



THE
ENVIRONMENT
PARTNERSHIP



SMITHY BRIDGE ROAD ROCHDALE DESIGN STAGE BNG ASSESSMENT

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX B:	Condition Assessment Summary
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Executive Summary

1. The Environment Partnership (TEP) were commissioned by Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) design stage assessment for development proposals at Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale; hereafter referred to as the "Site".
2. Habitat surveys and condition assessments were undertaken between 2018 and 2022 to inform this assessment. There are not considered to be any constraints to the surveys or condition assessments.
3. The assessment of proposals is based on the development proposals shown within the Proposed Site Layout (P21-2628_003R), the earthworks plan (30329_105_1D_Proposed Regrade Contours) and the Landscape Detailed Planting Plan (P21-2628_EN_102_1-8_A-Detailed Planting Plan Sheets 1-8 200123). Biodiversity Metric 3.1 has been used as the tool to calculate the net gain output. In line with the emerging Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and forthcoming mandated Environment Act 2021, the aim is to deliver a 10% net gain.
4. A detailed appraisal of options for improving on-site BNG was undertaken as part of the iterative design process following discussions with Rochdale Council. Three areas for additional net gains were identified and included in an updated landscape design.
5. The proposals included in the Detailed Layout and Detailed Planting Plan would result in an overall net loss of 37.68 biodiversity units (- 33.03%) for habitats and a net gain of 2.37 biodiversity units (+ 129.18%) for hedgerows.
6. The metric Trading Rules are not satisfied, due mainly to a shortfall in low and medium distinctiveness grasslands and minimally to a shortfall in medium distinctiveness scrub habitat.
7. A biodiversity offsetting strategy is being developed in conjunction with Rochdale Council and Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) to enable 10% net gain to be delivered for this site.
8. A 30 year Landscape and Habitat Management Plan (LHMP) will be produced to ensure that target conditions for each habitat can be achieved. The plan will also include the methods and reporting process for monitoring the success of the scheme against predicted targets.

1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Environment Partnership (TEP) were commissioned by Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) design stage assessment for development proposals at Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale; hereafter referred to as the "Site".
- 1.2 The purpose of this design stage report is to provide detailed assessment on the BNG delivered for the proposed development in support of the full planning application, taking into account detailed discussions held with Rochdale Council and Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU).
- 1.3 The Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Calculation Tool has been used to assess the net gain output.

Site description

- 1.4 The central grid reference of the Site is SD 920 153. The Site covers an approximate area of 14ha and is located to the east of the town of Smallbridge, Rochdale.
- 1.5 The site comprises a large area of semi-improved neutral grazed grassland, populated by common grasses, tall ruderal and scrub species. A number of scattered broad-leaved trees are present around the site boundary. Two defunct hedgerows are present in the west of the site. The southern boundary is bordered by the River Roch corridor.
- 1.6 The site is surrounded to the north and west by residential development, to the east by residential development and farmland along the River Roch corridor and by open farmland to the south.

Proposed development

- 1.7 The proposals are for the erection of 199 units with associated gardens and infrastructure. Two areas of more formal public open space (POS) will comprise a combination of amenity grassland and wildflower meadow within and adjacent to the built areas, with an extensive area of semi-natural POS along the River Roch floodplain comprising areas of existing semi-improved neutral grassland which will be enhanced with RE2 Lowland Meadow mix (MG9 grassland) on the slopes and drier areas of the River Roch floodplain and RE3 River Floodplain/ Water Meadow mix (MG8 grassland) in wetter areas and within the attenuation basins. While the existing hedgerows will be lost, native mix hedgerows will be planted along the boundaries between development and POS. The eastern pond and swamp habitats will also be retained and enhanced. The Proposed Site Layout (P21-2628_003R), the earthworks plan (30329_105_1D_Proposed Regrade Contours) and the Landscape Detailed Planting Plan (P21-2628_EN_102_1-8_A-Detailed Planting Plan Sheets 1-8 200123) have been used for this net gain assessment.

Relevant Policy and Legislation

National Policies

- 1.8 Paragraph 174(d) of the revised NPPF (2021) 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 [...]"* The Government 25-year Environment Plan states that government will *"[...] embed environmental net gain principle for development"*.
- 1.9 In July 2019, the government issued revised planning practice guidance (NPPG) with details on how planners can implement "net environmental gain" requirements when assessing development proposals, including new advice on protecting wildlife.
- 1.10 This revised guidance says that net gain in planning describes an approach to development that leaves the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. Net gain is an umbrella term for both biodiversity net gain and wider environmental net gain. It states: *"Planning conditions or obligations can, in appropriate circumstances, be used to require that a planning permission provides for works that will measurably increase biodiversity"*.
- 1.11 In terms of measuring net gain, the guidance states that using a metric is a pragmatic way to calculate the impact of a development and the net gain that can be achieved. It goes on to state that *"[...] tools such as the Defra biodiversity metric can be used to assess whether a biodiversity net gain outcome is expected to be achieved"*.
- 1.12 This report details the ecological surveys undertaken to establish a baseline position, and what the anticipated impacts are. In order to inform the biodiversity net gain assessment, the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 metric has been used.
- 1.13 The Environment Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 9th November 2021 and includes a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain on all Town and Country Planning Act 1990 developments. The 10% requirement will not become mandated across England until statutory instruments and regulations have been agreed and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 has been amended. Mandatory 10% net gain is currently anticipated to become law in Autumn 2023.

Local Policies

- 1.14 Policy G7 - Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity of the Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted 19th October 2016) states development in the borough should result in net gain. However, there is no current local policy relating specifically to BNG in the context of a required percentage net gain.
- 1.15 Places for Everyone, the draft Joint Development Plan for nine Greater Manchester councils including Rochdale Council is currently in the hearings stage and Policy JP-G 9: A Net Enhancement for Biodiversity and Geodiversity includes the following commitment to a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain in section 8.52:

- 1.16 *"If our overall aims of a major net enhancement of biodiversity value and improved access to nature are to be achieved then all new development will have to play its part, each delivering a net gain in biodiversity. This could involve the protection and improvement of existing habitats, the creation of new ones, and/or the strengthening of connections between them. Recognised metrics will be applied to new development proposals to calculate and demonstrate a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%."*
- 1.17 The mandatory minimum 10% biodiversity net gain requirement will apply once Places for Everyone is adopted in Greater Manchester or with the mandating of the Environment Act 2021, if passed first.

Aims of this report

- 1.18 The aims of this report are to:
- Set out the methods used to assess the habitat baseline of the Site;
 - Set out the methods and assumptions used to assess the post development habitat scoring of the Site;
 - Assess the BNG that is delivered as a result of the site design and offsetting required; and
 - Demonstrate how the BNG good practice principals for development have been addressed.

2.0 Methods

- 2.1 The existing habitat information was gathered for the site between 2018 and 2022. Full details are provided within the following technical reports:

- Ecology Desk Study, TEP Report Ref: 8776.001 (May 2021);
- Ecological Assessment 2022, TEP Report Ref: 8776.006 (June 2022); and
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Urban Green Report Ref: UG11711 (June 2022).

Survey Methods

Desk Study

- 2.2 A search of existing information relating to protected species, habitats of conservation priority and designated sites was undertaken in May 2021. Sources Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), Natural England and MAGIC Map websites. The search extended 2km from the site boundary for non-statutory designated sites, protected species and priority species and habitats. Information regarding statutory protected sites within the wider area (up to 10km) was also collected. Relevant local planning policies were also identified to inform the assessment.

Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.3 A Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken by TEP Associate Ecologist Anne Pritchard (FISC Level 4) on 3rd May 2018 and 15th June 2021. The survey was carried out in accordance with the Phase 1 habitat survey assessment methods (JNCC, 2010)¹/UK Habitat Classification User Manual (2020)², and the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017)³. Habitat types were mapped and dominant vegetation species noted. Any invasive species were also recorded.

Arboriculture Survey

- 2.4 An arboricultural survey of the site was carried out by Urban Green arboriculturist Robert Hickey in March 2022. The survey was by means of inspection from ground level in accordance with BS 5837:2012 *"Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations (Ref 7-20)"*. The Standard provides a categorisation method to *"identify the quality and value (in a non-fiscal sense) of the existing tree stock, to allow informed decisions to be made concerning which trees should be removed or retained in the event of development occurring"*. The method places trees and groups of trees into one of four quality categories and provides guidance on the integration and protection of trees during construction.
- 2.5 The presence of Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas, Ancient Woodland and Veteran Trees has also been ascertained.

¹ JNCC 2010. Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A technique for environmental audit.

² Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. (2020). The UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 1.1 at <http://www.ukhab.org/>

³ CIEEM 2017. Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

UK Habitat Classification Conversion

- 2.6 Phase 1 habitats were converted to UK Habitat classification codes with reference to the UK Hab conversions provided in the 'Technical Data' button in the calculation tool of the Biodiversity Metric 3.1, the UK Habitat Classification - Habitat Definitions⁴ and the UK Habitat Classification Field Key⁵.
- 2.7 Scattered trees identified in the arboricultural survey, which exclude those identified as hedgerows, lines of trees or scrub within the Phase 1 habitat survey were used to determine combined canopy area for use in the metric, where they are assigned to the Urban tree category.

Condition Assessment

- 2.8 Condition assessment surveys of the area-based and linear habitats present pre-development were undertaken by TEP Associate Ecologist Anne Pritchard (FISC Level 4) on 30th May 2022. The condition assessments were undertaken using guidance presented in the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 - Technical Supplement⁶.
- 2.9 The condition of scattered trees has been classified based on the category assigned to them in the arboricultural survey, such that Category A trees are assigned Good condition, Category B trees, Moderate condition and Category C or U trees are assigned Poor condition.
- 2.10 Following consultation with Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), condition assessment for the River Roch, which runs adjacent to the southern boundary of the site, has not been undertaken given that the small changes associated with two outfalls being constructed would be unlikely to lead to a change in condition.

BNG Assessment

- 2.11 The Site has been assessed using Biodiversity Metric 3.1 in line with the user guide⁷ and technical supplement provided, this was undertaken by TEP Associate Ecologist Anne Pritchard in July 2022.
- 2.12 Biodiversity Metric 3.1 is a tool designed to enable developers to measure the change in biodiversity across their site. It determines if there will be net gain, net loss or no net loss of biodiversity following completion of their development and any subsequent management regime.
- 2.13 In order to calculate the change in biodiversity across the site, a site survey is undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist to determine the habitats present on site, their location, size, and condition. This information is then digitised and the resulting information fed into Biodiversity Metric 3.1.

⁴ Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. (2020). The UK Habitat Classification - Habitat Definitions V1.1 at <http://www.ukhab.org/>

⁵ UK Hab Field Key V2.1 September 2020

⁶ STEPHEN PANKS A, NICK WHITE A, AMANDA NEWSOME A, MUNGO NASH A, JACK POTTER A, MATT HEYDON A, EDWARD MAYHEW A, MARIA ALVAREZ A, TRUDY RUSSELL A, CLARE CASHON A, FINN GODDARD A, SARAH J. SCOTT B, MAX HEAVER C, SARAH H. SCOTT C, JO TREWEEK D, BILL BUTCHER E AND DAVE STONE A 2022. Biodiversity metric 3.1: Auditing and accounting for biodiversity – User Guide. Natural England.

