Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Premier Inn Portsmouth (Havant) 65 Bedhampton Hill, Havant PO9 3JN

Whitbread Group PLC

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Industry Guidelines and Standards

This report has been written with due consideration to:

- British Standard 42020 (2013). Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.
- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Construction Industry Research and Information Association & Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2019). Biodiversity Net Gain – Good Practice Principles for Development.

Proportionality

> The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.
>
> The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary.
>
> (BS 42020, 2013)

Executive Summary

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Whitbread Group PLC to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Premier Inn Portsmouth (Havant) 65 Bedhampton Hill, Havant PO9 3JN (hereafter referred to as "the site"). The proposed works include the construction of a 30-bedroom annexe to the existing Premier Inn building alongside the demolition of the existing restaurant to facilitate a new 37-bedroom annexe, and a Solus 1.5 restaurant conversion of 7 bedrooms is proposed at the ground floor of the existing hotel (hereafter referred to as "the proposed development").

Areas of Habitat

The baseline habitat value of the site is 1.38 units, comprising modified grassland, hard standing, buildings, introduced shrubs and individual trees. The post development habitat value of the site is 1.56 units comprising the retention and creation of building, hard standing and scattered trees, as well as the retention and enhancement of grassland. This results in an overall net change of +13.22% (i.e. a net gain).

Hedgerows

The baseline hedgerow value of the site is 0.13 units, comprising non-native hedgerows. The post development hedgerow value of the is 0.2 comprising the retention of some existing hedgerows, as well as the creation of new native and non-native hedgerows. This results in an overall net change of +62.16% (i.e. a net gain).

The current proposed plan results in a 13.22% net gain in habitat units and a 62.16% net gain in hedgerow units. This is more than the 10% target of biodiversity net gain.

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Management Plan must be produced for the site. This should include recommendations for the implementation, management and monitoring of the site for at least 30 years to ensure that biodiversity net gain is delivered.

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1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Whitbread Group PLC to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Premier Inn Portsmouth (Havant) 65 Bedhampton Hill, Havant PO9 3JN (hereafter referred to as "the site"). The proposed works include the construction of a 30-bedroom annexe to the existing Premier Inn building alongside the demolition of the existing restaurant to facilitate a new 37-bedroom annexe, and a Solus 1.5 restaurant conversion of 7 bedrooms is proposed at the ground floor of the existing hotel (hereafter referred to as "the proposed development"). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in Appendix 1.

This report should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- BNG Calculation - Premier Inn, Portsmouth (Havant), PO9 3JN - v1 - 12-11-24 (Arbtech, 2024)
- PEA-PRA - Premier inn Portsmouth (Havant) 65 Bedhampton Hill, Havant PO9 3JN V1 (Arbtech, 2024)
- BS5837 (S1) - Premier Inn Portsmouth (Havant) - 07-10-24 (Arbtech, 2024)
- BS5837 (S2) - Premier Inn Portsmouth (Havant) - 22-10-24 (Arbtech, 2024)

1.2 Site Location, Geology and Landscape Context

The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference SU 69696 06243 and has an area of approximately 0.8ha. The site comprises two buildings – the main restaurant (B1) and a hotel (B2) which is enclosed with patches of vegetated lawn with scattered trees and introduced shrub, alongside tarmac car parks located east and western site boundary. It is situated west of the town of Havant, Hampshire, located just off of the A3. There are scattered trees within the site and extending into the local landscape. Aerial imagery shows the local landscape to have a woodland character, with several small copses and woodland swathes in close proximity to the site. Water bodies can be found nearby, such as Chalkdock Lake (located ~0.95km to the south.

1.3 BNG Informative

BNG is a specific, measurable outcome of project activities that deliver demonstrable and quantifiable benefits to biodiversity compared to the baseline situation. In order to achieve BNG, a project must be able to demonstrate that it has followed all 10 of the Principles of Biodiversity Net Gain (as outlined in the *British Standard 8683:2021 Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain*).

