A CAF GROUP COMPANY

ENVIRONMENT

Premier Group
Former Wombwell School Site
Wombwell
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

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Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

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Notice

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the Site on land at the Former Wombwell School Site, Wombwell. The Site is proposed for a residential development of six no. dwellings. The current habitat types within the Site include modified grassland, bare ground and other woodland; broadleaved. All of these habitats will be lost to facilitate the development proposals.

No habitats which fall under the 'hedgerow' or 'watercourse' category are present within the Site.

The Site habitat baseline provides a total of 0.97 habitat units with a total area of 0.17 ha. The results of the biodiversity net gain assessment for the habitat areas demonstrated that the post-development habitats proposed for the Site would result in a net change of -0.84 habitat units, resulting in an overall net change of -86.73%. Furthermore, considering the 10 % net gain required for the Site, the total habitat unit deficit is **-0.94 habitat units**.

The results of the metric show that the trading rules are not satisfied. The proposed development has a -0.13 loss in other woodland; broadleaved, which is of medium distinctiveness habitat types. As part of the habitat units required, a total of 0.13 medium distinctiveness woodland and forest habitat units will need to be obtained in order to compensate the loss of woodland at the at the Site.

Given the scope of the proposed project and scale of the Site, there is limited opportunities to improve the habitat unit score on the Site or provide a 10% net gain for the Site. It would take a major scheme design to provide the required habitat units within the Site, which would inevitably significantly reduce the number of residential units within the Site.

It is therefore recommended an area is sought for off-Site compensation in order to provide the mandatory 10% net gain for the development proposals. The area should be within as close proximity to the Site as possible, within the same Local Planning Authority boundary. If this is not possible then biodiversity credits could be purchased for the scheme from a local or national habitat bank. This would require prior agreement with the LPA.

Once either the off-Site compensation area has been found or an agreement with the LPA has been made, then a Net Gain Plan should be provided to outline how the development will achieve the 10% net gain in line with current statutory requirements.

If the additional habitat unit provision ascertained through off-Site compensation, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) for at least at 30-years post development will be required for the off-Site compensation habitat management and how to achieve their target conditions. The HMMP would follow best practice guidelines provided by and the statutory advice provided by DEFRA. The HMMP would be provided as part of the legal agreement for BNG during the planning process.

If this is not a viable option and the required units are to be purchased for the scheme from a local or national habitat bank, based on the proposed development i.e. not manageable open spaces, a HMMP and no further management would be required for the Site i.e. as this will be purchased.

CONTENTS

FIGURES

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: UK HAB Habitat Plan
Appendix 2: Proposed BNG Layout
Appendix 3: Site Layout
Appendix 4: Satellite Imagery of the Site 2021 to 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

Instruction

1.1 This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment has been undertaken on behalf of the Premier Group in respect of the Site at the Former Wombwell School Site, Wombwell. It has been produced to provide the results and an overview of the biodiversity net gain assessment undertaken at the Site using the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool.

Site Description

1.2 The Site is located at the former Wombwell School at Lundhill Road, Wombwell, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, England, S73 0RB. The Site itself currently comprises bare ground, modified grassland and other woodland; broadleaved. The Site is approximately 0.17 hectares (ha) in extent and is centred on grid reference SE 40284 02327. The land is generally flat and situated approximately between 60 and 64 metres above ordnance datum (m AOD).

1.3 The construction of 235 no. dwellings with roads, parking, landscaping and POS is currently undergoing on all sides of the Site (Planning Application 2019/0089). Areas of the Site have been impacted by the adjacent development, with areas of bare ground present within the Site.

