

HAGLEY BUILDING & CIVIL ENGINEERING LTD

LAND ADJACENT TO SEVEN STILES AVENUS, NEWPORT RETAIL PARK

ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL



MAY 2026

soltysbrewster
E C O L O G Y

4 Stangate House,
Stanwell Road,
Penarth,
Vale of Glamorgan,
United Kingdom.
CF64 2AA

Telephone: - 033 00 13 00 12
e-mail: - enquiry@soltysbrewster.co.uk
Web Site: - www.soltysbrewster.com

HAGLEY BUILDING & CIVIL ENGINEERING LTD

LAND ADJACENT TO SEVEN STILES AVENUE, NEWPORT RETAIL PARK

ECOLOGICAL APPRISAL

DOCUMENT REF: E24126401 / Doc 02 – May 2026

Issue	Revision	Stage	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Signed
1	-	Draft for review	19 May 2026	Ben Satherley (Associate Ecologist)	Dr. M Watts (Director)	M. WATTS

2026 ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

LAND ADJACENT TO SEVEN STILES AVENUE, NEWPORT RETAIL PARK

Background

Soltys Brewster Ecology (SBE) were commissioned by Hagley Building & Civil Engineering Ltd to undertake an ecological appraisal of a parcel of land found within a vacant plot at Newport Retail Park (central grid reference: ST 34803 86865, see Site Location Plan in Appendix I). This vacant plot was first surveyed by SBE in August 2024 in order to inform a separate planning submission for the *'erection of a new vehicular maintenance and workshop building, formation of car parking areas, EV charging points, landscaping and associated development'* (Newport City Council Planning Application No. 24/0969). Planning permission for the above development was granted in April 2025, and it is understood that the current client has now acquired additional land in the far southern extent of the plot, with the aim to convert this area to provide additional parking spaces for the adjacent vehicular workshop development. A survey to establish the baseline ecological conditions and identify any ecological constraints or opportunities at the current application site is therefore required.

2024 Survey Work

The current application site (Appendix I), along with the vacant plot immediately adjacent to the north and the existing/developed plot to the south, were initially subject to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) comprising of a desk study and Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey in August 2024 (SBE, 2024).

Desk based consultation with the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBReC) confirmed that the current application site boundaries do not lie within, or directly adjacent to, any statutory sites designated for nature conservation, although the Gwent Levels – Nash and Goldcliff Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) can be found approximately 475m to the southeast. A review of OS mapping revealed that a watercourse found adjacent to the site's eastern boundary (outside the redline boundary) may be hydrologically linked to the network of drainage ditches that lie within and play an important role in the Gwent Levels. With the exception of this hydrological link and the potential for indirect impacts (e.g. on water quality), the SSSI was considered of limited ecological relevance to the proposal based on its physical separation and the scale/type of proposed scheme (i.e. provision of additional car parking within an existing retail park). Several non-statutory designated sites were also identified within a 1km radius of the application site, of which only the Former Steel Works Site off Queensway Meadow Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) was considered

of any ecological relevance, with this SINC found directly adjacent to the site's eastern boundary. A copy of the 2024 desk study results as provided by SEWBReC are included in Appendix II.

The 2024 Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey revealed a limited number of habitats at/directly adjacent to the current application site, all of which are typically associated with recently colonised brownfield land. The northern extent of the site (where all development is proposed) comprised entirely of dense Bramble scrub, with the remaining land to the south covered largely by hardstanding in the form of existing carparking and road surfaces, with small areas of ornamental shrub planting. Several existing buildings can also be found within the site boundaries, including a car dealership and smaller outbuildings/garages, although these are to be retained/will not be impacted by the proposed works. The adjacent plot which extends to the north of the current application site was also predominantly covered in Bramble scrub with a mosaic of bare ground and patchy ephemeral/short perennial and ruderal vegetation also present. A line of broadleaved trees was found marking the eastern boundary of the site and adjacent plot, and this was considered to represent the greatest ecological feature (in a local context), with this treeline falling within the boundary of the adjacent Former Steel Works Site off Queensway Meadow SINC. No Section 7 Priority listed habitats were identified within/adjacent the current application site. The habitats noted above (i.e. including those found within the adjacent SINC) were considered suitable of supporting a range of protected/priority listed species including foraging/commuting/roosting bats, nesting birds, herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians), Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius* and Otter *Lutra lutra* on an irregular basis. The survey also found instances invasive non-native plant species (INNS) listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) growing in the local area, with Wall Cotoneaster present within the wider retail park's decorative landscaping.

