



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

A635 Bus Rapid Transfer Route

Biodiversity Net Gain Report





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Executive Summary

This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report has been prepared by WSP UK Ltd. on behalf of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) to support a planning application for works associated with the A635 Bus Rapid Transfer Route at Stairfoot Roundabout, Barnsley (the Proposed Scheme).

The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021) and applies the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2024) to quantify changes in biodiversity value resulting from the Proposed Scheme.

The on-site baseline assessment identified a range of habitats including grassland, woodland, individual trees, sparsely vegetated land and developed land, with no irreplaceable habitats present. The total on-site baseline area measures approximately 1.16 hectares.

The Proposed Scheme has been designed in line with the mitigation hierarchy and Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy, seeking to retain habitats where feasible and deliver on-site habitat creation where opportunities allow. On-site habitat creation includes grassland, woodland, scrub and individual trees. However, due to the scale and nature of the highways infrastructure works and associated safety and visibility constraints, habitat losses are unavoidable.

The Biodiversity Metric identifies a limited on-site net gain of area habitat units; however, the Proposed Scheme does not achieve the required 20% BNG on-site. In particular, the Metric demonstrates that trading rules are not met on-site for medium distinctiveness habitats, specifically woodland and individual trees. As such, off-site biodiversity gains are required to address the residual shortfall and ensure compliance with statutory BNG requirements and the Proposed Scheme target of 20%.

Off-site compensation is therefore proposed and will be secured through appropriate mechanisms in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric trading rules. A final Biodiversity Gain Plan will be prepared and submitted post-determination to demonstrate how the 20% BNG target, set internally by the Client above the mandatory 10%, will be achieved and legally secured for a minimum period of 30 years.

Image 1 - Headline Metric Results for the Proposed Scheme

A635 Bus Rapid Transfer Route		Return to results menu		
#VALUE!				
Scroll down for final results ▲				
On-site baseline	Habitat units	5.50		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	4.09		
	Hedgerow units	0.38		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Habitat units	-1.41	-25.60%	
	Hedgerow units	0.38	N/A	
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	
On-site net gain is less than target net ▲ Zero baseline units - % cannot be calculated				
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Habitat units	0.00	0.00%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	
Combined net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>				
		Habitat units	-1.41	
		Hedgerow units	0.38	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions				
		Habitat units	0.00	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>		Habitat units	-1.41	
		Hedgerow units	0.38	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>		Habitat units	-25.60%	
		Hedgerow units	N/A	
		Watercourse units	0.00%	
Total net gain achieved is less than target net ▲ 0 baseline units - % cannot be calculated				
Trading rules satisfied?		No - Check Trading Summaries ▲		
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	20.00%	5.50	6.60	2.51
Hedgerow units	20.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	20.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓ No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓				
Input errors/rule breaks present in metric ▲				

1 Introduction

1.1 Document Purpose

- 1.1.1. WSP UK Ltd. (WSP) was commissioned by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) (herein referred to as the 'Client') to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for a section of the A635 Bus Rapid Transfer Route (herein referred to as the 'Proposed Scheme') under detailed design. Much of the works will be constructed under Permitted Development; however the demolition and replacement of an old railway bridge which carries the TransPennine Trail across the A633 Grange Lane does require planning permission and forms the Proposed Scheme.
- 1.1.2. The purpose of this document is to report the process and outcomes of a BNG assessment completed to inform a planning application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 1.1.3. This report contains details relating to:

The BNG Statement to be submitted for planning application validation
- 1.1.4. The Client understands that, should planning permission be granted for the Proposed Scheme, it would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) (HM Government, 2021a). The Proposed Scheme does not meet criteria for BNG exemption, as defined by the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 (HM Government, 2024b).

1.2 Project Background

- 1.2.1. The BNG assessment was undertaken with respect to alterations needed to Stairfoot Roundabout as part of the A635 Bus Corridor Scheme / Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme, as well as the associated landscaping works.
- 1.2.2. The area is located at the junction of the A633 and A635 in Stairfoot, Barnsley (Central Grid Reference SE 37292 05498) and is approximately 1.16 hectares (ha) based on its design at the time of this assessment, as defined by the Proposed Scheme's red line boundary shown in **Appendix A**. This is hereafter referred to as "the Site".
- 1.2.3. The Proposed Scheme includes improvements to the roundabout itself and access roads, including demolition of existing highway structures namely the TransPennine Trail railway bridge over the A633 Grange Lane; temporary traffic management proposals; re-provision of an improved junction to include new carriageway arrangements, new dedicated bus lanes and new non-motorised user provision including new footways and cycle ways, toucan crossings and pedestrian / cycle bridges, and new services and drainage requirements associated with the road network.

1.3 Biodiversity Net Gain Overview

- 1.3.1. BNG is defined by the Department for Environment, Food, & Rural Affairs (Defra) as an approach to development that makes sure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development (Defra, 2024a).
- 1.3.2. In England, a minimum 10% BNG is mandatory for major developments and small sites under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) (HM Government, 2021a). BNG is expected to be mandatory for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) from May 2026 (Defra, 2026).
- 1.3.3. Local policy within BMBC aligns with the national legislation, supported by the Supplementary Planning Document (BMBC, 2024) to the Local Plan (adopted 2019).
- 1.3.4. There is a scheme delivery BNG target of 20% which has been applied to the Proposed Scheme.
- 1.3.5. The BNG process follows the mitigation hierarchy, which sets out that everything possible must be done to firstly avoid, secondly minimise and thirdly restore/rehabilitate losses of biodiversity on-site. Only as a last resort, residual losses are compensated for using off-site habitat enhancement or creation (also known as biodiversity offsetting).
- 1.3.6. Mandatory BNG also requires the application of the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy (Defra, 2024b), which specifies that:
- “first, in relation to on-site habitats which have a medium, high and very high distinctiveness (a score of four or more according to the statutory biodiversity metric), the avoidance of adverse effects from the development and, if they cannot be avoided, the mitigation of those effects; and
- then, in relation to all on-site habitats which are adversely affected by the development, the adverse effect should be compensated by prioritising in order, where possible, the enhancement of existing on-site habitats, creation of new on-site habitats, allocation of registered off-site gains and finally the purchase of biodiversity credits.”*
- 1.3.7. Mandatory BNG must be assessed by a competent person using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (herein referred to as “the Metric”) and its associated rules and guidance (Defra, 2024c). The Metric accounts for habitat losses and gains resulting from development and quantifies the net change in biodiversity value, measured in ‘area habitat units’, ‘hedgerow units’ and ‘watercourse units’¹. The Metric guidance also states that up-to-date industry good practice principles (CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA, 2016) and British Standard (BS) 8683:2021 (British Standards Institute, 2021) should be applied.
- 1.3.8. BNG cannot be applied to adverse effects on irreplaceable habitats (Defra, 2024e). BNG is additional to other legislative requirements relating to habitats and species, although