1.4 The location of the Site is shown below in Error! Reference source not found..

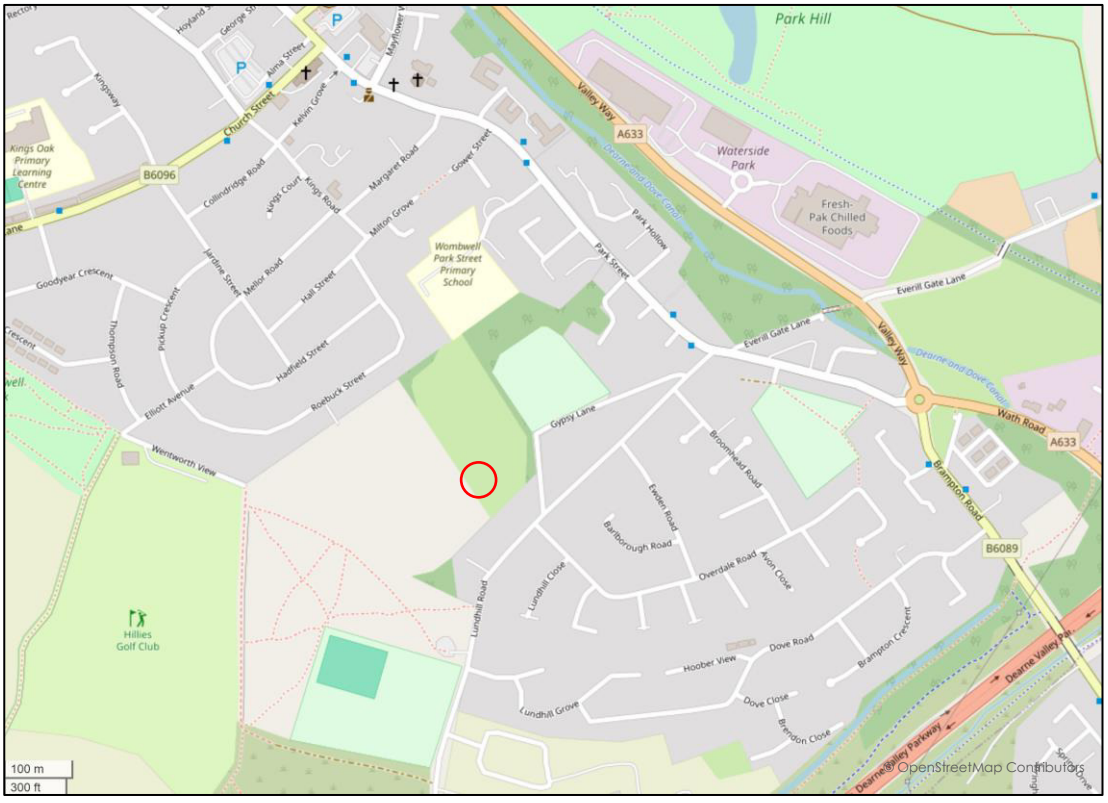

Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan

The Project

1.5 Current proposals are for a full planning application for residential development of the Site including the development of six no. dwellings.

Background

1.6 The construction of 235 no. dwellings with roads, parking, landscaping and POS is currently undergoing on all sides of the Site (Planning Application 2019/0089). Areas of the Site have been impacted by the adjacent development, with areas of bare ground present within the Site. Based on Google Imagery, some areas of the Site was also bare ground in 2023 (presumably with grass recolonising in areas over the interim period).

1.7 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken as part of the pre-mentioned Planning application in 2018 (2019/0089), with the Phase 1 Habitat survey including the 'Site'. Given the impacts from the adjacent development on the Site, the previous survey report has been used to aid this assessment and should be read in conjunction with the following document:

- MRB Ecology and Environment (2019). Former Wombwell High School. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Objectives

1.8 The primary purpose of the BNG report is to provide an overview as to the existing habitats present at the Site and the value assigned to these habitats using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

1.9 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric is the latest tool for measuring and assigning numerical values to the habitats present within a Site and the changes which will occur as a result of development or land management. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric provides the value of habitats as a 'baseline' score.

1.10 The three outputs of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric for terrestrial and aquatic habitats are:

- Area Habitat Biodiversity Units - Habitat area such as grassland, woodland or other areas of habitats which are measured in hectares (ha);
- Hedgerow Biodiversity Units - Linear features such as hedgerows or lines of trees which are measured in kilometres (km); and,
- Watercourse Biodiversity Units – Features containing water such as rivers, streams and ditches which are measured in kilometres (km).

Scope of Works

1.11 The biodiversity metric and assessment were informed by a desk-based study including a review of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment for the site produced by BWB Consulting (2024).

1.12 A specific habitat condition assessment survey was undertaken on the 28th June 2024 by Nick Clayton BSc (Hons) ACIEEM.

Legislation and Planning Policy

The Environment Act 2021

1.13 This legislation and the requirement for mandatory biodiversity net gain of new developments came into force on the 12th of February 2024. As such, all developments (aside from those exempt) are required to demonstrate a 10% biodiversity net gain.

National Planning Policy Framework

1.14 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) guides Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) when developing their planning policies and considering planning applications affecting protected habitats, sites and species.

1.15 Planning Policy Statement 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment of the NPPF recognises that, planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Section D of Paragraph 180 states:

"*Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;* In respect of the natural environment."

1.16 Section B of Paragraph 185 states:

"*Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity*".

1.17 Section D of Paragraph 186 also states:

"*Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate*".

1.18 Additionally, the current adopted Policy from Barnsley Local Plan (Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, 2019) provides the following guidelines with respect to open spaces and the natural environment:

Policy GI1 Green Infrastructure

"We will protect, maintain, enhance and create an integrated network of connected and multi functional Green Infrastructure assets that:

- *Provides attractive environments where people want to live, work, learn, play, visit and invest;*
- *Meets the environmental, social and economic needs of communities across the borough and the wider City Regions;*
- *Enhances the quality of life for present and future residents and visitors;*
- *Helps to meet the challenge of climate change;*
- *Enhances biodiversity and landscape character;*
- *Improves opportunities for recreation and tourism;*
- *Respects local distinctiveness and historical and cultural heritage;*
- *Maximises potential economic and social benefits; and*
- *Secures and improves linkages between green and blue spaces;*

At a strategic level Barnsley's Green Infrastructure network includes the following corridors which are shown on the Green Infrastructure Diagram:

- *River Dearne Valley Corridor. River Dove Valley Corridor.*
- *River Don Valley Corridor. Dearne Valley Green Heart Corridor.*
- *Historic Landscape Corridor.*

The network of Green Infrastructure will be secured by protecting open space, creating new open spaces as part of new development, and by using developer contributions to create and improve Green Infrastructure.

We have produced a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Barnsley which is informed by the Leeds City Region and South Yorkshire Green Infrastructure Strategies."

