

HEDYN HOMES

**LAND WEST OF
CORPORATION ROAD,
NEWPORT**

ECOLOGY SUMMARY NOTE

JULY 2025



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ECOLOGY SUMMARY NOTE

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Issue	Revision	Stage	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Signed
1	-	Draft for Review	24 July 2025	Ben Satherley (Senior Ecologist)	Dr. M Watts (Director)	M. WATTS
1	Minor text amendments	For submission	30 July 2025	Ben Satherley (Senior Ecologist)		

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Soltys Brewster Ecology (SBE) were commissioned by Hedyn Homes to undertake an updated ecological walkover survey at a parcel of land known as 'Block A' found west of Corporation Road in Newport (central grid reference: ST 32943 87073). The site is proposed for residential development and a full planning application is being prepared (see Site Location Plan/Proposed Layout Plan in Appendix I).
- 1.2 The site's baseline ecological conditions were first established via a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal comprising of a desk study and an Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey in June 2018 (SBE, 2018). This survey revealed that the site, and adjoining undeveloped land to the west/northwest, supported a limited range of habitats, dominated by bare ground and associated ephemeral/short perennial vegetation, with areas of species-poor semi-improved grassland and scrub also present. An updated walkover survey completed in November 2022 found there had been no significant changes to habitat types/extent since the 2018 survey, with the boundaries of Block A continuing to support a limited range of habitats typically associated with recently colonised brownfield land (SBE, 2022).
- 1.3 Following revisions to the development layout, and the proposed construction of a new drainage (surface water) outfall, the site was subject to an additional walkover survey in July 2023 (SBE, 2023a). This again confirmed that site conditions had remained consistent since the 2018/2022 survey visits. A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report and Appropriate Assessment was subsequently prepared by SBE (2023b) to inform the proposed drainage outfall which will discharge directly into the adjacent Spytty Pill tidal inlet – an area which forms part of the River Usk Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 1.4 Following recent pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), it is understood that further changes have been made to the scheme's layout. An updated version of Planning Policy Wales (PPW): Chapter 6 has also been published since the previous survey work took place, with this coming into immediate effect on 11th October 2023 in a published letter to Local Authorities from Julie James AS/MS – Minister for Climate Change¹. These changes have now been incorporated as part of the latest edition (February 2024) of PPW. The new guidance provides an update on Net Benefit for Biodiversity and the Step-wise Approach, with paragraphs 6.4.11 and 6.4.16 stating that:

'Planning authorities must follow a step- wise approach to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided,

¹ Published letter from Julie James AS/MS (Minister for Climate Change) to Local Authorities – Heads of Planning. Reference: MA/JJ/2512/23. Dated 11th October 2023.

then minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for. Enhancement must be secured by delivering a biodiversity benefit primarily on site or immediately adjacent to the site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact.

All development must deliver a net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience from the baseline state (proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed). Even if the biodiversity value has been maintained, there must still be a pro-active process to look for and secure enhancement through the design and implementation of the development.'

- 1.5 The current report therefore presents the findings of an additional walkover survey undertaken at the site in July 2025 and aims to identify any ecological constraints or opportunities associated with the proposed development. The document also sets out appropriate avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures for the scheme in accordance with PPW and policies GP5 and CE08 of Newport Council's Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP). This report should be read in conjunction with the existing reports (SBE, 2018; SBE 2022; SBE, 2023a; SBE 2023b) to provide a comprehensive overview of the site and surrounding landscape.

2.0 WALKOVER SURVEY RESULTS

- 2.1 The updated walkover survey was undertaken on 14th July 2025 by a suitably qualified ecologist². The survey revealed that conditions at the site have remained consistent since the 2018, 2022 and 2023 survey visits, with no notable changes to habitat types or extents. As such the 2018 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Plan is still considered to be representative of the site – a copy of this is included in Appendix II.

