

**76a Queens Road  
Caversham  
Reading  
RG4 8DW**

**Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment**

**February 2026**

**FINAL**

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**Produced by**  
*Ecology and Land  
Management*  
**For and on behalf of**  
**Rammurti Design Ltd.**



## Limitations and Constraints

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Site Name: 76a Queens Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8DW; The site Fig. 1

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OS Grid Reference: SU72087446

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County: Berkshire

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Planning Authority: Reading Borough Council

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Natural Character Area: Chilterns

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Client: Rammurti Design Ltd.

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Proposed Disturbance: Development

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Report Request: Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline Assessment

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Ecologist: Henriette Westergaard, MSc, BSc (Hons), MCIEEM, CMLI, CEnv

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For and on behalf of Ecology & Land Management

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Assessment Period: February 2026

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Limitations: Protected species surveys are not part of this assessment.

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Information within this report is based on information from the preliminary ecological appraisal and measurements provided by the client as indicated on site plan.

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The landscape plan illustrates proposals.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has been produced in response to the proposed development at 76a Queens Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8DW. Ecology & Land Management were commissioned by Rammurit Design Ltd to carry out a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment. See Figure 1 for site location.

Figure 1 – Site Location



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## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### Good Practice Principles

- 2.1 Biodiversity net gain has been defined as ‘development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, and an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation’ (Baker, 2016).

*Good practice principles for development include:*

- 2.2 Apply the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' (in line with CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)) (CIEEM, 2018) and be 'additional' by achieving outcomes that exceed existing obligations.
- Avoid losing biodiversity which cannot be off-set elsewhere (e.g. irreplaceable habitats).
  - Address risk (e.g. difficulty of achieving habitat creation / enhancement for net gain).
  - Make a 'measurable' net gain contribution (e.g. calculated using an appropriate metric) and ensure that calculations are consistent and transparent (i.e. limitations and assumptions are clearly identified).
  - Ensure that net gain design achieves the best outcome for biodiversity (this may require both quantitative and qualitative assessment) and create a net gain legacy for long-term benefits.

#### **Desk Study and Habitat Baseline Assessment**

- 2.3 A baseline habitat assessment was undertaken by Ecology & Land Management on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025. It provides a baseline assessment of existing habitats. The baseline is based on a site visit undertaken by a qualified ecologist.
- 2.4 The BNG assessment measures whether the proposed development will make a contribution to or have an impact on the wider ecosystem service of the site. The BNG assessment is based on data gathered from the baseline habitat assessment and landscape proposals provided by the client. A habitat plan shows the existing site (Appendix I). The baseline assessment has created a biodiversity unit baseline assessing how distinctiveness of habitats retained or lost are replaced or restored by equally distinctive new habitats.

#### **Condition Assessment**

- 2.5 Habitat condition was assigned following guidance from the 'Technical Supplement' document (Natural England, 2021), which accompanies the Biodiversity Metric (Defra 07.25/1.0.4) Assessment criteria as well as the UK Habitat Classification User Manual v.2.0 (July, 2023).

### **Calculation of Biodiversity Units**

- 2.6 Calculation of biodiversity units has been undertaken using the Defra 07.25/1.0.4 Biodiversity Metric Calculator to calculate the biodiversity unit values. Landscape proposals have allowed calculations for the site both before and after development. This has allowed calculation of the change in biodiversity units and the overall percentage of gain/loss achieved and thereby determining the overall habitat biodiversity net loss or gain of the site. Metric calculations have been undertaken by Principal Ecologist, Henriette Westergaard, MSc, MCIEEM, CMLI, CEnv. Pre-development baseline habitat areas were calculated using measurements taken from measuring the baseline habitats as illustrated on the Habitat Plan (ELM, February 2025). Post-development habitats are based on information provided by the client. A landscape proposals plan is shown in Appendix IV. Habitat condition for created habitats have been assigned taking a precautionary approach and with consideration of biotic and operational phase conditions (i.e. those which may limit the extent to which 'good' condition is likely to be reached).