Policy BIO 1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

"Development will be expected to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geological features of the borough by:

- *Protecting and improving habitats, species, sites of ecological value and sites of geological value with particular regard to designated wildlife and geological sites of international, national and local significance, ancient woodland and species and habitats of principal importance identified via Section 41 of the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006 (for list of the species and habitats of principal importance) and in the Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan;*
- *Maximising biodiversity and geodiversity opportunities in and around new developments;*
- *Conserving and enhancing the form, local character and distinctiveness of the borough's natural assets such as the river corridors of the Don, the Dearne and Dove as natural floodplains and important strategic wildlife corridors;*
- *Proposals will be expected to have followed the national mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, compensate) which is used to evaluate the impacts of a development on biodiversity interest;*
- *Protecting ancient and veteran trees where identified; and*

- *Encouraging provision of biodiversity enhancements."*

"Development which may harm a biodiversity or geological feature or habitat, including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, will not be permitted unless effective mitigation and/ or compensatory measures can be ensured.

Development which adversely effects a European Site will not be permitted unless there is no alternative option and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI)."

2. METHODS

Desk Based Study

2.1 A desk-based study of the Site was undertaken to establish the habitats previously recorded within the Site. This involved a review of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal undertaken by BWB Consulting (2024) and MRB Ecology and Environment (2019).

Habitat Condition Assessment

2.2 A Site survey was undertaken on the 28th June 2024 by Nick Clayton BSc (Hons) ACIEEM. During the surveys, data was collected on the habitats' conditions using the habitat condition assessment criteria for the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The condition assessment criteria are dependent on the habitats present on-Site, with each assessment containing sets of criteria which are either passed or failed. Criteria include things such as species composition, presence of undesirable species and percentage cover.

2.3 This approach is standard practice to calculate the biodiversity value of the Site.

Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles

2.4 CIRIA, CIEEM and IEMA developed The Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles in 2016 which has then been used to produce a more in-depth document (Baker, Hoskin & Butterworth, 2019) detailing the ten main good practice principles for achieving biodiversity net gain. In order for net gain to be achieved, these principles must be met.

2.5 The ten good practice principals are summarised in in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: The Good Practice Principles

Principal	In Practice
1. Apply the mitigation hierarchy	Do everything possible to first avoid and then minimise impacts on biodiversity. Only as a last resort, and in agreement with external decision makers where possible, compensate for losses that cannot be avoided. If compensating for losses within the development footprint is not possible or does not generate the most benefits for nature conservation, then offset biodiversity losses by gains elsewhere.
2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere	Avoid impacts on irreplaceable biodiversity i.e. statutory designated sites such as SSSI's – these impacts cannot be offset to achieve net gain.
3. Be inclusive and equitable	Engage stakeholders early and involve them in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the approach to net gain. Achieve net gain in partnership with stakeholders where possible.
4. Address risk	Mitigate difficulty, uncertainty and other risk to achieving net gain. Apply well accepted ways to add contingency when calculating biodiversity losses and gain in order to account for any remaining risk, as well as to compensate for the time between the losses occurring and the gains being fully realised.

Principal	In Practice
5. Make a measurable net gain contribution	Achieve a measurable, overall gain for biodiversity and the services ecosystems provide while directly contributing towards nature conservation priorities.
6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity by using robust, credible evidence and local knowledge to make clearly justified choices when: • Delivering compensation that is ecologically equivalent in type, amount, and condition and that accounts for the location and timing of biodiversity losses. • Compensating for losses of one type of biodiversity by providing a different type that delivers greater benefits for nature conservation. • Achieving net gain locally to the development while also contributing towards nature conversation priorities at local, regional and national levels. • Enhancing existing or creating new habitat. • Enhancing ecological connectivity by creating more bigger, better and joined areas for biodiversity.
7. Be additional	Achieve nature conservation outcomes that demonstrably exceed existing obligations, i.e. do not deliver something that would occur anyway.
8. Create a net gain legacy	Ensure net gain generates long term benefits by: • Engaging stakeholders and jointly agreeing practical solutions that secure net gain in perpetuity. • Planning for adaptive management and securing dedicated funding for long term management. • Designing net gain for biodiversity to be resilient to external factors, especially climate change. • Mitigating risks for other land uses. • Avoiding displacing harmful activities from one location to another. • Supporting local level management of net gain activities.
9. Optimize sustainability	Prioritise BNG and where possible optimise the wider environmental benefits for a sustainable society and economy
10. Be transparent	Communicate all net gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders.

Biodiversity Metric

2.6 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric used to calculate the ecological baseline of the Site using the methodology as described above.

2.7 The habitat types, conditions and areas were input into the metric to form the Site's habitat baseline.

2.8 In addition to the habitat types, areas and conditions, the biodiversity metric calculation tool also requires other information on distinctiveness and strategic significance. These categories are described in more detail below.

2.9 Habitats are also assigned distinctiveness bands. These are based on an assessment of the distinguishing features of a habitat or linear feature, including consideration of species richness, rarity (at local, regional, national and international scales), and the degree to which a habitat supports species rarely found in other habitats. The distinctiveness band of each habitat is preassigned in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and are based on the UK habitat classification system.

Strategic Significance

2.10 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric takes into consideration Strategic Significance. Strategic Significance can be defined as the spatial location of a habitat in relation to preferred locations for biodiversity. This is broken down into three categories as described below:

- Within area formally identified in local strategy – the Site or habitat type is within the local planning documents or frameworks;
- Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy; and
- Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy.

