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Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Client

Bellway Homes Ltd

Project

Desford Road,

Ratby

Date

November 2024

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Rev	Issue Status	Prepared/Date	Approved/Date
-	Draft	EAS/ 13.11.24	KG / 13.11.24
		EAS / 19.11.24	KG / 19.11.24

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 FPCR Environment and Design Ltd. (FPCR) were commissioned by Bellway Homes Ltd to complete a biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment of the Landscape Strategy Plan produced for the site (12963-FPCR-XX-XX-DR-L-0001, P02) for the proposed development on land at Desford Road, Ratby. (hereafter referred to as the 'Site' (central OS grid reference: SK 51137 05300).
- 1.2 This technical note has been produced to support discharge of Condition 11 on the outline planning permission for the Site (Planning Reference Number: 21/01295/2). This condition required the submission of an updated biodiversity metric assessment with the submission of the Reserved Matters application.
- 1.3 As a biodiversity metric assessment was submitted with the application, in accordance with the general requirements of biodiversity net gain, the ecological baseline has been taken as that agreed at the point of granting planning permission and the previous baseline assessment has been used to support this submission.
- 1.4 This Technical Note summarises the calculations and provides details regarding any assumptions made to inform the assessment.

Legislative Context

- 1.5 The UK Government, as signatory to the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity, is committed to conserving and enhancing biodiversity. This commitment is further enforced in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and the Natural Environment White Paper (June 2011).
- 1.6 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) sought to embed a 'net environmental gain' principle for development to deliver environmental improvements locally and nationally. This document was revised to the Environmental Improvement Plan (2023) which detailed aspirations to implement the Environment Act 2021, including rolling out Local Nature Recovery Strategies and introducing mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.
- 1.7 National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (paragraph 185) recommends that "planning policies and decisions should.... identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity."
- 1.8 The application was lodged prior to the implementation of mandatory biodiversity net gain on 12th February 2024. Given this date there is no mandatory requirement to provide biodiversity net gain, the provision of a net gain of at least 10% is a benefit of the scheme.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The development site was mapped and divided into existing habitat criteria. Habitats were defined using the UKHab classification system¹, with further information providing habitat area, distinctiveness and condition, which are used to calculate the value of each habitat.

¹ UK Habitat Classification Working Group 2018. *UK Habitats Classification User Manual* at <http://ecountability.co.uk/ukhabworkinggroup-ukhab>

- 2.2 The condition assessments were undertaken using the relevant Condition Assessment Criteria within the Statutory biodiversity metric condition assessments excel spreadsheet².
- 2.3 Full details of the calculation methodology are provided in The Statutory Metric – User Guide³.
- 2.4 The baseline habitats were provided in the Ecological Impact Assessment⁴ and mapped in line with the Habitats Plan, Drawing No.: CSA/5249/101.
- 2.5 Results are discussed in line with the Landscape Strategy Plan produced by FPCR, Drawing No.: 12963-FPCR-XX-XX-DR-L-0001 P02.

3.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Baseline Habitats

- 3.1 The majority of the Site comprised cereal crops, with relatively small parcels of bramble scrub in the northeast, northwest and southwest corners of the field. An area of other neutral grassland was identified in the south-eastern corner of the Site.
- 3.2 The Site is bounded a residential area to the north and east, including games pitches, arable land to the northwest and south and a paving centre to the southwest.
- 3.3 Existing habitats are presented at Figure 1 and details of the condition provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Baseline Habitats

Habitat (UKHab Type)	Area (ha)	Condition	Distinctiveness	Biodiversity Units
Bramble scrub	0.049	Condition Assessment N/A	Medium	0.20
Cereal crops	11.7231	Condition Assessment N/A	Low	23.45
Other neutral grassland	0.2392	Poor	Medium	0.96
Total	12.01			24.60

- 3.4 Native hedgerows associated with a bank or ditch ran along the southern boundary and sections of the northern and western boundaries. A native hedgerow comprised the rest of the northern boundary, and a species-rich native hedgerow associated with a bank or ditch was identified on the eastern boundary.
- 3.5 Existing hedgerows are presented at Figure 1 and details of the condition provided in Table 2.

² Defra (2024) Statutory biodiversity metric condition assessments [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides> [Accessed 05/09/24]

³ Defra (2024) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides> [Accessed 05/09/24]

⁴ CSA Environmental 2021. Ecological Impact Assessment, Desford Lane, Ratby. CSA/5249/05.

