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10736: LAND TO THE EAST OF STRATFIELD BRAKE AND WEST OF OXFORD PARKWAY STATION, KNOWN AS THE TRIANGLE

UPDATED BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- **1.1.** Ecology Solutions was originally commissioned in August 2022 by Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of Oxford United Football Club ('the Applicant') to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of the land east of Stratfield Brake and west of Oxford Parkway Station, known as The Triangle, hereafter referred to as 'the Site'. The initial BNG assessment report¹ was submitted as part of the planning application in February 2024 (ref: 24/00539/F).
- **1.2.** The development proposals are for the erection of a 16,000 capacity stadium (Use Class F2) with associated flexible commercial and community facilities for conferences, exhibitions, education and other events (including club shop, public restaurant, bar, health and wellbeing facility/clinic, and gym) (Use Class E), a 180-bed hotel (Use Class C1), external concourse/fanzone, car and cycle parking, associated access, highways, utilities, public realm, landscaping and other supporting infrastructure.
- **1.3.** Ecology Solutions was subsequently commissioned in October 2024 to update the BNG assessment in response to layout changes and comments received from Cherwell District Council (CDC).
- **1.4.** This report should be read in conjunction with Chapter 8 (Ecology and Nature Conservation) of the Main Environmental Statement (ES), it's associated Technical Appendix 8.1², and more recently, Chapter 8 (Ecology and Nature Conservation) of the ES Addendum (ESA) and associated Technical Appendix 8.1³.
- **1.5.** This report is accompanied by a draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) which can be viewed at Appendix 8.3 within the ESA.

¹ Ecology Solutions (February 2024). Ref: 10736.BiodiversityNetGain.vf4

² Ecology Solutions (February 2024) Ref: 10736.ES Technical Appendix.vf4

³ Ecology Solutions (December 2024) Ref: 10736:ESA Technical Appendix 8.1.vf1

1.6. This document details the updated BNG assessment undertaken for the above site using the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

2. METHODOLOGY

- **2.1.** In order to undertake an updated BNG assessment of the main development site, the most recent version of the Defra Biodiversity Metric 'Statutory Defra Biodiversity Metric' (hereafter, referred to as the 'Metric') has been applied to the site.
- **2.2.** The methodology for undertaking the BNG assessment is based on the guidance provided within the Technical Supplement and User Guide published by Defra, in addition to the application of professional judgement.
- **2.3.** The Metric works by assigning credits to the habitats located within the development site (both baseline and post-development). These credits are then used as a proxy to determine the ecological value of the site.
- **2.4.** The respective credit score of each habitat is gauged by calculating key parameters that influence the habitats reported value. These are as follow:
 - Habitat type / distinctiveness;
 - Habitat area;
 - Habitat condition; and,
 - Strategic significance.
- **2.5.** For either created or enhanced habitats, the additional main parameters are applied;
 - Habitat target type / distinctiveness;
 - Habitat target condition;
 - Time until target condition; and,
 - Difficulty of creation / enhancement.
- **2.6.** The value for hedgerow / treeline habitats and ditch / watercourse habitats is calculated separately, however follow a similar working methodology as those described for area-based habitats above.
- 2.7. The recorded baseline and development proposals for the site have been assessed against the above identified parameters and most recent Condition Assessment Criteria (CAC) provided by Defra. The most recent baseline is outlined in part within the ESA Technical Appendix 8.1 technical note produced as part of a response to consultees and also within the Main ES Chapter Technical Appendix 8.1. The post-development proposals for the site are summarised below as well as being highlighted in more detail within the relevant landscape plans (Appendix A).

Limitations

2.8. Biodiversity Metrics provide a way of measuring the biodiversity value of a site pre-development, and comparing it to what it will be, post-development. This is based on several parameters and the application of the most recent version of the guidance provided.

- **2.9.** This is most obviously highlighted by the fact that Metrics do not currently take into consideration measures directly relating to protected or notable species. It is only interested in the proposals from a purely mathematical perspective which is limited solely to habitats. For instance, the provision of a bespoke mitigation strategy that would, for example, see the inclusion of a variety of amphibian habitats to aid population success, will not necessarily score commensurate with the real value as it will simply assess the habitats in isolation and not that of the bigger picture.
- **2.10.** A further example of this would be that there is no mechanism currently in place that would reward schemes for installing several faunal specific features, such as bat and bird boxes or hibernacula.
- **2.11.** Whilst Biodiversity Metrics can be considered a helpful and guiding tool when assessing the BNG of a site, for a number of reasons including those outlined above, they shouldn't be the sole approach adopted when considering the validity of the site proposals in the context of local and national biodiversity planning policy.

3. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

3.1. Project Proposals Summary

- 3.1.1. The mechanisms of delivering ecological gains within the application site have been considered at all stages of design in order to realise the overall ecological potential of the site and habitats both created and enhanced. Notwithstanding this, in order to facilitate development as well as habitat creation, the proposals will result in the loss of arable land, other neutral grassland, modified grassland and losses to mixed scrub and hedgerows.
- 3.1.2. The development proposals incorporate areas of enhancement which provide net gains to biodiversity. However, habitat is being lost and as such, the measures that will be put in place will ensure that any losses are entirely mitigated. The landscaping proposals for the site can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.1.3. Creating areas of enhanced grassland and scrub habitats, attenuation features (e.g. SuDS, rain gardens), a pond, biodiverse and sedum green roofs, green walls, native tree and hedgerow planting is a key focus of the mitigation strategy for this site. Through additional management, it will be possible to create habitats which have a greater floral diversity than that over the existing situation, and as a consequence support a more diverse range of fauna.
- 3.1.4. In summary, it is considered that the losses of ecological assets on site will be compensated for in full with the additional mitigation providing vastly increased levels of biodiversity and species richness when compared to the present baseline.