2.11 The following data sources and resources were searched to gather information on the strategic significance of the Site and its habitats:

- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC);
- The Local Wildlife Site (LWS) list provided within the Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan (2023) was used to map the known LWS throughout Barnsley. The website provides the list of 53 LWS throughout Barnsley, with a six-figure grid reference provided (100m^2) for each one. All 53 grid references were mapped to provide context on their location to the Site.

Survey Comments

2.12 In line with standard guidance, the results and recommendations within this report are valid for up to two years from the date of survey (June 2026), assuming there are no significant changes to the survey Site or its immediate surroundings. Updated survey work may be required to support any future biodiversity metrics and planning applications outside of this time period.

2.13 The survey was undertaken within optimal period for habitat surveys / condition assessment (April to October). It is considered that sufficient botanical information was collected to categorise the habitats and undertake a condition assessment.

2.14 No habitats which fall under the 'hedgerow' or 'watercourse' category are present within the Site, and subsequently, an assessment of these features was not considered to be necessary within this assessment.

2.15 The minimum mappable area used is equal to or above 25 m^2, the minimum mappable length of a linear feature is equal to or above 5 m.

3. RESULTS

Desk Based Study

3.1 The Site survey was undertaken by BWB Consulting on 28th June 2024.

Habitat Condition Assessment and Habitat Descriptions

3.2 The habitats recorded on-Site are described in detail below with the habitat condition assessment results. Where appropriate, relative abundance of species are assessed with use of the DAFOR scale.

3.3 **Appendix 1** provides a plan with the locations of the habitats.

g4 – Modified Grassland & 510 – Bare Ground

3.4 Modified grassland represents the largest area of the Site and has received heavy impacts from the adjacent development, with the majority of it appearing to be temporarily lost in 2023 based on historic Google Imagery. As such, the species comprise both modified grassland and disturbed grassland species. Species comprised Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* (D), perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* (D), Timothy grass *Phleum pratense* (O), broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* (F), bramble *Rubus fruticosus* (O), cats ear *Hypochaeris radicata* (R), common couch *Elymus repens* (R), white clover *Trifolium repens* (R), spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare* (R), creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* (R), hairy tare *Vicia hirsute* (R), scentless chamomile *Tripleurospermum inodorum* (R), chickweed Stellaria media (R), weld *Reseda luteola* (R), lesser trefoil *Trifolium dubium* (R), common vetch *Vicia sativa* (R) and tall fescue *Festuca arundinacea* (R).

3.5 The Site had been subject to levels of disturbance, increasing the level of associated species within the grassland. Based on the previously completed Preliminary Ecological Appraisal undertaken in 2018 (MRB Ecology and Environment (2019), this habitat was mainly categorised as amenity grassland, with the western boundary of the Site categorised as poor semi-improved grassland. Both of these habitats were defined with use of the Phase 1 Habitat categories (JNCC, 2010) within the previous report. With use of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (Defra 2024) which provides a direct Phase 1 Habitat to Metric Habitat translation tool, these habitats would now be categorised as modified grassland. This can also be seen within the Google Earth Satellite imagery, prior to the adjacent works (pre-2023), in comparison to the aerial imagery in 2023 and 2024 (see **Appendix 4** for historic and current satellite imagery).

3.6 Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 contains the following paragraph in relation to pre-development biodiversity value:

"(a) a person carries on activities on land on or after 30 January 2020 otherwise than in accordance with—

(i)planning permission, or

(ii)any other permission of a kind specified by the Secretary of State by regulations, and

(b)as a result of the activities the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat referred to in paragraph 5(1) is lower on the relevant date than it would otherwise have been, the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is to be taken to be its biodiversity value immediately before the carrying on of the activities."

3.7 Although the section of the Site has received clearance and disturbance due to the adjacent planning permission, as the Site does not fall within the planning permission boundary, this is not considered to be a valid exemption. As such, both the existing modified grassland and bare ground is categorised as modified grassland; in line with the previous PEA undertaken across the wider site (MRB Ecology and Environment, 2019) and with use of historic satellite imagery.

3.8 As such, as the modified grassland and bare ground have received recent disturbance levels, it is not possible to undertake an accurate condition assessment of these habitats. In line with The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guidance (DEFRA, 2024b, P50), a precautionary approach must be adopted when assigning scores in degraded sites, and as such, the area of modified grassland (including the bare ground), is automatically assigned as of **Good Condition**.

w1g – Other woodland; broadleaved

3.9 A small copse of other woodland; broadleaved is located within the south-west corner of the Site. This woodland has been present within the Site prior to the first aerial imagery on Google Earth in 2002. This was previously part of a larger copse of woodland, which was removed as part of the adjacent planning permission.

3.10 This was mapped as broadleaved plantation within the previous Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report (MRB Ecology and Environment, 2019).

3.11 The woodland supports young to semi-mature trees. The species mix includes sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, cherry *Prunus avium*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*. The ground storey includes spear thistle (O), common bent *Agrostis capillaris* (R), bramble (O), Yorkshire fog (R), dandelion *Taraxacum officinale agg.* (R), red fescue *Fetuca rubra* (O), wood avens *Geum urbanum* (R), creeping soft grass *Holcus mollis* (R) and cleavers *Galium aparine* (O).

3.12 The woodland copse has been fenced off with no direct impacts from the adjacent construction works, and subsequently, it was possible to undertake an accurate condition assessment of the woodland.