### **Strategic Significance**

- 2.7 The criteria within the Biodiversity Metric (Defra 07.25/1.0.4) was assessed by determining if habitat areas within the site occur within any strategic locations for biodiversity, form part of a designated site for nature conservation or are identified within local plans such as Ecological Networks (MAGIC).

### **Assumptions & Limitations**

- 2.8 The baseline habitat areas have been calculated by cross referencing the Habitat Plan (Appendix I) with aerial imagery and information provided by the client. Post-development landscaping proposals have been provided by the client.

## **3.0 BASELINE HABITAT ASSESSMENT**

- 3.1 The existing habitats are shown on the Habitat Plan. The biodiversity units for each habitat have been calculated and summaries are shown in tables below. The site area is provided as 0.0230ha (230m<sup>2</sup>) in extent (this has been confirmed by client). This is based on the redline drawing shown on the Site Location Plan (SW-002). The site is level at c. 36m AOD and is described as Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater (Cranfield University).

- 3.2 The site is located within an established residential area of Caversham characterised by mature garden habitats and tree cover. Significant areas of publicly accessible open space occur within close proximity, including riverside parkland associated with the River Thames. The River Thames corridor forms a key strategic ecological feature within the local landscape, providing habitat connectivity and foraging opportunities for protected and notable species. Although the site itself comprises previously developed land, it is situated within a wider landscape of moderate ecological connectivity
- 3.3 The site is not designated for its Importance for Nature Conservation. The nearest designated sites are Clayfield Copse LNR c. 2.4km north, Ali's Pond LNR c. 3.6km east, Highwood LNR 3.3km southeast, Maiden Erieh Park LNR c. 4.3km southeast, Pearmans Copse LNR c. 5.3km south, Lousehill Copse LNR c. 3.8km southwest and Round Copse LNR c. 4km west. (See Appendix II). Nearby priority habitats include Wood pasture and parkland, Ancient & Semi-natural Woodland, Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land and No Main Habitat but Other Habitat Exists (Appendix III).
- 3.4 Habitats within the site boundary include derelict buildings, vacant and derelict land and one tree.

#### **4.0 BIODIVERSITY IMPACT CALCULATIONS**

##### **Baseline Habitats and Hedge features**

- 4.1 The baseline habitat assessment is summarised as follows:

##### *Individual trees (w32)*

- 4.2 One 3 stemmed Acer sp. is located north of the main building. Each stem is estimated at c. 170mm dbh. This is a medium distinctiveness habitat and the condition of trees is assessed as 'poor' due to passing 1 out of 6 criteria.

##### *Vacant/derelict land (u82)*

- 4.3 The majority of the site comprises derelict land with broken walls, flooring and ruderal vegetation. The site comprises a previous garage, which has been abandoned and has partly degraded. There is limited vegetation with minimal opportunities for wildlife. This is a low distinctiveness habitat and the condition is assessed as 'poor' due to failing conditions A and B.

*Developed Sealed Surfaces (u1b5)*

- 4.4 Sealed surfaces within the site include concrete slab paving stones and 1 building still standing with broken windows and roof. This is a very low distinctiveness habitat and the condition is set at not applicable.

*Table 1 - UKHab Definitions of existing habitats and linear features*

| Description                      | UKHab |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Individual Trees                 | w32   |
| Urban – vacant/derelict land     | u82   |
| Urban – Developed Sealed Surface | u1b5  |

- 4.5 A summary of existing biodiversity units is presented in tables 2, 3 and 4 below.

