

Biodiversity Metric Report

10 Limefield Terrace, Littleborough
Reference: 82-305-R1
Date: February 25





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Site Address	10 Limefield Terrace, Halifax Road, Littleborough, OL15 0LD
Co-ordinates	E 395276, N 417219
Site Area	0.01 ha
Current Site Use	The site comprised a small area of bare ground that had been cleared of vegetation. Halifax Road defines the site's southern boundary, with residential developments bordering the site along its western boundary. The Moorcock Inn, with associated amenity space, borders the site along its eastern boundary, and a residential garden defines the northern boundary of the site. Agricultural land extends further north and south, with areas of woodland located further west and north west.
Proposed Development	Development proposals include the construction of hardstanding for the use of off-road parking for the residents of 10 Limefield Terrace.
Results	The biodiversity metric shows that the proposed development achieves a loss in habitat units. Habitat Units -0.10 A -100.00% loss in habitat units will be incurred on-site as a result of the development. Based on current plans, a deficit of 0.11 habitat units on a 10% gain will need to be compensated. The trading rules of the metric would not be satisfied in relation to habitat units as these habitats being lost have not been 'traded up'.
Conclusions and Recommendations	A loss of 0.10 habitat units (-100.00%) will be incurred as a result of the development. 0.10 Medium Distinctiveness Grassland habitat units are required to satisfy the trading rules. If the trading rules cannot be satisfied and a 10% net gain is not achieved, off-site compensation or conservation offset payment will be required for the development to proceed.



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

E3P has been instructed by Mrs Rhea Fitzsimons to undertake a Biodiversity Metric Calculation at 10 Limefield Terrace, Littleborough, hereafter referred to as “the site”.

This report has been produced by Graduate Ecologist Max McCormick, BSc (Hons), who holds a qualifying CIEEM membership and has experience in undertaking Biodiversity Net Gain and Condition Assessments on a variety of projects across the UK.

This report should be read in conjunction with ‘The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool – 10 Limefield Terrace, Littleborough’.

1.2. SITE LOCATION

The site is located in Littleborough, north east of Manchester. Halifax Road defines the site’s southern boundary, with residential developments bordering the site along its western boundary. The Moorcock Inn, with associated amenity space, borders the site along its eastern boundary, and a residential garden defines the northern boundary of the site. Agricultural land extends further north and south, with areas of woodland located further west and north west. Red Brook is located approximately 180 m west. Please refer to Figure 1 for the approximate site location.

Figure 1 **Approximate Site Location**



1.3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Biodiversity Metric are as follows:

- ✳ Identify percentage change in on-site habitat.
- ✳ Identify the number of habitat units lost/gained on-site; and
- ✳ Determine the need for a conservation offset payment or off-site habitat creation.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. BIODIVERSITY METRIC

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used to undertake the metric calculation. The metric was undertaken following guidance as detailed within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide (DEFRA, 2024).

This report has been produced by Max McCormick. Max has attended internal training courses focusing on Biodiversity Net Gain and using the Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool and has experience undertaking Biodiversity Net Gain and Condition Assessments on a variety of projects across the UK.

This metric was reviewed by Associate Director Celia Kenyon, BSc (Hons) MSc MEnvSc CEnv MCIEEM. Celia has undertaken a number of online training courses with CIEEM including 'Calculating and Using Biodiversity Units with Metric 2.0' and 'Biodiversity Net Gain Through Development'. Celia has also completed Condition Assessments on a number of sites across the UK and holds a Level 3 Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC).

2.2. ON-SITE HABITAT BASELINE DATA

Site clearance had been undertaken prior to the Biodiversity Metric Calculation. Aerial imagery dated 22nd April 2020 showed the site as pre-clearance and consultation with Rochdale Borough Council showed no planning applications related to the site for its clearance. As such, the loss of on-site habitats after 30th January 2020 was not in accordance with planning permission from Rochdale Borough Council. Therefore, aerial imagery prior to vegetation clearance (dated 22nd April 2020) was used to inform habitat areas and the condition assessment. Please refer to Figure 2 for the pre-clearance imagery and Appendix I for the Pre-clearance UKHab Habitat Plan.

