

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Project: Former COMAG Works, Tavistock Road, West Drayton (1006546)

Technical Note TN01: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Using Defra Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Calculation Tool

Date: 8th August 2022

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Aspect Ecology was commissioned by Bellway Homes Limited (North London) in June 2022 to undertake ecological survey work and a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) for the proposed redevelopment of land at the former COMAG Works, Tavistock Road, West Drayton. The proposals are for the construction of 105 residential units, with associated landscaping.
- 1.2. The DEFRA 3.1 Biodiversity Impact Calculation Tool has been used to conduct the BNGA. This note accompanies the BNGA Calculator and provides a summary of the results and rationale for the choice of habitat types and conditions.

2. Policy

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ takes forward the Government's strategic objective to halt overall biodiversity loss, as set out at Paragraph 174, which states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: '*minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*'
- 2.2. The Environment Bill received Royal Assent in November 2021, such that it is now an Act of Parliament with a mandate for development in England to achieve a net gain in biodiversity. The Act sets out the need to achieve a minimum 10% gain, calculated using an approved metric (calculation tool), with habitat obligations secured for at least 30 years. However, secondary legislation is required to implement these commitments to Biodiversity Net Gain which is not expected to be passed until late 2023. The 10% biodiversity net gain requirement set out in the Act is therefore not yet law, such that it is not applicable to the proposals.
- 2.3. Policy EM7 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Council Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted in 2018) states that the biodiversity of Hillingdon will be preserved and enhanced, with particular attention given to '*the provision of biodiversity improvements from all development, where feasible.*'

¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2021) 'National Planning Policy Framework'

3. Approach and Methodology

Habitat Survey

- 3.1. The site was surveyed in June 2022 in order to ascertain the general ecological value of the land contained within the boundaries of the site and to identify the main habitats and ecological features present.
- 3.2. The site was surveyed based on standard Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology², whereby the habitat types present are identified and mapped, together with an assessment of the species composition of each habitat. This technique provides an inventory of the basic habitat types present and allows identification of areas of greater potential which require further survey. The site was classified into areas of similar botanical community types, with a representative species list compiled for each habitat identified. The nomenclature used for plant species is based on the Botanical Society for the British Isles (BSBI) Checklist.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.3. To quantify the level of biodiversity net gain that can be delivered under the proposed development, the change in biodiversity value resulting from the scheme has been calculated using the Defra Biodiversity Metric 3.1 calculation tool and associated user guide³. This takes account of the size, distinctiveness and ecological condition of existing and proposed habitat areas to provide a proxy measure of the present and forecast biodiversity value of a site, and therefore determine the overall change in biodiversity value. These calculations are provided in the accompanying metric spreadsheet.
- 3.4. To establish the habitat baseline, broad habitat areas have been identified based on the survey work undertaken at the site, the results of which are shown on Plan 6546/BNGA1. Habitat conditions have then been assigned based on the guidance set out in the Technical Supplement⁴, other appropriate guidance and professional judgement.
- 3.5. The post-development information used to inform the DEFRA 3.1 Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool has been taken from the landscape planting plans (see Plan 6546/BNGA2 and Appendix 6546/1).

4. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

- 4.1. The following section provides a systematic review of the input information, rationalising the habitat categories and their condition chosen from the drop-down menus of the BNAG calculator. The completed DEFRA 3.1 Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculation Tool accompanies this report.

² Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010, as amended) *'Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey: A technique for environmental audit.'*

³ Natural England (July 2021) *Natural England Joint Publication JP039. Biodiversity Metric 3.0: auditing and accounting for biodiversity – User Guide.*

⁴ Natural England (July 2021) *Natural England Joint Publication JP039. The Biodiversity Metric 3.0: auditing and accounting for biodiversity – Technical Supplement.*

A-1 Site Habitat Baseline (Pre-development)

Habitat	Rationale for Habitat Type	Condition	Rationale for Condition
Urban – Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface	The majority of the site comprises bare ground with rubble and spoil mounds, and few colonising botanical species present, typical of disturbed ground in urban areas.	N/A	No assessment required.
Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface	A small area of hardstanding is present.	N/A	No assessment required.
Heathland and Shrub – Mixed Scrub	Small areas of relatively dense scrub at the site boundaries, largely comprising <i>Buddleja</i> , with <i>Maple Acer</i> sp., <i>Rosa</i> sp., Elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i> and Ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> .	Poor	The mixed scrub habitat fails all condition assessment criteria (5), on the basis that this habitat comprises > 75% cover by one single, and undesirable, species (<i>Buddleja</i>). The mixed scrub does not comprise a good age range, nor does it have a well-developed edge, or clearings, glades or rides present.