3.13 The condition assessment used the Woodland Habitat Type condition sheet which included the following categories as shown in **Table 3.1** below along with the results of the condition assessment.

Table 3.1: Habitat Condition Assessment Summary (Woodland Habitat Type)

	Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator
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 less than 40% 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 *Rhododendron ponticum* or cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* not present, and other invasive species[3] <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species[3] ≥10% cover.	3
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 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback[9].	11% to 25% tree 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].	2
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
l) Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen 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 and fallen 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 and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance	2

			of small cavities[13].	
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].	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground[14].	2
Total score >32 (33 to 39) - Good Total score 26 to 32 - Moderate Total score <26 (13 to 25) - Poor				**25** **Poor**

Summary

3.14 **Table 3.2** below provides a summary of the habitats, the condition assessment and the areas of habitats which was used in the Biodiversity Metric to calculate the Site's baseline score.

Table 3.2: Habitat Condition Assessment Summary

UK Habitat Type	Condition Assessment Result	Area (hectare)
g4 – Modified grassland (includes bare ground)	Good	0.13935
w1g – Other broadleaved woodland	Poor	0.03305
	Total Habitat Area:	**0.17 (0.1724)**

Biodiversity Metric

3.15 The following sections provide an overview of the baseline Site results including the strategic significance and baseline Site scores.

Strategic Significance

3.16 There does not currently appear to be a Local Nature Recovery Strategy available for Barnsley.

3.17 The Site does not fall into any formally identified areas of biodiversity value or local strategies and no habitats within the Site provide high quality priority habitat, therefore the habitats within the Site are classed as "Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy".

Baseline Habitat Score

3.18 The baseline habitat score of the Site has been calculated using the information above for habitat types, habitat areas, habitat condition and strategic significance. **Table 3.3** below provides a summary of the Sites habitat area baseline unit score, as detailed within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool which should be read in conjunction with this document.

Table 3.3: Summary of Baseline Habitat Area Score

Ecological Habitat Area Baseline		
UK Habitat Type	**Habitat Area (Ha)**	**Habitat Units**
g4 – Modified grassland (includes bare ground)	0.13935	0.84
w1g – Other broadleaved woodland	0.03305	0.13
Total Area:	**0.17 (0.1724)**	**0.97**

3.19 **Table 3.3** shows the Site baseline provides a total of 0.97 habitat units with a total area of 0.17 ha.

Post-Development Habitat Score

3.20 The proposed BNG habitats map is illustrated in **Appendix 2** and the post-development scheme for the Site is shown in **Appendix 3**.

3.21 The habitats to be created on-Site post-development include, developed land (buildings and access (roads/paths)) and vegetated gardens.

3.22 In line with best practice guidelines (DEFRA 2024b), hedgerows, tree planting and ornamental shrub planting which form part of private gardens have not been included within the metric calculation separately. These habitats have been included within the vegetated garden habitat type as they form part of each properties ownership and therefore cannot be managed.

3.23 **Tables 3.4** below provides a summary of the Sites post-development areas as well as the post-development habitat unit score in line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool which should be read in conjunction with this document.

Table 3.4 Summary of Post-Development Habitat Areas and Habitat Units

Habitat Post-development Score			
UK Habitat Type	**Target condition**	**Habitat Created (ha)**	**Habitat Units**
Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (roads/paths)	N/A	0.05745	0.00
Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (buildings)	N/A	0.04837	0.00
Urban – Vegetated Garden	N/A	0.06658	0.13
	Total:	**0.17 (0.1724)**	**0.13**

3.24 The post-development habitat units total 0.13. The development will therefore result in an overall unit change of **-0.84** habitat units providing an overall net change of **-86.73%.**

4. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Biodiversity Metric

4.1 The habitats within the Site are relatively common and widespread with the total area of the Site measuring 0.17 ha. There are no irreplaceable habitats within the Site.

4.2 The Site is dominated by modified grassland (including the bare ground) which provided the highest habitat unit score within the Site (due to its extent and precautionary condition). There is also a small copse of other woodland; broadleaved.

4.3 The Site habitat baseline score totalled **0.97** habitat units. Given the requirement for a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain i.e. an additional 0.097 habitat units, the total habitat units required for the Site is **1.07** habitat units.

4.4 All of the habitats present on-Site will be lost to facilitate the development.

4.5 Given the scale of the Site, the proposals are for residential properties, gardens and roads only, with no provision of public open spaces or landscaping / tree planning outside of residential ownership.

4.6 All of the gardens will be created with at least amenity turf with some gardens containing shrubs and trees.

4.7 The results of the biodiversity net gain assessment for the habitat areas demonstrated that the post-development habitats proposed for the Site would result in a net change of **-0.84** habitat units resulting in an overall net change of **-86.73 %.** Furthermore, considering the 10 % net gain required for this Site type, the total habitat unit deficit is **-0.94 habitat units**.

Trading Summary

4.8 The results of the metric show that the trading rules are not satisfied. The proposed development has a -0.13 loss in other woodland; broadleaved, which is of medium distinctiveness habitat types. As part of the habitat units required, a total of 0.13 medium distinctiveness woodland and forest habitat units will need to be obtained in order to compensate the loss of woodland at the at the Site.

Achieving Biodiversity Net Gain

4.9 Given the scope of the proposed project and scale of the Site, there is limited opportunities to improve the habitat unit score on the Site or provide a 10% net gain for the Site. It would take major amendments to the scheme design to provide the required habitat units within the Site, which would inevitably significantly reduce the number of residential units within the Site.