Habitats

- 2.2 The majority of the site remains covered in bare ground in the form of loose aggregate material which has been sparsely colonised by ephemeral/short perennial and ruderal vegetation (see Plate 1). Species present are considered typical of recently colonised brownfield land and include Yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, **Perforate St John's Wort** *Hypericum perforatum*, **Wild Carrot** *Daucus carota*, **Bristly Oxtongue** *Picris echioides*, Creeping Cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, White Clover *Trifolium repens*, **Teasel** *Dipsacus fullonum*, Ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, **Smooth Hawksbeard** *Crepis capillaris*, Common Mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris*, **Red Clover** *Trifolium pratense*, Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, **Hemp Agrimony** *Eupatorium cannabinum*, Hoary Mustard *Hirschfeldia incana*, Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, White Melilot *Melilotus albus*, **Oxeye Daisy** *Leucanthemum vulgare*, Goat's-rue *Galega officinalis*, Broadleaved Dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, **Wild Thyme** *Thymus polytrichus*, **Common Sorrel** *Rumex acetosa*, **Common Knapweed** *Centaurea nigra*, **Wild Parsnip** *Pastinaca sativa*, Common Vetch *Vicia sativa*, Common Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, Ivy *Hedera helix*, **Knotted Clover** *Trifolium striatum*, **Common Bird's-foot-trefoil** *Lotus corniculatus*, Mustic Mallow *Malva moschata*, Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, Great Horsetail *Equisetum telmateia*, Dove's-foot Crane's-bill *Geranium molle*, Hairy Bittercress *Cardamine hirsute*, Common Evening Primrose *Oenothera biennis*, Smooth Cat's-ear *Hypochaeris glabra*, Canadian Fleabane *Erigeron canadensis*, **Black Medick** *Medicago lupulina* and Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*.

Plate 1 – Bare ground with ephemeral short perennial vegetation



² Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) with experience in habitat and protected species surveys and previous knowledge of the site.

- 2.3 This list contains 15no. indicator species post-industrial land (highlighted in **bold**) as set out in the *Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales* document (Gwent Wildlife Trust, 2004). The site therefore falls short of the required 20no. indicator species to be considered for selection as a Post-Industrial Land Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- 2.4 A small and isolated pocket of species-poor semi-improved grassland remains in the southeastern extent of the site (see Plate 2). This grassland, which covers an area less than 100m² in size, contains a similar species list as noted above, although is defined by a higher coverage of grasses with additional species recorded including Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Cocksfoot Grass *Dactylis glomerata*, False Oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* and Wood Small-reed *Calamagrostis epigejos*. This grassland contains only 6no. indicator species for neutral grassland and therefore falls short of the required 8no. indicator species for consideration as a neutral grassland SINC.

Plate 2 – Grassy area in southeast corner of site



- 2.5 Scattered scrub represents the only other habitat found within the site boundaries, with this comprising mostly of low-lying Bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, interspersed by young strands of Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Traveller's-joy *Clematis vitalba*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Rose *Rosa sp.*, Willow *Salix sp.*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Birch *Betula sp.* and Buddleia *Buddleja davidii*.
- 2.6 Habitats found within the adjacent Spytty Pill tidal inlet (where then associated drainage outlet has been proposed) have also remained consistent since the 2023 survey visit. Dense reedbeds continue to occupy the majority of this area, with these comprising almost entirely of Common Reed *Phragmites australis* (see Plate 3).

A small parcel of dense scrub lies on the northeastern periphery of the inlet, next to the Argosy Walk footpath. This is made up of a dense and established Bramble thicket with Buddleia and Hawthorn spread throughout. All habitats found south of the footpath, including the scrub and reedbeds, fall within the boundary of the River Usk SSSI and SAC designation.

Plate 3 – Spyttly Pill Tidal Inlet south of application site



- 2.7 The survey found no instances of any invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) growing within the site boundaries although Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica* is known to be present within the Spyttly Pill inlet further to the west of the site. Buddleia was also recorded within the site boundaries and while this species is not currently listed under Schedule 9, it is considered to be particularly invasive and can spread rapidly if left unmanaged, often to the detriment of native flora.