¹ The minimum 10% BNG target applies separately for each type of unit, and these cannot be summed or traded.

mitigation/enhancement from certain schemes can count towards BNG either in full or in part (Defra, 2024f).

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1. The client has committed to a minimum 20% BNG target for the Proposed Scheme, above but aligned with the principles of the Environment Act 2021 and the local policy for BMBC as detailed above.
- 1.4.2. The remainder of this report and associated appendices describe the BNG assessment methods, results and recommendations for the following aspects of the Proposed Scheme, aligning with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy (Defra, 2024b):
 1. The pre-development (baseline) biodiversity unit value of on-site area habitats, hedgerows/lines of trees and watercourses, calculated using the Metric.
 2. The estimated units to be retained, lost, enhanced, and created on-site, based on the Proposed Scheme's design.
 3. The resulting overall net change in **on-site** biodiversity unit value (i.e., whether the Proposed Scheme achieves an on-site net loss, no net loss, or net gain in biodiversity units).
 4. An estimate of the number and type of **off-site** units needed to reach 20% BNG based on the current landscape design, to be created/enhanced or purchased off-site.
 5. The overall result for the Proposed Scheme, indicating whether the 20% BNG target is estimated to be achieved.
- 1.4.3. It is important to recognise that BNG is one of several factors to be considered when assessing the impact of the Proposed Scheme on biodiversity. Please note that this BNG report does not cover potential impacts of the Proposed Scheme on protected species or, designated sites, although the BNG design has been aligned with these wherever possible. These aspects are covered within associated documents submitted alongside this report:
 - Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment Memo Report – Temple, 2024.
 - Precautionary Working Method Statement – Temple, 2024.
- 1.4.4. This assessment has been compiled with reference to relevant legislation and policy relating to nature conservation and BNG, listed in **Appendix B**.

2 Methodology

2.1 Quality Assurance

2.1.1. This report and the Metric calculation have been completed and quality assured by a team of ecologists competent in BNG, with 10 years' collective experience of BNG assessment, including Associate members of CIEEM.

2.2 Guidance and Tools

2.2.1. This BNG report and approach has applied the following guidance and tools:

- UK Government Biodiversity Net Gain Collection (Defra, 2024g);
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric and associated user guidance (Defra, 2024c), including the associated rules and principles set out in the Metric User Guide;
- Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA, 2016). These are listed in **Appendix C**;
- Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development – a Practical Guide (CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA, 2019);
- British Standard 8683 Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain – Specification (2021) (British Standards Institute, 2021);
- Biodiversity Net Gain Reporting and Audit Templates (CIEEM, 2021);
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council – Biodiversity Appendix 1 (BMBC, 2025);
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Biodiversity and Geodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (BMBC, 2024); and
- Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan (Barnsley Biodiversity trust, 2010).

2.3 Data Sources

2.3.1. The following data sources have been used to complete the Metric calculation:

1. An initial desk study using publicly available and local datasets to identify potential/likely Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI), irreplaceable habitats, and statutory and non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation. The desk study is described further in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal²
2. A UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) (UKHab, 2023) and Metric habitat type survey undertaken in June 2024 by Temple Ecology following best practice guidelines. This survey provided baseline habitat data which detailed the habitat types present on-site, their area (ha) and/or length (km) and their geographic distribution. Full details of the

² Temple Ecology (2024) Stairfoot Roundabout Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment Memo Report Job No. T10138.

survey method are provided within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal² All areas/lengths of habitats have been measured using ArcGIS with reference to Ordnance Survey MasterMap (OSMM).

3. Condition assessments for area habitats and hedgerows/lines of trees were completed concurrently with the baseline habitat survey, following the Metric Condition Assessments Criteria (Defra, 2024c) and provided by the Client for use within this assessment.
4. A post-development landscape mitigation plan produced by WSP (70111595-WSP-ELS-AZ-DR-LA-000021 Landscape General Arrangement). The post-development landscape mitigation plan habitats were translated into UKHab habitat types for use in the assessment (**Appendix E**).

2.4 Relevant Date for Pre-development Biodiversity Value (On-site Baseline)

- 2.4.1. The metric calculation has been carried out based on on-site baseline habitats present on the 'relevant date'³. This was determined based on the date of the planning application, and whether authorised habitat degradation had been carried out since 25 August 2023 or unauthorised habitat degradation had been carried out since 30 January 2020.
- 2.4.2. No signs of habitat degradation were recorded therefore the relevant date is taken to be the date of the planning application. It is considered that the baseline survey data collected on during the UKHab survey reflects the habitats present on this date.

2.5 Strategic Significance

- 2.5.1. Strategic significance of habitats⁴ has been assessed following the categories set out in the Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024c) using the scoring criteria specified in the Statutory Metric User Guide due to the absence of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) covering the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) area.
- 2.5.2. Habitats have been assigned a strategic significance score based on their location and habitat type, as summarised in **Table 2-1**.

³ As defined in paragraph 5 of Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (HM Government, 1990).