Figure 2 Pre-clearance Aerial Imagery



The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Sheets (DEFRA 2024) were used to undertake the condition assessment. The methodology follows the Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide (DEFRA 2024). On-site baseline habitats were measured off the UKHab Habitat Plan using QGIS.



2.3. POST DEVELOPMENT HABITAT CREATION

The Block Plan was used to measure habitat creation on-site (Healey Consulting, 2024. Drawing reference: HC-24091-(60)-003). A Post-Development Plan has been created to coincide with the UKHab Habitat Types within the Statutory Metric. The areas of the proposed habitats were measured using QGIS.

Please see Appendix II for the Post Development Habitat Plan and Appendix III for the Block Plans.

2.4. LIMITATIONS

Some areas on the site are double counted, including root protection zones and areas of habitat, where overlap is shown. This means areas of habitat pre- and post-development do not total to the same area.

Due to vegetation clearance taking place after 30th January 2020, which was not in accordance with planning permission, aerial imagery prior to vegetation clearance (dated 22nd April 2020) was used to inform habitat areas and the condition assessment. Please refer to the description section of Table 1 for a justification of why each habitat was assumed to be in a certain condition.



3. RESULTS

3.1. ON-SITE BASELINE CONDITION ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Table 1 shows the details of the habitat condition assessment used for input into the metric calculation tool.

Table 1 **Habitat Baseline Condition Assessment Results**

HABITAT TYPE (UKHAB)	AREA (HA)	CONDITION ASSESSMENT	DESCRIPTION
Grassland – Other Neutral Grassland	0.0122	Moderate	Passes 4 of 6 condition assessment criteria, including condition criterion A, which is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition: - The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type. - 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. - Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens. - Cover of bracken (<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>) is less than 20%, and cover of scrub (including bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.)) is less than 5%. Justification: Based on aerial imagery, it can be determined that the sward height of the species present within the grassland is varied. Additionally, no bracken or scrub appears to be present within the grassland, and the cover of bare ground is limited. Furthermore, the grassland is a good example of the habitat type when compared to other examples of other neutral grassland.



3.2. ON-SITE HABITAT CREATION CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Habitats have been proposed within the site based on the Block Plan (Healey Consulting, 2024). Table 2 shows the details of the target condition assessment and total areas of habitat creation. It has been assumed that there will be no significant delay in the creation of the proposed habitat features, as such, the delay in starting habitat creation has been set to zero.

Table 2 **Habitat Creation Condition Assessment Results**

HABITAT TYPE (UKHAB)	AREA (HA)	TARGET CONDITION/DESCRIPTION	TARGET TIME TO CONDITION
Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.0122	N/A	N/A



3.3. STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

The site is not noted within Rochdale Borough Council's Local Plan (adopted in November 2016) for its ecological value. As such, the strategic significance was defined as 'Area not in local strategy/no local strategy'. Additionally, due to the proximity of the site to residential dwellings and the limited connectivity from the site to habitats of higher value, the site is not anticipated to provide significant ecological value.

3.4. BIODIVERSITY UNIT RESULT

The headline results of the metric show a total loss of 0.10 (-100.00%) habitat units as a result of the proposed development. Table 3 shows the headline results detailed within the Biodiversity Metric.

Table 3 Headline Results

HEADLINE	CATEGORY	RESULT
Total Net Unit Change	Habitat Units	-0.10
	Hedgerow Units	N/A
	Watercourse Units	N/A
Total Net % Change	Habitat Units	-100.00%
	Hedgerow Units	N/A
	Watercourse Units	N/A

A total of 0.11 habitat units will be required to achieve a 10% net gain on-site. Table 4 details the deficit on 10% that will be incurred on-site for habitat units as a result of the development.