A-2 Site Habitat Creation (Post-development)

Habitat	Target Condition	Rationale for Condition
Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface	N/A	No assessment required.
Grassland – Modified Grassland	Poor	Areas of amenity grassland will be created on the first-floor roof area. The amenity grassland will comprise a turf designed for amenity purposes which is suitable for regular mowing. The grassland will not contain high levels of scrub or Bracken and will not include non-native invasive species. However, the grassland will likely fail other condition assessment criteria and therefore is likely to achieve 'poor' condition.
Urban – Introduced Shrub	Poor	No assessment required
Urban – Urban Tree	Poor	Thirteen small street trees will be incorporated within the landscape planting. Many of the trees are non-native species. The trees will not form a continuous canopy and will primarily be managed for amenity purposes rather than ecologically. As such the trees are likely to only achieve 'poor' condition.

5. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment – Results

5.1. In summary, the DEFRA 3.1 Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator indicates that the development will result in a **net gain of 711.6% habitat units (0.31 units)**. There are no hedgerows or river/stream features present within the site and, as such, no score is generated for these sections.

	Change in Units	% Change
Habitats	+0.31	+711.6%
Hedgerows	N/A	N/A
Rivers/Streams	N/A	N/A

5.2. In addition to the measurable habitat benefits described above, it is anticipated that the development will deliver a number of faunal benefits; however, it is not possible to quantify these benefits with the DEFRA 3.1 Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator. The faunal specific benefits of the proposed development include installation of enhancements targeted to specific species, such as bat boxes, which would provide new roosting opportunities for a number of both National and Local Priority Species such as Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, in addition to bird boxes.

Plans and Appendices:

- Plan 6546/BNGA1: Existing Habitats Measurements
- Plan 6546/BNGA2: Proposed Habitats Measurements
- Appendix 6546/1 – Landscape Planting Plans (Aspect Landscape Planning, 2022)