*Table 2 – Summary of Baseline Habitat Biodiversity Units*

| All habitats within boundary     | Area (ha) Existing | Condition | Area (ha) Retained | Biodiversity Units Current | Biodiversity Units Lost |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Individual Trees                 | 0.00392            | Poor      | 0                  | 0.02                       | 0.02                    |
| Urban – vacant/derelict land     | 0.00800            | Poor      | 0                  | 0.02                       | 0.02                    |
| Urban – Developed Sealed Surface | 0.01500            | N/A       | 0                  | 0                          | 0                       |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>0.02300*</b>    |           |                    | <b>0**</b>                 | <b>0.03**</b>           |

\*excluding individual trees.\*\*metric value.

- 4.6 No hedgerows were identified at the site.

*Table 3 – Summary of Baseline Hedge Features Biodiversity Units*

| Linear Feature | Length (km) Existing | Length (km) Lost | Biodiversity Units Current | Biodiversity Units Lost |
|----------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| N/A            | -                    | -                | -                          | -                       |
| <b>Total</b>   | -                    | -                | -                          | -                       |

- 4.7 No watercourses were identified within the site or within 10m of the site.

*Table 4– Summary of Baseline Watercourse Features Biodiversity Units*

| Watercourse Feature | Length (km) Existing | Length (km) Lost | Biodiversity Units Current | Biodiversity Units Lost |
|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| -                   | -                    | -                | -                          | -                       |
| <b>Total</b>        | -                    | -                | -                          | -                       |

### Compensation - Habitats

- 4.8 The proposed soft includes creation of soft landscaping, which is described below. The proposed design has been created to provide soft landscaping to reduce carbon footprint with a list of plants appropriate for potential climate change impacts. The proposed Soft Areas plan (QR-76a-100) provide details of the proposed landscape.

#### *Urban – vegetated garden (u828)*

- 4.9 Private gardens are proposed for each property to include grass, shrubs and trees. Where possible, plants suitable for pollinators would be used. This is a low distinctiveness habitat and the target condition is not applicable.

#### *Urban – Developed sealed surfaces (u1b5)*

- 4.10 Two residential properties and hard surfaces are proposed. This is very low distinctiveness habitat and the target condition is not applicable.

*Table 5 – Summary of On-site Habitat Compensation Biodiversity Units*

| Compensation Habitat           | Area/ha | Distinctiveness Score | Target Condition Score | Biodiversity Units achieved |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Urban – vegetated garden       | 0.009   | Low                   | N/A                    | 0.02                        |
| Urban Developed Sealed Surface | 0.014   | Very Low              | N/A                    | 0                           |
| <b>Total</b>                   | 0.023   |                       | <b>Total</b>           | <b>0.02**</b>               |

**\*\*metric value.**

### Compensation – Hedge Features

- 4.11 There are no hedge proposals.

*Table 6 – Summary of Compensation Linear Biodiversity Units*

| Compensation Linear | Km | Distinctiveness Score | Target Condition Score | Biodiversity Units |
|---------------------|----|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| N/A                 | -  | -                     | -                      | -                  |
| <b>Total</b>        | -  |                       | <b>Total</b>           | -                  |

### Compensation – Watercourses

- 4.12 There are no proposals for watercourses.

Table 7 – Summary of Compensation Watercourse Biodiversity Units

| Compensation Linear | Km | Distinctiveness Score | Target Condition Score | Biodiversity Units |
|---------------------|----|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| N/A                 | -  | -                     | -                      | -                  |
| <b>Total</b>        | -  |                       | <b>Total</b>           | -                  |