⁴ Defined as the local significance of the habitat based on its location and the habitat type – see page 27 of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024c)

Table 2-1 – Strategic Significance Assignment

Strategic Significance	Habitats Assigned and Reasoning
<p>High (Formally identified in local strategy)</p>	<p>The habitat type is mapped and described as locally ecologically important within a specific location, within documents specified by the relevant planning authority.</p> <p>If your project delivers the mapped habitat creation, enhancement or actions set out within specified alternative documents, or enhances an existing habitat identified within specified alternative documents as locally ecologically important, strategic significance can be recorded as high in the post-intervention sheets.</p> <p>If the specified alternative documents identify existing habitat as locally ecologically important within a specified location, strategic significance may be recorded as high in the baseline. You should record the name of the plan the relevant planning authority has specified in the user comments and record that you have used the specified document in your gain plan.</p>
<p>Medium (Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy)</p>	<p>This category can be applied when the LPA has not identified a suitable document for assessing strategic significance. Users should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how the habitat type is ecologically important within a specific location. • Demonstrate the importance of that habitat in providing ecological linkage to other strategically significant locations. • Use professional judgement. <p>When the above criteria are met, strategic significance may be recorded as medium in the baseline and post-intervention sheets.</p>
<p>Low (Area not in a local strategy)</p>	<p>Any habitats which do not fall into either of the above categories will be assigned this level of strategic significance.</p>

2.5.3. The Proposed Scheme falls within the Dearne Valley Landscape and Nature Improvement Area (NIA), detailed within the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Biodiversity and Geodiversity Supplementary Planning Document. In the absence of a draft or published LNRS for South Yorkshire, this has been adopted as a local strategy within which the location is identified – therefore ‘high’ strategic significance has been assigned to all baseline and post-development habitats. Additionally, woodland, scrub, neutral grassland and amenity grassland are listed as local priority habitats within the Barnsley BAP; also indicating ‘high’ strategic significance for these habitats specifically.

2.6 Additionality

- 2.6.1. There are no habitat creation or enhancement measures associated with the Proposed Scheme that require consideration for additionality as they are all measures that can be counted 'in full' in line with government guidance on what counts towards your BNG (Defra, 2024f).

2.7 Assumptions

- 2.7.1. The following assumptions have been applied when using the above methodologies.
- Trees to be translocated have been input into the Metric as created medium-sized individual urban trees of moderate condition, reflecting realistic post-translocation establishment under the proposed management regime.
 - Retained trees have been input into the Metric as retained medium-sized individual urban trees of moderate condition, consistent with the baseline habitat data.
 - It has been considered in conjunction with the design team that moderate condition would be feasible for post-development habitats including linear habitats and trees under a management regime compatible with the habitats roadside location.

3 Results

- 3.1.1. This section provides a summary of results for the Proposed Scheme, including the on-site baseline and post-intervention biodiversity. Further detailed quantitative results are provided within the Metric toolkit (see **Appendix D**).

3.2 Irreplaceable habitats

- 3.2.1. Irreplaceable habitats (as defined in the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024 (HM Government, 2024a)) are treated differently within the statutory framework for BNG. Good practice (CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA, 2019) recommends that an overall scheme-wide BNG cannot be achieved where there are losses of irreplaceable habitats, although mandatory net gain requirements will still be applied to remaining habitats.
- 3.2.2. No irreplaceable habitats were identified on-site.

3.3 On-site Baseline Biodiversity

- 3.3.1. An overview of the baseline biodiversity for the Proposed Scheme is provided below. The tabs within the accompanying Metric (**Appendix D**) provide quantitative details on the habitat baseline and should be referred to for full details on the habitats present on-site. In this instance, please refer to tabs: A-1 Site Habitat Baseline.
- 3.3.2. A baseline habitat map is provided in **Appendix A**. A summary of baseline habitat units is provided in **Image 3-1**.

Area habitats

- 3.3.3. The total area covered by area habitats measures 1.16 ha.
- 3.3.4. Baseline area habitats present within the Proposed Scheme comprised other neutral grassland – g3c, modified grassland – g4, other woodland; broadleaved – w1g, developed land; sealed surface – u1b, sparsely vegetated urban land – u1f; and individual trees.

3.4 On-site Post-intervention Biodiversity

- 3.4.1. An overview of on-site post-intervention biodiversity for the Proposed Scheme is provided below, in line with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy (Defra, 2024h). The tabs within the accompanying Metric (see **Appendix D**) provide full quantitative details of on-site habitat retention, enhancement, loss and creation.
- 3.4.2. A post-intervention habitat map is provided in **Appendix A**.

On-site Habitat Retention

- 3.4.3. Habitats have been retained or enhanced wherever feasible, in line with the mitigation hierarchy and Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy. This comprises of modified grassland – g4, other

woodland; broadleaved – w1g, developed land; sealed surface – u1b, sparsely vegetated urban land – u1f; and individual trees, a total area of 0.56ha. All retained habitats will be subject to a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to ensure their continued provision.

On-site Habitat Enhancement

- 3.4.4. No habitats are proposed for enhancement within the Proposed Scheme, as construction will require their removal where retention is not feasible; however reinstatement of habitats will be undertaken which is detailed within the Metric as loss and creation.

On-site Habitat Loss

- 3.4.5. The total habitat loss as a result of the Proposed Scheme comprises 4.32 units prior to consideration of on-site creation. Due to the scale of the Proposed Scheme, it is considered that this is unavoidable as far as the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy has been followed to limit these losses.

Summary of On-site Biodiversity Change

- 3.4.6. Headline results for the on-site baseline units, on-site post-intervention units, and on-site net change are shown in **Image 3-1 and 3-2**. Detailed results per individual habitat type, including habitat trading, can be viewed within the Metric toolkit (see **Appendix D**).
- 3.4.7. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric identifies an on-site baseline of 5.50 area habitat units (AHU). Following on-site habitat retention, creation and enhancement, the on-site post-intervention position is 4.09 area habitat units, resulting in a net on-site change of –1.41 area habitat units, equivalent to a 25.60% reduction relative to the on-site baseline.
- 3.4.8. Hedgerow units increase from 0.00 to 0.38 units as a result of on-site proposals, while no watercourse units are present within the baseline or post-development scenarios.
- 3.4.9. In accordance with the Proposed Scheme target above the 10% statutory requirements, the Proposed Scheme is required to deliver a minimum 20% Biodiversity Net Gain. Based on the on-site baseline of 5.50 area habitat units, this equates to a target of 6.60 area habitat units post-development. The Metric therefore identifies a residual requirement of 2.51 area habitat units, which cannot be met through on-site measures alone.
- 3.4.10. The on-site unit shortfall to achieve the 20% net gain is proposed to be compensated through off-site measures in line with the trading rules of the Metric. Off-site proposals are discussed in **Section 4**.