The current report should be read in conjunction with the 2024 PEA in order to provide a more comprehensive overview of the local conditions.

2025 Walkover Survey

An updated ecological walkover survey was undertaken on 6th June 2025 by a suitably qualified ecologist¹. Overall, conditions across the entire vacant plot (including the current application site boundaries) were found to be consistent with what was described/mapped in 2024, and as such the 2024 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map is still considered to be representative of the site. A copy of the

¹ Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) with experience of habitat and protected species surveys.

Hagley Building & Civil Engineering Ltd

Land Adjacent to Seven Stiles Avenue, Newport Retail Park

Ecological Appraisal

E24126401 / Doc 02

2024 plan is included within Appendix III along with an updated (2025) Habitat Plan for the current application site, with site notes/photos from the 2025 survey visit included within Appendix IV.

Habitats

The northern extent of the current application site (where all development is proposed) continues to support a limited number of habitats, with this area covered almost entirely by dense thickets of Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* interspersed by young strands of Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Guelder-Rose *Viburnum opulus*, Dog-rose *Rosa canina*, Buddleia *Buddleja davidii*, Willow *Salix sp.*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* (see Plate 1). A small dry ditch measuring approximately 1-1.5m in width and 5m in length intersects this area, with this feature supporting several damp-loving species such as Pendulous Sedge *Carex Pendula*, Soft Rush *Juncus effusus* and Common Reed *Phragmites australis*, indicating it is likely to hold water during wetter periods. The remainder of the application site (south of the proposed carparking spaces) was still made up of existing hardstanding, buildings and ornamental shrubs, as described in 2024. Outside the site boundaries, small parcels of bare ground were noted within the vacant plot directly to the north, with these supporting early successional communities of patchy ephemeral/short perennial and ruderal vegetation. A mature treeline remains along the eastern boundary of the site/adjacent plot.

Plate 1 – dense scrub within redline boundary



As previously discussed, there are no Priority Habitats listed under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 found within/directly adjacent to the current application site boundaries, and based on the current site conditions and general lack of diversity, the site as a whole is not considered to be representative of the S7 Priority Habitat ‘*Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land*’. None of the habitats present at the site would qualify for consideration as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) under the current selection guidelines for wildlife sites in South Wales (Gwent Wildlife Trust, 2004). Similarly, the habitats as a collective were not considered to qualify as a ‘*Mosaic Habitat*’ SINC, based on species-poor and degraded elements of low/negligible conservation interest forming a significant proportion of the total site area (>25%).

No invasive plant species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) were identified within the current application site boundaries. However, *Buddleia davidii* is present at the site, and while this species is not currently listed on Schedule 9, it is considered particularly invasive in certain habitats and can spread rapidly if left unmanaged, often outcompeting and over-shadow native flora.

Protected Species

As the habitats across the site have remained consistent with what was recorded during the 2024 survey visit, so does the site’s potential to support protected or priority listed species (as discussed in paragraphs 3.16 – 3.28 of the 2024 PEA report). The thickets of Bramble are likely to support tree/shrub nesting bird species, with the adjacent mosaic of scrub, bare ground, ephemeral/short perennial and ruderal vegetation considered suitable of supporting low numbers of foraging bats as well as herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians). The nearby treeline and canal (offsite) are likely to support greater numbers of foraging/commuting/roosting bats, nesting birds and possibly irregular use by Otter and Water Vole. No new evidence was found to suggest current occupation of the site by Badger *Meles meles*, and the site is generally considered to be of poor suitability for this species based on its isolated location and it’s shallow/stony substrate which is likely to be unsuitable for sett building.