⁷ STEPHEN PANKS A, NICK WHITE A, AMANDA NEWSOME A, MUNGO NASH A, JACK POTTER A, MATT HEYDON A, EDWARD MAYHEW A, MARIA ALVAREZ A, TRUDY RUSSELL A, CLARE CASHON A, FINN GODDARD A, SARAH J. SCOTT B, MAX HEAVER C, SARAH H. SCOTT C, JO TREWEEK D, BILL BUTCHER E AND DAVE STONE A 2022. Biodiversity metric 3.1: Auditing and accounting for biodiversity – User Guide. Natural England.

- 2.14 The Biodiversity Metric 3.1 - GIS import tool has been used to populate the metric. This can give rise to multiple lines for habitats with the same condition and strategic significance as a separate line is created for areas that are retained, enhanced and lost.
- 2.15 The principles of biodiversity net gain as set out in the Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Guidelines⁸ have been considered throughout this process as discussed in Section 7.0.

Determining Strategic Significance

- 2.16 Strategic significance was determined through a thorough desktop review of local planning policy and other relevant documentation. The desk-based assessment provides full details of local policy and legislation covering the site. This includes Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted 19th October 2016), Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (adopted June 2006), Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Biodiversity and Development and the Environment and Ecology layer of MappingGM, Greater Manchester's online mapping tool (https://mappinggm.org.uk/gmodin/?lyrs=v_gmeu_lnr_opportunities#os_maps_ligh_t/17/53.42239/-2.27028).
- 2.17 The entire site is allocated as a Greenspace Corridor under Policy G/8 and protected Open Land under Policy G/10 of the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (adopted June 2006).
- 2.18 With respect to the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) opportunities layer on MappingGM, the site is identified either as having grassland or tree planting opportunities.
- 2.19 As a result all baseline habitats are allocated to High strategic significance. With respect to post-development habitats, all habitats along the river corridor are allocated to High strategic significance because they will still be within the Greenspace Corridor. Semi-natural areas of public open space (POS) in the developed area are allocated to High strategic significance where wildflower meadow planting falls within the LNRS grassland opportunity area and tree planting falls within the LNRS tree planting opportunity area. This approach was agreed through consultation with GMEU in April 2022.

Post-Development Calculations

- 2.20 Post development calculations have for the most part been based on the Landscape Masterplan (P21-2628.100A Landscape Masterplan 070922). However the extent of the Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) was not clearly defined on this plan and therefore the extent of the LEAP was based on the Proposed Site Layout (P21-2628_003R).
- 2.21 The extent of habitats which are lost as a result of earthworks is based on the earthworks plan (30329_105_1D_Proposed Regrade Contours).

⁸ CIEEM, IEMA & CIRIA (2019). Biodiversity Net Gain. Good Practice Principles for Development. A Practical Guide.

- 2.22 Target condition has been assessed based on the number of criteria which can reasonably be achieved for each habitat type, taking into account management opportunities and levels of public access.

Limitations

- 2.23 No limitations were encountered. Full access for baseline surveys was possible and these were undertaken in the appropriate season (mid-April and early October). Grasslands were ungrazed or lightly grazed enabling accurate assessment of species composition and number per metre squared.

3.0 Baseline conditions

Important Ecological Features

- 3.1 No statutory or non-statutory designated sites are located within the redline boundary for the proposed development.
- 3.2 The closest international and national statutory designated sites are the Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) respectively, 200m south east.
- 3.3 The Rochdale Canal (Scowcroft to Warland) Site of Biological Interest (SBI) is also the closest non-statutory designated site, 200m south east of the proposed development.
- 3.4 Information from the desk study indicates that the River Roch which runs adjacent to the southern boundary of the site is a main river. No priority habitats were identified in the desk study, but the site survey identified hedgerows, a S41 habitat within the site.
- 3.5 No irreplaceable habitats are present within or adjacent to the site.

On-Site Baseline

- 3.6 The site comprises a large area of semi-improved neutral grazed grassland, with smaller areas of modified neutral grassland, marshy grassland and poor semi-improved grassland. Tall ruderal and scrub are also present as is a pond surrounded by swamp vegetation. A number of scattered broad-leaved trees are present around the site boundary. Two defunct hedgerows are present in the west of the site. The southern boundary is bordered by the River Roch corridor.
- 3.7 Full details of the conversion from Phase 1 habitat to the UK Habitat Classification along with the results of the condition assessment are provided in the Assessor Comments column within the completed Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (Appendix A). A summary of the condition assessment criteria scores are provided in Appendix B. The following drawings are provided in Appendix C:
 - Phase 1 Habitat Survey Results (G8776.007);
 - UK Habitat Classification Baseline (G8776.012); and
 - Habitat Condition and Strategic Significance (G8776.013).

4.0 Post Development Habitats

On-Site Proposed Design

- 4.1 Details regarding post-development habitats are provided in the following documents:
- Landscape Detailed Planting Plan (P21-2628_EN_102_1-8_A-Detailed Planting Plan Sheets 1-8 200123); and
 - Proposed Site Layout, Pegasus, (P21-2628_003R).
- 4.2 The Detailed Layout (Drawing: P21-2628-003R) indicates that the developed area will be set back from the floodplain of the River Roch which will form an extensive area of public open space (POS). The developed area will comprise up to 199 units with associated gardens and infrastructure. Two green wedges of more formal POS will comprise a combination of flowering amenity grassland and wildflower meadow within and adjacent to the built areas. The extensive POS along the River Roch floodplain will comprise areas of existing semi-improved neutral grassland which will be enhanced, mainly through management, but with some specific wildflower overseeding in places to boost diversity and areas of created wildflower meadow areas seeded with Emorsgate EM1 Basic General Purpose Meadow Mixture or similar and Emorsgate EM8 meadow Mixture for Wetlands or similar in wetter areas and within the attenuation basins. While the existing hedgerows will be lost, native mix hedgerows will be planted along boundaries between built development and POS. The eastern pond and swamp habitats will also be retained and enhanced within the riverside POS.
- 4.3 The habitat enhancement and creation proposals are described in more detail in the following sections.

Habitat Enhancement

- 4.4 With reference to TEP's BNG technical note (TEP Report Ref: 8776.010), approximately one quarter of the habitats within the site, along the River Roch corridor, will be retained and enhanced in line with best practice and what is reasonably achievable with respect to the number of criteria required to be passed to meet target condition. Enhancements will include the following:
- Modified grassland (low distinctiveness habitat) in Good condition enhanced to Other neutral grassland (medium distinctiveness habitat) in Good condition;
 - Modified grassland (low distinctiveness habitat) in Moderate condition enhanced to Other neutral grassland (medium distinctiveness habitat) in Good condition;
 - Other lowland acid grassland enhanced from Moderate to Good condition;
 - Other neutral grassland enhanced from Moderate to Good condition;
 - Other neutral grassland enhanced from Poor to Moderate condition;
 - Bramble scrub (medium distinctiveness habitat), which automatically scores as Poor condition enhanced to mixed scrub (medium distinctiveness habitat) in Moderate condition;
 - Pond habitat enhanced from Poor to Moderate condition; and

- Reedbeds enhanced from Poor to Moderate condition.

- 4.5 One area of other neutral grassland has been targeted to achieve Moderate condition, rather than Good condition; this follows the best practice approach to only increase condition by one level e.g. Poor to Moderate, or Moderate to Good to ensure it is achievable.
- 4.6 With respect to the enhanced mixed scrub being targeted at Moderate condition; all five criteria must be met in order to achieve Good condition but because of its small area, this scrub would fail on the criterion requiring provision of glades and therefore can only achieve Moderate condition.
- 4.7 Likewise pond habitat is targeted to achieve Moderate enhanced condition, because all nine criteria must be met to achieve Good condition. Since confirmation of whether water quality can be improved is not currently known and it is linked by a blocked drain to the river (constituting two failed criteria), Good condition is not achievable.
- 4.8 Similarly the reedbeds habitat is targeted to achieve Moderate enhanced condition rather than Good condition because criteria relating to water quality and species composition cannot be met.
- 4.9 This robust approach to determining what can be achieved through enhancement of existing habitats will ensure that targets are realistic and the scheme doesn't fail to meet the desired conditions, leading to a reduction in overall biodiversity value on the site in the long-term.

Habitat Creation

- 4.10 In addition to the enhanced habitats along the River Roch valley, a significant swathe of additional public open space will be created which will link up and strengthen the green corridor along the northern banks of the river. These habitats will comprise:
- Wildflower meadow using Emorsgate EM1 Basic General Purpose Meadow Mixture or similar and in wetter areas/ attenuation basins Emorsgate EM8 meadow Mixture for Wetlands or similar to create Other neutral grassland in Good condition - to be achieved using suitable low nutrient soil and detailed management prescriptions;
 - Amenity, short mown grassland to create Modified grassland in Moderate condition - criteria for variable sward height and limited physical damage will fail due to focussed amenity use, meaning Moderate is the maximum condition which can be achieved;
 - Native shrub planting to create Mixed scrub in Moderate condition - as above, limited area of created scrub prevents achievement of all criteria, therefore Moderate is the maximum condition which can be achieved;
 - Permanently wet areas, planted up aquatic and marginal species which align with a pond habitat within the SUDS basin to create Pond (non-priority) habitat in Moderate condition - precautionary approach given the number of criteria that could realistically be achieved; and
 - A range of trees predicted to achieve small (75%) or moderate (25%) size and Moderate condition - criteria for mature/veteran trees will be failed and

likelihood that micro-habitats would not be achieved in 30 years means Moderate is the maximum condition which can be achieved.

- 4.11 Within the built development, two green wedges of more formal public open space will comprise a combination of amenity grassland and wildflower meadow within and adjacent to the built areas. Habitats will include the following, with their target conditions being allocated based on the explanations provided above.:
- Wildflower meadow using Emorsgate EM1 Basic General Purpose Meadow Mixture or similar to create Other neutral grassland in Good condition;
 - Amenity, short mown grassland with bulb planting to create Modified grassland in Moderate condition;
 - Native shrub planting to create Mixed scrub in Moderate condition;
 - Ornamental shrubs to create Introduced shrub (set condition); and
 - A range of trees predicted to achieve small (75%) or moderate (25%) size and Moderate condition.
- 4.12 Native species-rich hedgerows (targeted to Good condition) and non-native ornamental hedgerows (set condition) are also included within the design and lead to a net gain in the hedgerows section of the Biodiversity Metric 3.1.
- 4.13 As with the enhanced habitats, a robust approach to setting target conditions for the created habitats has been used, to ensure that overall biodiversity net gains are achievable on the site over the 30 year management period.

Alternative BNG Options Appraisal

- 4.14 As part of the consultation process with Rochdale Council further efforts to maximise BNG within the site were requested, in order to ensure that all potential options had been considered.
- 4.15 Table 1 sets out the options that have been considered and whether it has been feasible to take them forward into the current landscape design and BNG assessment.
- 4.16 It is important to note, when reviewing these options, that good biodiversity net gain design should deliver measurable and achievable benefits and that piecemeal delivery of small enhancements that cannot be secured or effectively monitored will not necessarily result in these good biodiversity outcomes. In such cases, it is better to secure large strategic habitat creation and enhancement schemes in the local area that can be effectively implemented and monitored and will truly result in real biodiversity net gains.
- 4.17 In addition, an exercise was undertaken to determine how much of the site would need to be retained as green space in order to achieve 10% net gain on-site. The results of this exercise indicated that approximately two thirds of the developed area would need to be retained and enhanced (Figure 1). This would make the development unviable and therefore has not been considered as an option to take forward.