3.2. Detailed Net Gain Assessment

- 3.2.1. In line with the above methodology, an updated BNG assessment has been taken. This is in accordance with the guidance outlined by Natural England. Indicative planting programmes are outlined within the appropriate landscape plans. However, by way of summary an overview of the respective measures associated with those habitats to be either created or enhanced, are included within the tables below and shown graphically on Plan BNG1 and Plan BNG2.
- 3.2.2. Each table is split into both pre-development (baseline) and postdevelopment (created and enhanced) descriptions relevant to each main measured habitat type; area-based habitats and linear-based.
- 3.2.3. Full habitat descriptions are described in the Main ES (Chapter 8) associated Technical Appendix 8.1 with any changes observed described in within the ESA Technical Appendix 8.1 as part of the more recent ESA (Chapter 8).

3.3. Area-based Habitat Baseline

3.3.1. The habitats present at the application site were recorded and assessed during surveys undertaken between October 2022 and July 2024. The results are presented in Table 1 below.

Habitat	Condition	Area	Retained	Enhanced	Lost	Condition Notes
Arable: Non- cereal crop	N/A	(ha) 3.354	(ha) 0	(ha) 0	(ha) 3.354	Willow Plantation. This habitat is dominated by Willow that is subjected to short rotational coppicing and therefore fits within the UKHabs definition of <i>c1d6</i> <i>Short rotation coppice</i> , which is associated with the 'non- cereal crop' habitat type within the Metric. No formal CAC required.
Urban: Developed land; sealed surface	N/A	1.329	1.329	0	0	Roads / footpaths around Site. No formal CAC required.
Urban: Sparsely Vegetated Land - Ruderal/ ephemeral	Poor	0.789	0.419	0	0	Area beneath hedgerows. Passed criteria C only.
Grassland: Other neutral	Poor	0.653	0	0.18	0.47	Grassland rides around plantation. Frequent areas of bare ground from vehicular access damage. Frequent scrub encroachment and species indicative of sub- optimal condition. Passed criteria B only.
Grassland: Other neutral	Moderate	0.04	0.023	0	0	Small grassland area located adjacent to Oxford Parkway. Varied sward height with representative species present and <5% scrub encroachment. Damage from frequent footfall resulting in areas of bare ground. Passed criteria A, B and D.
Individual Tree: Urban tree	Moderate	0.008	0.008	0	0	Two trees along A4165. Native species, continuous canopy and no evidence of adverse health. Passed criteria A, B, D and F.
Scrub: Mixed scrub	Poor	0.593	0.49	0.025	0.52	Scrub located to the north of the Triangle. Comprising native species with an absence of invasive non- native plants. Does not comprise of required age structure as per criterion B. Scrub does not have well- developed edge and does not have clearings, glades or rides present. Passed criteria A and C.
Grassland: Modified	Poor	0.309	0	0.231	0.08	Grass verges around Frieze Way and A4165. Managed to

Table 1: Baseline area-based habitat units.

Habitat	Condition	Area (ha)	Retained (ha)	Enhanced (ha)	Lost (ha)	Condition Notes
						a short sward with areas of damage from vehicles. No scrub, bracken or invasive non-native species present, Passed criteria C, F and G.

3.4. Linear-based Habitat Baseline (Hedgerows)

3.4.1. A total of 3 hedgerows were recorded within the site and are described in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Baseline hedgerow habitats.

Ref.	Туре	Condition	Length (km)	Retained	Enhanced	Lost	Notes
H1	Species-rich Native Hedgerow with Trees – Associated with Bank or Ditch	Moderate	0.306	0	0.255	0.08	Unmanaged with dry ditch. Road on western side and strip of disturbed grass used for access on Site side. Passed criterion group A, B, D and criteria E1. Failed group C, D2 and E2.
H2	Native Hedgerow with Trees	Moderate	0.351	0	0.170	0.18	Unmanaged with varying height. Footpath on eastern side and strip of disturbed grass used for access on Site side. Passed criterion group A, B, D and criteria E1. Failed group C, D2 and E2.
H ₃	Native Hedgerow	Moderate	0.086	0.064	0	0.02	Thin, gappy and species- poor. Passed criterion group C and criteria A1 and D1.

3.5. Watercourse Habitat Baseline (Ditch)

3.5.1. A ditch lies adjacent the southern boundary and is described in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Baseline watercourse habitats.

Ref.	Туре	Condition	Extent of Watercourse Encroachment	Extent of Bank Encroachment	Length (km)	Retained	Notes
D1	Ditches	Poor	No encroachment	No encroachment	0.25	0.25	No water recorded. No aquatic fringe/ emergent/ submergent/ floating plants recorded. No algae/ duckweed or invasive non- native species recorded. Passed criteria C, E and H.

3.6. Post-Development Habitats – Area Based

3.6.1. The area-based habitats to be created and enhanced as part of the proposals are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Post-development area-based habitats.