The existing buildings found within the redline boundary are to be retained/will not be impacted by the proposed works and so to date, have not been subject to Preliminary Roost Inspection (PRA) – i.e. no internal/external inspection to search for evidence of use by roosting bats/nesting birds has taken place. A PRA was not considered necessary for the current application, which relates to the proposed installation of new carparking spaces in the northern extent of the site only.

2025 Vegetation Clearance Works

Much of the scrub vegetation present within the adjacent plot to the north was cleared in May/June 2025 in order to provide access for further survey and exploratory work associated with the adjacent approved car garage development (see Plate 2). These works were undertaken under direct ecological supervision and following guidance set out in the 2024 PEA (i.e. phased directional clearance using hand tools and/or a low-pressure machine). It is understood that the scrub found within the current application site boundaries was left in place/untouched.

Plate 2 – scrub clearance across adjacent vacant plot in 2025



Conclusions & Recommendations

As conditions across the site have remained consistent, the conclusions and recommendations set out in the 2024 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal also continue to remain appropriate for any future development at the current application site. While no further survey work is deemed necessary, there are several precautionary measures that would be appropriate during the clearance/construction/operational phases of any future development in order to safeguard wildlife and other features of ecological value at the site (as detailed below).

While there are no SINC quality habitats or S7 Priority listed habitats found at/adjacent to the site, the site as a collective does support habitats of some ecological value in the context of the site (e.g. parcels of scrub) and loss of these features will therefore require some form of mitigation under the stepwise approach. This could entail new habitat provision e.g. through the planting of new species-rich scrub, hedgerows or grassy areas or through the positive management of retained/undeveloped areas of the site.

In accordance with the Newport Council's adopted LDP and Planning Policy Wales (PPW 12), any development at the site will also need to adhere to the avoidance, mitigation and compensation hierarchy. Appropriate avoidance, mitigation and enhancements measures for the site (as outlined in the 2024 PEA) are summarised below:

Avoidance

- Retention and protection of the eastern boundary treeline with an appropriate scrub buffer to limit potential impacts to the adjacent Former Steel Works Site off Queensway Meadow SINC.
- Retention of any mature trees (i.e. those found in eastern boundary treeline) considered suitable of supporting roosting bats.
- Any future vegetation clearance (i.e. tree/scrub removal) to be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (clearance possible between September – February). If this is not possible an ecologist should be on site to inspect habitats for the presence of nesting birds prior to removal and to supervise vegetation clearance.

Mitigation

- Appropriate controls to minimise any pollution risk during the construction phase, such as silt mitigation measures, spill kits, and surface run-off control to manage surface water discharge into the canal/watercourse found adjacent to eastern boundary. Such measures to be set out in a CEMP.
- Drainage design to incorporate oil/petrol interceptors as appropriate so as to maintain (or improve) the quality of surface water discharge from the application site into the adjacent ditch (eastern boundary) during the operational phases of the development.
- Loss of scrub to be compensated for through the provision of new native tree/shrub planting (e.g. within landscape buffer along eastern boundary).

- Sensitive and phased approach to vegetation clearance works so as to minimise any risks to common reptiles and amphibians.
- Design of site lighting to minimise artificial light spill onto the retained eastern boundary treeline and scrub buffer to limit potential impacts to foraging/commuting bats and other nocturnal wildlife such as Otter. Any increase in lux level to be less than or equal to 0.5 lux.
- Covering of any excavations overnight or means of escape provided during construction phase to minimise risks to any wildlife that may become trapped.
- Clearance of any rubble/log/brash/stone piles and any other potential refuges to be undertaken under ecological supervision.
- Layout design to feature Hedgehog corridors (if fencing is required), to allow for continued habitat connectivity throughout the final development².