Table 2. Summary Of Baseline Hedgerows

Habitat (UKHab Type)	Length (km)	Condition	Distinctiveness	Biodiversity Units
Native hedgerow	0.384	Good	Low	2.30
Native hedgerow – associated with bank or ditch	0.713	Good	Medium	8.56
Species-rich native hedgerow – associated with bank or ditch	0.258	Good	High	4.64
Total	1.36			15.50

4.0 PROPOSALS

Lost/ Retained Habitat

- 4.1 As shown in Figure 2, the majority of the baseline habitats are to be lost within the proposed plan to allow the development for a residential area and associated green space. Small parcels of bramble scrub are to be retained under the current plan.
- 4.2 The majority of the hedgerows are to be retained. The native hedgerows associated with a bank or ditch on the northern boundary and parts of the western boundary are lost to make way for access routes.

Created Habitat

- 4.3 Proposed habitat creation is shown at Figure 3. A residential area and associated access and parking are proposed in the centre of the Site. Habitat creation is proposed in the surrounding area, prioritising habitats that will increase the biodiversity value.
- 4.4 There are three types of other neutral grassland proposed within the POS, comprising general purpose meadow, long season meadow grassland and tussock mix. Flowering lawn has been classified as modified grassland. Given the appropriate management as detailed in the Management Plan, these habitats should meet the criteria to be classified as moderate condition. Wetland meadow mix has been classified as sustainable drainage system and should meet the criteria to be classified as good condition.
- 4.5 Areas of grass turf are proposed along the road verges and as mown pathways. Turf is generally dominated by a single species and thus classified as modified grassland in poor condition within the calculation.
- 4.6 Areas of mixed scrub are proposed around the edge of the Site. Given the appropriate management, it should meet the criteria to be classified as good condition.
- 4.7 The diverse range of flora will provide interest for wildlife, particularly pollinators that can take advantage of flowering species. Scrub may also provide foraging habitats for mammals.
- 4.8 177 native trees and 26 non-native feature trees are to be planted in the green space surrounding the residential area to increase biodiversity within the Site.
- 4.9 The biodiversity units for each habitat on the Site have been calculated and are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Biodiversity Units: Proposed On-site Habitats

Habitat (UKHab Type)	Area (Ha)	Target Condition	Distinctiveness	Biodiversity Units
Built linear features	1.5287	N/A	V. Low	0
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0789	N/A	V. Low	0
Developed land; sealed surface – 70% residential area	4.43625	N/A	V. Low	0
Vegetated garden – 30% residential area	1.90125	Condition Assessment N/A	Low	2.55
Mixed scrub	0.7954	Good	Medium	6.68
Mixed scrub	0.0453	Moderate	Medium	0.30
Modified grassland	0.5692	Moderate	Low	1.97
Modified grassland	0.6256	Poor	Low	1.21
Other neutral grassland	1.1551	Moderate	Medium	7.73
Sustainable drainage system	0.8718	Good	Low	2.93
Urban tree	0.8345	Moderate	Medium	2.55
Total	12.84			27.06

4.10 Proposed native hedgerows are to be planted along the boundary of the residential area. These are expected to reach moderate condition with the appropriate management. The biodiversity units for the proposed hedgerows have been calculated and are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Biodiversity Units: Proposed On-Site Hedges

Habitat (UKHab Type)	Length (Km)	Target Condition	Distinctiveness	Biodiversity Units
Native hedgerow	0.668	Moderate	Low	2.24
Native hedgerow with trees	0.85	Moderate	Low	4.76
Total	1.52			7.00

5.0 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Biodiversity Net Gain

5.1 As assessed under the Statutory metric, based on the proposed habitats that are readily achievable and common place in residential development of this type, the assessment has demonstrated the proposals will lead to a net gain of 2.47 habitat units (10.05%) and 2.59 hedgerow units (16.73%). The current proposals meet the trading rules.