Habitat	Target Condition	Area (ha)	Target Condition Notes
Urban: Developed land; sealed surface	N/A	2.2	Areas of built-form, e.g. stadium, small buildings, new access roads and footpaths.
			CAC not required.
Urban: Ground- based green wall	Good	0.041	Areas of the stadium and small new buildings will have 'vertical meadows' installed which will be sown with a native wildflower and grass mixture with a mix of plant species that will benefit different invertebrate species throughout the year. Target: Passes all criteria.
Urban:	Good	0.408	The Site will have large areas of biodiverse green roof
Biodiverse green roof	4004	0.400	constructed on the roof of the proposed Stadium and smaller buildings. The green roofs will comprise native wildflowers and sedum species to offer a diverse new habitat. It will be managed accordingly to promote a varied vegetation structure. Additional refugia habitat in the form of bee banks, insect hotels will be provided to achieve 'good' condition. Target: Passes all criteria.
Urban: Other	N/A	0.006	Substations will comprise sedum roofs which will be
green roof	INZ A	0.008	managed sympathetically for wildlife.
Urban: SuDs	Good	0.099	Sustainable urban drainage features will be created in the site. These will be planted with a native wildflower grassland seed mixture (such as Emorsgate's Meadow Mixture for Wetland EM8) that is tolerant of wet / damp conditions and be subject to a suitable management regime to enhance its floristic diversity accordingly. Part of this feature will be designed to be permanently wet so as to provide additional wildlife benefits. It is considered that the drainage features will pass all criteria and therefore meet good condition. The marginal vegetation of attenuation features will also be seeded with a suitable wetland seed mix such as Emorsgate EP1 Pond Edge Mixture, along with areas of planting comprising species such as Sedges <i>Carex</i> spp., Rushes <i>Juncus</i> spp. And wetland-tolerant grasses such as <i>Deschampsia</i> alongside flowering species such as Yellow Iris <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> and Lesser Spearwort <i>Ranunculus flammula</i> . Long-term management to include dredging/desilting, vegetation clearance and mowing works at appropriate times of the year to avoid build-up of soil/vegetation and removal of pollutants or litter where needed. On this basis, it is understood that all criteria.
Urban: Rain garden	Good	0.108	Shallow, vegetated basins designed to manage rainwater runoff from impervious surfaces. To be planted with a pond- edge species mixture with sedges, rushes, flowering species and grass species tolerant of wet conditions. This will provide a diverse range of habitats for invertebrates with no singular species dominating the planted mix. Good suitable vegetation composition and structures, no invasive species used.
			Target: Passes all criteria.

Urban:	N/A	0.116	Areas of amenity planting around Site.
Introduced Shrub			CAC not required.
Individual trees: Urban trees	Moderate	0.582	Planting of 143 small-sized trees will take place throughout the site. The trees have been assigned a target condition of moderate as trees will have a continuous canopy cover, no evidence of adverse impact on tree health due to appropriate management and monitoring, and have more than 20% of the canopy oversailing vegetation.
Grassland: Other	Fairly poor	0.161	Target: Passes criteria B, D and F. Areas of other neutral grassland will be created within the
neutral			site. The areas will be sown with a species-rich mixture such as Emorsgate's EL1 Flowering Lawn Mixture or similar, which will benefit a wide range of species. This grassland will be subject to an appropriate management regime to enhance biodiversity. Target: Passes criteria A-D, however reduced to 'fairly poor'
			condition as a conservative estimate in anticipation of recreational pressure.
Grassland: Other neutral	Fairly poor	0.016	An area of other neutral grassland proposed around the non- priority pond in the northern area of the Triangle. This area will be a buffer to the pond to prevent recreational pressure onto the pond. This area will be sown with a Emorsgate's Meadow Mixture for Wetland EM8 or similar and subject to a suitable management regime to enhance biodiversity.
			Target: Passes criteria A-D, however reduced to 'fairly poor' condition as a conservative estimate in anticipation of recreational pressure in this area.
Enhanced Grassland: Other neutral	Moderate	0.18	The retained grass margins along the Triangle boundaries will be oversown with a wetland tolerant seed mixture such as Emorsgate's Meadow Mixture for Wetland EM8 or similar and subject to a suitable management regime to enhance biodiversity. This will be implemented in a sensitive manner that will avoid impacts to retained areas where notable plant species are present (i.e. along southern boundary).
			Target: Passes criteria A-E.
Enhanced Grassland: Other neutral (previously Modified Grassland)	Moderate	0.231	Grass verges along Frieze Way, the entrance to Stratfield Brake and Oxford Road will be oversown with a species-rich seed mixture such as EM1F Basic General-Purpose Wildflowers mix or similar. Management will allow for two annual cuts which will maintain species diversity. Target: Passes criteria A, B, D and E.
Scrub: Mixed scrub	Moderate	0.299	Areas of created mixed scrub habitats will be created within the site. New scrub areas will comprise a variety of native species and will include a well-developed edge (by the target time set out) through an appropriate management regime, which will reach 'moderate' condition.
			Target: Passes criteria A, C and D.