Enhancement

- Management of invasive Buddleia as appropriate.
- Any new grassy/landscaped areas to be seeded with species-rich wildflower mix and managed as a meadow to provide new habitat resource for wildlife.
- Inclusion of bat and bird boxes onto retained buildings/ retained trees along eastern boundary/boundary fencing.
- Creation of new reptile and amphibian hibernacula and/or log/brash/stone piles along the retained treeline and adjacent banks of the canal.
- Landscape plan to include native tree and shrub species or those with a known benefit to local biodiversity.
- New hedgerow planting to be considered for site boundaries.
- Implement Management Plan for retained and newly created habitats to maintain & enhance value to Biodiversity.

² Based on the 'Hedgehog Street' principle advised by the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) and other conservation groups: <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/>

REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition)*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Bat Conservation Trust & Institution of Lighting Professionals (2023). *Bats and artificial lighting in the UK*. Guidance Note 08/23. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

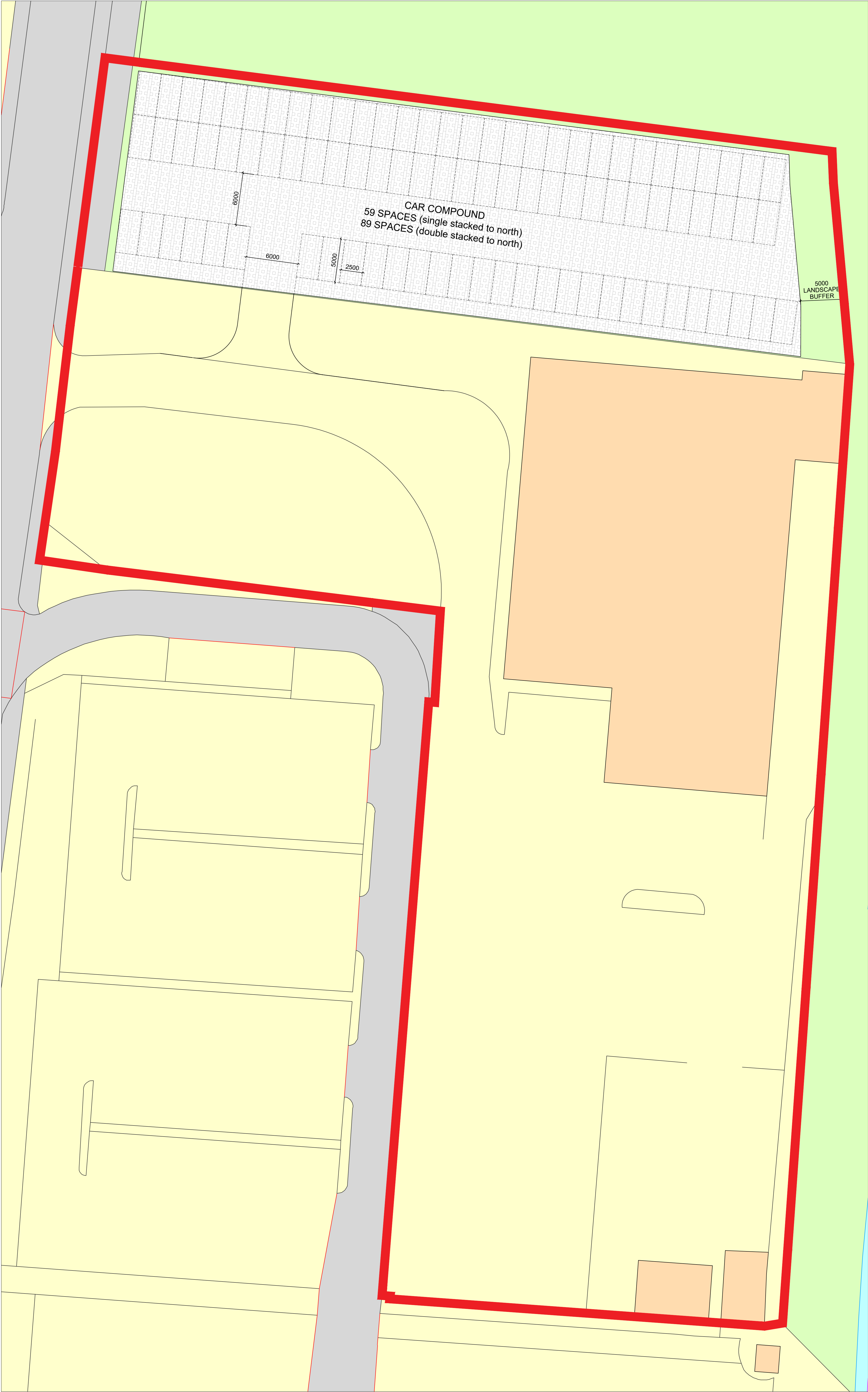
Froglife. (1999). *Reptile Survey: an introduction to planning, conducting and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation*. Froglife Advice Sheet 10. Froglife. Halesworth.