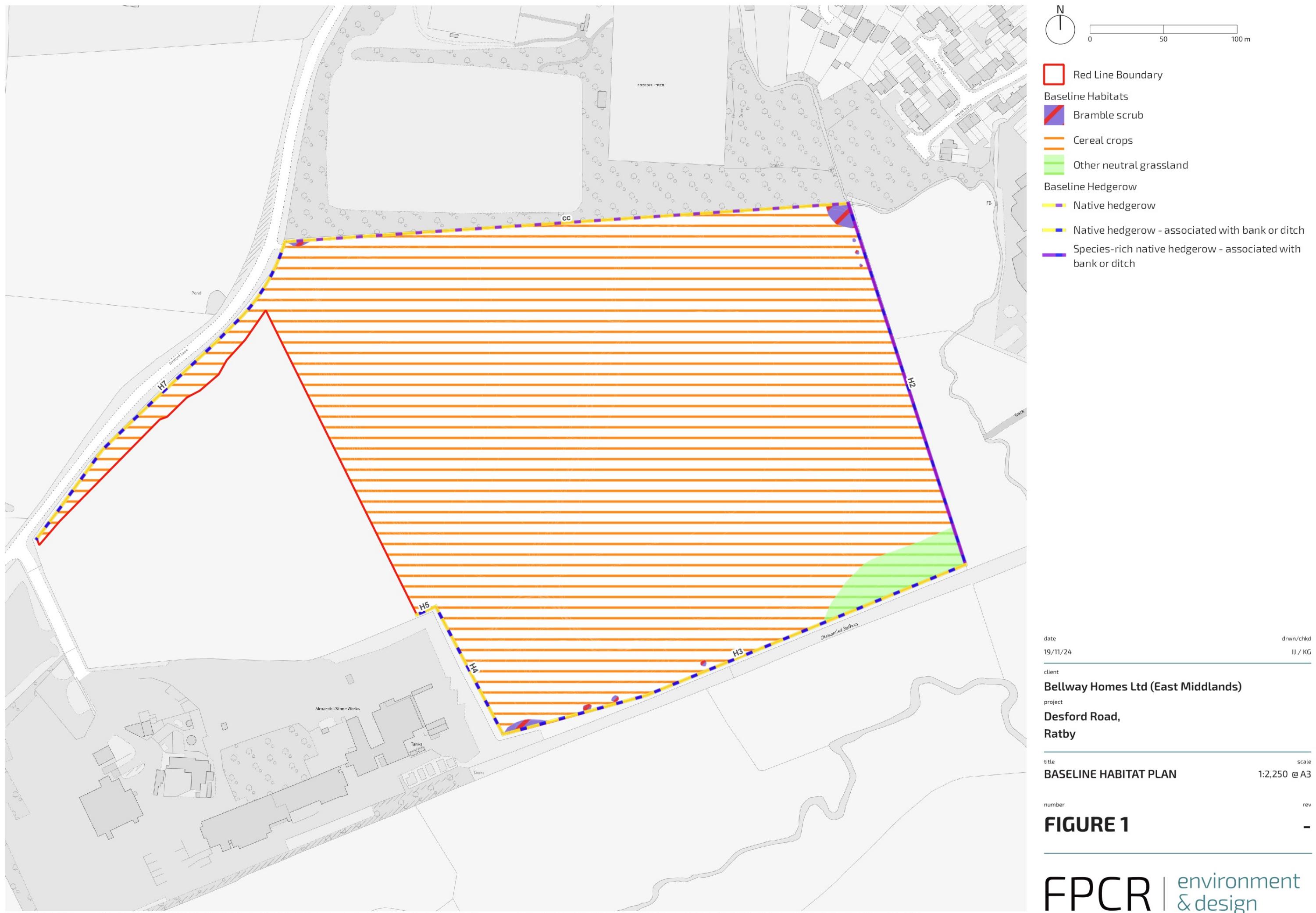
The habitat retention and creation proposals highlighted within this report have all been inputted into the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric. Table 5 provides a summary of the headline results from the BNG assessment for the proposals.