Lakes: Non- priority pond	Moderate	0.024	New pond created in the northern tip of the Site which will comprise native planting and a native wildflower seed mix suitable for pond edges and wet grassland of benefit to wildlife. The pond water levels will fluctuate naturally, have an absence of invasive species and will not be stocked with fish.
			The pond will be capable of passing all criteria, however have reduced to 'Moderate' condition as a conservative estimate as pond levels may be consistent throughout the year.
			Target: Passes criteria A-D, F-I.
Ratio mix: Grassland: Modified / Urban: Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	Poor / N/A	Pitch 80:20: 0.736 / 0.184 Grasscrete car park 60:40: 0.271 / 0.181	The hybrid technology sports pitch will comprise hard- wearing grass species with artificial fibres incorporated into the grass to create a durable and stable playing surface, resulting in an 80:20 ratio of these habitats. The pitch will be intensively managed to a short sward with no herbaceous species present. It is expected to pass criteria C, D, E, F and G but fail essential criterion A to achieve a better condition.
			A 60:40 ratio has also been applied to the grasscrete car park area which is a grass-based, permeable paving system.
			The grasscrete will also be managed to a short sward and may have occasional herbaceous species colonise the area albeit considered to be species-poor and targeted to pass only criteria C, F and G.

3.7. Post-Development Habitats – Linear

3.7.1. The linear-based habitats to be created and enhanced as part of the proposals are presented in Table 5 below.

Ref.	Туре	Target Condition	Target Condition Notes
H1	Species-rich native hedgerow with trees – associated with a bank or ditch	Good	These hedgerows will be subject to an appropriate management regime where species indicative of nutrient enrichment will be managed / removed where required. Diseased trees to be removed. Areas where diseased trees removed will be bolster planted with native hedgerow
H2	Native hedgerow with Trees	Good	species of benefit to invertebrate species (e.g. Blackthorn). Targeted to pass all criteria apart from C1 and D2.
NEW	Species-rich hedgerow	Good	Approximately 420m of species-rich, native hedgerow planting is proposed across the site. Species composition will comprise at least 5 native woody species of local provenance including Blackthorn. The hedgerow will follow an appropriate management regime to achieve 'good' target condition.

Table 5: Post-development linear (hedgerow) habitats

3.8. Post-Development Habitats – Watercourse

The watercourse-based habitats to be enhanced as part of the proposals are presented in Table 6 below.

Ref.	Туре	Target Condition	Extent of Watercourse Encroachment	Extent of Bank Encroachment	Target Condition Notes
D1	Ditches	Moderate	No encroachment	Minor / no encroachment	The retained off-site ditch is expected to hold water more frequently throughout the year as it will be built into the drainage strategy of the Site. The ditch will be managed so that it is of good water quality and will avoid pollution from surface run-off etc as an extensive green buffer is proposed alongside the Site boundary which will help with filtration, achieving criteria A and F. Emergent, submergent and floating vegetation will be planted along with a suitable native wetland seed mix achieving criteria B, D and H. The ditch will be buffered from the development (with the exception of encroachment into 5m riparian zone in two separate areas) and is not expected to be subjected to physical damage from visitors or management activities. The ditch will still be susceptible to shading from the woodland thus failing criterion G.

Table 6: Post-development watercourse habitats.

3.9. Metric Results

3.9.1. The Metric returned the following headline results for the Site, detailed in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Metric results.							
Matuia Cumanaamu		Metric Categorie	Metric Categories				
Metric Summary		Area Habitats	Hedgerows	Watercourses			
Baseline results	Units	14.27	8.05	1.00			
Post- development results	Units	14.52	10.65	1.83			
	Unit Change	+0.25	2.61	0.83			
Change	% Change	+1.74%	+32.37%	+82.98%			

3.9.2. The headline results of the Metric are included at Appendix 2 of this document and shown graphically on plans BNG1 and BNG2. A full digital version of the Metric has also been submitted as part of this BNG assessment.

4. EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The Principles of Evaluation

Biodiversity Net Gain - Good Practice Principle for Development

- 4.1.1. CIRIA, CIEEM and IEMA have developed principles of good practice to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain. These principles provide a framework that helps improve the UK's biodiversity by contributing towards strategic priorities to conserve and enhance nature through sustainable development. There are ten principles in total, and all principles must be applied together as one approach. The ten principles are set out below.
- 4.1.2. **Principle 1. Apply 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 compensation 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.
- 4.1.3. Principle 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.
- 4.1.4. **Principle 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.
- 4.1.5. Principle 4. Address risks. 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.
- 4.1.6. **Principle 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.
- 4.1.7. **Principle 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 conservation 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.
- 4.1.8. **Principle 7. Be additional.** Achieve nature conservation outcomes that demonstrably exceed existing obligations (i.e. do not deliver something that would occur anyway).
- 4.1.9. **Principle 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 from other land uses.
 - Avoiding displacing harmful activities from one location to another.
 - Supporting local-level management of net gain activities.
- 4.1.10. **Principle 9. Optimise sustainability.** Prioritise Biodiversity Net Gain and, where possible, optimise the wider environmental benefits for a sustainable society and economy.
- 4.1.11. **Principle 10. Be transparent.** Communicate all net gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders. *Lawton's Principle*
- 4.1.12. Principles for enhancing England's wildlife sites were developed as part of the Lawton Review. Across the UK, these principles can be used to design Biodiversity Net Gain activities to boost wildlife sites. They are:
 - Improving the quality of wildlife sites;
 - Increasing the size of the wildlife sites;
 - Enhancing connections between, or joining up wildlife sites;
 - Creating new wildlife sites; and
 - Reducing pressure on wildlife sites.