The legalised Environment Act (2021) requires developments in England to demonstrate a measurable net gain in biodiversity and sets a target of a minimum of 10% BNG for all developments. It also stipulates that a management plan with a minimum 30-year term, should be adopted to ensure biodiversity net gain can be delivered. The. The requirement for biodiversity net gain is enshrined within the Environment Act (2021) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021).

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric is the widely accepted tool used to calculate BNG. It enables the calculation of habitat value pre- and post-development in order to determine the overall change in biodiversity value as a result of the proposed development. The Biodiversity Metric has separate BNG assessments for areas of habitat, hedgerows and watercourses.

The biodiversity value of a site should be maximised. However, it may not always be possible to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain within a site and therefore the Statutory Biodiversity Metric can also account for offsite habitat creation, where land is available. Alternatively, developers can seek to provide an agreed financial contribution to an appropriate third party (such as the Local Authority, the UK Government or another landowner) to deliver the required biodiversity net gain elsewhere on their behalf.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Baseline Biodiversity Value

The baseline BNG Calculation was informed by Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) report produced by Arbtech Consulting Ltd. (Arbtech, 2024). A baseline habitat plan is provided in Appendix 3.

Habitat Classification

The PEA classified the habitats on site according to UK Habitat Classification User Manual 2.0 (UK Habitat Classification Working Group, 2023).

Habitat Area/Length

The area or length of each habitat was calculated using qGIS software. In calculating the area or length of each habitat, habitats which occur as two or more isolated parcels across the site were combined, where they were deemed to be of a similar composition and condition. Distinctions were made between habitats to be retained (i.e. left as found in baseline), enhanced (i.e. improved condition) or lost (i.e. destroyed by proposed development).

Areas of scattered trees were calculated using the Tree Helper tool within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. Class sizes for urban trees are set out in Table 8-1 of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (Natural England, 2023).

Habitat Condition

Habitat condition was assessed using the relevant condition assessment sheets found in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (Natural England, 2023).

Strategic Significance

Strategic significance was assigned for each habitat based upon a review of the following:

- Ecological value
- Function within the landscape
- Any site or habitat allocations under the Havant Borough Council Core Strategy 2011

2.2 Post Development Biodiversity Value

The post development BNG Calculation was informed by the proposed site plan, which is included in Appendix 1. A post development habitat plan is provided in Appendix 4.

Habitat Classification

Proposed habitats were translated to their equivalents in the UK Habitat Classification using The UK Habitat Classification Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, 2023) and the information provided within the proposed site plan.

Habitat Area/Length

The area or length of each proposed habitat was calculated using qGIS software. In calculating the area or length of each habitat, habitats which occur as two or more isolated parcels across the site were combined, where they were deemed to be of similar composition and condition. Distinctions were made between habitats to be retained (i.e. left as found in baseline), enhanced (i.e. improved condition) or newly created.

Areas of scattered trees were calculated using the Tree Helper tool within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. Class sizes for urban trees are set out in Table 14 of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (Natural England, 2024).

Habitat Condition

Target habitat condition for each proposed habitat was determined assessed using the Temporal Multipliers Tool and the Enhancement Temporal Multipliers Tool included in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric spreadsheet as well as the relevant condition assessment sheets found in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (Natural England, 2024). This is based on the assumption that a 30-year management plan will be adopted for the site.

Strategic Significance

Strategic significance was assigned for each proposed habitat based upon a review of the following:

- Likely ecological value
- Function within the landscape
- Any site or habitat allocations under the Havant Borough Council Core Strategy 2011

2.3 Limitations

No limitations were recorded in the PEA report.

3.0 Results

3.1 Baseline Habitats

Table 1 details the baseline habitats present within the site along with their area/length, condition and strategic significance. A full condition assessment for each habitat (where relevant) is provided in Appendix 5a.