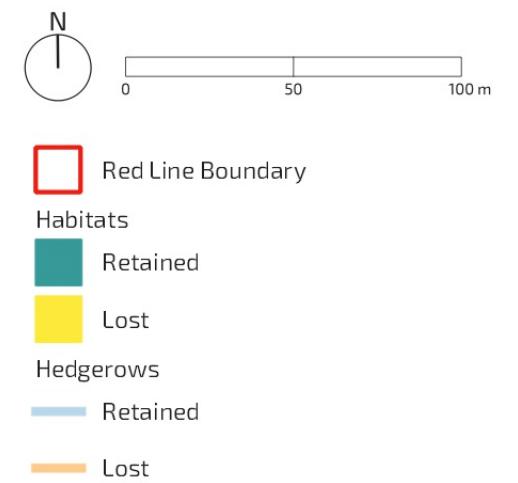
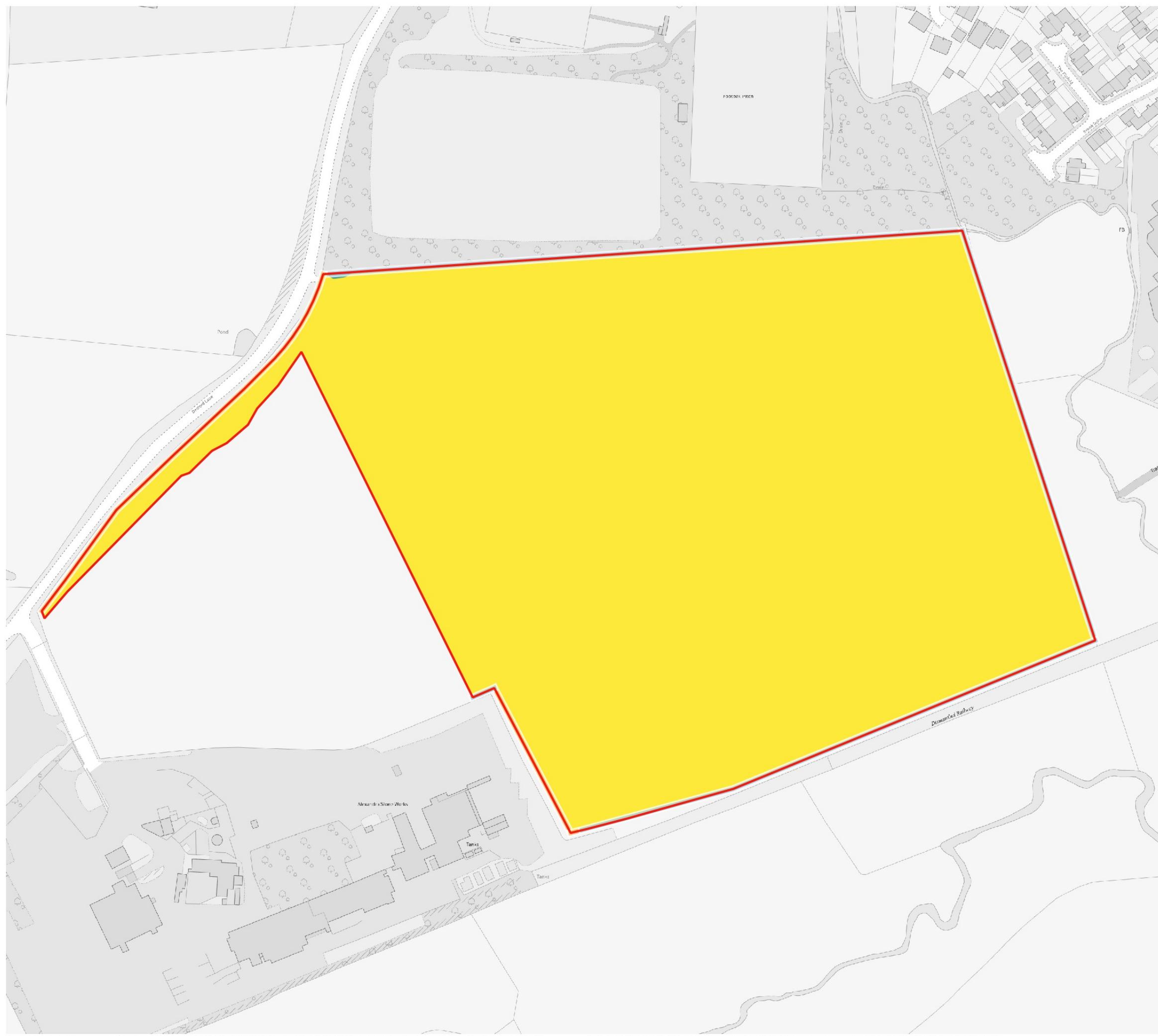
Table 5: Summary Statuary Metric Headline Results

Baseline	Habitat Units	24.60
	Hedgerow Units	15.50
Post-Intervention	Habitat Units	27.07
	Hedgerow Units	18.10
Total Net Unit Change	Habitat Units	2.47
	Hedgerow Units	2.59
Total Net Percentage Change	Habitat Units	10.05%
	Hedgerow Units	16.73%