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Biodiversity off setting has informed the habitat retention, creation and enhancement for the proposed site.
- 5.2 The development is valued at 0.03 for on-site habitat baseline units, 0 on-site baseline hedge units and 0 on-site baseline watercourse units.
- 5.3 The creation of vegetated gardens will partially mitigate the loss of habitat. In summary, the resulting biodiversity net change is -0.01 (-45.17%) for habitat and 0 for (0%) for hedges and watercourse biodiversity units. The habitat biodiversity deficit is 0.02. There are no hedge and watercourse biodiversity unit deficits. This results in a credit requirement for habitats is 0.03 (see Credit summary in Defra metric).
- 5.4 As proposals currently stand the trading rules have not been satisfied. Overall, the current proposals do not meet the national planning policy (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2021) and the Environment Act 2021.
- 5.5 If all the landscape proposals are followed as prescribed and the landscape is managed favourably for the required length of time the current proposals will make a net loss in terms of habitat biodiversity units. Headline results from the biodiversity calculator have been included in Table 8.
- 5.6 A biodiversity unit deficit represents the shortfall between the post-development biodiversity value and the required 10% net gain. Where a deficit occurs, compensation biodiversity units can be secured through on-site enhancements, off-site habitat delivery, or the purchase of off-site biodiversity units or statutory credits, as outlined below:
- 1 Securing off-site biodiversity units from a habitat bank or landowner delivering approved BNG habitats elsewhere. The site must be registered on Natural England's Biodiversity Gain Site Register. This enables development to proceed without major on-site changes. The biodiversity units must be sourced, and prices vary by habitat type and location.

- 2 Purchase statutory biodiversity credits from Natural England. Only available if no local off-site units can be sourced. Requires evidence that all other options have been exhausted. This is a legally valid fallback but usually the most expensive option; not favoured by planning authorities.

Table 8 – Headline Baseline Results

76a Queens Road

Return to results menu

Headline Results

Scroll down for final results

On-site baseline

Area habitat units0.03

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

On-site post-intervention

(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units0.02

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

On-site net change

(units & percentage)

Area habitat units-0.01

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

-45.17%

0.00%

0.00%

On-site net gain is less than target set

Off-site baseline

Area habitat units0.00

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

Off-site post-intervention

(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units0.00

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

Off-site net change

(units & percentage)

Area habitat units0.00

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

0.00%

0.00%

0.00%

Combined net unit change

(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units-0.01

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions

Area habitat units0.00

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

FINAL RESULTS

Total net unit change

(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units-0.01

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

Total net % change

(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units-45.17%

Hedgerow units0.00%

Watercourse units0.00%

Total net gain achieved is less than target set

Trading rules satisfied?