Table 1: Baseline Biodiversity Value

Habitat	Area / Length	Description	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance
Developed, sealed surface [u1b6]	0.3093ha	Hard standing is present in the form of two car parks and pathways located around the hotel.	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Developed, sealed surface (buildings) [u1b5]	0.1402ha	There are two buildings on site, a restaurant (B1) and hotel (B2).	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Modified grassland [g4]	0.2643ha	Areas of modified grassland are present throughout the site. The grassland is regularly mown and managed to maintain a consistent sward length. These areas are accessed regularly by hotel guests and therefore signs of trampling damage were present throughout. Species composition was low and patches of bare ground were evident along footpath edges.	Grassland condition: A: There are less than 6 vascular species per m2. B: Sward height is <7cm. C: No scrub present within grassland. D: Physical damage present in >5%. E: Bare ground coverage >10%. F: No bracken present. Score: **Poor**	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Scattered tees [32]	0.1059ha (9 x small, 2 x medium and 1 x large trees)	There are 12 trees within the red line boundary of the site, which vary between semi-mature and mature, and species include sycamore, ash, whitebeam, Lawson cypress and Himalayan birch.	A: At least 70% of trees are native species. B: Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and individual gap being >5 metre wide C: No ecological niches present D: No- Car park directly to one side E: No evidence of adverse impact on tree health from anthroprogenic factors Score: **Moderate**	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Non-native hedgerow [h2b]	0.1252km	Non-native hedgerow was present within the south-eastern corner of the site consisting of coral berry with some gorse.	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy

3.2 Post Development Habitats

Table 2 details the post development habitats present within the site along with their area/length, condition and strategic significance. An assessment of the anticipated condition for each habitat (where relevant) is provided in Appendix 5b, which is based on the assumption that a 30 year management plan will be implemented for the site. The proposed development will result in the loss of ornamental hedgerow.

Table 2: Post Development Biodiversity Value

Habitat	Area / Length	Description	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance
Developed, sealed surface [u1b6]	0.2931ha (retained) 0.0462ha (new)	Existing and new areas of hard standing on site	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Developed, sealed surface (buildings) [u1b5]	0.0662ha (retained) 0.0433ha (new)	Existing buildings and new building on site	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Modified grassland [g4]	0.2213ha (retained) 0.043ha (enhanced)	Existing grassland retained, with a small area enhanced to other neutral grassland.	Maintain current condition (poor) and enhanced grassland anticipated to reach moderate condition	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Scattered tees [32]	0.0936ha (retained) 0.0326ha (new)	All existing trees with only T6, T7 and T13 (all small size removed). Eight new trees to be planted across the site.	Maintain current condition (moderate)	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Native hedgerow [h2a]	0.0202km	New native hedgerows	Maintain current condition (moderate)	Area/compensation not in local strategy
Non-native hedgerow [h2b]	0.0933km (retained) 0.0733km (new)	Existing and new non-native hedgerows	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy

3.3 Biodiversity Value of the Site

Full details are provided in the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Areas of Habitat

The baseline habitat value of the site is 1.38 units, comprising modified grassland, hard standing, buildings, introduced shrubs and individual trees. The post development habitat value of the site is 1.56 units comprising the retention and creation of building, hard standing and scattered trees, as well as the retention and enhancement of grassland. This results in an overall net change of +13.22% (i.e. a net gain).

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4.0 Recommendations to Deliver BNG