Image 3-1 - On-site Headline Results

On-site baseline	Habitat units	5.50		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention (including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	4.09		
	Hedgerow units	0.38		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	-1.41	-25.60%	On-site net gain is less than target set Δ
	Hedgerow units	0.38	N/A	Zero baseline units - % cannot be calculated
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	

Image 3-2 - Biodiversity Net Gain unit targets and residual unit requirement

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Habitat units	20.00%	5.50	6.60	2.51	
Hedgerow units	20.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
Watercourse units	20.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

Trading Rules

- 3.4.11. Based on the on-site design, the Metric trading rules have not been met for all habitats.
- 3.4.12. Habitat types for which trading rules have not been met on-site include:
- Woodland and forest – other woodland; broadleaved which results in a site-wide net loss of 2.43 area habitat units. This loss cannot be compensated on-site within the same broad habitat type or through delivery of a higher distinctiveness habitat, and therefore fails the Metric trading rules.
 - Individual trees – urban tree which results in a site-wide net loss of 0.46 area habitat units. This loss cannot be offset on-site in accordance with the trading rules for Medium distinctiveness habitats.
- 3.4.13. Although on-site habitat creation delivers some Medium distinctiveness units, the Biodiversity Metric identifies a net shortfall for these habitat types, and the required trading rule of delivery within the same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat cannot be achieved on-site.
- 3.4.14. This is proposed to be addressed through off-site measures, as described in Section 4.
- 3.4.15. Surpluses generated within other Medium distinctiveness habitats, such as grassland, cannot be used to compensate for losses of woodland or individual trees in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric trading rules but do go towards the overall net gain score.

4 Recommendations and Next Steps

- 4.1.1. All on-site options for habitat retention, enhancement and creation have been considered for the Proposed Scheme, in line with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy. Due to the requirements for highways safety and visual splays, further options for on-site medium distinctiveness habitat provision are limited across the Proposed Scheme with discrete areas of habitat provided where feasible. Discussions with internal teams and off-site providers will continue to take place throughout the planning application determination period and finalised prior to submission of the final Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP). The off-site provision to deliver BNG may be achieved using any, or a combination of, the following:
- Enhancement or habitat creation on existing non-operational land that may be available within the Client's land holdings to be managed for a period of 30 years (minimum) after completion of the works as described above.
 - Agreements with third-party landowners/managers to manage land for a period of 30-years after completion of the works to achieve net gain across one or more habitats, by improving the habitat distinctiveness and/or condition, preferably on land local to the Site.
 - Purchase of land dedicated to be managed for BNG for a period of 30-years after completion of the works as described above.
 - The preferred off-site delivery mechanism will be confirmed prior to commencement of development and secured through the Biodiversity Gain Plan.
- 4.1.2. A choice will therefore need to be made prior to the commencement of the Proposed Development as to the most appropriate delivery mechanism. This will include, but is not limited to, the need to register the units claimed off-site, if required, with Natural England.
- 4.1.3. The following recommendations apply to the Proposed Scheme in order to meet national and local policy and legislative requirements, as well as BNG good practice:
1. A final BGP will be prepared and submitted, detailing the on-site post-development units resulting from the final consented landscape plan and registered off-site units, post-determination to discharge the general biodiversity gain condition pre-commencement.
 2. A 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) is required and will be finalised for establishment and maintenance of on-site significant enhancements; all medium distinctiveness habitats within the Proposed Scheme. Off-site biodiversity gains will also be secured with an HMMP and will be registered on the national register by the provider. The HMMP will be submitted alongside the BGP and secured with an appropriate mechanism (e.g. planning condition), with off-site units also secured via an Section 106 legal agreement to ensure monitoring can be undertaken by the LPA and is appropriately covered by fees.
 3. Purchase of Statutory Biodiversity Credits will be considered as a last resort to offset residual habitat losses.

