

Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report

Land Adjacent to Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe

CCW-EVE-ECO-RP-02

JANUARY 2026

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Report No CCW-EVE-ECO-RP-02

Date January 2026

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Checked	Changes
1.1	26/01/2026	HG	DS	Issue

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Executive Summary

Evelyn Ecology Ltd was instructed by Gary Walker to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 2SL, in support of a planning application comprising construction of three residential dwellings.

The assessment was informed by a detailed UKHab survey and condition assessment carried out across the Site on 05/01/2026, with habitat mapping and classification completed in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification v2.0 and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (February 2024). The results of this assessment have been used to calculate baseline habitat units and model post-development changes based on the latest Proposed Plans.

Following the input of baseline and post-intervention data into the Biodiversity Metric, the following results were obtained:

- Habitat units: -0.17 units, representing a -34.81% net loss

The development therefore does not currently achieve the statutory minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain in habitat units, as required by the Environment Act 2021 and paragraph 180 of the NPPF.

To meet the statutory 10% net gain requirement, the scheme requires an additional 0.22 habitat units.

Given the constrained nature of the Site, the applicant proposes to secure the residual shortfall of biodiversity units through the purchase of off-site biodiversity units within the Greater Manchester Authority (where possible), to be secured via planning obligation.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Evelyn Ecology Ltd was instructed by Gary Walker to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 2SL (hereafter referred to as “the Site”). This report sets out the findings of a Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report (BNGDSR) in relation to the proposed development, which comprises construction of three residential dwellings (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). The Proposed Plan showing the indicative proposed development is provided in Appendix A.

This report is submitted alongside the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) produced by Evelyn Ecology, which should be read in conjunction with this BNGDSR.

1.2 Scope

This BNGP aims to:

- Provide baseline data to classify the type, distinctiveness, condition, and strategic significance of habitats prior to and post development.
- Ensure that baseline habitat conditions are classified in a robust and consistent manner, and that classification is based on the best available data at the time of assessment.
- Clearly identify data collection methods and any limitations.
- Calculate baseline pre- and post-development habitat units for the Site based on current development proposals.
- Achieve BNG on-site wherever possible; with off-site contribution measures considered as an alternative where required.

2 PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, among other things, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

As of February 2024, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a legal requirement for most planning permissions under the Environment Act 2021, which mandates that all major developments in England must deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value, as measured using the statutory BNG Metric. This applies both to on-site and off-site habitat interventions.

The statutory development plan for the Site comprises the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2022–2039), the Manchester Core Strategy (2012–2027), and the extant (saved) Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies, read alongside any made Neighbourhood Plans.

Places for Everyone includes a specific requirement for a net enhancement to biodiversity and geodiversity. Policy JP-G8 (A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity) expects development to follow the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, compensate), avoid fragmenting or severing habitat connectivity, achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%, and make appropriate provision for long-term habitat management. Policy JP-G7 (Trees and Woodland) is also relevant where proposals may affect retained trees or woodland, requiring protection and appropriate management.

The Manchester Core Strategy supports these requirements. Policy EN9 (Green Infrastructure) expects development to maintain existing green infrastructure (quantity, quality and multiple function) and, where opportunities arise, enhance green infrastructure and strengthen linkages. Policy EN15 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation) seeks to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value (including SBIs) and expects development to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create biodiversity (on-site or adjacent), contributing to habitat linkages where appropriate.

3 Methodology

3.1 Desk Study

In order to inform an assessment of the habitat types and condition, a desk study was undertaken.

Aerial photography from publicly available sources was reviewed to understand the Site's ecological context, assess habitat connectivity to the wider landscape, and identify any changes to habitats since baseline survey data were collected. This helped to determine the reliability of baseline assumptions.

3.2 Field Survey

The UKHab survey was undertaken by Henry Gunning (2017-28633-CLS-CLS, 2022-10860-CL17-BAT & FISC Level 3) on 05/01/2026. Weather during the survey was clear and dry. Thawing snow was covering the ground at the time of the survey.

3.3 UKHab Survey

A habitat survey was undertaken, following the methodology set out in The UK Habitat Classification Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, July 2023). All habitats are described and mapped and, where appropriate, target notes provide supplementary information on habitat conditions, features too small to map to scale, species composition, structure and management.

All habitat parcels have been mapped and labelled on the Habitat Plan provided in Appendix B.

Detailed habitat descriptions, including species composition, structure, and ecological context, are provided within the accompanying Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report. This Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report should therefore be read in conjunction with the PEA to ensure full understanding of habitat characteristics.

3.4 Condition Assessment

Habitat condition was assessed using the criteria in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2024), applying a consistent methodology in line with national guidance.

Separate habitat condition assessment sheets have been provided for the Site which were completed during the survey. This condition assessment workbook should be read in conjunction with the report and the justifications provided in Table 1.

3.5 Calculation of Biodiversity Units

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (February 2024) was used to calculate the change in biodiversity units and the overall percentage of gain / loss achieved.