Figure 1 Approximate area (blue shading) required for retention to achieve 10% net gain on site

Table 1 Additional On-site BNG Options Appraisal

Option/ Biodiversity Metric Terminology	Area available (ha)	Potential increase in habitat units	Feasibility	Taken forward
Vegetated retaining wall to the link road	0.0085	0.02	There is the potential that a vegetated retaining wall (allocated as façade bound green wall with moderate target condition in the metric) could deliver 0.02 habitat units to the scheme, if feasible. However, the limited gain in habitat units provides limited benefit and would not outweigh the potential structural design issues and securing of ongoing maintenance. Therefore, this potential gain has not been taken forward in the metric at this time.	No
Grasscrete	n/a	n/a	While grasscrete can be useful in certain situations, when this was reviewed against the most appropriate habitat type to allocate it to in the metric, it would be allocated to the 'artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface' habitat category. This category has no value within the metric as it has a habitat unit score of 0.00, being a 'very low distinctiveness' habitat. Therefore use of grasscrete within the design would not lead to benefits for BNG and it is not taken forward.	No
Bioswales	n/a	n/a	Bioswales, which can increase habitat diversity and therefore habitat units have been considered for this site. However, inclusion of swales within the green wedges would take up a lot of the public open space, splitting the space in two while restricting movement and amenity. In addition, the topography of the site is steep, meaning steeply sloping swales that would offer little benefit in terms of attenuation/treatment of surface water. Therefore, swales within the open spaces cannot be included within the design.	No

Option/ Biodiversity Metric Terminology	Area available (ha)	Potential increase in habitat units	Feasibility	Taken forward
Allotments	n/a	n/a	In order for allotments (in moderate condition) to deliver a higher number of habitat units than modified grassland (in moderate condition) within the metric, a minimum area of 0.0095ha would be required (allotment in moderate condition would score 0.04 habitat units, while the same area of modified grassland in moderate condition score 0.03 habitat units). There is not the capacity for this area of allotments to be located within the POS of the site and therefore no opportunity to include these within the design.	No
Intensive green roof (on garages)	0.1382	0.5 (moderate condition)	This green roof type requires roof vegetation to be created on a thick substrate with irrigation and management. Any green roof system increases the loadings due to the additional weight on the supporting walls such that structural design and engineering, materials and costings are impacted, meaning it is not possible to use standard construction techniques. In addition, the 30 year management requirement for BNG could not be guaranteed to be undertaken by home owners even if covenanted and would be difficult to monitor. This would lead to an overall reduction in BNG benefits in the long-term. As a result the option for green garage rooves is not taken forward.	No

Option/ Biodiversity Metric Terminology	Area available (ha)	Potential increase in habitat units	Feasibility	Taken forward
Other green roof (on garages)	0.1382	0.27 (condition n/a)	This is an extensive green roof type where vegetation grows on a thin substrate with little or no irrigation and management. Any green roof system increases the loadings due to the additional weight on the supporting walls such that structural design and engineering, materials and costings are impacted, meaning it is not possible to use standard construction techniques. However, the 30 year management requirement for BNG could not be guaranteed to be undertaken by home owners even if covenanted and would be difficult to monitor. This would lead to an overall reduction in BNG benefits in the long-term. As a result the option for green garage rooves is not taken forward.	No
Biodiverse green roof (on garages)	0.1382	0.62 (moderate condition)	This green roof type must have a varied soil depth of 80 - 150mm with at least 50% at 150mm and is planted/ seeded with wildflowers and sedums and will require management. Any green roof system increases the loadings due to the additional weight on the supporting walls such that structural design and engineering, materials and costings are impacted, meaning it is not possible to use standard construction techniques. In addition, the 30 year management requirement for BNG could not be guaranteed to be undertaken by home owners even if covenanted and would be difficult to monitor. This would lead to an overall reduction in BNG benefits in the long-term. As a result the option for green garage rooves is not taken forward.	No

Option/ Biodiversity Metric Terminology	Area available (ha)	Potential increase in habitat units	Feasibility	Taken forward
Facade-bound green wall (on garage walls)	0.2724	0.66	Façade-bound green walls have complex construction and irrigation requirements which would not be suitable for garage walls. In addition, the 30 year management requirement for BNG could not be guaranteed to be undertaken by home owners even if covenanted and would be difficult to monitor. This would lead to an overall reduction in BNG benefits in the long-term. As a result the option for green garage rooves is not taken forward.	No
Ground based green wall (on garage walls)	0.2724	0.66	While ground based green walls comprises the planting of climbers etc. and is feasible against garage walls, the management of these features for 30 years could not be guaranteed to be undertaken by home owners even if covenanted and would be difficult to monitor. This would lead to an overall reduction in BNG benefits in the long-term. As a result the option for green garage rooves is not taken forward.	No
Façade-bound or ground based green wall (on substation walls)	0.0026	0.01	The addition of a green wall, likely of ground based design, to the substation is possible but would require the consent of Electricity Northwest and a commitment to 30 years of management. As the additional habitat units obtained are minimal, this addition to the BNG design is not taken forward.	No
Ground level planters	0.0008	0.00	Eight ground level planters could be included within hardstanding areas of the POS e.g. within seating areas. While they will provide some biodiversity benefit their area is so small that it does not register a score in the biodiversity metric and are therefore not taken forward.	No

Option/ Biodiversity Metric Terminology	Area available (ha)	Potential increase in habitat units	Feasibility	Taken forward
Ground level planters (raised beds)	0.006	0.01	In lieu of allotments, raised beds for community growing could be included in the northern part of the POS, to the east of the existing off-site allotments. However, these are best allocated to the ground level planters feature within the Biodiversity Metric and result in a lower habitat unit score than the habitats they would replace (modified grassland in moderate target condition (0.02 habitat units)). Therefore these are not taken forward in the landscape design.	No
Introduced shrub	n/a	n/a	It is considered that the locations and areas of introduced shrub within the site design has already been maximised. As a relatively low scoring habitat in biodiversity terms, there would only be merit in increasing this habitat type if it replaced hard standing.	No
Rain garden	n/a	n/a	While rain gardens would give a slight increase in habitat units when compared to amenity grassland, introduced shrub or hard standing, they have not been considered to be feasible on this site for the same reasons as bioswales, due to the steep gradients making a surface based drainage system unfeasible.	No
Additional urban trees along main spine road and other areas	0.3622	1.27	Following review of the tree planting schedule it has been possible to increase the tree planting along the main spine road and in other areas of POS by 89 trees, leading to increased benefits for biodiversity. The potential increase in units illustrated here is based on 89 small trees with moderate target condition within a high strategic significance area.	Yes

Option/ Biodiversity Metric Terminology	Area available (ha)	Potential increase in habitat units	Feasibility	Taken forward
Advance habitat enhancement of retained riverside habitats	n/a	0.44	Consideration was given to enhancing retained riverside habitats 1 year (the minimum allowable within the metric) in advance of the impact occurring to habitats being lost, which could result in an increase of 0.44 habitat units. However, the construction programme following planning consent will not allow for this to be undertaken in advance of site clearance commencing. In addition, the site clearance programme will take less than a year to complete and therefore also prevents this approach being taken.	No
Removal of created scrub around western SUDS and replacement with meadow	0.0476	0.09	The potential for replacing the native shrub planting (mixed scrub, moderate condition (0.37 habitat units)) with wildflower meadow planting (other neutral grassland, good condition (0.46 habitat units)) was considered as this would lead to a small increase (0.09 units) in habitat units for the site. However, due to the losses of scrub from the site as a result of the development, it is best practice to include replacement scrub on site in the landscape design as mitigation for the losses and to provide habitat for birds, small mammals and invertebrates. In addition, from a landscape perspective the inclusion of native shrubs/scrub provides height and structure. Therefore, in this instance this potential for BNG improvement has not been taken forward in order to ensure best practice with respect to biodiversity and landscape design.	No

Option/ Biodiversity Metric Terminology	Area available (ha)	Potential increase in habitat units	Feasibility	Taken forward
Increased habitat detail in the play area	0.0424	0.15	The play area was originally allocated to hard standing (with a habitat unit score of 0.00) within the metric. However, further detail has been provided which indicates the play area will be created in an area of amenity grassland (modified grassland, moderate condition (because likely to be affected by heavy recreational pressure), low strategic significance) which would achieve a habitat unit score of 0.15 units and is therefore taken forward.	Yes
Additional wildflower meadow at entrance to Smithy Bridge Road	0.0964	0.6	Following review of the landscape masterplan, it is considered feasible to change an area of amenity grassland (modified grassland, moderate condition and low strategic significance (0.33 habitat units)) to wildflower meadow (other neutral grassland, good condition, high strategic significance (0.93 habitat units)) to the north of the entrance to Smithy Bridge Road. This would lead to an increase in habitat units of 0.6 and will be taken forward.	Yes

- 4.18 As a result of the BNG options appraisal a number of opportunities have been identified as being viable to take forward for an update to the Biodiversity Metric calculations. These options are summarised as follows:
- 0.0476ha of amenity grassland within the play area, yielding 0.15 habitat units;
 - 0.3622ha of additional tree planting along the spine road, yielding 1.27 habitat units; and
 - 0.0964ha of wildflower meadow at the entrance to Smithy Bridge Road, yielding 0.6 habitat units.
- 4.19 These options were identified as a result of additional information being available (i.e. play area habitats) or where meaningful improvements to the design are possible i.e. they will benefit biodiversity and their future management and monitoring can be effectively secured. While a wide range of options were considered in this exercise, the majority would have resulted in minimal biodiversity gains and it would not have been possible to secure their long-term management, meaning their adoption could have led to biodiversity losses on site instead. In these instances, much better biodiversity outcomes can be gained from contributing to local and strategic biodiversity offsetting schemes which cover larger areas and whose implementation, management and monitoring are secured in the long-term.
- 4.20 Following incorporation of the updates detailed above, full details of the conversion from the masterplan to the UK Habitat classification along with the target condition are provided in the Assessor Comments within the completed Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (Appendix A). The following drawings are provided in Appendix C:
- Habitat Impacts Plan (G8776.017A);
 - Proposed Development Plan (G8776.014B);
 - UK Habitat Classification Proposed Development Layout (G8776.015B)
 - Target Condition and Strategic Significance plan (G8776.016B).

Other Biodiversity Enhancements

- 4.21 A range of other biodiversity enhancements will be included within the site, although these cannot be included within the Biodiversity Metric scoring system.
- 4.22 Those stated in the Ecological Assessment (TEP Report: 8776.006) include:
- Tree and building mounted bat and bird boxes; and
 - Log piles placed around the enhanced pond, swamp and marshy grassland areas in the south-east of the site.
- 4.23 Additional enhancements will include the following:
- Bug hotels placed in the south-east of the site, by the western SUDS basin and within the more formal public open space (POS); and
 - Inclusion of plants for pollinators in the more formal areas of POS.

5.0 BNG Metric

- 5.1 A biodiversity assessment has been undertaken, using the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 calculator to quantify the change in biodiversity units for the planning application area between the pre-development baseline and post-development retained, enhanced and created habitats.

Summary of Biodiversity Impact

- 5.2 Detailed results of the assessment are provided in the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 in Appendix A. The headline results, taken from the metric, are provided in Figure 1.