4.1 Discussion

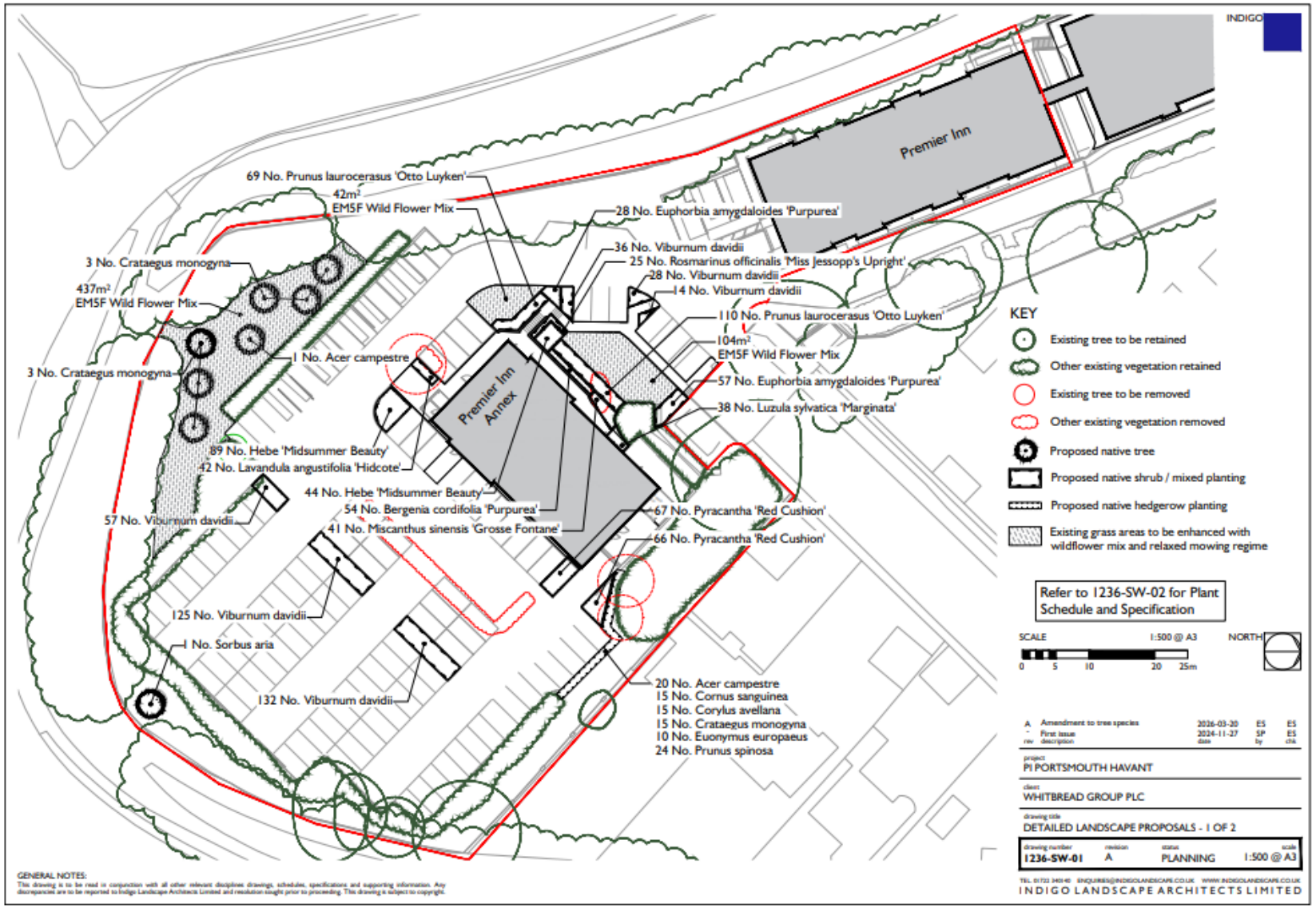
The current proposed plan results in a 13.22% net gain in habitat units and a 62.16% net gain in hedgerow units. This is more than the 10% target of biodiversity net gain.

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Management Plan must be produced for the site. This should include recommendations for the implementation, management and monitoring of the site for at least 30 years to ensure that biodiversity net gain is delivered.