Conclusion

5.2 The results of the assessment demonstrate that the proposed Landscape Strategy Plan will lead to a 10% net gain of habitat and hedgerow units associated with the baseline habitats when compared with the proposed habitats.





date: 19/11/24 drwn/chkd: EAS / KG

client: Bellway Homes Ltd (East Midlands)

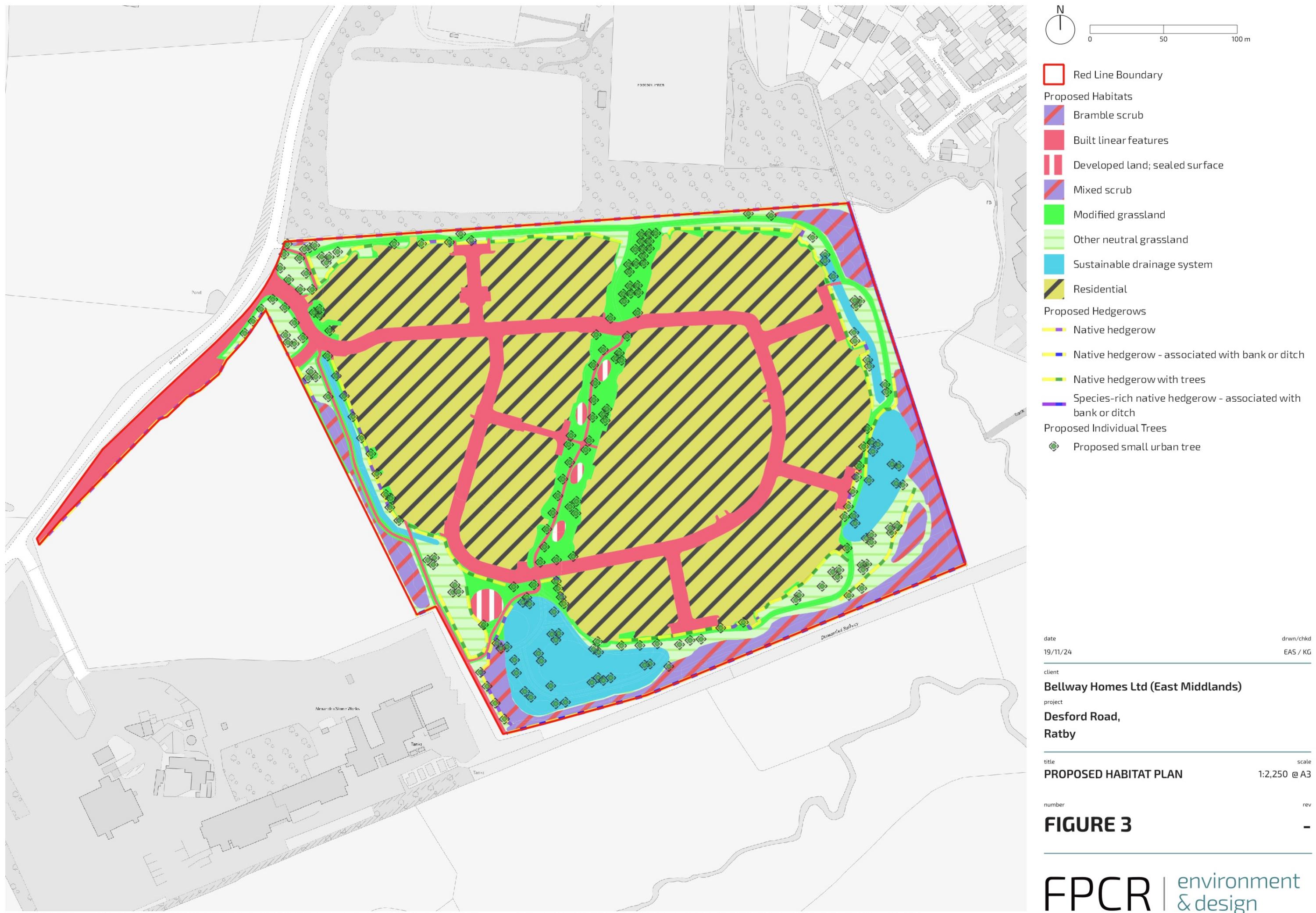
project: Desford Road,
Ratby

title: HABITAT RETENTION PLAN

scale: 1:2,250 @ A3

number: rev:

FIGURE 2



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