On-site baseline	Habitat units	114.08
	Hedgerow units	1.83
	River units	0.00
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	76.40
	Hedgerow units	4.20
	River units	0.00
On-site net % change (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-33.03%
	Hedgerow units	129.18%
	River units	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.00
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Total net unit change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-37.68
	Hedgerow units	2.37
	River units	0.00
Total on-site net % change plus off-site surplus (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-33.03%
	Hedgerow units	129.18%
	River units	0.00%
Trading rules Satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summary ▲	

Figure 2: Headline Results from Biodiversity Metric

- 5.3 Based on the details available, the results indicate a net loss of 33.03% for area-based habitats and a net gain of 129.18% for linear habitats/hedgerows.
- 5.4 The Trading Rules are not satisfied, due mainly to a shortfall in low and medium distinctiveness grasslands and minimally to a shortfall in medium distinctiveness scrub habitat. Every effort has been made to boost biodiversity within the site design. As it has not been possible to achieve 10% net gain on site during detailed design, a biodiversity offsetting strategy will be developed to provide the shortfall in biodiversity units.

BNG Offsetting Strategy

- 5.5 In order to achieve a 10% net gain for the proposed development at Smithy Bridge Road, 49.09 habitat units are required to be delivered via a BNG offsetting scheme.
- 5.6 The client has been engaging with Rochdale Council and GMEU to develop a suitable strategy. GMEU have reviewed a number of Rochdale Council owned sites in the immediate vicinity of Smithy Bridge Road and have shortlisted three sites for more detailed assessment, all of which have good public access and support from the council and local groups.
- 5.7 Once detailed surveys and assessments have been undertaken, further discussions will be held to confirm a final offsetting package which will then be compiled and submitted to Rochdale Council.

6.0 Implementation, Management and Monitoring

- 6.1 This BNG assessment has been undertaken for a full planning application and based on a detailed landscape plan and planting schedule. Full details of implementation for created habitats are provided within the Detailed Planting Plan, with details of specific species mixes to ensure the target habitat and condition can be achieved.
- 6.2 An implementation plan will be produced to detail the requirements for delivery of the enhanced habitats along the River Roch corridor. It will include requirements for cutting and removal arisings to reduce fertility, removal of 'weeds' such as thistles in areas where this is required, removal of invasive species such as Himalayan balsam in certain areas, along with scarification and seeding with a wildflower mix to boost diversity in relevant areas.
- 6.3 A detailed 30 year management and monitoring plan will be produced and will include specific management prescriptions which aim to achieve the specific target condition for each habitat, based on the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 condition criteria. The plan will include the methods and reporting processes to be used for monitoring the success of habitat enhancement and creation along with options for remedial intervention where needed if a habitat is not achieving its targeted condition. Roles and responsibilities, along with financial and legal requirements will also be included.

7.0 BNG Good Practice Principles for Development

7.1 An appraisal of the scheme against the ten good practice principles is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 22: Appraisal against Good Practice Principles

Good Practice Principle	Commentary
1. Apply the mitigation hierarchy	Habitats along the River Roch, including grasslands, a pond and wetland habitat have been avoided, in order to minimise impacts on biodiversity. Design team discussions ensured that drainage outfalls avoided using the pond and associated wetland. Trees have been avoided where possible within the design. The majority of retained habitats have been enhanced to improve their biodiversity value.
2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere	No irreplaceable habitats or protected areas will be lost or affected by this application.
3. Be inclusive and equitable	Consultation with GMEU has been undertaken to confirm the allocation of strategic significance and the justification for not undertaking a river condition assessment. Ongoing discussions with Rochdale Council led to a review of further BNG options to ensure all avenues for on-site gains had been investigated.
4. Address risks	A considered approach to target condition has been taken in order to ensure that these are achievable, thereby reducing the risk of failure during the 30 years of management. With respect to enhanced habitats, only a one step change in condition has been targeted to ensure the condition can be achieved. Management and monitoring, to be included within the LHMP will ensure remedial action is taken to enable target conditions to be achieved.

Good Practice Principle	Commentary
5. Make a measurable Net Gain contribution	There is currently a 33.03% loss of habitat units on the site. 10% net gain will be achieved through a biodiversity offsetting strategy being developed in conjunction with Rochdale Council and GMEU which will ensure that the deficit of grassland and scrub loss will be suitably offset.
6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	The enhancement of retained habitats and creation of new habitats within the riverside POS along the River Roch will enhance connectivity and strengthen this important strategic wildlife corridor for the area. It is anticipated that the offsetting strategy will deliver compensation habitats locally and contribute to local nature conservation priorities.
7. Be additional	There are no existing nature conservation outcomes on the site. Therefore, the enhancement of retained habitats and creation of new habitats within the riverside POS along the River Roch and their management for biodiversity for the next 30 years add value to this strategic wildlife corridor.
8. Create a Net Gain legacy	The retention and creation of habitats within the riverside POS along the River Roch enables this floodplain to continue to act as a floodplain. Habitats and their species are compatible with periodic inundation and resilient to climate change.
9. Optimise sustainability	BNG has been prioritised throughout the development and particularly within the riverside POS and the green wedges of the development. Within the floodplain, habitats are compatible with periodic inundation and enable functioning of the floodplain. The greenspace also provides formal and semi-natural spaces for people to enjoy, with benefits for physical and mental wellbeing.
10. Be transparent	This report provides a transparent method for the BNG assessment ensuring that all stakeholders can follow the process through.

APPENDIX A: Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (provided as a separate document)

APPENDIX B: Condition Assessment Summary

Habitat Description				
Grassland - Modified Grassland				
See UKHab				
Condition Assessment Criteria		G3 - semi-improved neutral grassland	G8 - modified neutral grassland	G9 - poor semi-improved grassland
1	There must be 6-8 species per m2. If a grassland has 9 or more species per m2 it should be classified as a medium distinctiveness grassland habitat type. NB - this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	Yes - 8.8 average	Yes - 7.5 average	Yes - 6 average
2	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Yes	No	No
3	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	No - >5% poaching	No - artificial surface - grasscrete	Yes
5	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Yes	Yes	Yes
7	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Yes	Yes	No - Himalayan balsam
Essential criterion 1 achieved (Y/N)		Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of criteria passed		6	5	5
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓		
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion 1	Good (3)	Good		
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria; OR Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion 1	Moderate (2)		Moderate	Moderate
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion 1	Poor (1)			

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high & very high distinctiveness)									
UKHab Habitat Type(s)									
Grassland - Lowland calcareous grassland									
Grassland - Lowland dry acid grassland									
Grassland - Lowland meadows									
Grassland - Other lowland acid grassland									
Grassland - Other neutral grassland									
Grassland - Tall herb communities (H6430) [Note Tall herb habitat that does not meet the Annex 1 definition should be recorded as "Other neutral grassland"]									
Grassland - Upland acid grassland									
Grassland - Upland calcareous grassland									
Grassland - Upland hay meadows									
Sparsely vegetated land - Calaminarian grassland									
Habitat Description									
See UKHab									
Condition Assessment Criteria		G1 - semi-improved neutral grassland	G2 - semi-improved neutral grassland	G4 - semi-improved neutral grassland	G5 - semi-improved acid grassland	G6 - semi-improved neutral grassland	G7 - semi-improved neutral grassland	G10 - marshy grassland	G11 - tall ruderal
1	The appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches characteristics of the specific grassland habitat type (see UKHab definition). Wildflowers, sedges and indicator species for the specific grassland habitat type are very clearly and easily visible throughout the sward. NB - This criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
3	Cover of bare ground between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Cover of bracken less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble) less than 5%.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981). Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition1 and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area.	No - poaching >5%	No - poaching >5%	No - poaching, > 5% species indicative of sub-optimal condition	No - poaching >5%	No - poaching >5%	No - poaching >5%	No - Himalayan balsam and damage from machinery and management >5%	No - Himalayan balsam and damage from machinery and management >5%
Additional Group (Non-acid types only)									
6	There are greater than 9 species per metre squared. NB - This criterion is essential for achieving good condition (non-acid grassland types only).	Yes - average of 12.6	Yes - average of 11	Yes - average of 11.5	n/a	Yes - average of 11.6	Yes - average of 11.5	Yes - average of 10	No
on 1 Achieved (Essential for good condition for non-acid grassland) (Y/N)		Yes	Yes	Yes	n/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Number of criteria passed		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score Score Achieved x/✓							
Acid Grassland Types									
Passes 5 of 5 criteria	Good (3)								
Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria	Moderate (2)				Moderate				
Passes 0, 1 or 2 of 5 criteria	Poor (1)								
Non-acid grassland Types									
Passes 5 of 6 criteria, including essential criterion 1 and 6.	Good (3)								
Passes 3 or 4 of 6 criteria, including essential criterion 1.	Moderate (2)	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate		Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	
Passes 0, 1, 2 criteria of 6 criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion 1 and 6	Poor (1)								Poor
Notes									
Footnote 1 - Species indicative of sub-optimal condition for this habitat type include: Creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> , cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> .									

Part 1b - Condition assessment of hedgerows

UKHab Habitat Type					
Native hedgerow Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch Native hedgerow with trees Native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch Native species rich hedgerow Native species rich hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch Native species rich hedgerow with trees Native species rich hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch					
Habitat Description					
See Chapter 8 of User Guide					
Hedgerow favourable condition attributes					
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D & E)		Criteria (the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Description		
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types				H1	H2
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of shoots, excluding	Yes	Yes
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and	Yes	Yes
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length (unless 'line of trees')	This is the vertical gappiness of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth.	No	No
B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	☐ Gaps make up <10% of total length and ☐ No canopy gaps >5 m	This is the horizontal gappiness of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how	No	No
C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: ☐ measured from outer edge of hedgerow, and ☐ is present on one side of the hedge (at least)	This is the horizontal gappiness of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall gappiness, but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).	Yes	Yes
C2.	Undesirable perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground	The indicator species used are nettles (<i>Urtica</i> spp.), cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>) and docks (<i>Rumex</i> spp.). Their presence, either singly or together, should not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	Yes	Yes
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native and neophyte species	Neophytes are plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500. For information on neophytes see the JNCC website and for information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website.	Yes	Yes
D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes.	No	No
Additional group - applicable to hedgerows with trees only					
E1.	Tree age	At least one mature tree per 30m stretch of hedgerow. A mature tree is one that is at least 2/3 expected fully mature height for the species.	This criterion addresses if there are sufficient mature trees (within the scope of planning timescales) which are of higher value to biodiversity.	n/a	n/a
E2.	Tree health	At least 95% of hedgerow trees are in a healthy condition (excluding veteran features valuable for wildlife). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	This criterion identifies if the trees are subject to damage which compromises the survival and health of the individual specimens.	n/a	n/a
				Results	
Each attribute is assigned to one of five functional groups (A – E), as indicated in Table TS1-2 and the condition of a hedgerow is assessed according to the number of attributes from these functional groups which pass or fail the 'favourable condition' criteria according to the approach set out in Table TS1-3. The hedgerow condition assessment generates a weighting (score) ranging from 1-3, which is used within the biodiversity metric 3.0. The scores for each are set out in tables TS1-3 and TS1-4 below.				Moderate	Moderate