5.0 Bibliography

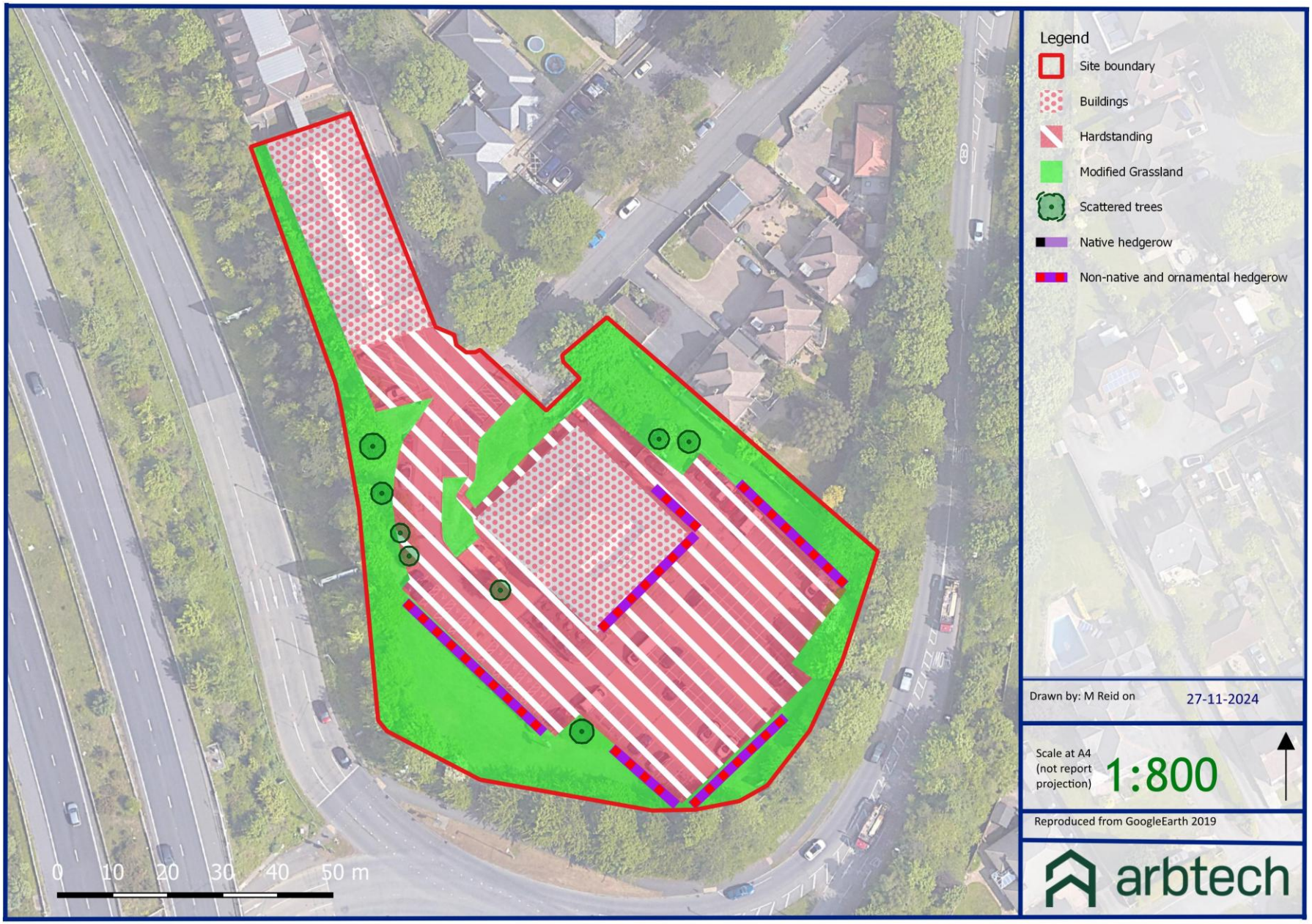
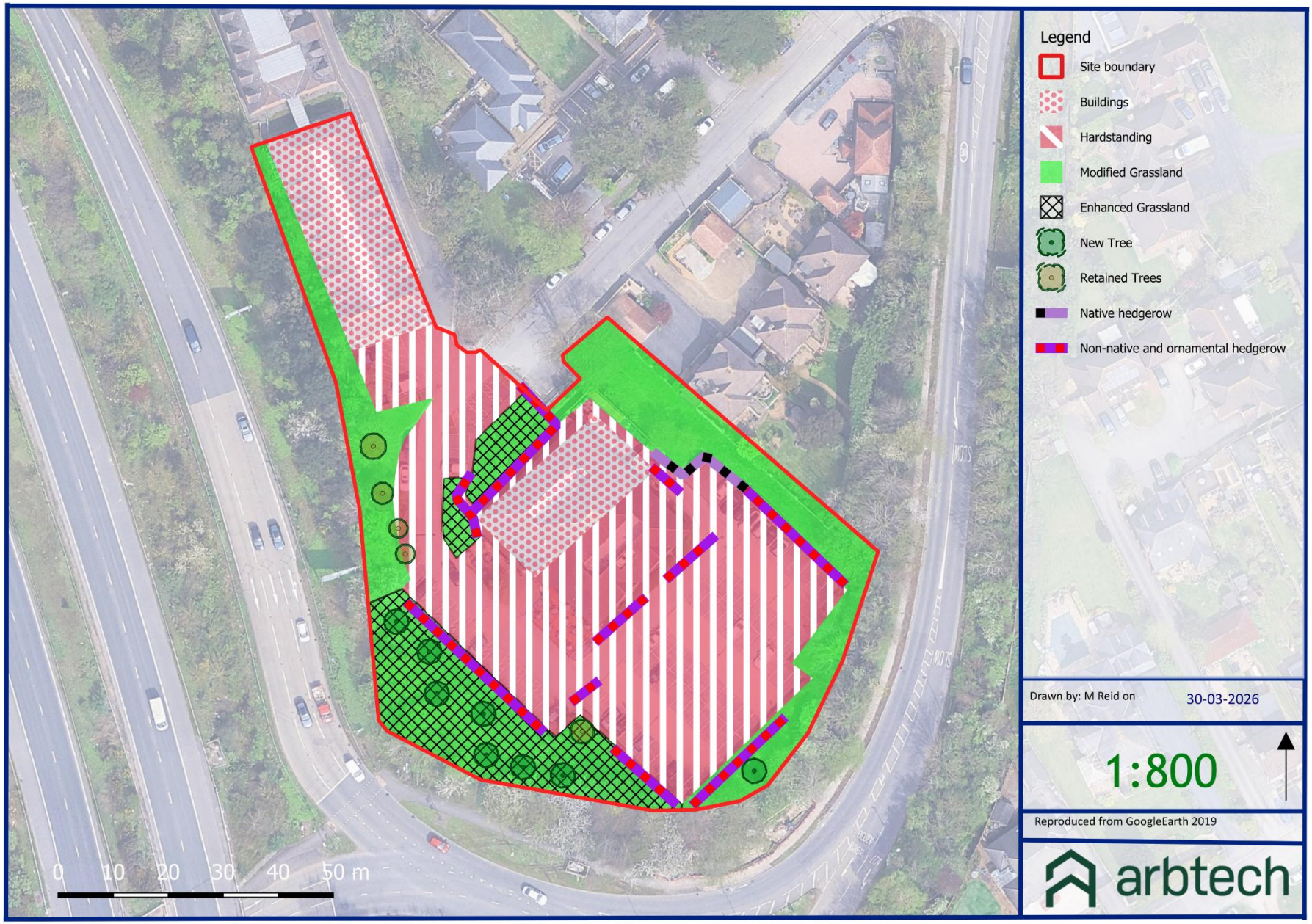
- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.
- CIEEM-CIRIA-IEMA (2019) Biodiversity Net Gain – Good Practice Principles for Development.
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey a technique for environmental audit. http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/PDF/pub10_handbookforphase1habitatsurvey.pdf
- Natural England (2023). Statutory Biodiversity Metric (JP039).
- Natural England (2023). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (JP03).
- UK Habitat Classification Working Group (2023). UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions V2.0.

Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan

Appendix 3: Baseline Habitat Plan



Appendix 4: Post Development Habitat Plan