4.10 It is therefore recommended that an area is sought for off-Site compensation in order to provide the mandatory 10% net gain for the development proposals. The area should be within as close proximity to the Site as possible, within the same Local Planning

Authority boundary. If this is not possible then biodiversity credits could be purchased for the scheme from a local or national habitat bank. This would require prior agreement with the LPA.

4.11 Once either the off-Site compensation area has been found or an agreement with the LPA has been made, then a Net Gain Plan should be provided post-validation to outline how the development will achieve the 10% net gain in line with current statutory requirements.

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

4.12 If the additional habitat unit provision is ascertained through off-Site compensation, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) for at least at 30-years post development will be required for the off-Site compensation habitat management and how to achieve the required target conditions.

4.13 The HMMP would follow best practice guidelines provided by and the statutory advice provided by DEFRA. The HMMP would be provided as part of the legal agreement for BNG during the planning process.

4.14 If this is not a viable option and the required units are to be purchased for the scheme from a local or national habitat bank, based on the proposed development (i.e. no manageable open spaces), a HMMP and no further management would be required for the Site.

5. REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: UK HAB Habitat Plan

Notes

1. Do not scale this drawing. All dimensions must be checked/ verified on site. If in doubt ask.
2. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant architects, engineers and specialists drawings and specifications.

Key Plan

Legend

- Site boundary (1,724.0m^2)
- g4 - Modified grassland (779.3m^2)
- w1g - Other broadleaved woodland (330.5m^2)
- 510 - Bare ground (614.2m^2)

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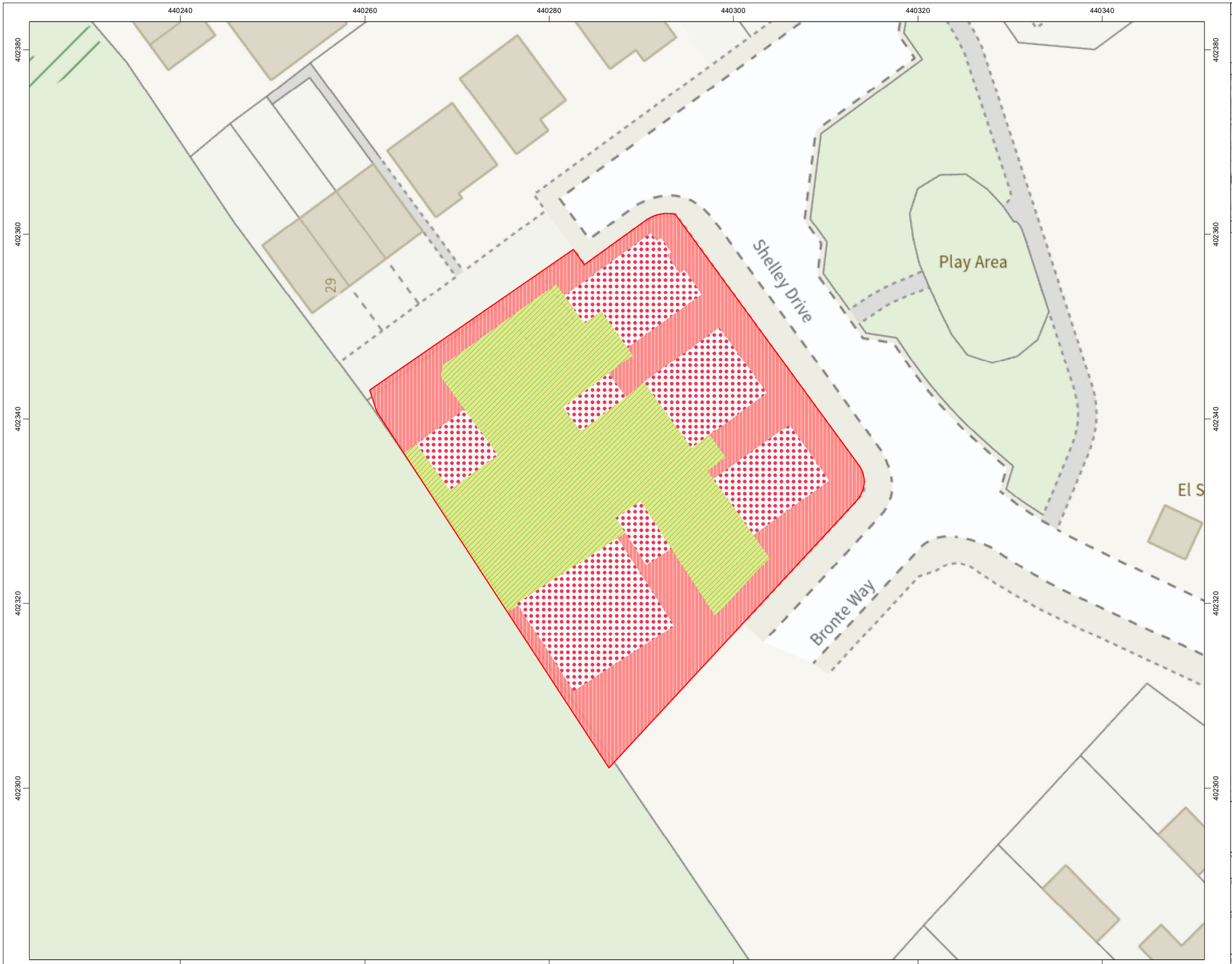
Client
PREMIER GROUP

Project Title
FORMER WOMBWELL SCHOOL SITE

Drawing Title
Baseline Habitat Condition Plan

Drawn:	Mark Parnell		Reviewed:	B. McLean	
BWB Ref:	-	Date:	02.07.24	Scale@A3:	1:375

Appendix 2: Proposed BNG Layout



Notes

1. Do not scale this drawing. All dimensions must be checked/ verified on site. If in doubt ask.
2. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant architects, engineers and specialists drawings and specifications.