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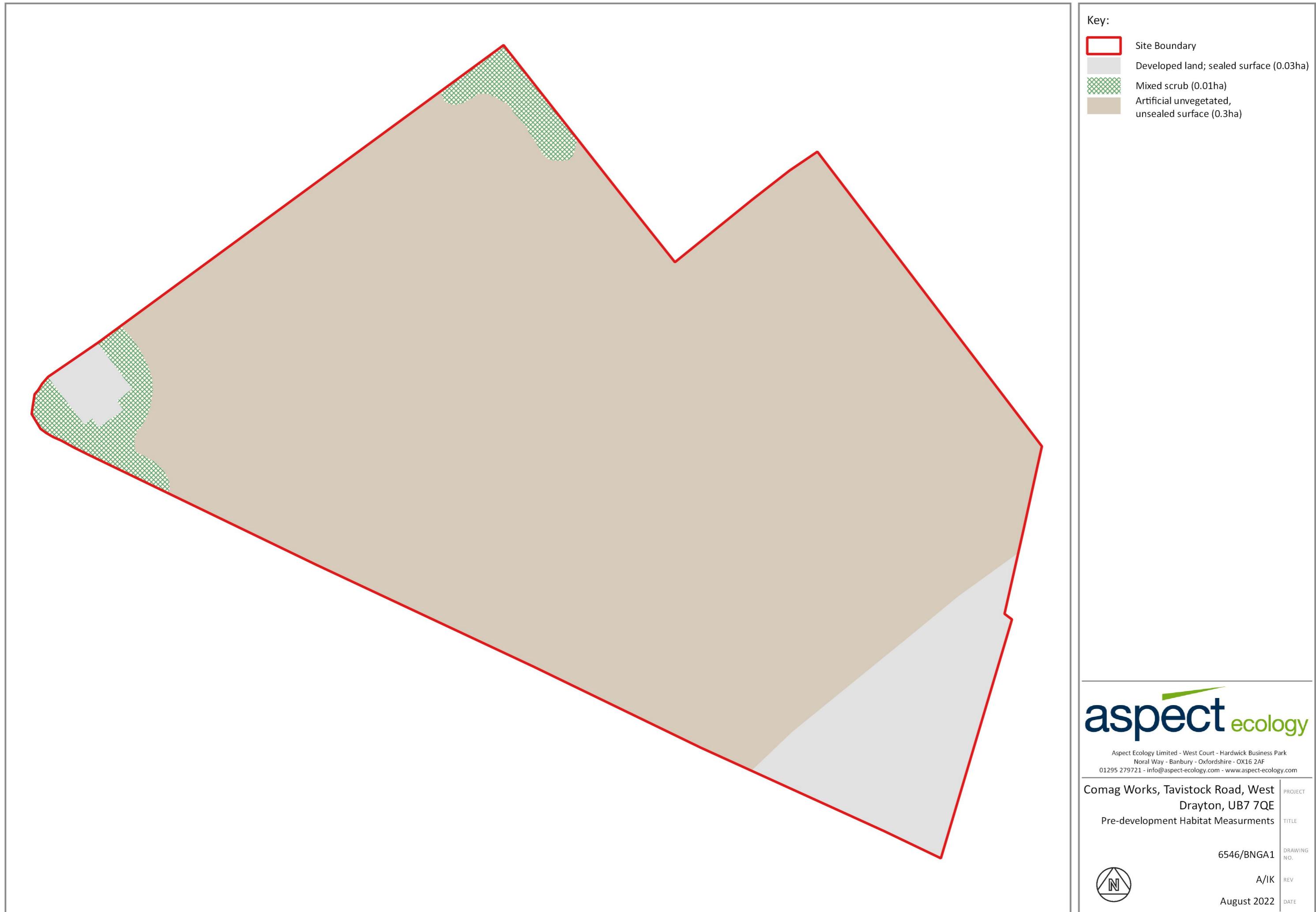
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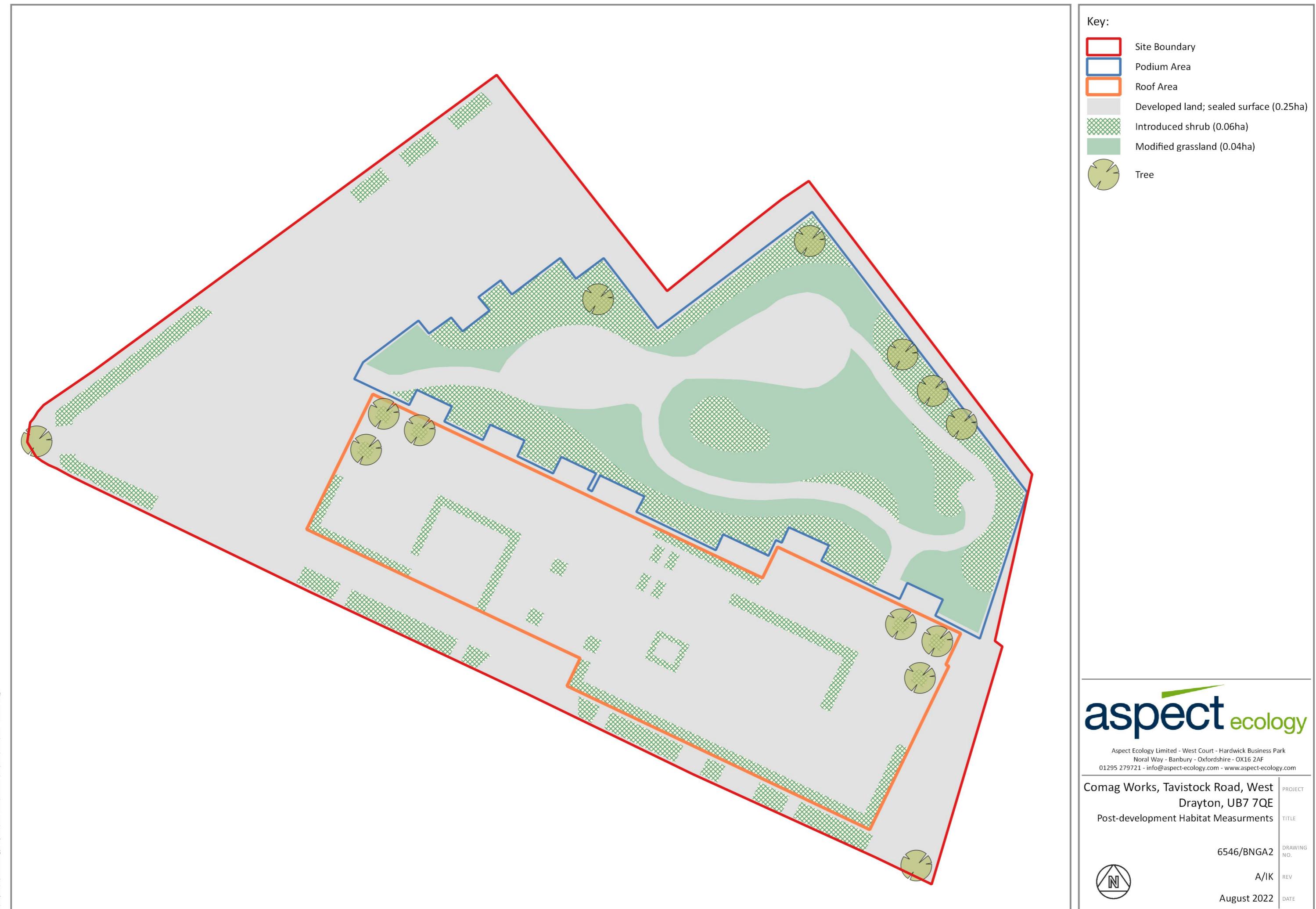
Plan 6546/BNGA1:

Pre-development Habitat Measurements



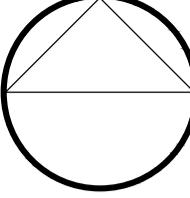
Plan 6546/BNGA2:

Post-development Habitat Measurements



Appendix 1:

Landscape Planting Plans (Aspect Landscape Planning)



PLANTING SCHEDULE - PODIUM

Trees

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height
5 -	BETALBS	Betula albosinensis var. septentrionalis	Advanced Nursery Stock: Multistem 3 stems :Clear Stem min. 150 :C	3.5-4.0m
Total :5 -				

Shrubs

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height	Pot Size	Density
2 -	AMELAM	Amelanchier lamarckii	Multistem 3 stems :3/5 brks :C	175-200cm	15-20L	Counted
59 -	CORSAMF	Cornus sanguinea 'Midwinter Fire'	Branched :3/5 brks	60-80cm	10L	3/m ²
124 -	EfSQ	Euonymus fortunei 'Silver Queen'	Bushy :3/4 brks	30-40cm	10L	3/m ²
13 -	EUOJAURM	Euonymus jap. 'Aureomarginatus'	Bushy :2/3 brks	20-30cm	10L	3/m ²
15 -	FAJA	Fatsia japonica	Branched :4/6 brks	100-125cm	15L	Counted
50 -	HEBGG	Hebe 'Green Globe'	Bushy :3/4 brks	20-30cm	10L	4/m ²
29 -	PIEJAVA	Pieris japonica 'Variegata'	Bushy :2/3 brks	20-30cm	10L	3/m ²
64 -	SARHOHU	Sarcococca humilis	Bushy :3/4 brks	40-60cm	10L	3/m ²
66 -	SjRu	Skimmia japonica 'Rubella'	Bushy :3/4 brks	30-40cm	10L	3/m ²

Herbaceous

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Pot Size	Density
125 -	E a r	Euphorbia amygdaloides robbiae	4 Buds :Full Pot	5L	6/m ²
126 -	GERMAG	Geranium magnificum	4 Buds :Full Pot	10L	4/m ²
146 -	LIRMUM	Liriope muscari 'Majestic'	4 Buds :Full Pot	5L	6/m ²
50 -	MISSISI	Miscanthus sinensis 'Silberturn'	7 Buds :Full Pot	10L	3/m ²
95 -	STABY	Stachys byzantina	4 Buds :Full Pot	5L	6/m ²
151 -	T c	Tiarella cordifolia	4 Buds :Full Pot	5L	6/m ²