Protected/Priority Listed Species

- 2.8 As habitats have remained consistent since the previous survey work, so does the site's potential to support protected/priority listed fauna. The mosaic of bare ground with early colonising vegetation, grassland and scrub represents suitable habitat to support an assemblage of terrestrial invertebrates as well as species of common reptile such as Slow Worm *Anguis fragilis* and Common Lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, the latter of which has previously been recorded in the local area. The more extensive/established areas of scrub, within the site and within the adjacent Spyttly Pill tidal inlet, are likely to support a range of tree/scrub nesting birds. While there are no features suitable for use by roosting bats found within the site boundaries, the habitats present at the site and in the adjacent inlet are likely to support a range of foraging bat species. Finally, Otter *Lutra lutra* are known to inhabit the nearby Usk, with Otter footprints previously found within the adjacent tidal inlet –

while no evidence of this species was found during the walkover survey, the adjacent inlet was still considered suitable for use by commuting Otter on an occasional or irregular basis. The survey found no evidence to suggest current occupation/use of the site by Badger *Meles meles* and the likelihood of presence for Hazel Dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius*, Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* and Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius* at the site was considered to be negligible.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The walkover survey revealed that site conditions have remained unchanged since the 2018, 2022 and 2023 survey work. The site supports a limited number of habitats, all of which are typically associated with recently colonised brownfield land. There are no Priority Habitats listed under Section 7 of the Environmental Act (Wales) 2016 found within the site boundaries, and the general lack of diversity meant that the site as a whole was not considered to be representative of the S7 Priority Habitat ‘Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land’. The survey also revealed that the site does not qualify wholly, or in part as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) – none of the habitats found at the site, such as the grassland or scrub, pass any of the relevant criteria for selection as a wildlife site, and the site as a whole would not qualify for consideration under ‘H20) Mosaic Habitats and Common Land’.
- 3.2 The habitats present at and directly adjacent to the site (i.e. within tidal inlet), were still considered to be suitable of supporting a range of protected or otherwise notable species including common reptiles, nesting birds, foraging bats and Otter. Any scheme will therefore need to incorporate measures to limit potential impacts to these species, as noted in the previous reports (SBE, 2018; SBE, 2022 & SBE, 2023a).
- 3.3 Finally, and in accordance with PPW, any future scheme will need to deliver a net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience from its baseline state, in manner that is proportionate to the scale and nature of the development. Any landscaped/undeveloped areas will therefore need to be designed and managed in a way so as to strengthen ecological networks, encourage botanical diversity and provide a continuation of habitat resource for a wide array of wildlife – a soft landscaping plan has been produced for the scheme (Hammond Architectural, 2025). The following avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures (as set out in the existing reports) are therefore considered appropriate for any future development at the site:

Avoidance

- Any future scrub clearance to be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (i.e. between September – February). If this is not possible then an ecologist should be on site to inspect habitats for the presence of nesting birds prior to removal and to supervise vegetation clearance as required;

- Retention of vegetated buffer (using either retained or newly planted vegetation) along southern and eastern boundaries.