Gwent Wildlife Trust (2004). *Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales*. The South Wales Wildlife Sites Partnership.

Soltys Brewster Ecology (SBE) (2024). *Proposed Days Rental Site, Newport. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. Report Reference: E24126401/DOC 01. Dated 09 September 2024.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (2010). *UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions*. Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land. Document available from:
<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5706>

APPENDIX I SITE LOCATION PLAN



FOR INFORMATION

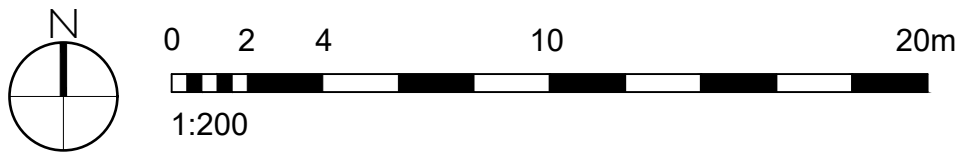
A.	Parking amended for cars	NC	04/26
Rev.	Description	By	Date

OLA
Opfer Logan Architects
130 Cubie Street / Glasgow / G40 2AF /
t: (0141) 332 9300 Scotland e: info@olarchitects.com

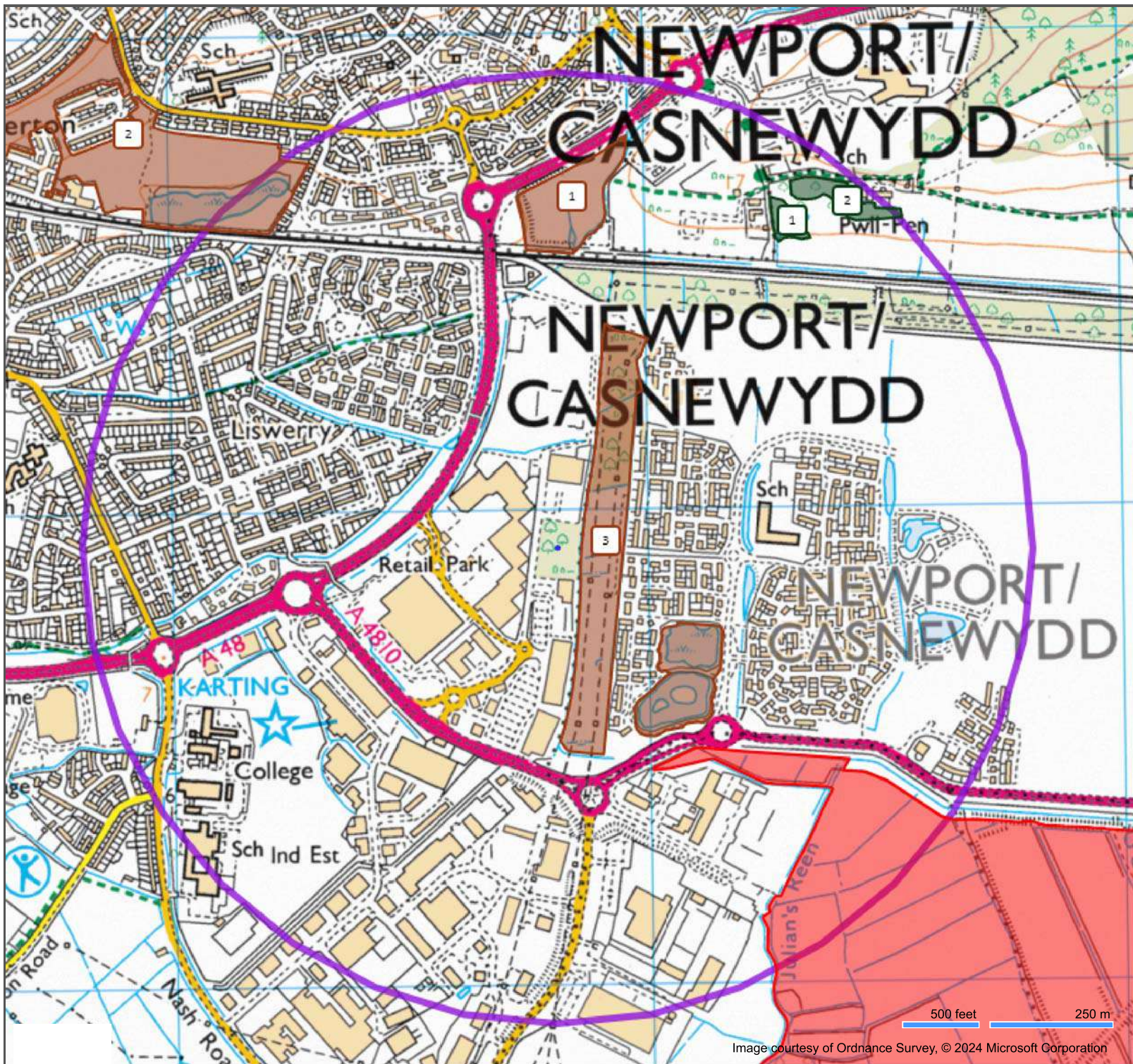
Client: HAGLEY BUILDING & CIVIL ENGINEERS LTD
Project: STELLANTIS VAUXHALL
Project: NEWPORT

Title: SITE PLAN AS PROPOSED
Project No: 22625
Scale: 1:200 @ A1
Drawing No: SP-01
Date: APRIL 2026
Rev. A

Drawn By: NC Checked by: DW
COPYRIGHT OF DESIGN & DRAWING RESERVE
Unauthorized copying, distribution or reuse of this drawing without the written
consent of OLA Ltd may constitute an infringement of copyright. If in doubt please
contact OLA Ltd



APPENDIX II DESK STUDY INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM SEWBREC (2024)



Aderyn
LERC Wales' Biodiversity &
Reporting Database



eMapper for LERC Wales Aderyn Commercial

ben-satherley_22/08/2024_day-rental-newport-retail-park /
8397/0245-432

Spytty Retail Park Designated Sites Map (Public Use)

Key

- Search Location
- Search Buffer (1000m)

Ancient Semi-natural Woodland

- 1: Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
- 2: Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Adopted SINC

- 1: Ringland Way Marsh
- 2: Liswerry Playing Fields and Angling Ponds.
- 3: Former Steel Works Site off Queensway Meadow