4.2. Post-Development Evaluation

- 4.2.1. The site's contribution to Biodiversity Net Gain has been assessed with due regard to the principles outlined and discussed above.
- 4.2.2. The landscape strategy includes a variety of species-rich habitats and will comprise created and enhanced grassland and scrub habitats, attenuation features, a wildlife pond, biodiverse green roofs, green walls, native tree and hedgerow planting, as well as rain gardens and amenity planting across the Site. Focus has been had towards the retention and enhancement of habitats of greatest diversity around the boundaries of the site where possible, whilst providing species-rich habitats within landscaped areas.
 - 4.2.3. The development of the site will result in the gain of 0.25 habitat units, resulting in a percentage change of 1.74%. There is also a gain in linear features (i.e. hedgerows) of +2.61 hedgerow units (+32.37%), and a gain in watercourse units with a total net unit change of +0.83 (+82.98%) which are percentage changes significantly above the minimum 10% net gain.
- 4.2.4. The post-development habitat units, when based against the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, do not deliver the mandatory 10% net gain as stated in the Environment Act 2021.
- 4.2.5. The initial BNG assessment (February 2024) concluded that the proposals would reach a net gain of 15.05% in habitat units which is no longer achievable. This is due to changes in guidance relating to the proposed sizes of planted trees. The initial BNG assessment based the tree sizes on the projected size, which was following the guidance set out within the previous version of the metric (4.0), which stated:

"Size classes for newly planted trees should be classified by a projected size relevant to the project timeframe. When estimating the size of planted trees consideration should be given to growth rate, which is determined by a wide range of factors, including tree vigour, geography, soil conditions, sunlight, precipitation levels and temperature."

4.2.6. The guidance on planted individual trees has since changed, with the above-mentioned guidance removed within the Statutory Metric User Guide, replaced with the following:

"When planting trees post-development size class is determined by the size of the tree at site-planting. When using the tree helper:

- Record newly planted individual trees as 'small', unless 'medium' size or above at the time of site-planting."
- 4.2.7. As per the latest statutory guidance, the proposed sizes of trees have had to be revised which has resulted in the reduced net gain in habitat units.
- 4.2.8. At the time of writing, the following options will be considered in order to achieve over 10% net gain in habitats, including;

- Review habitat offsetting opportunities with Stratfield Brake Sports Ground; and
- Independent and local Habitat Bank providers who work alongside LPAs and landowners to deliver off-site BNG habitats units for developers.
- 4.2.9. Off-site gains will firstly be sought within the Stratfield Brake area to achieve net gain locally. The option thereafter will be to agree an offsetting strategy within the same LPA and National Character Area (NCA) of the site, to align with the mitigation hierarchy, which must be agreed through a planning obligation (s106 agreement) or conservation covenant where appropriate.
- 4.2.10. Once off-site habitat units are secured, a HMMP for onsite habitats will need to be finalised and submitted to the LPA after planning permission is granted. The HMMP will demonstrate how the development will achieve BNG in-line with statutory net gain requirements.
- 4.2.11. Given the responses received from the CDC, a draft HMMP has been provided upfront to provide clarity on how the on-site habitat target conditions will be met and managed over the minimum required 30-year period.