Mitigation

- Further targeted survey work for reptiles to inform mitigation requirements. Alternatively, and on the presumption that low numbers of reptiles are present, a precautionary approach to any grassland/scrub vegetation clearance shall be employed. Vegetation should be cleared when reptiles are active (typically April – September) and via a two-stage process where an initial cut to 100-150mm is undertaken with the use of hand tools (strimmers/brushcutters or low-pressure mower capable at cutting at a set height), followed by a second cut to ground level after a minimum period of 48hrs. Arisings removed from working footprint immediately following each cut;
- Clearance of large rubble/stone piles to be undertaken under ecological supervision;
- Adoption of a sensitive lighting design during construction and operational phases of the development to minimise increased illumination of the adjacent Spytyt Pill inlet and to limit potential impacts to nocturnal wildlife such as bats and Otter;
- Strict timings for construction works near the inlet to be timed to avoid the period around sunrise and sunset (1 hour prior and post respectively) to avoid times when Otters are most likely to be active;
- Any vegetation clearance within the adjacent inlet (i.e. associated with installation of the drainage outlet) to be immediately (within 24-48 hours) preceded by a check for Otter resting sites by an appropriately trained ecologist. All vegetation clearance works within the inlet (i.e. scrub and reedbeds) also to be undertaken under direct ecological supervision.
- Any excavations during the construction phase to be covered overnight or a means of escape provided (e.g. 300 mm wide timber board at an angle of $\leq 45^\circ$ to be used as a ramp) to prevent entrapment of wildlife;
- Implementation of a site drainage and pollution prevention strategy to cover construction and operational phases, in order to limit any potential indirect risks to the adjacent River Usk SSSI & SAC (e.g. on water quality via construction run-off and/or surface water run-off);
- Any boundary fences to feature Hedgehog corridors³ to allow for continued habitat connectivity throughout the operational phases of the development.

Enhancement

- Specialist advice sought to control/eradicate any strands of Japanese Knotweed found near the site boundaries and adjacent inlet;
- Control/removal of other invasive non-native species (INNS) present at the site (i.e. Buddleia);

³ Based on the 'Hedgehog Street' principle advised by the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) and other conservation groups: <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/>

- Inclusion of bat and bird boxes onto new buildings/retained trees.
- Landscape plan to provide 9no. trees and 938no. shrubs in soft landscaped areas;
- Soft landscaping plan to incorporate native species, or those with a known benefit to local biodiversity;
- Positive management of retained and newly created habitats in order to encourage botanical diversity and help provide a net benefit for biodiversity;
- New tree/shrub planting provided around site boundaries to contribute towards the local green infrastructure (GI) network;
- Creation of new stone/log/brush piles within landscaped areas to provide additional sheltering opportunities for reptiles and invertebrates;