No - Check Trading Summaries

Unit Type

Target

Baseline Units

Units Required

Unit Deficit

Area habitat units

10.00%

0.03

0.03

0.02

Hedgerow units

10.00%

0.00

0.00

0.00

Watercourse units

10.00%

0.00

0.00

0.00

No additional hedgerow units required to meet target

✓

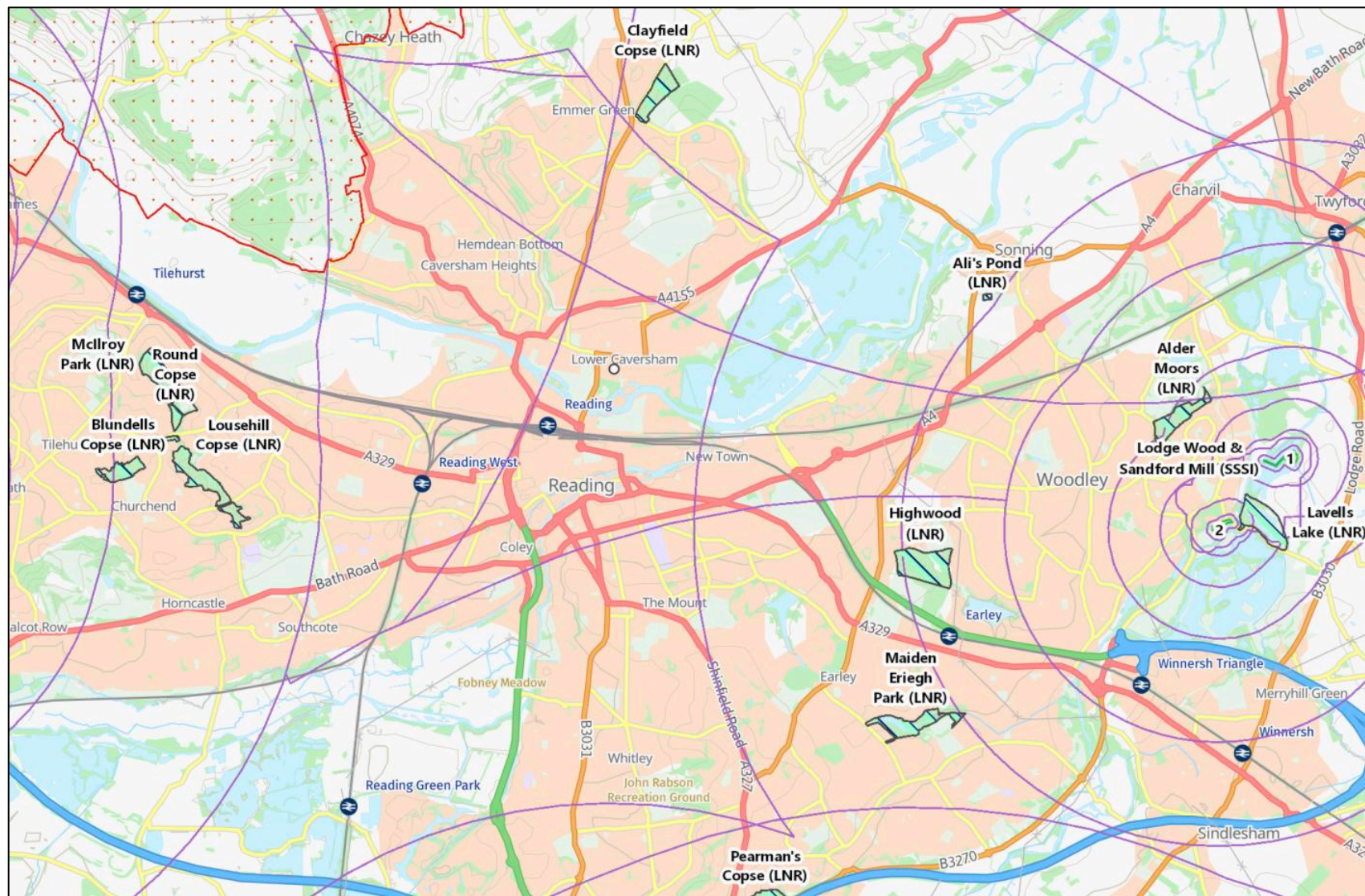
No additional watercourse units required to meet target