5 References

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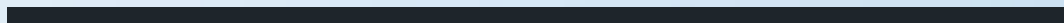
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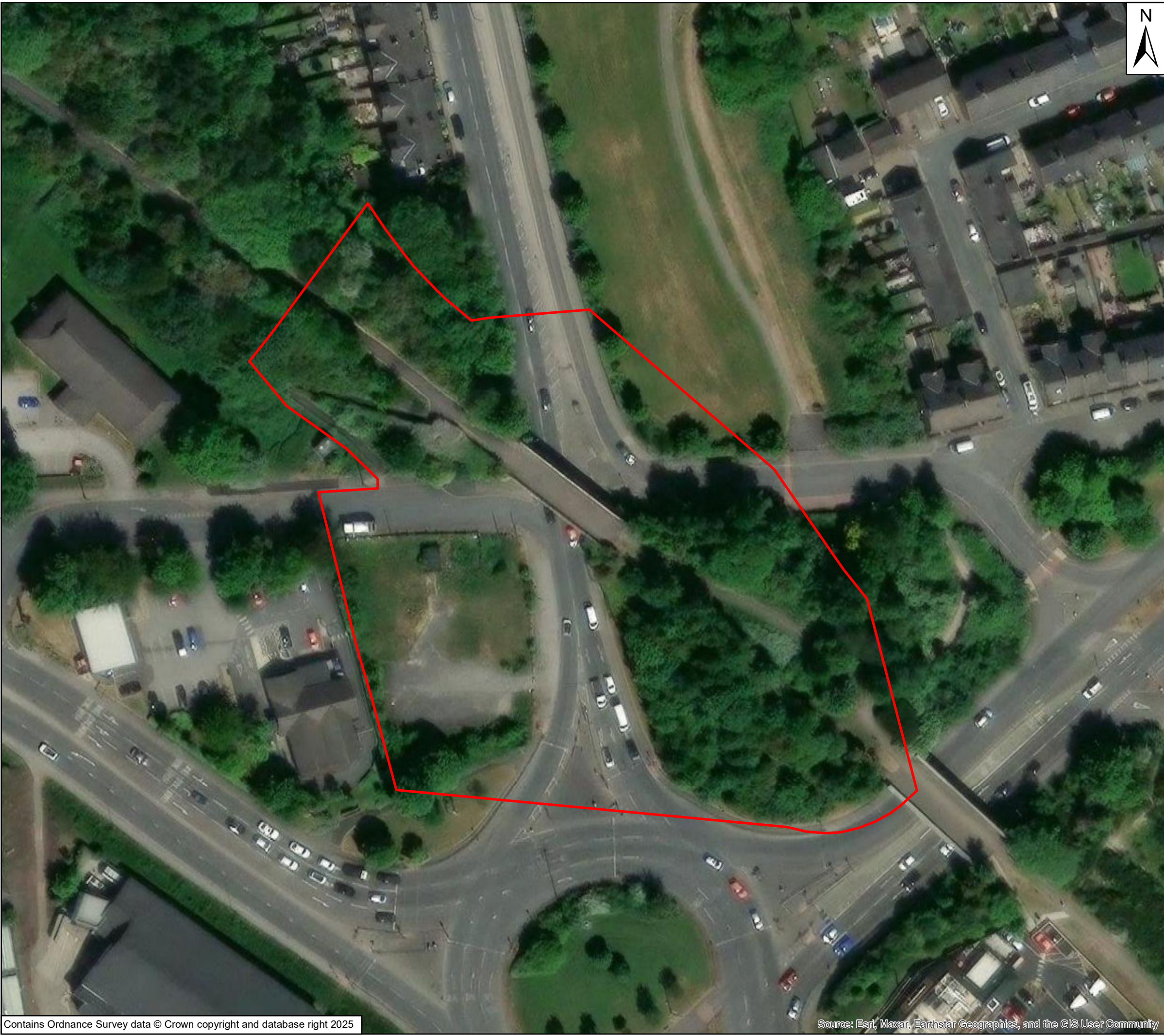
Appendix A

Baseline and Post-intervention Habitat Maps




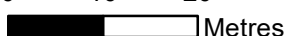


Appendix A – Baseline & Post-Intervention Habitat Maps



Key

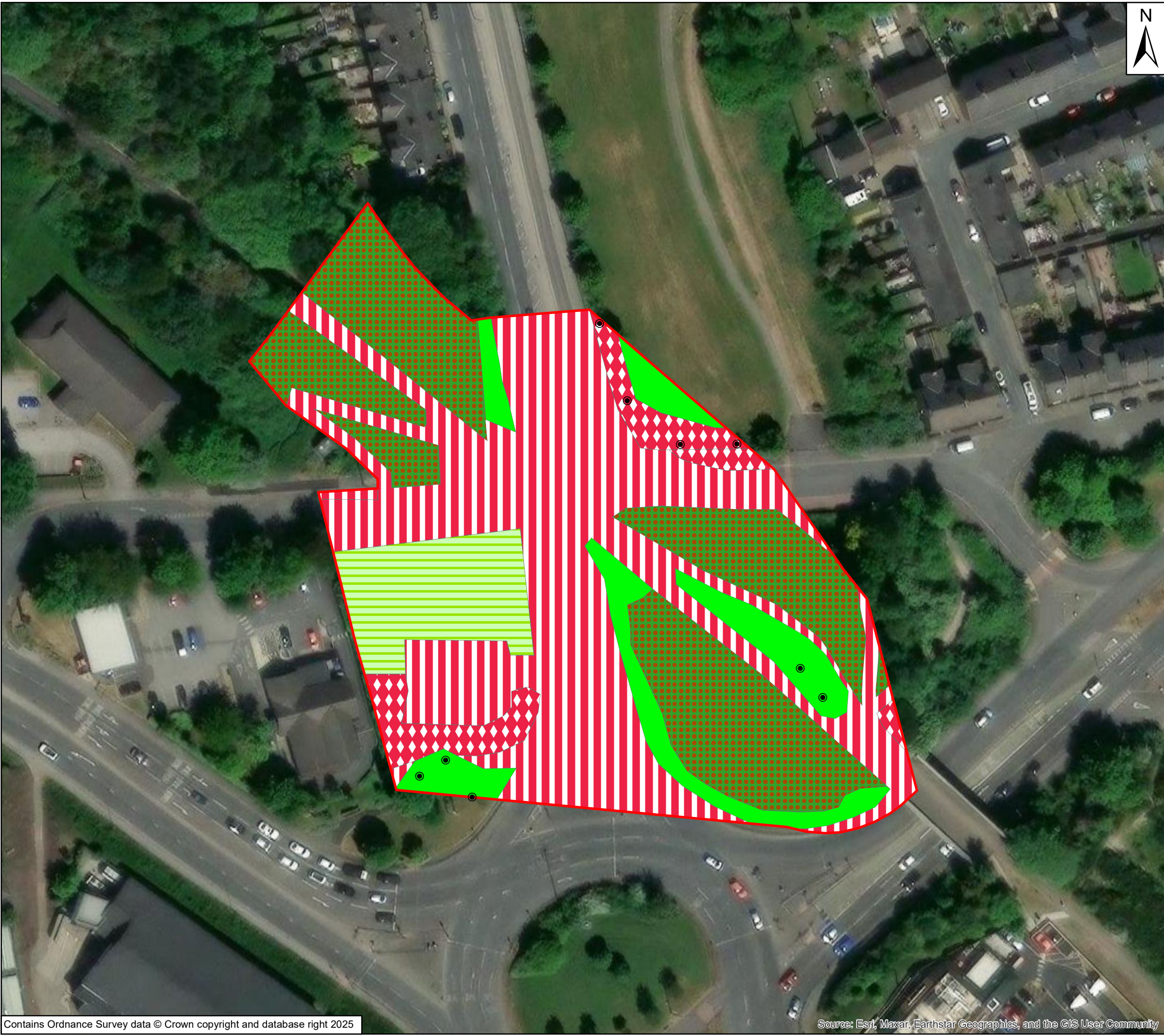
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