Table 4 Headline Deficit Results

UNIT TYPE	TARGET	BASELINE UNITS	UNITS REQUIRED	UNIT DEFICIT
Habitat Units	10%	0.10	0.11	0.11
Hedgerow Units	10%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse Units	10%	0.00	0.00	0.00

The trading rules for habitat units have not been satisfied, as habitats lost have not been 'traded up'. Table 5 details the units that require offsetting in order to satisfy the trading rules for habitat units.

Table 5 Habitat Unit Offsetting

DISTINCTIVENESS	HABITAT GROUP	UNIT LOSSES TO BE OFFSET
Medium	Grassland	0.10



4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed scheme will incur a loss of 0.10 habitat units (-100.00%) on-site as a result of the development. The trading rules of the metric have not been satisfied for habitat units, as habitats lost will not be 'traded up'.

As such, a deficit of 0.11 habitat units will be required to achieve a 10% net gain on-site, of which 0.10 units will need to comprise Medium Distinctiveness Grassland units.

Based on the current layout, a 10% net gain in habitat units is not considered achievable on-site due to the size of the site and the current proposals. As such, off-site compensation or conservation offset payment will be required.



5. PLANNING APPLICATION INFORMATION

Please provide the pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitats on the date of calculation.

0.10 habitat units. 13th February 2025.

Please provide the date the onsite pre-development biodiversity value was calculated:

Aerial imagery prior to vegetation clearance (dated 22nd April 2020) was used to inform habitat areas and the condition assessment.

If an earlier date, to the date of the planning application, has been used, please provide details of why this date has been used:

Biodiversity Metric was completed at an earlier date due to vegetation clearance after 30th January 2020.

When was the version of the biodiversity metric used published?

27th July 2024.

Has there been any loss (or degradation) of any onsite habitat(s) resulting from activities carried out before the date the onsite pre-development biodiversity value was calculated? Either:

-  - on or after 30 January 2020 which were not in accordance with planning permission; or
-  - on or after 25 August 2023 which were in accordance with a planning permission?

The loss of on-site habitats after 30th January 2020 was not in accordance with planning permission from Rochdale Borough Council.

Does the development site have irreplaceable habitats (corresponding to the descriptions in column 1 of [Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2023)]) which are:

- i. on land to which the application relates and
- ii. exist on the date of the application for planning permission (or an earlier agreed date)

No irreplaceable habitat was identified on-site.