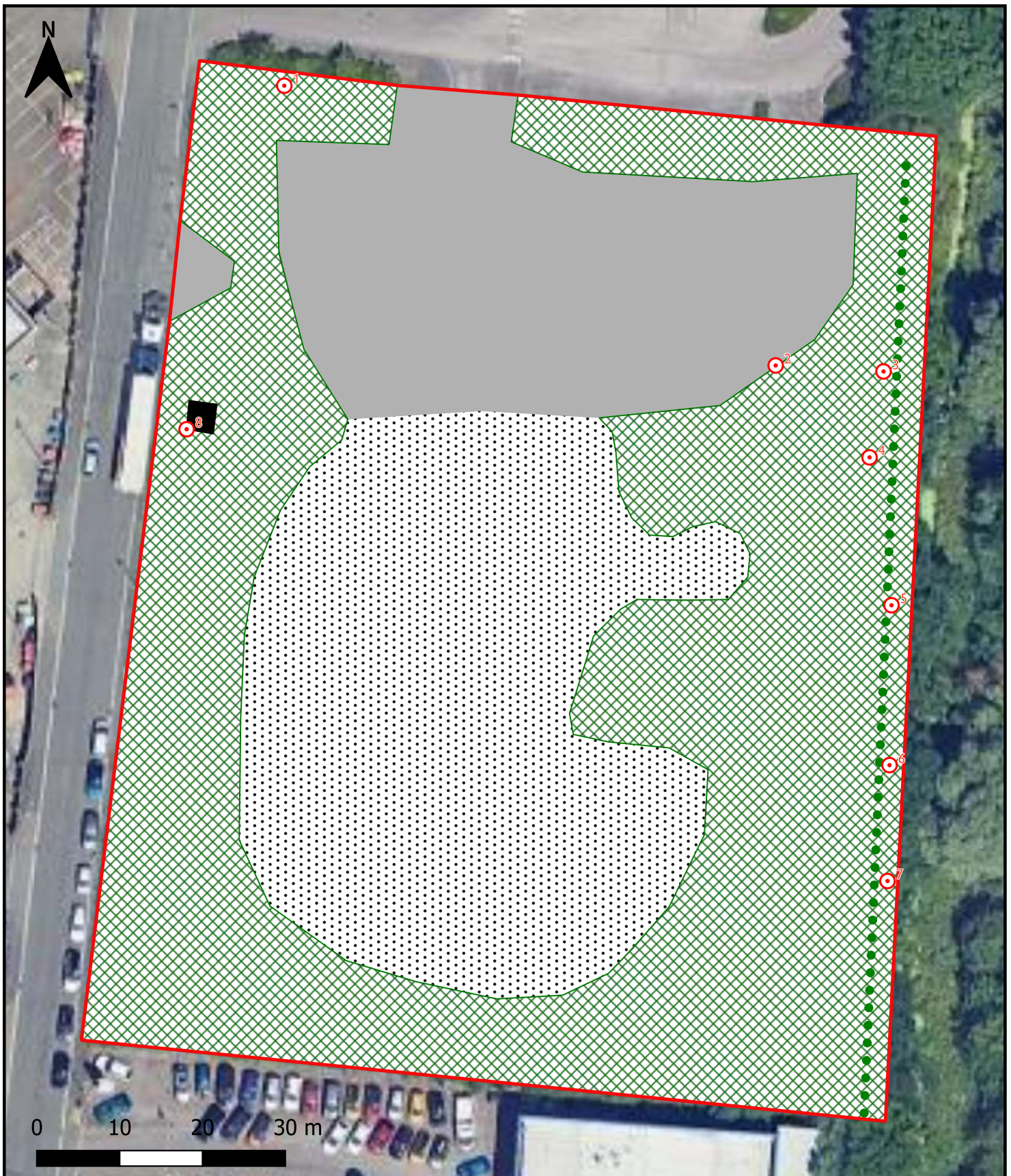
Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 1: Gwent Levels - Nash and Goldcliff