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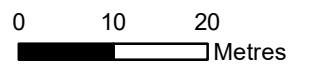


Client:	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Project:	A635 Bus Rapid Transfer Route
Title:	Site Location

Drawing No:	Figure 1	Drawn:	US
Date:	12/19/2025	Checked:	EH
Scale:	800 @ A3	Approved:	RB

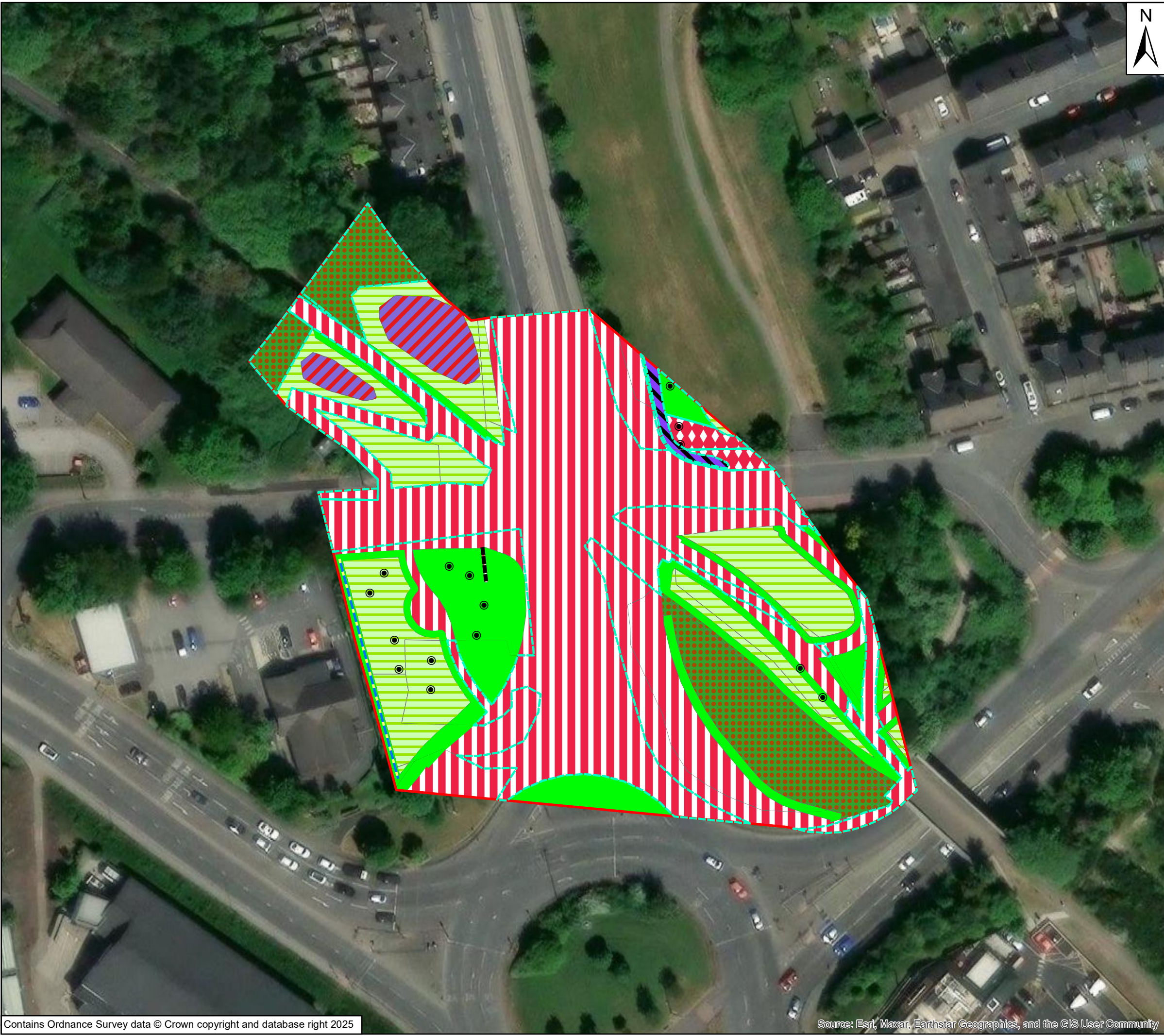


- Key**
-  Site Boundary
 - UKHab Classification**
 -  g3c - other neutral grassland
 -  g4 - modified grassland
 -  u1b - developed land, sealed surface
 -  u1f - sparsely vegetated urban land
 -  w1g - other woodland, broadleaved
 -  Individual trees

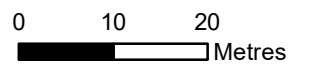


Client:	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Project:	A635 Bus Rapid Transfer Route
Title:	Baseline Habitat Map

Drawing No:	Figure 2	Drawn:	NC
Date:	12/19/2025	Checked:	EH
Scale:	800 @ A3	Approved:	RB



- Key**
- Site Boundary
 - Retained Baseline Habitats
- UKHab Classification**
- g3c - other neutral grassland
 - g4 - modified grassland
 - h3b6 - other hazel scrub
 - u1-847 - introduced shrub
 - u1b - developed land, sealed surface
 - u1f - sparsely vegetated urban land
 - w1g - other woodland, broadleaved
 - h2a5 - species rich native hedgerow
 - u1e 114 - stone wall
 - Individual trees

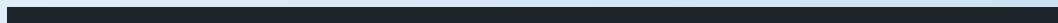


Client:	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Project:	A635 Bus Rapid Transfer Route
Title:	Post- Development Habitat Map

Drawing No: Figure 3	Drawn: NC
Date: 12/19/2025	Checked: EH
Scale: 800 @ A3	Approved: RB

Appendix B

BNG Legislation & Policy



Appendix B – BNG Legislation and Policy

National legislation

England

Environment Act 2021

BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7a of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) (HM Government, 2021a). This means that most major developments (with exemptions) must deliver a minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity as a condition of planning permission, measured by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. There are six statutory instruments that work together to deliver the BNG framework including:

- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2023 (HM Government, 2024e);
- The Biodiversity Gain Sites Register (Financial Penalties and Fees) Regulations 2023 (HM Government, 2023a);
- The Biodiversity Gain Site Register Regulations 2024 (HM Government, 2024f) ;
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 (HM Government, 2024b);
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitats) Regulations 2024 (HM Government, 2024a); and
- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 (HM Government, 2024d).