6. REFERENCES

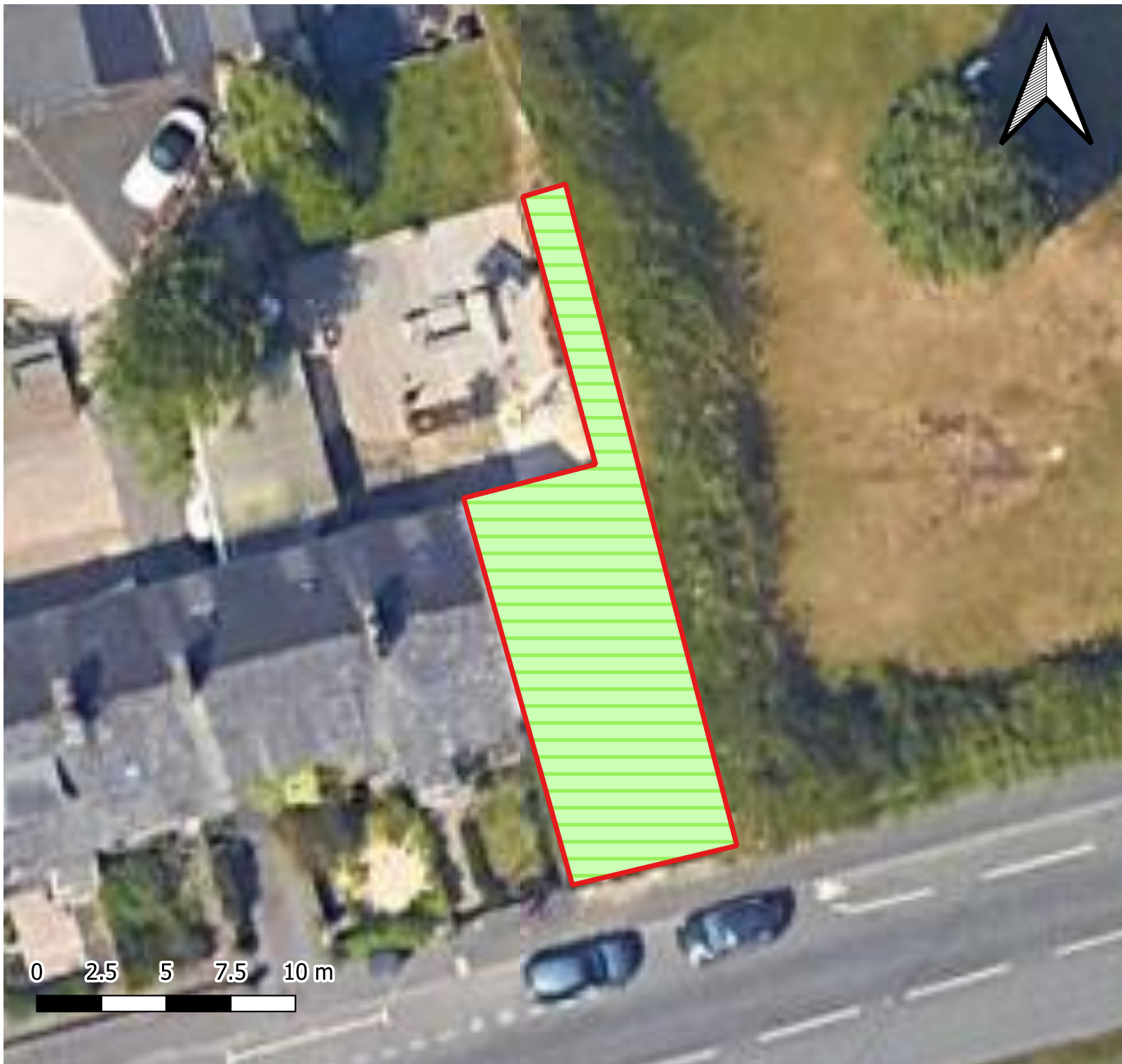
- ✳ DEFRA. (2024). Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments.
- ✳ DEFRA. (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide.
- ✳ Healey Consulting. (2024). Proposed Off Road Parking Existing and Proposed Block Plans. Drawing Reference: HC-24091-(60)-003.
- ✳ Rochdale Borough Council (2025). Rochdale Local Plan.

END OF REPORT

APPENDIX I

UKHAB HABITAT PLAN





Key:

-  Site Boundary
-  Other neutral grassland

Notes

Issue: 1	Revision: 1	Date: 13/02/2025	Drawn: MM	Authorised: CK
Client: Mrs Rhea Fitzsimons			Job No. 82-305	Date: 13/02/2025
			Drawing No. 82-305-001	Scale: 1:250 @ A4
Job title: 10 Limefield Terrace, Littleborough			Drawing title: Pre-clearance UKHab Habitat Plan	