APPENDIX III EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT PLANs (CURRENT APPLICATION SITE AND ADJACENT PLOT)

				PRELIMINARY	PLANNING	DESIGN	TENDER	CONSTRUCTION
Hagley Building & Civil Engineering Ltd Land Adjacent to Seven Stiles Avenue, Newport Retail Park				2025 Phase 1 Habitat Plan		 4 Stangate House Starwell Road Newarth Vale of Glamorgan CF64 2AA 033 00 13 00 Telephone: 12 e-mail: enquiry@soltysbrewster.co.uk		
E24126401 / DR02	BS	MW	19 May 2026					

Soltys Brewster Ecology is the trading name of Soltys Brewster Ecology Ltd. Registered Offices:- 4 Stangate House, Stanwell Road, Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan. CF64 2AA. Registration No. 5779051.



- Target Notes A2.1 Dense/Continuous Scrub J3.6 Buildings Hardstanding
 Survey Area A3.1 Line of Broad-Leaved Trees J4 Bare Ground

PRELIMINARY		PLANNING	DESIGN	TENDER	CONSTRUCTION
ARC Building & Project Management Ltd		Extended Phase 1			
Proposed Days Rental Site, Newport		Habitat Plan			
E24126401 / DR01		BS	MW	05 September 2024	



4 Stangate House
Stanwell Road
Penarth
Vale of Glamorgan
CF64 2AA

Telephone:- 033 00 13 00
e-mail:- enquiry@soltysbrewster.co.uk

Soltys Brewster Ecology is the trading name of Soltys Brewster Ecology Ltd. Registered Offices:- 4 Stangate House, Stanwell Road, Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan. CF64 2AA. Registration No. 5779051.

APPENDIX IV WALKOVER SURVEY (JUNE 2025) SITE NOTES

Target Note	Description/Comment
Birds seen/ heard: <i>Herring Gull, Wren, Blackbird, Chiffchaff, Chaffinch, Blue Tit & Carion Crow.</i>	
Bramble Scrub	A large portion of the vacant plot (and almost all of the current application site boundaries) comprises of dense scrub vegetation. This scrub encompassed the site to the west, south and east. The scrub was largely formed of Bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg., with Hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>, Guelder-Rose <i>Viburnum opulus</i>, Dog-Rose <i>Rosa canina</i>, stands of Buddelia <i>Buddleja davidii</i>, Willow <i>Salix</i> sp., Sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>, Ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> and Dogwood <i>Cornus sanguinea</i>. 
Bare ground, Ephemeral/Short Perennial, Ruderal and scrub mosaic	The vacant plot to the north (offsite) also contained areas of bare ground with patchy ephemeral/shot perennial and ruderal vegetation. Species present included Teasel <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>, Creeping Thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i>, Hemp Agrimony <i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>, Ragwort <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>, Perforate St. John's Wort <i>Hypericum perforatum</i>, Willowherb <i>Epilobium</i> spp., Woodland Strawberry <i>Fragaria vesca</i>, Spear Thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>, Bristly Oxtongue <i>Picris echinoides</i>, Scarlet Pimpernel <i>Anagallis arvensis</i>, Common Agrimony <i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>, Selfheal <i>Prunella vulgaris</i>, Scentless Mayweed <i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i>, Columbine <i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>, Smooth Sow-thistle <i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>, Common Evening Primrose <i>Oenothera biennis</i>, and Shortpod Mustard <i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>.

	
Ephemeral Ditch	A small ephemeral ditch also lies within the current application site boundaries. This ditch was approximately 1-1.5m wide and 5m in length. Species recorded within the ditch included Pendulous Sedge <i>Carex Pendula</i>, Soft Rush <i>Juncus effusus</i>, Common Reed <i>Phragmites australis</i>, with young strands of Sycamore and Buddleia bordering its sides. 