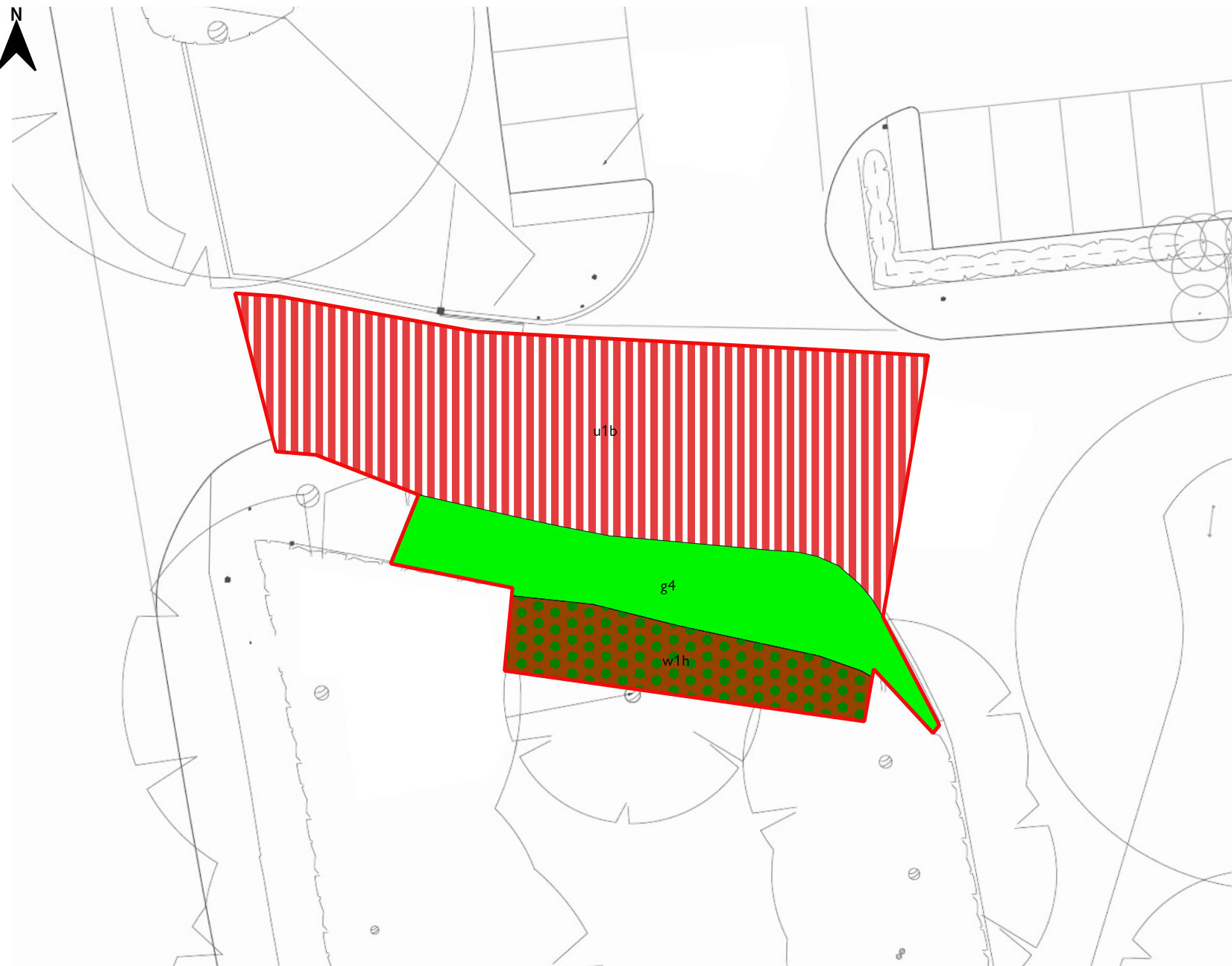
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Revision: B

APPENDIX III TVERC DESK STUDY RESULTS



APPENDIX IV UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION PLAN



Key

Site Boundary

UKHabitat Classification

w - woodland

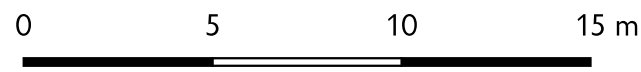
w1h - other woodland mixed

g - grassland

g4 - modified grassland

u - urban

u1b - developed land. sealed surface



Leighton Park School		UK Habitat Classification Plan	
Proposed Entrance Lodge		(Baseline)	
E25129801/DR01 Rev B	DJ	MW	25 March 2026