Ferns

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Pot Size	Density
303 -	BLESP	Blechnum spicant	Full Pot	3L	7/m ²
53 -	POLSE	Polystichum setiferum	Full Pot	3L	7/m ²

Box hedge

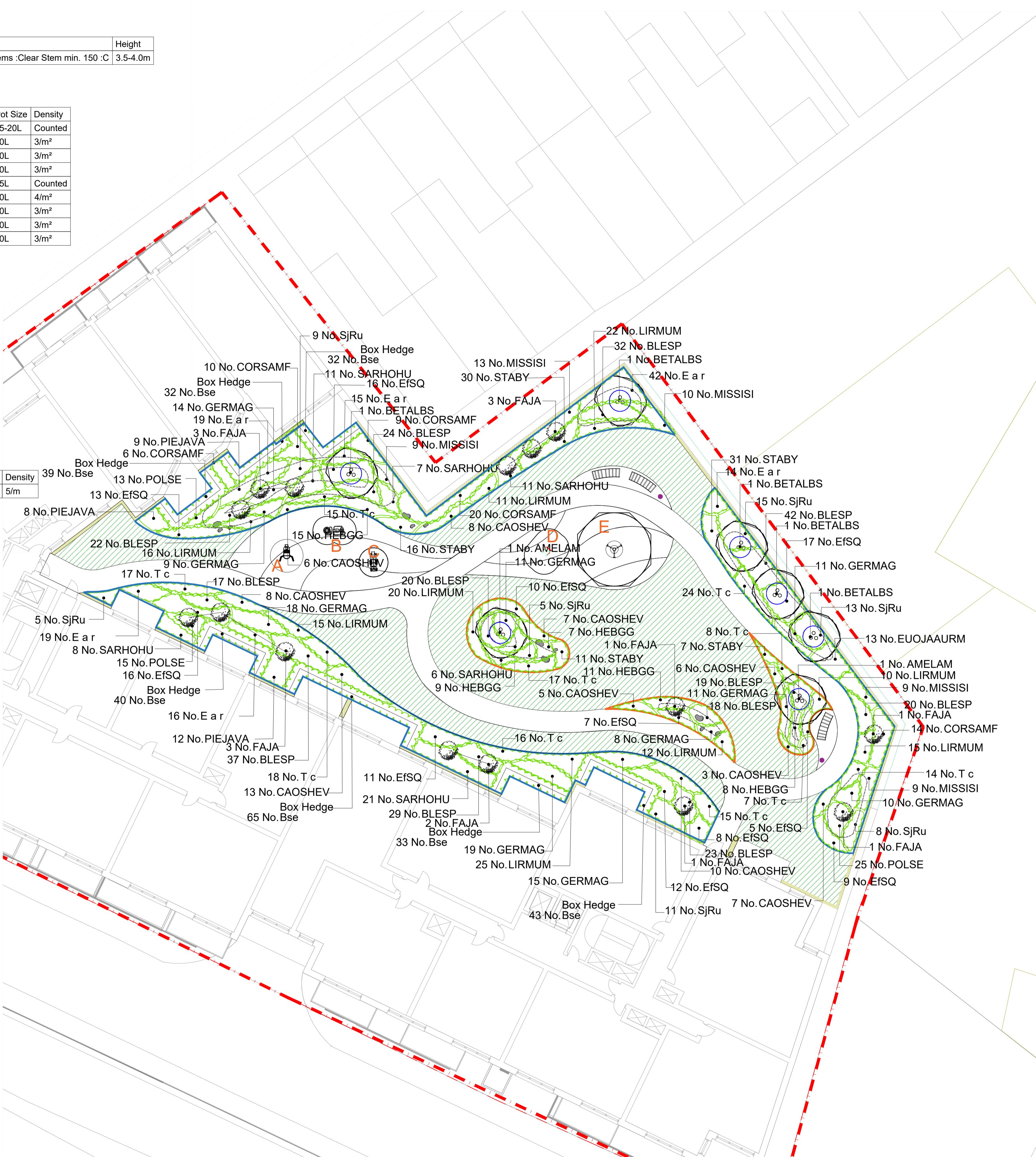
Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height	Pot Size	Density
284 -	Bse	Buxus sempervirens	Bushy :3/4 brks:Clipped Level 0.3m high	30-40cm	10L	5/m

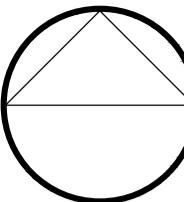
Amenity Turf
Rolawn Medallion Turf or Similar

NB: Species within planting mixes to be planted in groups or 3, 5, and 7's in random positions ensuring that contrasting blocks are provided.