Condition Sheet: LINE OF TREES Habitat Type		
UKHab Habitat Type(s)		
Line of trees		
Line of trees – associated with bank or ditch		
Line of trees (ecologically valuable)		
Line of trees (ecologically valuable) – associated with bank or ditch		
Habitat Description		
See Chapter 8 of User Guide for definition.		
Condition Assessment Criteria		LOT1
1	More than 70% of trees are native species.	Yes
2	Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide.	Yes
3	Includes one or more mature ¹ or veteran ² tree.	No
4	There is an undisturbed naturally vegetated strip of at least 6 m on both sides to protect the line of trees from farming and other anthropogenic operations.	No
5	At least 95% of the trees are in a healthy condition (excluding veteran features valuable for wildlife). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	Yes
Number of criteria passed		
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score Achieved x/✓
Passes 5 of 5 criteria		Good (3)
Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria		Moderate (2)
Passes 0, 1 or 2 of 5 criteria		Poor (1)
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score		
Notes		
Footnote 1 - A mature tree in this context is one that is at least 2/3 expected fully mature height species. Footnote 2 - All ancient trees are veteran trees, but not all veteran trees are ancient. A veteran may not be very old, but it has decay features, such as branch death and hollowing. These features contribute to its biodiversity, cultural and heritage value. Veteran trees can be classified if they have four out of the five following features: 1. Rot sites associated with wounds which are decaying >400 cm²; 2. Holes and water pockets in the trunk and mature crown >5 cm diameter; 3. Dead branches or stems >15 cm diameter; 4. Any hollowing in the trunk or major limbs; 5. Fruit bodies of fungi known to cause wood decay		

Condition Sheet: POND Habitat Type			
UKHab Habitat Type(s)			
Lakes - Ponds (priority habitat)			
Habitat Description			
See UKHab Other than for non-priority ponds, which are those which do not meet either the definition of (i) priority habitat			
Condition Assessment Criteria		P1	
CORE CRITERIA - applicable to all ponds (woodland¹ and non-woodland):			
1	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	No - orange discolouration	
2	There is semi-natural habitat (i.e. moderate distinctiveness or above) for at least 10 m from the pond edge.	Yes	
3	Less than 10% of the pond is covered with duckweed or filamentous algae.	Yes	
4	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, either via streams, ditches or artificial pipework.	No - linked by blocked drain to river	
5	Pond water levels should be able to fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious dams, pumps or pipework.	Yes	
6	There is an absence of non-native plant and animal species ² .	No - Himalayan balsam in bankside vegetation	
7	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Yes	
ADDITIONAL CRITERIA - only applicable to non-woodland ponds:			
8	In non-woodland ponds, plants, be they emergent, submerged or floating (excluding duckweeds) ³ , should cover at least 50% of the pond area that is less than 3 m deep.	No	
9	The surface of non-woodland ponds is no more than 50% shaded by woody bankside species.	Yes	
Number of criteria passed		5	
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score Achieved x/✓	
If 7 criteria assessed (woodland ponds):			
Passes 7 of 7 criteria		Good (3)	
Passes 5 or 6 of 7 criteria		Moderate (2)	
Passes 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 of 7 criteria		Poor (1)	
If 9 criteria assessed (non-woodland ponds):			
Passes 9 of 9 criteria		Good (3)	
Passes 6, 7 or 8 of 9		Moderate (2)	
Passes 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 of 9 criteria		Poor (1)	Poor
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
Footnote 1 - A woodland pond will be surrounded on all sides by woodland habitat. Footnote 2 - Any species included on the Water Framework Directive UKTAG GB High Impact Species List should be absent. • Frequently occurring non-native plant species include water fern <i>Azolla spp.</i> , Australian swamp stonecrop <i>Crassula helmsii</i> , parrot's feather <i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i> , floating pennywort <i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i> and Japanese knotweed <i>Fallopia japonica</i> , giant hogweed <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i> (on the bank). • Frequently occurring non-native animals include signal crayfish <i>Pacifastacus leniusculus</i> , zebra mussels			

Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Type			
UKHab Habitat Type			
Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/ephemeral Urban – Allotments Urban – Biodiverse green roof [Use Urban condition sheet as default. Where there are areas of grassland, scrub or other habitat above the minimum mappable area threshold, record and assess these as the relevant habitat type] Urban - Bioswale Urban - Cemeteries and churchyards [Use Urban condition sheet as default. Where there are areas of grassland, woodland or scrub above the minimum mappable area threshold, record and assess these as the relevant habitat type] Urban - Façade-bound green wall Urban - Ground based green wall Urban - Intensive green roof Urban - Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land Urban - Rain garden Urban - Sustainable urban drainage feature [in the context of the Biodiversity Metric, this habitat type refers to open SUDS with vegetation and/or open water] Urban - Vacant / derelict land / bare ground			
Habitat Description			
See UKHab			
Condition Assessment Criteria			U1 - bare ground
CORE CRITERIA - applicable to all urban habitat types:			
1	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for insects, birds and bats to live and breed. A single ecotone (i.e. scrub, grassland, herbs) should not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	No	
2	There is a diverse range of flowering plant species, providing nectar sources for insects. These species may be either native, or non-native but beneficial to wildlife. NB - To achieve GOOD condition, criterion 2 must be satisfied by native species only (rather than non-natives beneficial to wildlife). Note that Biodiverse green roofs are exempt from this requirement, and can include non-native sedums, as set out in footnote 1.	No	
3	Invasive non-native species (Schedule 9 of WCA) cover less than 5% of total vegetated area. NB - To achieve GOOD condition, criterion 3 must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Yes	
ADDITIONAL CRITERION - only applicable to Open mosaic on previously developed land habitat type:			
4a	The site shows spatial variation, forming a mosaic of at least four early successional communities (a) to (h) PLUS bare substrate AND pools. (a) annuals; (b) mosses/liverworts; (c) lichens; (d) ruderals; (e) inundation species; (f) open grassland; (g) flower-rich grassland; (h) heathland.	n/a	
ADDITIONAL CRITERION - only applicable to Bioswale and SUDS habitat types:			
4b	The water table is at or near the surface throughout the year. This could be open water or saturation of soil at the surface.	n/a	
ADDITIONAL CRITERION - only applicable to green roof habitat types (select as necessary):			
4c1	Intensive green roofs – have a minimum of 50% native and non-native wildflowers - 70% of the roof area is soil and vegetation (including water features)	n/a	
4c2	Biodiverse green roofs - have a varied depth of 80 - 150mm at least 50% is at 150mm and is planted and seeded with wildflowers and sedums or is pre-prepared with sedums and wildflowers. To achieve Good condition some additional habitat, such as sand piles, logs etc should be present.	n/a	
Essential criterion 2&3 achieved? (must be achieved to score a good condition for non biodiverse green roofs) (Y/N)			n/a
Number of criteria passed			1
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment	Score Achieved x/✓
If 3 criteria assessed:			
• Passes 3 of 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3		Good (3)	
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3		Moderate (2)	
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria		Poor (1)	Poor
If 4 criteria assessed:			
• Passes 3 of 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3; AND • Passes additional criterion 4a or 4b		Good (3)	
• Passes 2 of 3 of 4 criteria; OR • Passes 4 of 4 criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3		Moderate (2)	
• Passes 0 or 1 of 4 criteria		Poor (1)	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
Notes			
Footnote 1: For Biodiverse green roofs only - experience has shown that a range of sedums species (native, naturalised, and non-native) support wildflowers during hot periods. Therefore, for Criteria 2 a Biodiverse green roof can have non-native sedums and still achieve Good condition. Footnote 2: For Criteria 3 – For green roof habitat types only - <i>Buddleja davidii</i> should be assessed alongside Schedule 9 species. This species impairs the health of the local ecosystem and reduces the biodiversity potential of the roof. It is also a sign that a roof has not be planted and seeded correctly in sub-sequent years.			

Condition Sheet: WETLAND Habitat Type			
UKHab Habitat Type(s)			
Grassland - Floodplain wetland mosaic (CFGM) [Use this condition sheet (plus Ditch condition sheet for any ditches) unless associated with a species rich grassland sward (meeting the definition of a priority habitat), reedbed or fen, in which case record and assess as the relevant habitat type within the metric (plus Ditch condition sheet for any ditches). Wetland - Blanket bog Wetland - Depression on peat substrates (H7150) Wetland - Fens (upland and lowland) Wetland - Lowland raised bog Wetland - Oceanic valley mire [1] (D2.1) Wetland - Purple moor grass and rush pastures Wetland - Reedbeds Wetland - Transition mires and quaking bogs (H7140)			
Habitat Description			
For Oceanic valley mires - see EUNIS			
Condition Assessment Criteria		We1	
CORE CRITERIA - Applicable to all wetland habitat types :			
1	The water table is at or near the surface throughout the year, this could be open water or saturation of soil at the surface. There is no artificial drainage, unless specifically to maintain water levels as specified above. NB - this criterion is essential for achieving good condition.	Yes	
2	The appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches characteristics of the specific wetland habitat type (see UKHab definition linked above). Indicator species for the specific wetland habitat type1 are very clearly and easily visible.	No	
3	The water supplies (groundwater, surface water and/or rainwater) to the wetland are of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution.	No	
4	Cover of scrub and scattered trees less than 10%.	Yes	
5	Cover of bare ground less than 5%.	Yes	
6	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition ¹ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	No - Himalayan balsam and variegated yellow-archangel	
ADDITIONAL CRITERION - only applicable to Fen and Purple moor grass and rush pasture habitat type:			
7a	No more than 25% of the fen area has a continuous cover of litter (i.e. dead vegetation) preventing regeneration.	n/a	
ADDITIONAL CRITERION - only applicable to Bog habitat type:			
7b	Sphagnum and cottongrasses are at least frequent. Cover of ericaceous dwarf-shrubs ² is less than 75%.	n/a	
ADDITIONAL CRITERION - only applicable to Reedbed habitat type:			
7c	The reedbed has a diverse structure with between 60 and 80% reeds. Other areas may include open water (at least 10%), species-rich fen and/or wet woodland.	No - reeds not present. Dominated by reed sweet-grass and great reed-mace	
ADDITIONAL CRITERION - only applicable to Floodplain wetland mosaic (CFGM) habitat type:			
7d	All ditches recorded within the habitat achieve Good condition as assessed using the Ditch condition sheet.	n/a	
Essential criterion 1 achieved (required for good condition Y/N)		Yes	
Number of criteria passed		3	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
If 6 criteria assessed:			
• Passes 5 or 6 of 6 core criteria,	Good (3)		
• Passes 3 or 4 of 6 core criteria; OR	Moderate (2)		
• Passes 0, 1 or 2 of 6 core criteria	Poor (1)		
If 7 criteria assessed:			
• Passes 5 or 6 of 6 core criteria,	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria; OR	Moderate (2)		
• Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria	Poor (1)	Poor	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
Notes			
Footnote 1 - For fens, specify what fen type is present - alkaline, neutral, acidic/eutrophic, mesotrophic, oligotrophic. Footnote 2 - Species considered undesirable for this habitat type include: creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , docks <i>Rumex</i> spp., cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> , common ragwort <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i> . Footnote 3 - Ericaceous dwarf shrubs include: crowberry <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> , cowberry <i>Vaccinium vitis-idaea</i> , bog bilberry <i>Vaccinium uliginosum</i> , cranberry <i>Vaccinium oxycoccos</i> , heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> , cross-leaved heath <i>Erica tetralix</i> , bog-rosemary <i>Andromeda polifolia</i> , bog myrtle <i>Myrica gale</i> .			