Key Plan

Legend

- Site boundary (1,724.0m^2)
- u1b - Developed land; sealed surface (574.5m^2)
- u1b5 - Building (483.7m^2)
- 828 - Vegetated garden (665.8m^2)

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Drawing Title
Proposed Habitat Condition Plan

Drawn:	Mark Parnell		Reviewed:	B. McLean	
BWB Ref:	-	Date:	02.07.24	Scale@A3:	1:375

Appendix 3: Site Layout

Former Wombwell High School, Wombwell

Notes:

xx

PLANNING LAYOUT KEY:

Boundary treatments

- 1.8m Brick wall & fence panel
- 1.8m Close boarded timber fence
- 1.5m Hit & Miss fence
- 0.9m Metal railings
- 0.45m Knee rail

General

- Application boundary
- Bin storage area
- Bin collection point (bin collection day only)
- Retained tree
- Removed tree under previous application
- Indicative landscaping. (Detailed design by others)

ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE						
Reference	**Floor Area (Sqft)**	**Beds**	**Storeys**	**Total**	**Total Sqft**	**% of Mix**
Private						
Type L - M4(2)	700	1	1	1	700	16.7
Type L - M4(3)	700	2	1	1	700	16.7
Type G	1100	3	2.5	2	2200	33.3
Type E2	1408	4	2	1	1408	16.7
Type A2 - M4(2)	1552	4	2	1	1552	16.7
Grand Total				**6**	**6560**	**100.0**

N

Scaled @ 1:250

0 5m 10m 20m

REV:	DESCRIPTION:	BY:	DATE:
F	Build line of plots 4-6 brought forward to match plot 3	TS	21.03.24
E	Scheme updated to show M4(2) & (3) bungalows. A2 house type introduced.	TS	07.03.24
D	Garage introduced for plot 6. Updated offsite layout indicated. Plot 1 amended to Type C	TS	06.07.23
C	Plot 6 updated to house type C.	VR	28.06.23
B	Layout updated generally inline with pre-app comments. site reduced to 6. VP introduced south of plot 2, all drives moved away from ramp positions.	TS	17.05.23
A	Garage added to plot 4	TS	21.12.22

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SITE: Former Wombwell High School
Wombwell

TITLE: Proposed Site Layout

SCALE AT A2:	DATE:	DRAWN:	CHECKED:
1:250	26.05.22	TS	DS

PROJECT NO:	DRAWING NO:	REVISION:
2228	2228.01	F

Appendix 4: Satellite Imagery of the Site 2021 to 2024

Image 1: Satellite Imagery of the Site (2021 – pre-adjacent development) - Google Imagery