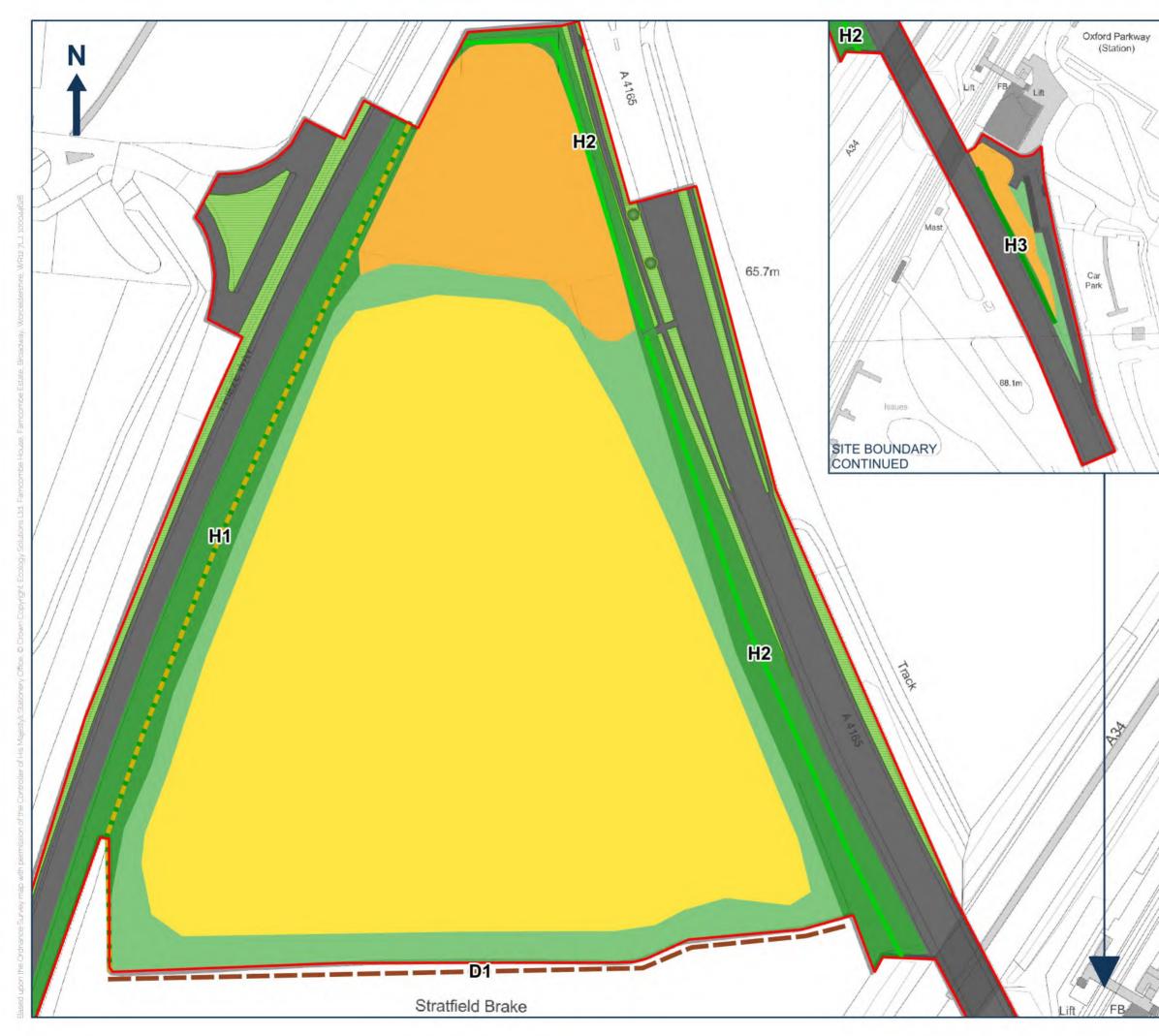
5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- **5.1.** The Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used to calculate the predevelopment baseline units. A total of 14.27 baseline habitat units are present on-site pre-development. The proposed development will achieve an on-site net gain of 1.74% in habitat units. There is also a gain in linear features (i.e. hedgerows) of +2.61 hedgerow units (+32.37%), and a gain in watercourse units with a total net unit change of +0.83 (+82.98%) which are percentage changes significantly above the minimum 10% net gain.
- **5.2.** The landscape strategy includes a variety of species-rich habitats and will include mixed scrub, a pond, other neutral grassland, hedgerow and tree planting across the site and enhancements around the boundaries. Furthermore, new biodiverse green roofs and sedum green roofs are proposed on roofs of the proposed stadium and small buildings, along with 'vertical meadow' green walls. Attenuation features and rain gardens will be created around the Site, and areas of amenity planting will be included within the landscape proposals. Focus has been had towards the retention and enhancement of habitats of greatest diversity around the boundaries of the site whilst providing species-rich habitats within the southern and northern areas of the Triangle.
- **5.3.** Additional provisions are being incorporated into the scheme that are not considered within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, including the installation of bat and bird boxes, log piles, insect hotels, bee banks and standing deadwood.
- **5.4.** The proposals have taken opportunities on Site where possible to maximise biodiversity net gain to achieve a no net-loss on Site. The mitigation hierarchy has been followed with the proposals maximising opportunities to enhance the site's biodiversity with the creation of species-rich medium distinctiveness habitats. On-site measures to increase this net loss, such as additional mixed scrub or urban tree planting, is not seen as a viable option. As such, off-site compensation is considered the only remaining option to ensure a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain is achieved. The Proposed Development will ensure compliancy with policy and legislation relating to Biodiversity Net Gain.
- **5.5.** The applicant will ensure this is secured and in place during the determination. This may be done through the creation of habitats on the adjacent land at Stratfield Brake, or third parties land within the local area (and thus remain inside the LPA/NCA boundary) by purchasing biodiversity units from an independent Habitat Bank company. An updated report shall be provided once this has been agreed post-permission.