APPENDIX C: Associated Plans

Phase 1 Habitat Baseline Survey (G8776.007)

UK Habitat Classification Baseline (G8776.012)

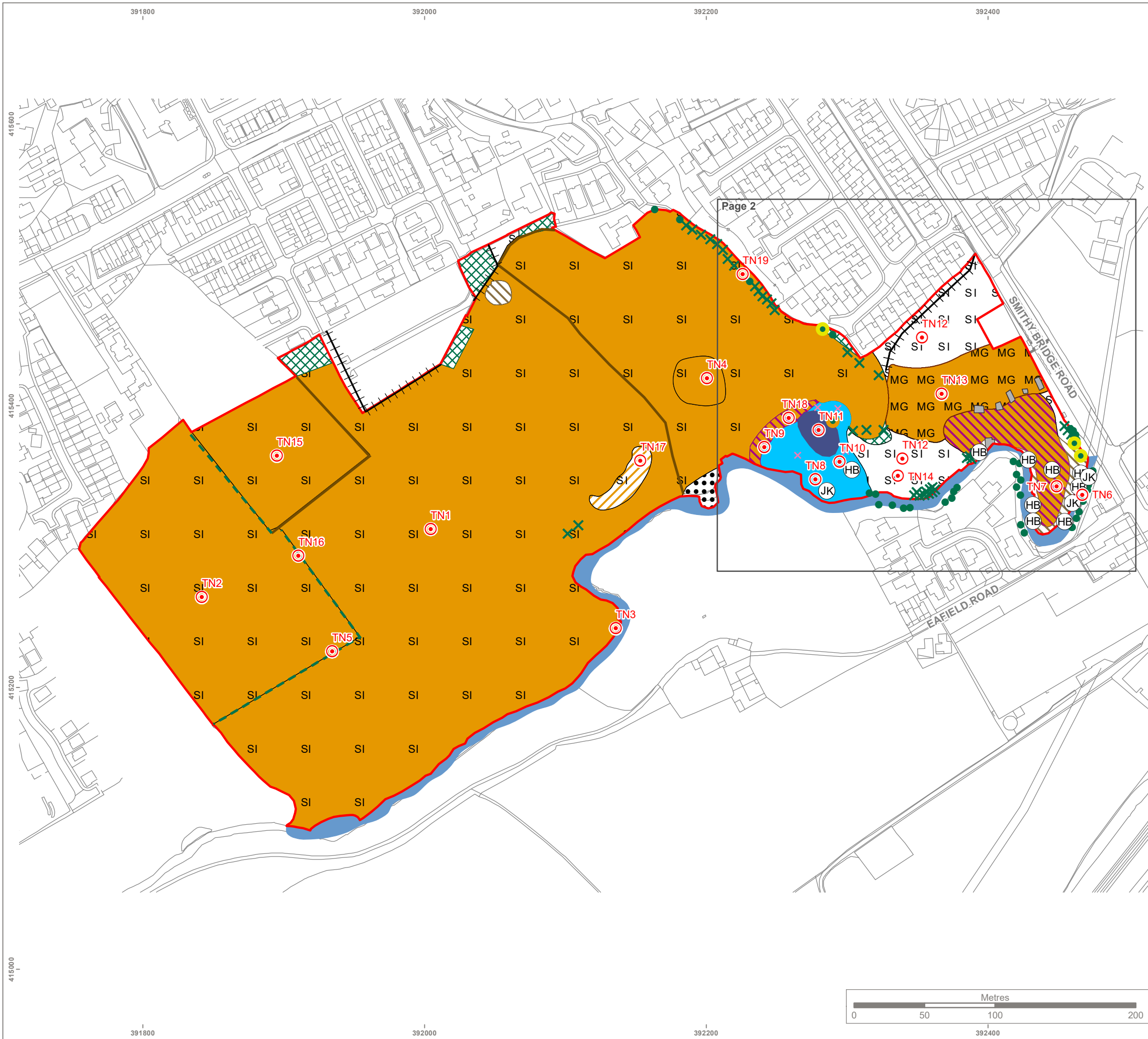
Habitat Condition and Strategic Significance (G8776.013)

Habitat Impacts Plan (G8776.017A)

Proposed Development Plan (G8776.014B)

UK Habitat Classification Proposed Development Layout (G8776.015B)

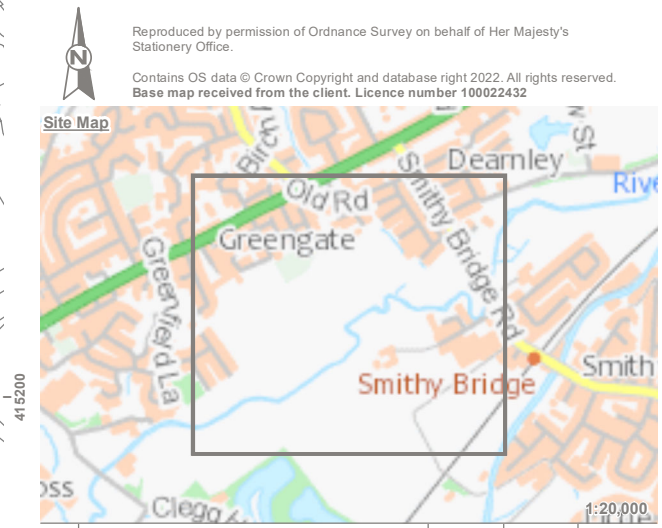
Target Condition and Strategic Significance plan (G8776.016B)



- KEY**
- Site boundary
 - Page and page number
 - Target note
 - Himalayan balsam
 - Japanese knotweed
 - Scattered scrub
 - Scattered broad-leaved tree
 - Broad-leaved tree with low bat potential
 - Broad-leaved tree with moderate bat potential
 - Scattered saltmarsh plants
 - Species-poor defunct hedge
 - Fence
 - Wall
 - Dense/continuous scrub
 - Semi-improved acid grassland
 - Semi-improved neutral grassland
 - Modified neutral grassland
 - Marsh/marshy grassland
 - Poor semi-improved grassland
 - Tall ruderal
 - Swamp
 - Standing water
 - Running water
 - Bare ground
 - Hardstanding

Note:
The locations of habitats and habitat features are indicative.

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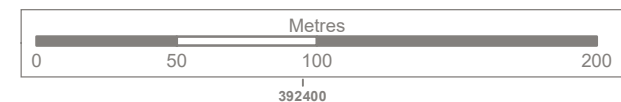
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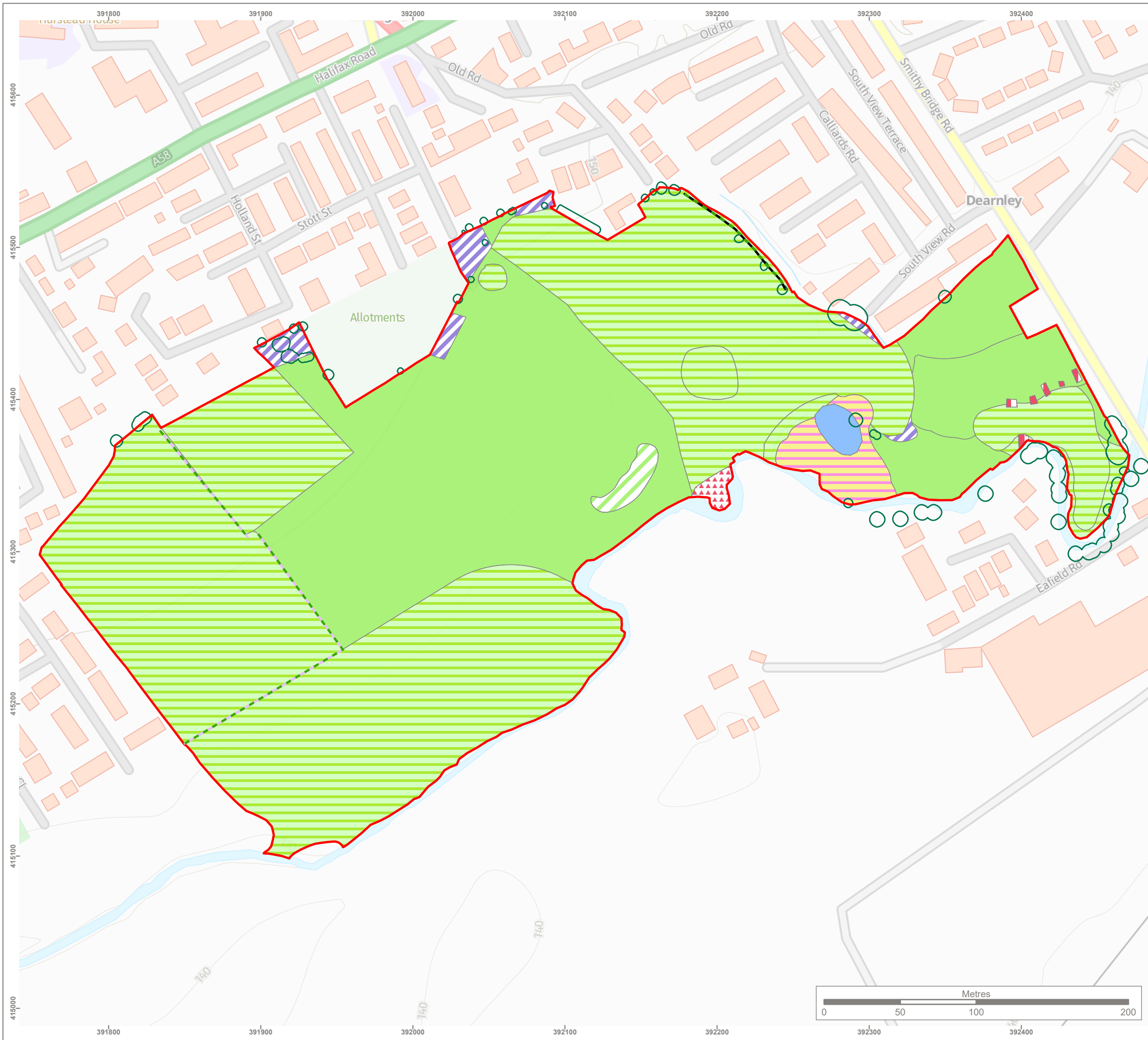
Project
Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale

Title
Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Drawing Number G8776.007.1	Sheet 1 of 2
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Drawn CW	Checked SA	Approved ACP	Scale 1:2,700 @ A3	Date 13/06/2022
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KEY

- Site boundary
- Urban trees

Hedgerows

- Native hedgerow
- Line of trees

Wetland

- Reedbeds

Grassland

- Modified grassland
- Other lowland acid grassland
- Other neutral grassland

Heathland and Shrub

- Bramble scrub

Lakes

- Ponds (non-priority habitat)

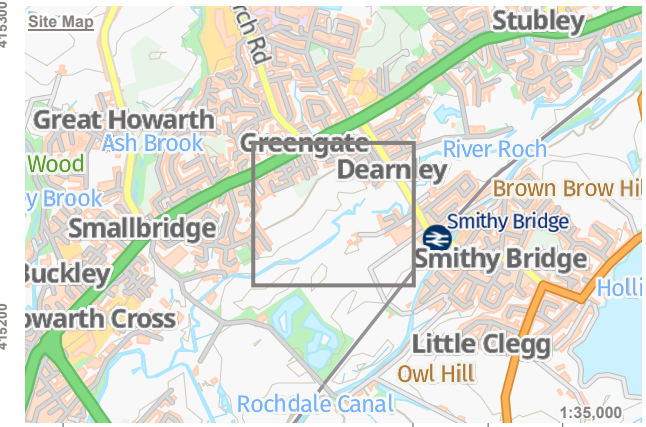
Urban

- Developed land, sealed surface
- Vacant/derelict land/bareground

Note:

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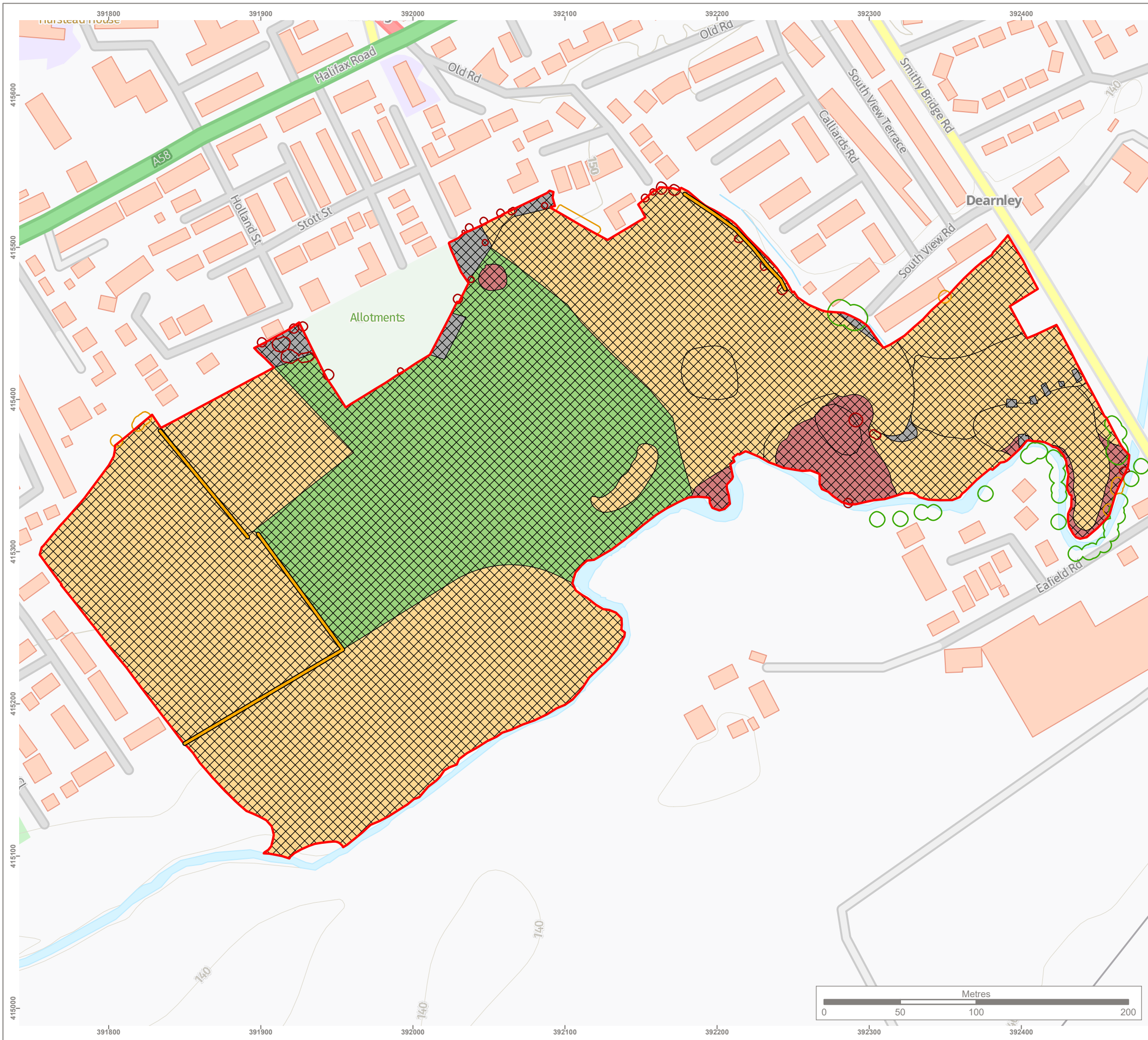
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Project
Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale

Title
Baseline UK Habitats

Drawing Number
G8776.012

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
CW	MH	ACP	1:2,500 @ A3	27/07/2022



KEY

Site boundary

Hedgerow Condition

Moderate

Tree Condition

Good

Moderate

Poor

Habitat Condition

Good

Moderate

Poor

Condition assessment not applicable

Strategic Significance

Formally identified in local strategy

Note:
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Site Map

Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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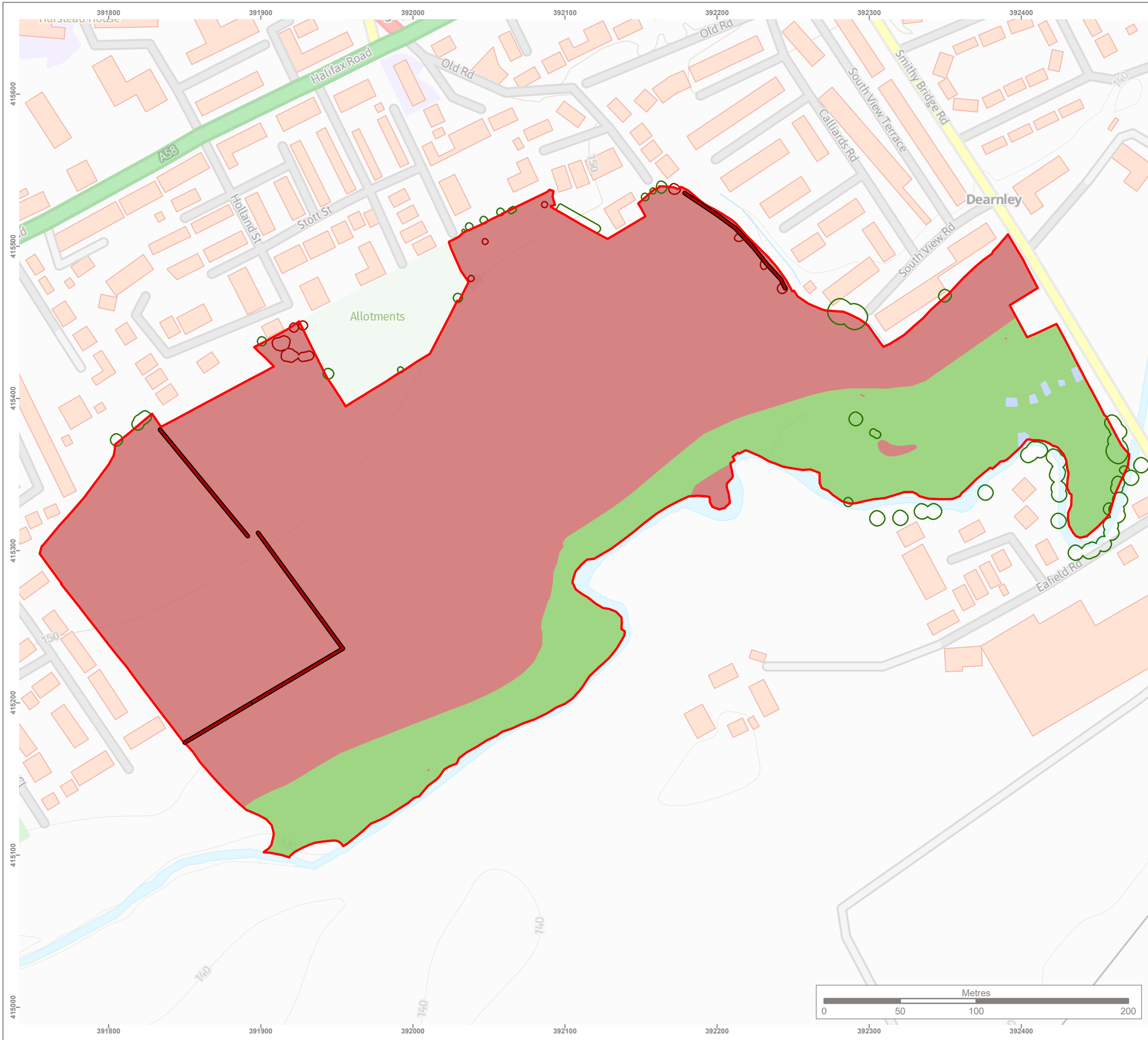
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Project
Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale

Title
Existing Habitat Conditions and Strategic Significance

Drawing Number
G8776.013

Drawn CW	Checked MH	Approved ACP	Scale 1:2,500 @ A3	Date 27/07/2022
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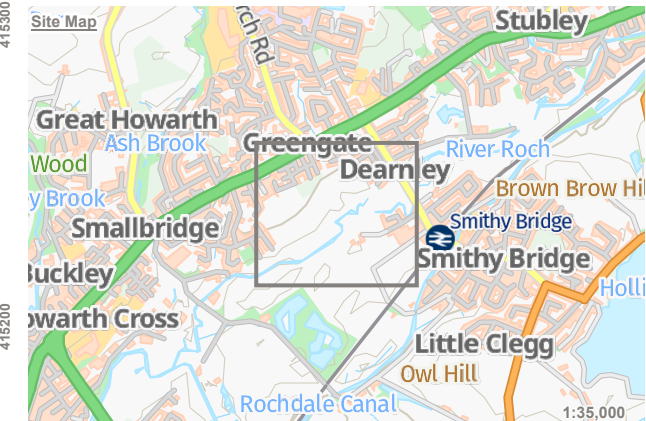


KEY

- Site boundary
- Hedgerow Impact**
 - Lost
- Tree Impact**
 - Retained
 - Lost
- Habitat Impact**
 - Enhanced
 - Retained
 - Lost

Note:
The locations of habitats and habitat features are indicative.
Impacts based on drawing P21-2628.102 Landscape Masterplan provided by the client.

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B	Updated proposed development.	CW	ACP	23/01/2023
A	Updated proposed development.	AC	ACP	04/10/2022
Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



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Project
Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale

Title
Habitat Impacts

Drawing Number
G8776.017B

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
CW	CB	ACP	1:2,500 @ A3	23/01/2023

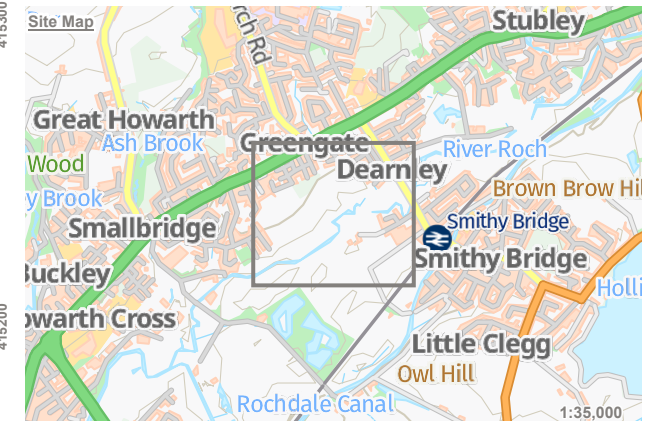


KEY

Site boundary	Hard surfaced footpath
Large urban tree	LEAP
Medium urban tree	Marginal planting in SUDs basin
Small urban tree	Mown paths
Retained urban trees	Native shrub mix
Proposed Development	Ornamental gravel
Native hedgerow	Ornamental shrub planting
Ornamental hedgerow	Public open space grass
Buildings	Retained development
Bulb planting	River Roch 8m offset
Drives, pavements and roads	Wet area enhanced
Enhanced scrub	Wetland meadow grass
Gardens	Wildflower meadow grass

Note:
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Based on drawing P21-2628.102 Landscape Masterplan provided by the client.