Image 2: Satellite Imagery of the Site (2022- Google Imagery

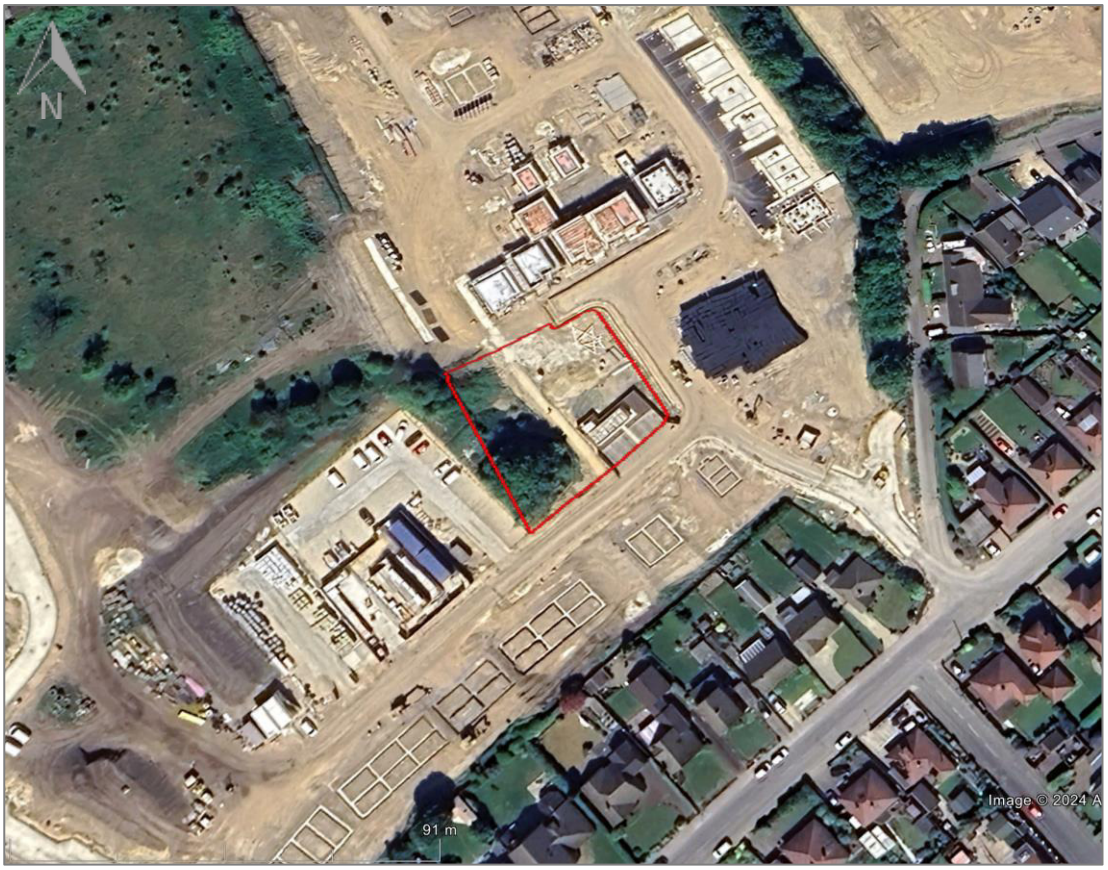

Image 3: Satellite Imagery of the Site (2023) - Google Imagery

Image 4: Satellite Imagery of the Site (2024 – ongoing adjacent development) - Google Imagery

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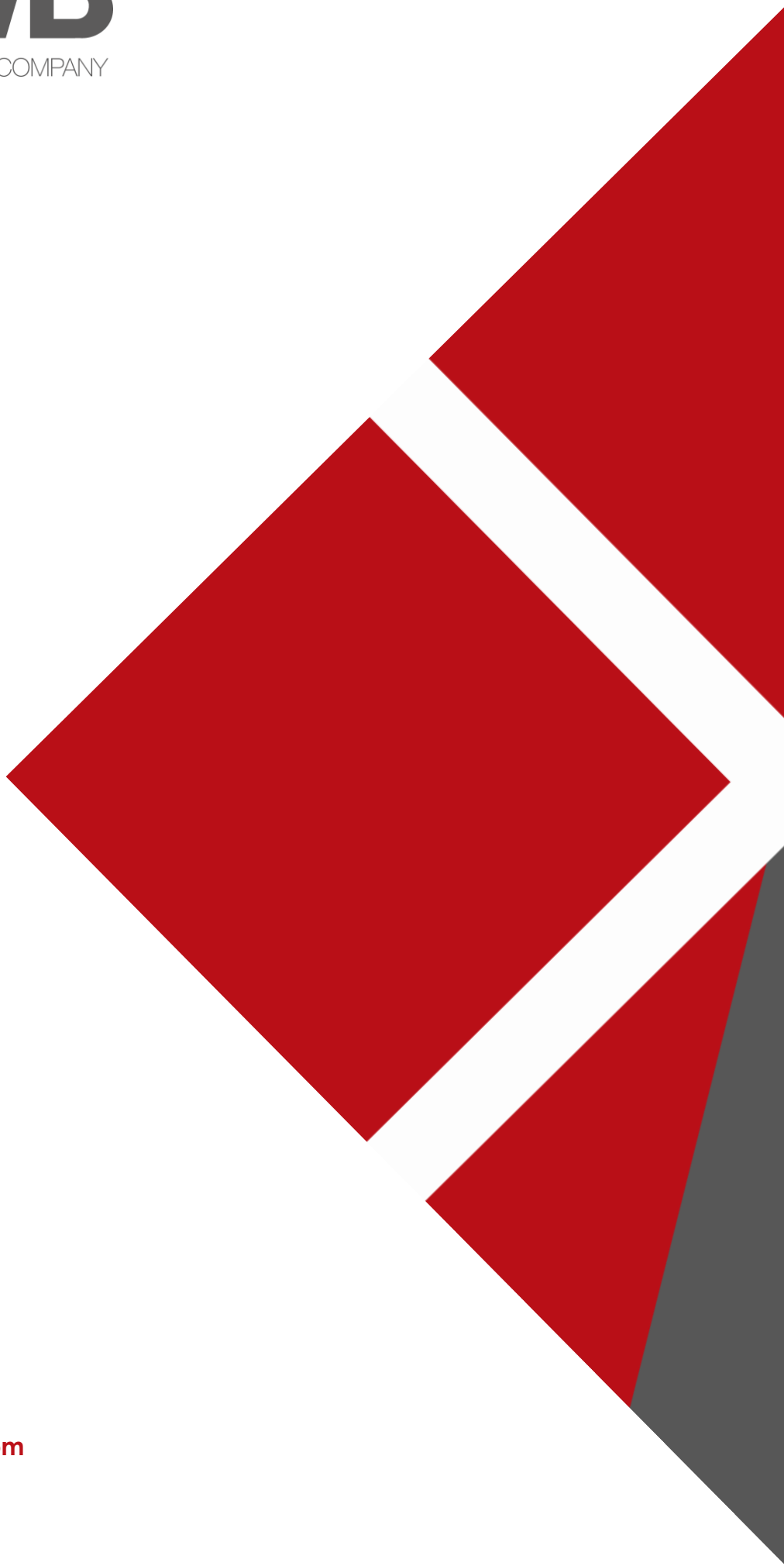

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