PLANS

PLAN BNG1

Baseline Habitats

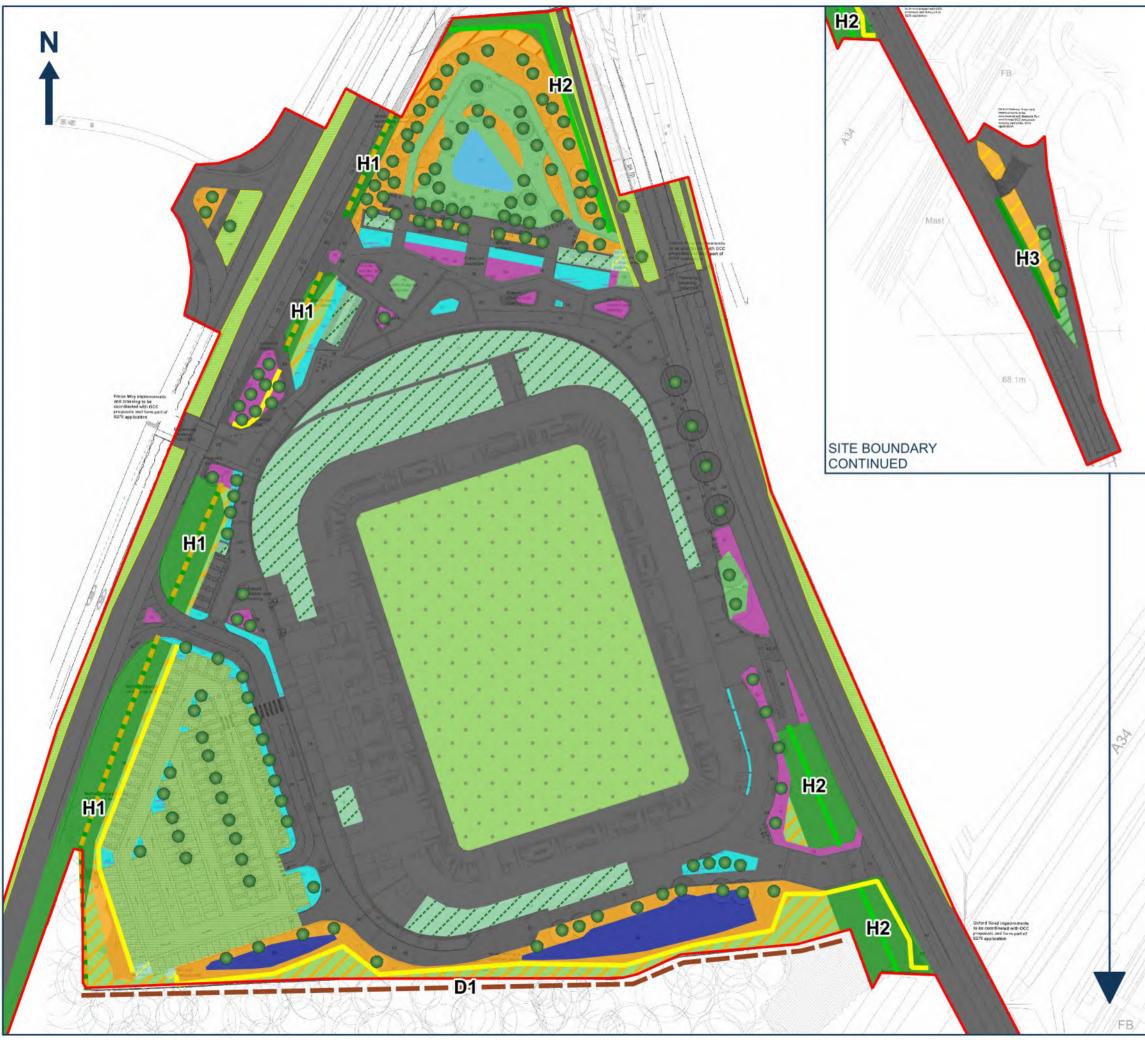




PLAN BNG1: BASELINE HABITATS

PLAN BNG2

Proposed Habitats




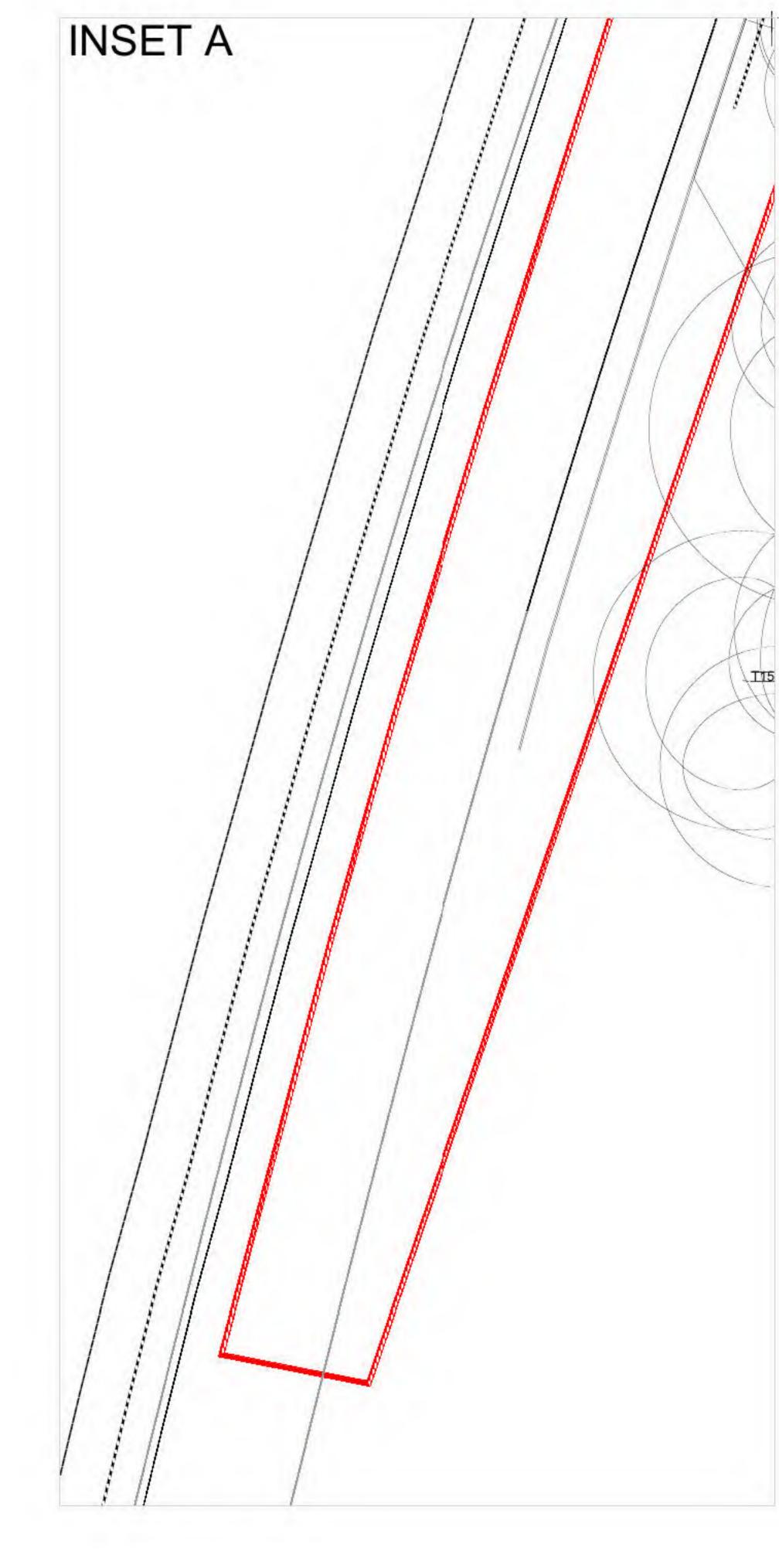


APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Landscape Plan





731461 19181 -----68.1m

BOUNDARY _

LEGEND

Concrete block paving

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01

Site Boundary

Planting beds (variety of typologies inc suds) 02 19 **Boulevard trees** 20 This drawing may contain: Ordnance Survey material by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office C Crown Copyright 2017. All rights reserved. Reference number xxxxxxx. OS Open data C Crown copyright and database right 2017 Rain-gardens (exact size to be confirmed with Engineers) 04 Hoggin/ compacted gravel 22 External References: J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\05 CAD\01 Autocad\M2-Models\D3263-FAB-00-XX-M2-L-0001-P19 DK 1:22 access route/ ramp (tarmac with fairfaced concrete wall edge) J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\02 Incoming\Y-Specialist Designer\2024-03-15 Deeproot cells\240313-UK230727 Layout edit.dwg
J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\02 Incoming\D-Highways Engineer\2024-091-0 VISSIM Stadium Transport Assessment\5018932-RDG-XX-XXDR-H-0012.dwg
J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\05 CAD\01 Autocad\M2-Models\D3263-FAB-00-XX-M2-S-1002-Tree survey bridge edit.dwg 23 Bollards and retractable bollards where required NOTES: Attenuation basins (to be confirmed with Engineers) 24 Section 278 proposals to be delivered in coordination with OCC and Tarmac 25 bridge edit.dwg
J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\02 Incoming\T-Town & Country Planner\2023-10-26 Red line Wildflower planting, various typologies Network Rail as part of a separate planning application. 26 P2121.11.24AmendmeP2007.10.24Layout upoP1923.09.24Layout upoP1813.02.24BiodiverseP1708.02.24AdditionalRevisionDateReason Amendments made to reflect BNG target goals afs OCC\E1251.pdf Bollards/ bollard locations and security measures to be confirmed Scrub planting 27 dk afs Layout updates afs J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\02 Incoming\A-Architect\2023-09-18 Building revit and Layout updates with security consultant recommendations. Timber lounge seat dwg\0UFC-AFL-ZZ-XX-M3-A-00002_Central Model_P05-Floor Plan-Level 00-Pitch.dwg J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\05 CAD\01 Autocad\M2-Models\Revit base\OUFC-FAB-ZZ-XX-M3-L-1100 Biodiverse roof extended to achieve bng under new matrix. afs sg Lighting design to be coordinated with Engineers. Cycle racks 28 Additional trees added to achieve bng under