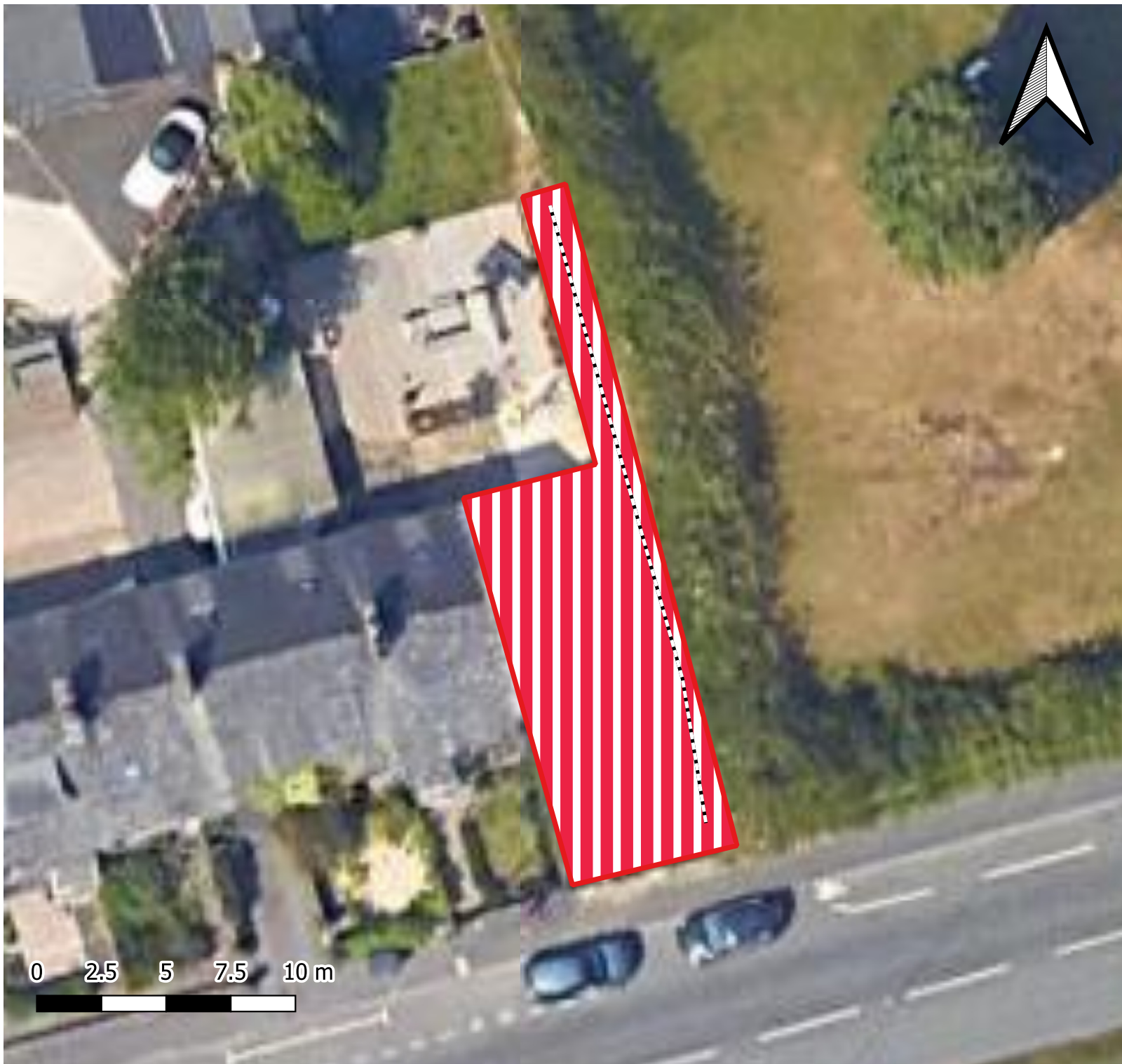


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APPENDIX II POST DEVELOPMENT PLAN





Key:

-  Site Boundary
-  Developed land; sealed surface
-  Wall

Notes

Issue: 1	Revision: 1	Date: 13/02/2025	Drawn: MM	Authorised: CK
Client: Mrs Rhea Fitzsimons			Job No. 82-305	Date: 13/02/2025
			Drawing No. 82-305-002	Scale: 1:250 @ A4
Job title: 10 Limefield Terrace, Littleborough			Drawing title: Post-development Plan	



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APPENDIX III

BLOCK PLANS



DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING. USE GIVEN DIMENSIONS ONLY.
ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED ON SITE BY THE CONTRACTOR.
ANY DIMENSIONAL DISCREPANCIES TO BE REPORTED BACK TO HEALEY
CONSULTING PRIOR TO PROCEEDING WITH CONSTRUCTION