REFERENCES

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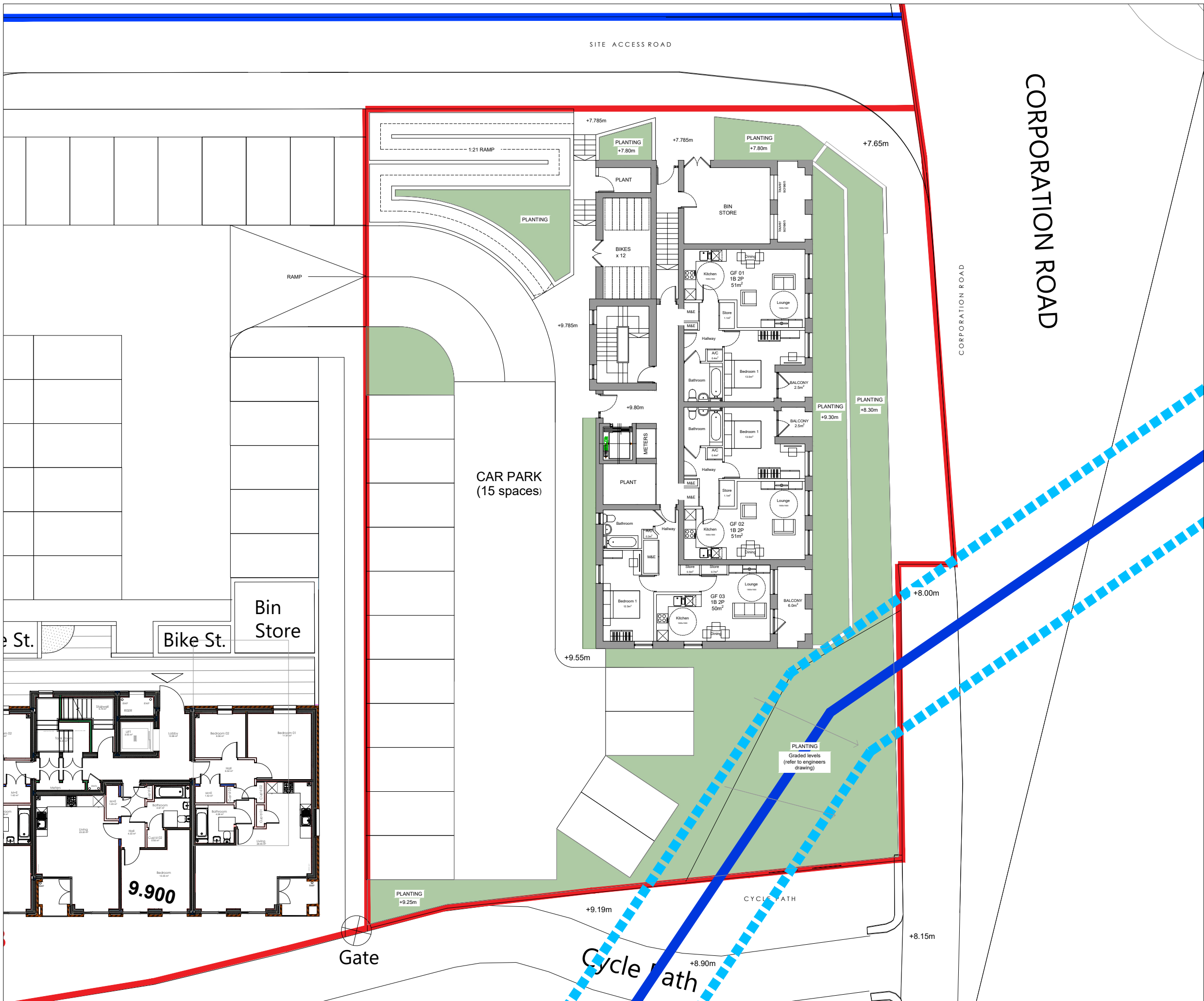
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Soltys Brewster Ecology (SBE) (2023b). *Land West of Corporation Road, Newport – Drainage Scheme. Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). Screening Report & Appropriate Assessment*. Report Reference: E1883305 Doc02. Dated – 20th December 2023.

APPENDIX I SITE LOCATION PLAN / PROPOSED LAYOUT PLAN



REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE
CLIENT		
Newport City Homes		
JOB TITLE		
Block A, Corporation Road		
DRAWING TITLE		
Block A		
Ground Floor Plan		
SCALE @ A3	DATE	DRAWN BY
1:200	October '19	SC
JOB NO.	DRAWING NO.	REVISION
2119	S01 BLA_MP_GF_00 B	



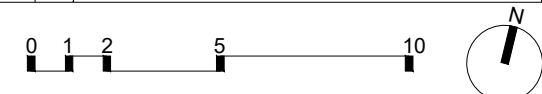
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Figured dimensions must be taken in preference to scaled dimensions and any discrepancies are to be referred to Hammond Architectural Ltd. Contractors, subcontractors and suppliers must verify all dimensions on site before commencing any work or making any workshop drawings.