PRELIMINARY

PLANNING

DESIGN

TENDER

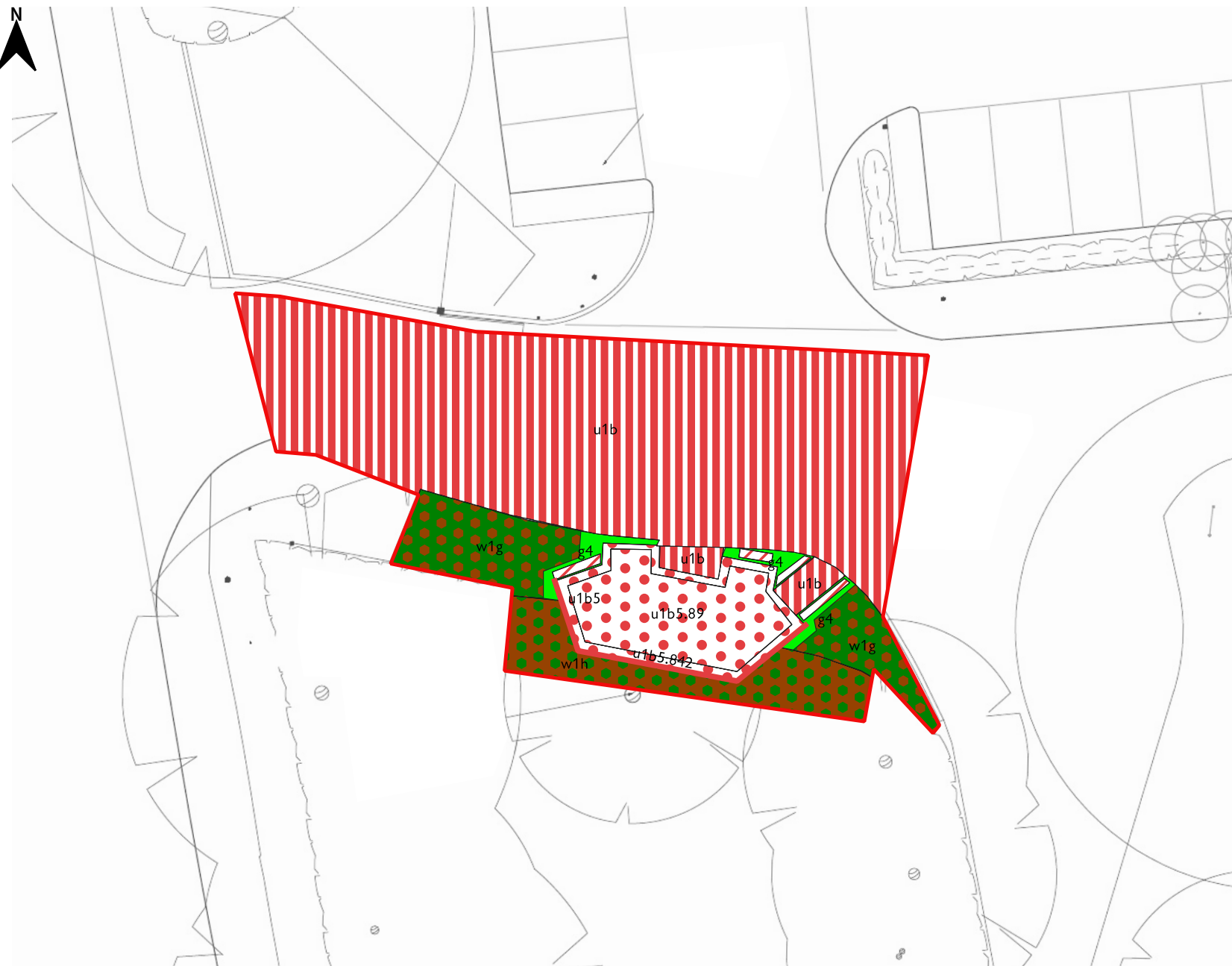
CONSTRUCTION

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Key

Site Boundary

Extent of Works/Survey Area

UKHabitat Classification

w - woodland

w1g - other woodland-broadleaved

w1h - other woodland mixed

g - grassland

g4 - modified grassland

u - urban

u1.845 - urban, ground level planters

u1b - developed land, sealed surface

u1b5 - buildings

u1b5.89 - buildings, other green roof

Linear features

u1b5.842 - building, ground-based green wall



Leighton Park School

Proposed Entrance Lodge

UK Habitat Classification Plan

(Post-Development)

E25129801/DR02 Rev B

DJ

MW

25 March 2026

PRELIMINARY

PLANNING

DESIGN

TENDER

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APPENDIX IV HABITAT CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS

g4 – modified grassland

Condition Assessment Criteria		New amenity grassland seeding
		Condition Achieved (Yes/No)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (this may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	No
B	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 vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	No
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes
D	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.	No
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	No
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA4).	Yes

Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	✓

w1h - woodland

Condition Assessment Criteria						
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator	Notes (such as justification)
A	Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes ¹ present.	Two age-classes ¹ present.	One age-class ¹ present.	2	
B	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland ² .	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or less of whole woodland ² .	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland ² .	3	
C	Invasive plant species	No invasive species ³ present in woodland.	Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, other invasive species ³ <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ³ >10% cover.	1	Cherry Laurel abundant
D	Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel.	Three to four native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel.	Two or less native tree or shrub species ⁴ across woodland parcel.	2	
E	Cover of native tree and shrub species	>80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native ⁵ .	50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understory shrubs are native ⁵ .	<50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native ⁵ .	2	
F	Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted ⁷ .	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ .	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category ⁷ .	1	
G	Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland ⁸ ; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland ⁸ .	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland ⁸ .	2	
H	Tree health	Tree mortality less than 10%, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback ⁹ .	11% to 25% mortality and/or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present ⁹ .	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present ⁹ .	3	

Condition Assessment Criteria						
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator	Notes (such as justification)
I	Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.	1	
J	Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots or a complex woodland ¹¹ .	Two storeys across all survey plots ¹¹ .	One or less storey across all survey plots ¹¹ .	2	
K	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees ¹² per hectare.	One veteran tree ¹² per hectare.	No veteran trees ¹² present in woodland.	1	No veteran trees
L	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	1	No fallen or standing deadwood
M	Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident ¹⁴ .	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area and or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ .	More than 1 hectare of nutrient enrichment and or more than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ .	2	
Total score (out of 39)					23	

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Result Achieved
Total score >32 (33 to 39)	Good (3)	Poor
Total score 26 to 32	Moderate (2)	
Total score <26 (13 to 25)	Poor (1)	