✓

APPENDIX I – ON-SITE BASELINE HABITAT PLAN

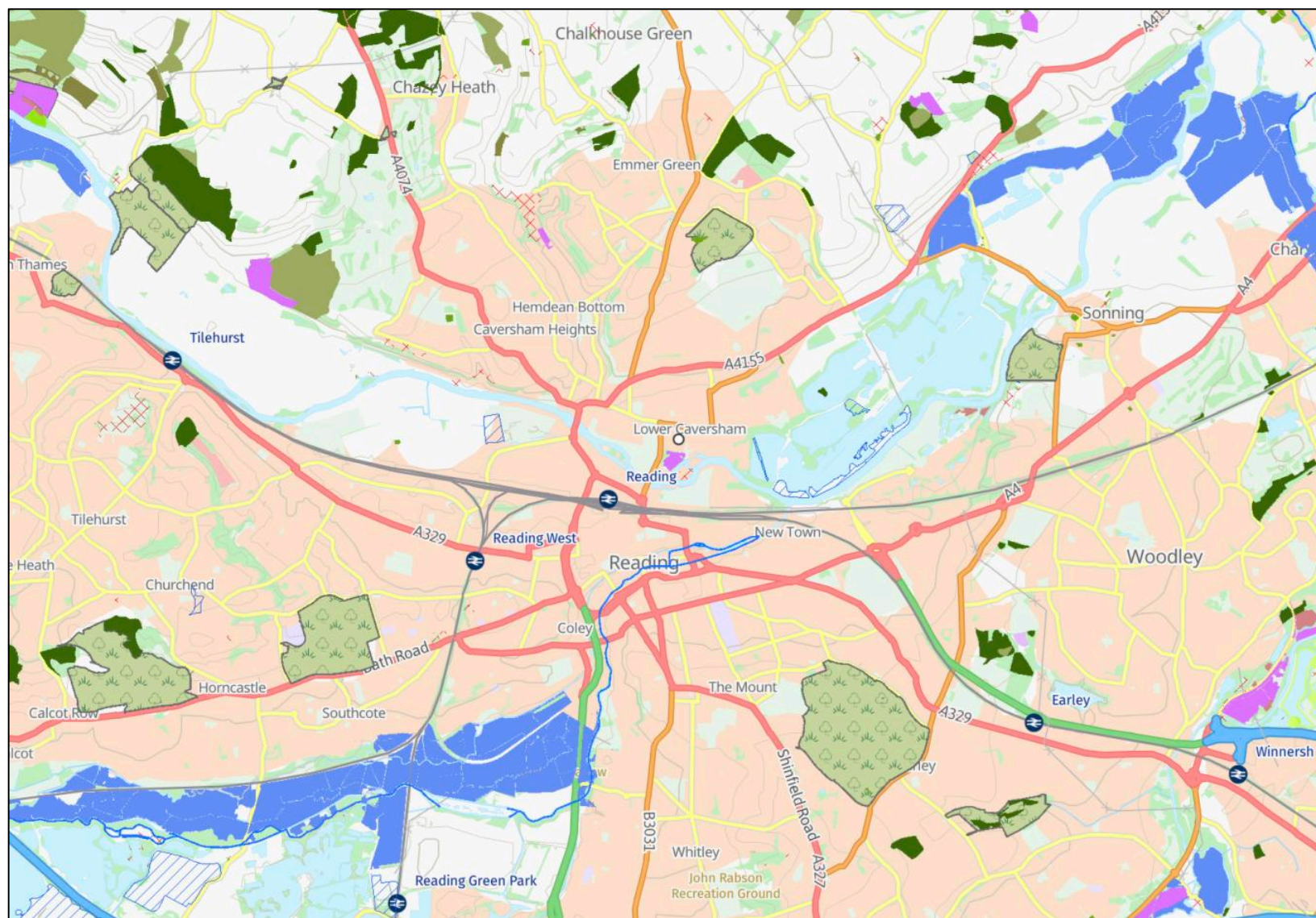


**APPENDIX II – STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS**

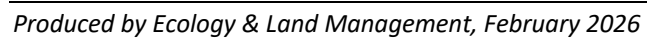


Source: Magic.gov.uk online February 2026

**APPENDIX III –PRIORITY HABITATS**



Source: Magic.gov.uk online February 2026



## APPENDIX V – BIODIVERSITY METRIC CONDITION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### Individual trees w32

| Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                  |                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| On-site or off-site, site name and location                                                                 | 76a Queens Park                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Survey date and Surveyor name                    | 3 February 2026, H. Westergaard                                                   |
| Limitations (if applicable)                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey) |                                                                                   |
| Grid reference                                                                                              | SU72087446                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Habitat parcel reference                         | w32                                                                               |
| Condition Assessment Criteria                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Criterion passed (Yes or No)                     | Notes (such as justification)                                                     |
| A                                                                                                           | The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).                                                                                                                                                                                                     | n                                                | Acer sp.                                                                          |
| B                                                                                                           | The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).                                                                                         | y                                                | Individual tree                                                                   |
| C                                                                                                           | The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) <sup>1</sup> .                                                                                                                                                                                                        | n                                                | Semi-mature                                                                       |
| D                                                                                                           | There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height. | n                                                | The tree is growing very close to building and root system is likely compromised. |
| E                                                                                                           | Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.                                                                                                                                                     | n                                                | None observed                                                                     |
| F                                                                                                           | More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.                                                                                                                                                                                                                | n                                                | Mainly hard standing                                                              |
| Number of criteria passed                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1                                                |                                                                                   |
| Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)                                                             | Condition Assessment Score                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Score Achieved x/✓                               |                                                                                   |
| Passes 5 or 6 criteria                                                                                      | Good (3)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                  |                                                                                   |
| Passes 3 or 4 criteria                                                                                      | Moderate (2)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                  |                                                                                   |
| Passes 2 or fewer criteria                                                                                  | Poor (1)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Poor                                             |                                                                                   |
| Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                  |                                                                                   |

## Urban – Vacant/derelict Land

| Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Type                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  |                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide for green roofs and UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) for other habitats: |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  | <a href="#">UKHab – UK Habitat Classification</a> |
| On-site or off-site, site name and location                                                                                | 76a Queens Road                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Survey date and Surveyor name                    | 3 February 2026. H. Westergaard                   |
| Limitations (if applicable)                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey) |                                                   |
| Grid reference                                                                                                             | SU72087446                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Habitat parcel reference                         | u82                                               |
| Condition Assessment Criteria                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Criterion passed (Yes or No)                     | Notes (such as justification)                     |
| Core Criteria - must be assessed for <b>all urban habitat types</b> :                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  |                                                   |
| A                                                                                                                          | Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.                                                                                                                                                                           | n                                                | Limited vegetation                                |
| B                                                                                                                          | The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.                                                                                                                                                                                                              | n                                                | Limited vegetation                                |
| C                                                                                                                          | Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA <sup>1</sup> ) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) <sup>2</sup> cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area <sup>3</sup> .<br><br><b>Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than &lt;5% cover).</b> | y                                                | None observed                                     |
| Additional Criterion - must be assessed for <b>Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land</b> only:                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  |                                                   |
| D                                                                                                                          | The parcel shows spatial variation and forms a mosaic of bare substrate PLUS:<br><br>- At least four early successional communities (a) to (i);<br><br>Communities: (a) annuals; (b) mosses/liverworts; (c) lichens; (d) ruderals; (e) inundation species; (f) open grassland; (g) flower-rich grassland; (h) heathland, (i) pools.                                                                                |                                                  |                                                   |
| Additional Criteria - must be assessed for <b>Bioswale and SuDS</b> habitat types only:                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  |                                                   |
| E1                                                                                                                         | Plant species are mostly native. If non-native species are present, they should not be detrimental to the habitat or native wildlife <sup>4</sup> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                  |                                                   |
| E2                                                                                                                         | The vegetation is comprised of plant species suited to wetland or riparian situations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                  |                                                   |
| Additional Criterion - must be assessed for <b>Intensive green roofs</b> only:                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  |                                                   |
| F                                                                                                                          | The roof has a minimum of 50% native and non-native wildflowers.<br>70% of the roof area is soil and vegetation (including water features).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                  |                                                   |
| Additional Criterion - must be assessed for <b>Biodiverse green roofs</b> only:                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  |                                                   |
| G                                                                                                                          | The roof has a varied depth of 80 – 150 mm; at least 50% is at 150 mm and is planted and seeded with wildflowers and sedums or is pre-prepared with sedums and wildflowers.<br><br><b>Note – to achieve Good condition some additional habitat, such as sand piles, stones, logs etc. are present.</b>                                                                                                             |                                                  |                                                   |
| Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  | No                                                |
| Number of criteria passed                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                  | 1                                                 |

**APPENDIX VI – PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE**



Vacant/derelict land

Multi-stemmed tree



Sealed surface

Multi-stemmed tree





Vacant/derelict land

### Disclaimer

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