200mm min gravel strip with metal edge to be installed along house.
30mm decorative gravel to be agreed and laid over geotextile membrane.

50mm bark mulch to be added around planting





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KEY:

- Site Boundary
- Proposed Multistem Trees
- Tree to be underground guyed support
- Proposed Feature Shrub
- Proposed Ornamental Shrubs
- Proposed Climbers
(Fixed onto pressure-treated golden brown timber fan trellis - Dimensions: (H)1800 x (W)945 x (D)30mm. Supplier and Product Code: Grange; HDFAN)
- Powder Coated Metal Tree Planter
 - 10mm thickness
 - 1000 mm height above path level
 - Colour orange RAL 2000
 - Size 1200x1200mm
- Powder Coated Metal Planter
 - 10mm thickness
 - 400 mm height above path level
 - Colour grey RAL 7016
 - Size 750 x1500mm
- Powder Coated Metal Planter
 - 10mm thickness
 - 600 mm height above path level
 - Colour black RAL 9005

A Outdoor Tennis Table

B Aluminium Pergola

C Seating Area

D Herb Garden

E Outdoor Kitchen

F Yoga Area

PLANTING SCHEDULE

Trees	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Girth	Height
6 -		BETALBS	<i>Betula albosinensis</i> var. <i>septentrionalis</i>	Advanced Nursery Stock: Multistem 3 stems :Clear Stem min. 150 :C	3.5-4.0m	
Total: 6 -						

Shrubs	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height	Pot Size	Density
3 -		AMELAM	<i>Amelanchier lamarckii</i>	Multistem 3 stems :3/5 brks :C	175-200cm	5L	6/m ²
8 -		ROSOF	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Bushy :3/4 brks	20-30cm	5L	6/m ²
Total: 8 -							

Herbaceous	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Pot Size	Density
8 -		FRAVES	<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Full Pot	5L	6/m ²
8 -		MENSU	<i>Mentha suaveolens</i>	Full Pot	5L	6/m ²
4 -		THYCIARG	<i>Thymus citriodorus</i> 'Archer's Gold'	Full Pot	5L	6/m ²
Total: 8 -						

Grasses	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Pot Size	Density
29 -		MISSIML	<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Morning Light'	Grade 3/+ :C	10L	Counted
Total: 29 -						

Bulbs	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Top size	Density
4 -		ALL SCH	<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>		6/m ²	
Total: 4 -						

Climbers	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height	Pot Size
6 -		TRAJA	<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>	Several Shoots :3/5 brks :Fixed onto fan trellis	100-150cm	5.7L
Total: 6 -						

Elaeagnus Hedge	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height	Pot Size	Density
214 -		EeGE	<i>Elaeagnus ebbingei</i> 'Gilt Edge'	Bushy :3/4 brks :60-80cm	10L	4/m	
Total: 214 -							

Planting Mix 1	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height	Pot Size	Density
37 -		ECH PUR	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Grade 3/+ :C	5L	8/m ²	25%
37 -		EUOFOEG	<i>Euonymus fortunei</i> 'Emerald Gaiety'	1+1 Bushy :C	15-20cm	5L	8/m ²
37 -		LAVANHI	<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> 'Hidcote'	Branched :2/3 brks :C	20-30cm	5L	8/m ²
37 -		STI TEN	<i>Stipa tenuissima</i>	Full Pot	3L	8/m ²	25%
Total: 148 -							

Planting Mix 2	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height	Pot Size	Density
37 -		ECH PUR	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Grade 3/+ :C	5L	8/m ²	25%
37 -		EUOFOEG	<i>Euonymus fortunei</i> 'Emerald Gaiety'	1+1 Bushy :C	15-20cm	5L	8/m ²
37 -		LAVANHI	<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> 'Hidcote'	Branched :2/3 brks :C	20-30cm	5L	8/m ²
37 -		STI TEN	<i>Stipa tenuissima</i>	Full Pot	3L	8/m ²	25%
Total: 148 -							