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A	Updated proposed development.	AC	ACP	04/10/2022
Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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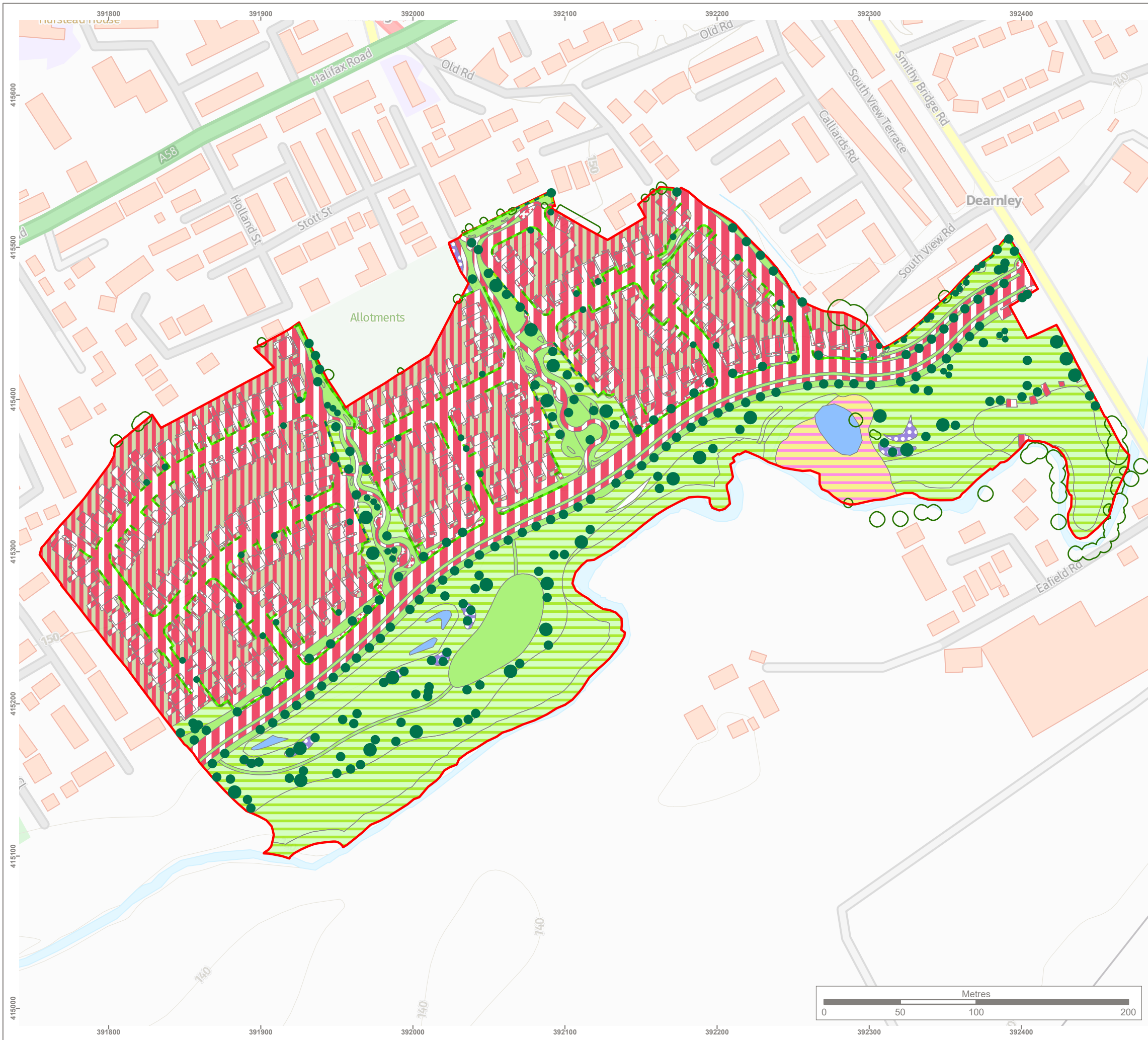
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Project
Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale

Title
Proposed Development

Drawing Number
G8776.014B

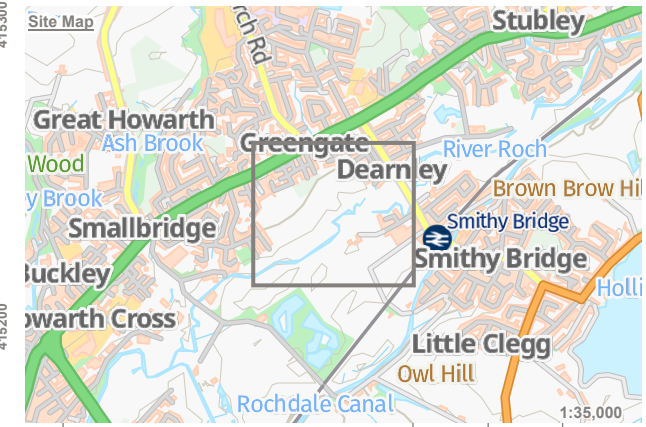
Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
CW	CB	ACP	1:2,500 @ A3	23/01/2023



- KEY**
 - Site boundary
 - Large urban tree
 - Medium urban tree
 - Small urban tree
 - Retained urban trees
 - Hedgerows**
 - Native species-rich hedgerow
 - Ornamental non-native hedgerow
 - Wetland**
 - Reedbeds
- Grassland**
 - Modified grassland
 - Other lowland acid grassland
 - Other neutral grassland**Heathland and Shrub**
 - Mixed scrub**Lakes**
 - Ponds (non-priority habitat)**Urban**
 - Developed land, sealed surface
 - Introduced shrub
 - Vegetated garden

Note:
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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

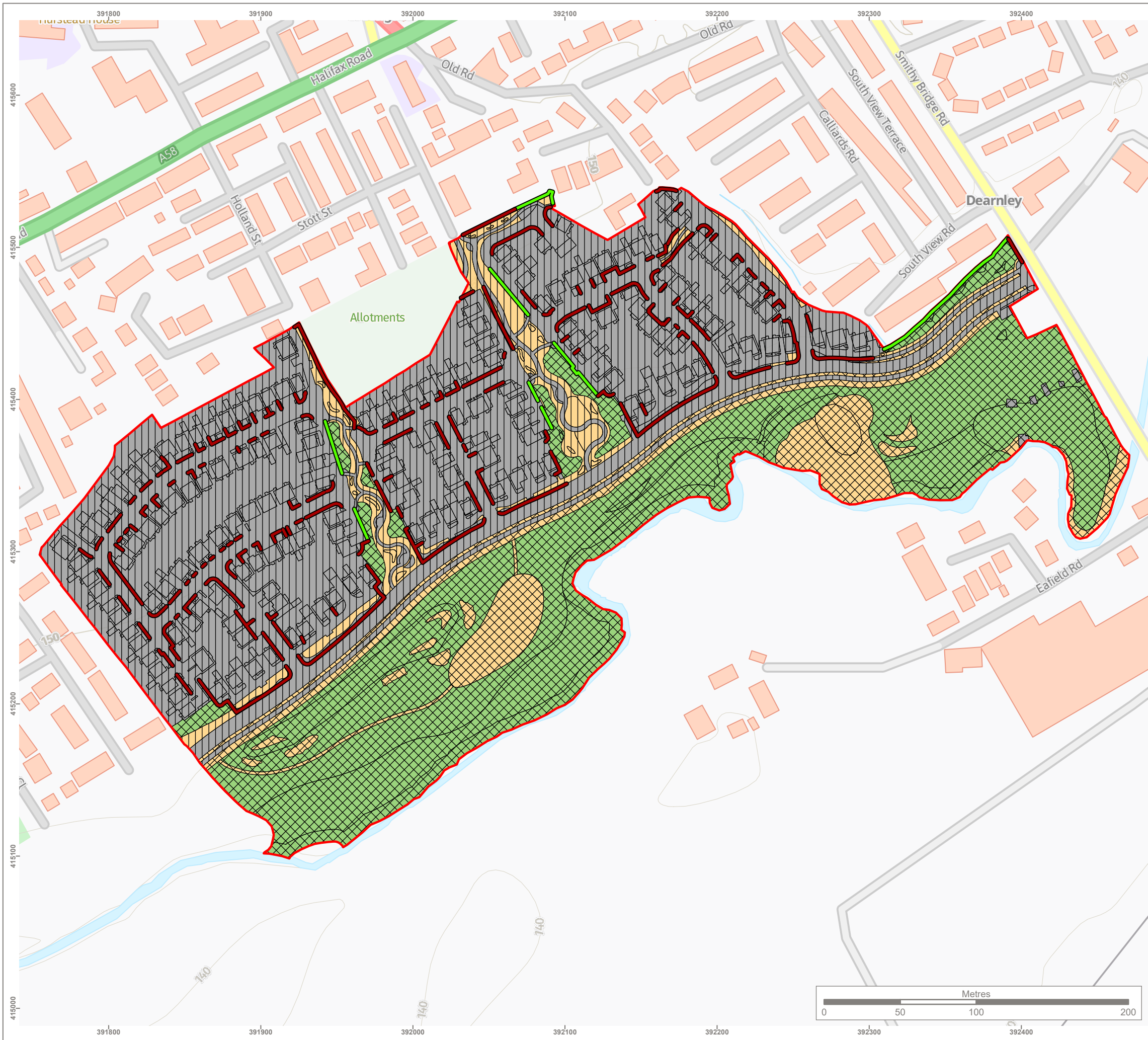
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Project
Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale

Title
**Proposed Development
UK Habitat Classification**

Drawing Number
G8776.015B

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
CW	CB	ACP	1:2,500 @ A3	23/01/2023



KEY

Site boundary

Hedgerow Condition

Good

Poor

Habitat Condition

Good

Moderate

Condition assessment not applicable

Strategic Significance

Formally identified in local strategy

Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy

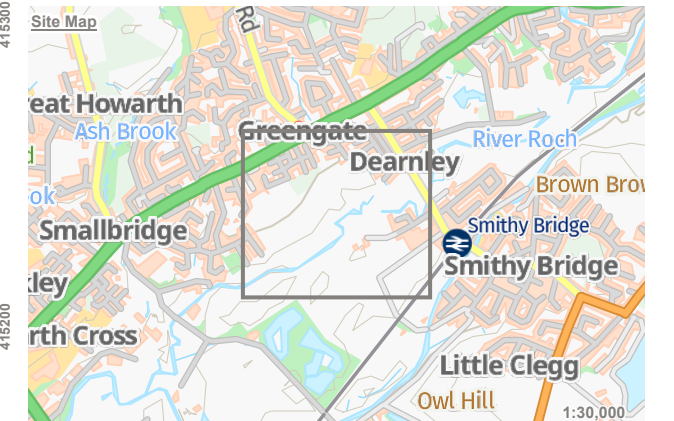
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Project
Smithy Bridge Road, Rochdale

Title
Proposed Habitat Conditions and Strategic Significance

Drawing Number
G8776.016B

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
CW	CB	ACP	1:2,500 @ A3	23/01/2023



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