01 Block A - Ground Floor Plan
Scale 1:200 @ A3

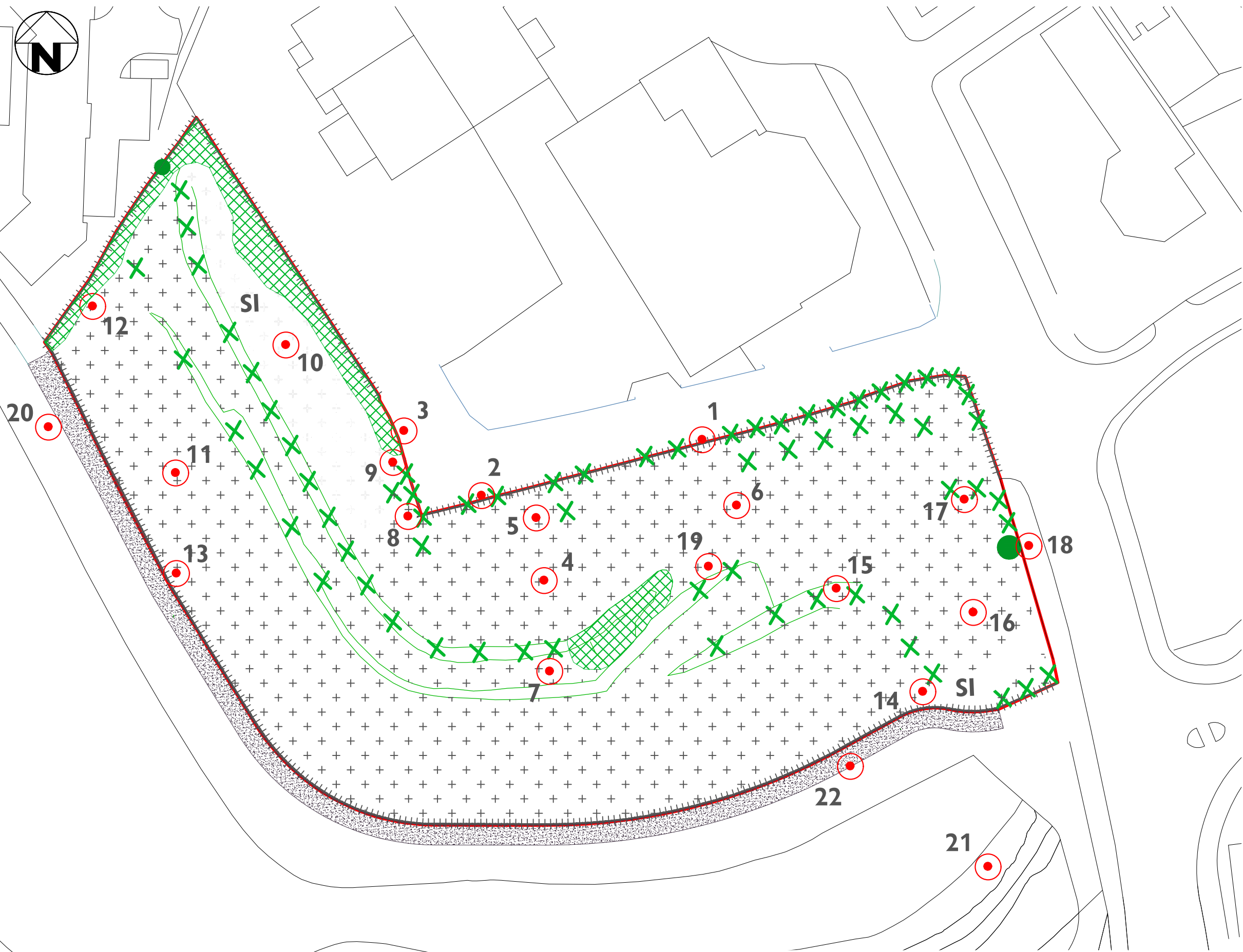


APPENDIX II EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABTIAT PLAN (2018)



KEY

- Dense/ Continuous Scrub
- Scattered Scrub
- Scattered Broad-leaved Trees
- Poor Semi-improved Grassland
- Ephemeral/ Short Perennial Vegetation
- Target Note



* Rev.	xx.xx.xx Date	First issue Comment	XX XX	
			Approved	Drawn

	PLANNING	DESIGN	TENDER	CONSTRUCTION
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Corporation Road, Newport

o drawing
Phase 1 Habitat Map

o drawing no.	Project Identifier	o revision	o scale	o drawn	o approved	o date
E183301/001		*	NTS @ A3	AO	MW	June 2018
SB Project Number Originator Zone Level Type Role Number Figure						

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