Planting Mix 3	Number	Abbreviation	Species	Specification	Height	Pot Size	Density
37 -		ECH PUR	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Grade 3/+ :C	5L	8/m ²	25%
37 -		EUOFOEG	<i>Euonymus fortunei</i> 'Emerald Gaiety'	1+1 Bushy :C	15-20cm	5L	8/m ²
37 -		LAVANHI	<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> 'Hidcote'	Branched :2/3 brks :C	20-30cm	5L	8/m ²
37 -		STI TEN	<i>Stipa tenuissima</i>	Full Pot	3L	8/m ²	25%
Total: 148 -							

NB: Species within planting mixes to be planted in groups or 3, 5, and 7's in random positions ensuring that contrasting blocks are provided.

Climbers to be trained onto treated timber fan trellis. Dimensions (H1055 x W614mm) or similar to be proportional with proposed wall.

50mm bark mulch to be added around planting



PLANTING NOTES

All plants to be supplied in accordance with the HTA 'National Plant Specification' and from a HTA certified nursery. All plants and trees to be planted in accordance with BS5936 and BS5845.

Delivery and handling of all plant material to be in accordance with BS4428/JUL/CPSE 'Code of Practice for Handling and Establishing Landscape Plants' Parts I, II and III and BS5845.

Planting Pit and Trench Preparation

Tree pits in soft landscape to be excavated to 1mx1mx1m depth prior to topsoiling and all shrub planting areas excavated to 450mm depth. All proposed hedge planting trenches to be excavated to 600mm depth. Unless otherwise specified, all tree pits in hard landscape to be 2m x 2m x 1m, backfilled with compacted Urban Tree Soil.

The preparation of planting pits, beds or trenches shall comply with the appropriate British Standards, namely BS4043, BS4428, BS5837 and BS5845.

Excavation of planting pits, beds or trenches shall be undertaken when the ground is frozen or defrosted such that backfilling may be difficult due to the nature of the soil. All excavated areas to be backfilled with either site or imported topsoil to be BS3882-2:General product grade. All trees and areas to be cleared of rocks and rubble larger than 50mm diameter and any other debris that may interfere with the establishment of plants. The Contractor shall break up and cultivate at the base of the trenches or planting pits shall be loosened with a fork or other similar implement. All stones and the like over 75mm in any dimension, deleterious matter, weeds and weed roots brought to the surface by any cultivation or excavation shall be removed off site. The Contractor shall remove off site the excavated subsoil material when preparing planting pits. The imported topsoil should make up any deficiencies caused by the removal of the subsoil material. Trenches and pits shall have the topsoil and any subsoil material thoroughly broken up and mixed prior to backfilling.

All trees shall be supplied root balled, unless otherwise stated. Root balled trees shall be well grown, healthy and with a compact, contained rootball. They shall be nursery grown and have been regularly watered. Prior to planting, all plant material shall be stored and sorted in accordance with best practice.

Planting

All plants shall be planted in a random fashion avoiding formal regimented lines at densities indicated in the schedule, unless otherwise specified. Unless otherwise specified, all hedgerows shall be planted in single rows and hedgerow mixes shall be planted in groups of 3, 5 & 11s and some shrub planting mixes shall be planted in groups of 9, 13 & 15s, with a cane and protective spiral guard included to all native planting. The selection, preparation, storage, handling, storage and planting operations all proposed trees shall be in accordance with BS5845-2014 - Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape, recommendations.

Planting and associated operations shall comply with BS4043, BS4428, BS5837 and BS5845. Unless otherwise stated planting shall be carried out during the period of 1 Nov to 31 March when the ground is not frozen or waterlogged. If planting is required outside this period agreement shall be sought and all bare root plants shall be substituted with container grown stock.

Provide Bamboo cane support and 'Trebreak Biodegradable Spiral Guards' (Green-tech Product code: 160PS1031-PRO) or similar to all native shrubs and hedgerows, young sapling trees, whips and feather planting, ensuring that the main or terminal bud is protruding out above the top of the spirals.

Watering

All plants shall be watered to field capacity immediately after planting and mulched with 50mm depth of medium grade crushed mulch. The Contractor shall water the trees, shrubs and hedges once planted so that the entire tree or planted area

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