Under mandatory BNG, the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy must be considered by LPAs when determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan. Here, efforts must be made to first avoid then minimise adverse impacts in relation to on-site medium, high and very high distinctiveness habitats. Secondly, any adverse effect should be compensated by prioritising in order, where possible, the enhancement of existing on-site habitats, creation of new on-site habitats, allocation of registered off-site gains and finally the purchase of biodiversity credits. All significant on-site gains and all off-site gains from a development must be legally secured, managed and maintained for a period of 30 years.

Mandatory BNG does not replace existing legislations and protections for sites, habitats and species.

The Environment Act 2021 also amended the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (HM Government, 2006). This amendment extended the duty of public authorities (the 'Biodiversity Duty') beyond the original NERC Act, which referred only to

conservation, so that it included the enhancement of biodiversity in England. Further description of the NERC Act is provided below.

All government policy and guidance are collated under the Biodiversity Net Gain Collection (Defra, 2024g).

UK Government's Environmental Improvement Plan

Biodiversity Net Gain is a key cross-cutting theme to deliver the environmental targets and commitments set out in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan (Defra, 2023a).

National Planning Policy Framework

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (HM Government, 2024g) refers to conserving and enhancing the natural environment. This requires Local Authorities in England to take measures to:

- Conserve and enhance biodiversity;
- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks within plans;
- Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and priority species within plans, in addition to secure measurable net gains for biodiversity; and
- Refuse planning permission for development, if significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for.

The revised NPPF refers to biodiversity and environmental net gains in the following paragraphs:

Transport Infrastructure:

- Paragraph 109. *“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:

d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for **net environmental gains.**”*

Planning decisions

- Paragraph 125. *“Planning policies and decisions should a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land ... and taking opportunities to **achieve net environmental gains - such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside.**”*
- Paragraph 187. *“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: ... d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains*

for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.”

- Paragraph 192. *“To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity plans should b) 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**.”*
- Paragraph 193. *“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts) adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused; ... and d) ... “ 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”.*

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (HM Government, 2006) requires public bodies, including local authorities, ‘to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England when carrying out their normal functions’.

Section 40 sets out the ‘Duty to Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity’, and states that:

Paragraph 1. *“A public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective”. The general biodiversity objective is the “conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in England”.*

Section 41 sets out that:

Paragraph 1. *“The Secretary of State must... publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat ... of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity”* based on consultation with Natural England; and that

Paragraph 3a. The Secretary of State must *“a) take such steps... to further the conservation of the living organisms and types of habitat included in any list published under this section, or (b) promote the taking by others of such steps”.*

Local BNG Policy

Barnsley Local Plan – Biodiversity and Geodiversity Supplementary Planning Document 2024

BMBC requires measurable BNG in line with national targets; the current local planning policy context is incorporated within the 2024 Supplementary Planning Document of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted January 2019) for the future development of Barnsley up to the year 2033.

Policy BIO1 – 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 boroughs 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;*
- *Encouraging provision of biodiversity enhancements. 5 Supplementary Planning Document: Biodiversity and Geodiversity Supplementary Planning Document: Biodiversity and Geodiversity 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 affects a European Site will not be permitted unless there is no alternative option and imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI).”*

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;*
- *Maximises potential economic and social benefits;*
- *Secures and improves linkages between green and blue spaces.*

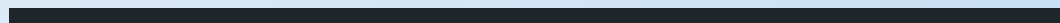
At a strategic level Barnsley's Green Infrastructure network includes the following corridors which are shown on the Green Infrastructure Diagram (see below):

- *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.

Appendix C

**BNG Good Practice Principles
(CIEEM, IEMA & CIRIA, 2016)**



Appendix C – BNG Good Practice Principles (CIEEM, IEMA & CIRIA, 2016)

Principle	Description	Evidence
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.	See Section 2.7.1 for details on how the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy has been applied.
2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere	Avoid impacts on irreplaceable biodiversity – these impacts cannot be offset to achieve No Net Loss or Net Gain.	See Section 3.2 for details relating to avoidance of irreplaceable habitats.
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 and share the benefits fairly among stakeholders.	The benefits in terms of biodiversity, as well as ecosystem services will be available to the main stakeholders – the users of the new highway section, as well as the general public in adjacent areas. The BNG outcome is to be shared with relevant stakeholders through the planning process. Stakeholders will be able to review results and provide comments and queries as part of this process.

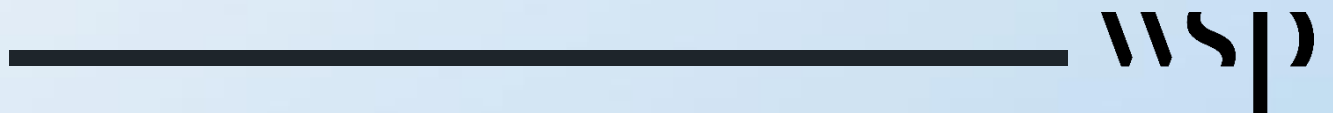
Principle	Description	Evidence
<p>4. Address risks</p>	<p>Mitigate difficulty, uncertainty, and other risks to achieving Net Gain. Apply well-accepted ways to add contingency when calculating biodiversity losses and gains in order to account for any remaining risks, as well as to compensate for the time between the losses occurring and the gains being fully realised.</p>	<p>The Statutory Biodiversity Metric accounts for delivery risk, temporal risk, and spatial risk in the unit calculation (see Section 2 and Appendix D for the Metric toolkit).</p>
<p>5. Make a measurable Net Gain contribution</p>	<p>Achieve a measurable, overall gain for biodiversity and the services ecosystems provide while directly contributing towards nature conservation priorities.</p>	<p>The Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been applied to quantify changes in biodiversity value. Habitats will contribute to nature conservation priorities for example through creation of habitat connections which will benefit foraging bat species within other woodland areas locally, which are LBAPs and protected species.</p>
<p>6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity</p>	<p>Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity by using robust, credible evidence and local knowledge to make clearly justified choices when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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; 	<p>The Proposed Scheme has been designed to meet the trading rules of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (see Section 2.7.1/Appendix D), apply the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy (see Section 2.7.1), and incorporate local strategic objectives for nature (see Section 2.5).</p> <p>The post-development landscape design delivers a range of habitat types including grassland, scrub, woodland and individual trees, providing habitat heterogeneity and local-scale ecological connectivity within an urban transport corridor.</p>