new matrix. afs baseedit.dwg J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\02 Incoming\D-Highways Engineer\2024-09-18 Ridge car park\OUFC CAR PARKING LAYOUT V2 [DRAFT]-Fabedit.dwg Public art strategy to be developed during the next phase to form Proposed tree planting (below extra heavy standard size) Drawn Checked part of the wayfinding strategy. No tree/ hedge planting within 3m of utilities without the use of a root protection system and to be fully coordinated to avoid clashes. Proposed trees (30cm girth and above) Stepped access (concrete, with hand rails and wall) J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\02 Incoming\D-Highways Engineer\2023-09-26 Transport plan\xRefs\X_OCC Kidlington CAD VERSION2.dwg
J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\02 Incoming\D-Highways Engineer\2023-09-26 Transport plan\Kidlington Roundabout GA CAG Files\P1B-ATK-HKF-XX-M2-CH-000001.dwg
J:\D3263 Oxford United FC\02 Incoming\D-Highways Engineer\2024-09-09 Kidlington Scheme.dwg Disclaimer:
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Do not scale from this drawing. Only figured dimensions are to be taken from this drawing.
All contractors must visit site and be responsible for taking and checking all dimensions related to the works 30 8m wide steps (as part of S278 in coordination with NR) 17 shown on the drawing prior to fabrication or setting out.
This drawing uses coloured lines. Please do not rely on a monochrome copy.

Existing vegetation retained Biodiverse roof (location on canopy when above E&M Plant) Double litter and recycling bins The manor arch feature (to be coordinated with Architects) Car park area, with reinforced no dig grasscrete vehicular suitable surfacing Earthworks mound with look out point Combined cycleway (As part of S278 in coordination with OCC) **Timber benches** Substation Natural pond with terraces for increased planting opportunities (2m deep in deepest part, with safety ropes provided) Natural coloured reduced carbon concrete (With etchings at key locations)

0 2 5 10 15 20 25 50m 1.500 _ landscape architects Lenten House | 16 Lenten Street | Alton | Hampshire | GU34 1HG T : 01420 593250 | E : alton@fabrikuk.com | W : www.fabrikuk.com Project Client The Triangle, Oxford Oxford UTD Drawing Title Landscape General Arrangement Plan Purpose of Issue Drawn Scale Date of First Issue Drawn By Checked By ISSUED FOR PLANNING APPROVAL 1:500 @ A0 Aug | 2023 Project Number Origin Zone Level File Type Number Revision Role OUFC 00 XX DR 1001 P21 FAB

Native hedge with standard tree planting and eco-tone edge planting Seating step wall (boundary edge dealing with level change) Cycle hubs with wildflower roof and vertical meadow green screens