Principle	Description	Evidence
	<p>Achieving Net Gain locally to the development while also contributing towards nature conservation priorities at local, regional and national levels;</p> <p>Enhancing existing or creating new habitat;</p> <p>Enhancing ecological connectivity by creating more bigger, better, and joined areas for biodiversity.</p>	<p>The Metric results demonstrate that on-site habitat creation does not fully compensate for losses of Medium distinctiveness woodland and individual trees. In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric trading rules, these residual losses are proposed to be addressed through off-site compensation (Section 4).</p>
<p>7. Be additional</p>	<p>Achieve nature conservation outcomes that demonstrably exceed existing obligations (i.e., do not deliver something that would occur anyway).</p>	<p>See Section 2.5.3 (Additionality).</p>

Principle	Description	Evidence
<p>8. Create a Net Gain legacy</p>	<p>Ensure Net Gain generates long-term benefits by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 from other land uses; Avoiding displacing harmful activities from one location to another; Supporting local-level management of Net Gain activities. 	<p>A HMMP will be developed for the Proposed Scheme in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and line with the Natural England HMMP template (Natural England, 2024) (See Section 4).</p>
<p>9. Optimise sustainability</p>	<p>Prioritise Biodiversity Net Gain and, where possible, optimise the wider environmental benefits for a sustainable society and economy.</p>	<p>BNG has been used to inform the Proposed Scheme’s design in collaboration with landscape and planning team to provide positive outcomes for biodiversity while optimising wider sustainability, and adhering to highways and civils requirements.</p>
<p>10. Be transparent</p>	<p>Communicate all Net Gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders.</p>	<p>The BNG outcome is to be shared with relevant stakeholders through delivery of the Proposed Scheme via the local authority planning portal.</p>

Appendix D

Statutory Biodiversity Metric & Supplementary Files



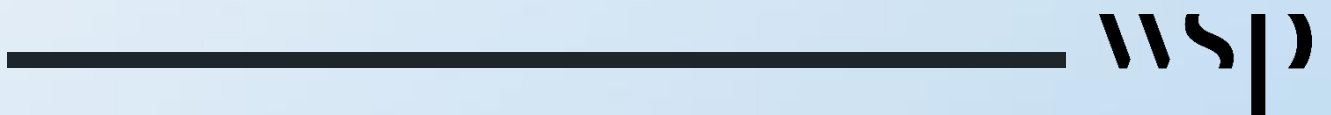


Appendix D – Statutory Biodiversity Metric

A completed Statutory Biodiversity Metric Excel toolkit has been provided alongside this report.

Appendix E

Post-development habitat translation





Appendix E – Post-development habitat translation

Data Sources:

Landscape Layout Plan Ref. 70111595-WSP-ELS-AZ-DR-LA-000021

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with Landscape Planting Plan Drawings 70111595-WSP-ELS-AZ-DR-LA-000022 - 000023.

Table E-1 – Translation of post-development habitats

Landscape Classification	Metric habitat type	Metric habitat justification	Target condition	Condition justification
Amenity grass	Modified grassland	Grassland mix for amenity purpose, limited species.	Moderate	The grassland will be managed for amenity purposes with regular mowing and limited species diversity. While some condition criteria will be met through establishment and management, the intensive management regime is likely to limit structural diversity and species richness; therefore, Moderate condition is considered a realistic and precautionary assumption.
Hazel shrub mix	Hazel scrub	Suitable habitat based on limited species mix proposed.	Moderate	The scrub planting comprises a limited native species mix and will be subject to routine maintenance to maintain visibility and safety requirements. This is likely to restrict structural complexity and natural successional development; therefore, Moderate condition is

Landscape Classification	Metric habitat type	Metric habitat justification	Target condition	Condition justification
				considered achievable under the proposed management regime.
Native hedgerow	Species-rich native hedgerow	This is the most suitable hedgerow class given the proposed native species mix, with no trees or ditches.	Moderate	The hedgerow will be established using a native species mix; however, its location within a transport corridor and the need for regular trimming for safety and visibility purposes are likely to limit its structural complexity and long-term development. Moderate condition is therefore considered appropriate.
Trees	Urban tree	Urban location for individual trees.	Moderate	Trees will be planted within an urban highway environment, where constraints such as limited rooting volume, soil compaction, and exposure to pollution are likely to restrict growth and condition. Moderate condition is therefore considered a realistic and precautionary assumption.
Shrub planting	Introduced shrub	Predominantly ornamental species within planting scheme.	Moderate	The shrub planting is identified on the landscape drawings as predominantly ornamental shrub planting, with no specific ecological habitat objectives or commitment to native species-only mixes. In the absence of a defined habitat-led specification, and given its location within an urban transport corridor where planting is typically managed for visual amenity and

Landscape Classification	Metric habitat type	Metric habitat justification	Target condition	Condition justification
				screening purposes, Moderate condition is considered a realistic and precautionary assumption.
Wildflower grass	Other neutral grassland	Species mix is inclusive of forbs and herbs, indicative of species composition.	Moderate	The proposed seed mix includes a range of grasses and forbs indicative of neutral grassland. However, establishment within an urban setting and ongoing management constraints mean that higher condition criteria are unlikely to be met; therefore, Moderate condition represents a realistic and precautionary target.
Woodland edge mix planting	Other woodland; broadleaved	Size and structure of trees and planting aligns with habitat classification.	Moderate	Woodland planting will be newly established and located adjacent to transport infrastructure. While the proposed species mix and management will support woodland development over time, constraints associated with site context and establishment timescales mean that Moderate condition is considered appropriate.



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