Baseline data collected during field and desk studies were used to classify each habitat present on Site using UKHab 2023, with condition scores assigned in accordance with the metric guidance. This data formed the basis for the pre-development baseline calculation, generating values for area-based habitat units and linear features such as hedgerows.

The post-development scenario was modelled using the following drawing:

- Proposed Site Plan - New Dwellings to the Land Adjacent to Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe - CH-001 - 001

Post-development habitat types and their spatial extent are illustrated on the Proposed Habitats Plan in Appendix C. These drawings support the post-intervention Biodiversity Metric calculations and should be reviewed alongside the metric outputs.

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator should be read in conjunction with this report.

3.6 Strategic Significance

Strategic significance scores were assigned in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2024). The Greater Manchester, ExploreGM map was reviewed to identify non-statutory designated sites / Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) within 1 km of the Site. Additionally, the Greater Manchester Nature

Network Map, which forms the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was reviewed to see where the Site is in relation to 'Nature Recovery Opportunity Areas.

3.7 Trading Summary

The principle of 'Trading Up' has been applied in accordance with Biodiversity Metric guidance. This ensures that, where habitat loss occurs, compensation is delivered through the enhancement or creation of habitats of equal or greater distinctiveness and ecological value, provided that environmental conditions are appropriate and delivery will provide clear biodiversity benefit.

3.8 Limitations

The post-development habitat areas may be subject to change as the design evolves through planning. Consequently, the BNG values presented are indicative and should be updated if the plans change at any point.

The walkover survey was undertaken in January, which is generally a sub-optimal period for detailed botanical assessment due to seasonal die-back and reduced detectability of some herbaceous species. In addition, there had been recent snowfall in the days preceding the survey and residual snow cover was present across parts of the Site, although this was thawing at the time of the visit. Notwithstanding this, the snow cover was shallow/patchy and did not materially restrict access or prevent identification of the principal habitat types and dominant species present.

At the time of writing, only minimal detail has been provided in respect of the proposed development layout and the extent of associated external works (refer to Appendix A). The proposal drawings received indicate the outline of three residential properties within the red line boundary, however, the drawings do not clearly define the extent, specification or treatment of any private amenity / green space, nor do they confirm the final extent of hardstanding, access or boundary. For the purposes of the biodiversity baseline and impact assessment, it has therefore been necessary to make a reasonable precautionary assumption regarding the likely presence of some retained or proposed garden areas. Specifically, it has been assumed that the properties will be served by a limited area of green space to the rear, and this has been represented as vegetated garden within the baseline mapping and the Habitats Plan (Appendix B). This assumption should be reviewed and, if necessary, the assessment updated once the detailed landscape and layout proposals (including the extent of private gardens and planted areas) are confirmed.

4 BASELINE

4.1 Area Habitats and Condition Assessment

The baseline habitat types, and their assessed condition are summarised in Table 1 and illustrated on the Habitat Plan in Appendix B.

Habitats within the Site have been assessed for strategic significance in line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric guidance. The Site does not lie within a core nature area or an opportunity area of the greater Manchester Nature Network. Therefore, all habitats have been assigned low strategic significance ('Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy').

Table 1: Baseline Habitats and Condition Assessment

Parcel Ref	Baseline Habitat Type	Baseline Condition	Area (ha)	Condition Justification
G1	Ruderal/Ephemeral	Moderate	0.0479	Condition assessed as moderate. The parcel supports a range of ruderal/ephemeral species and no invasive non-native species were recorded. However, the sward is relatively uniform and structurally simple, with one vegetation type dominating much of the area and limited variation in vegetation structure across the parcel.
DL1	Developed land; sealed surface	N/A - Other	0.0024	
T1	Urban tree	Moderate	0.0366	Condition assessed as moderate. The tree is a mature native specimen with a largely intact, continuous canopy and oversails vegetation beneath. However, there is evidence of recent/ongoing management (pruning), and it lacks notable ecological features (e.g. cavities, deadwood, loose bark or ivy), reducing its ecological value relative to a "good" condition tree.

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

5.1 BNG Good Practice Principles for Development

In accordance with the CIEEM guidance for BNG reporting (including the requirement to set out compliance against the BNG Good Practice Principles), the proposed approach for the Capenhurst Close scheme applies the mitigation hierarchy from the outset by seeking to avoid and minimise biodiversity loss, protect retained features, and deliver proportionate on-site enhancement where practicable. No irreplaceable habitats are present within the Site and no losses of biodiversity that cannot reasonably be offset are anticipated. Engagement on a scheme of this scale is expected to be addressed principally through the planning process, with the assessment informed by locally relevant evidence (including non-statutory site mapping and Local Nature Recovery Strategy / Nature Network layers) to ensure that measures are appropriate to the local ecological context and contribute to wider nature recovery objectives where opportunities exist.

BNG outcomes are quantified using the relevant biodiversity metric approach, providing a measurable baseline and post-development position, with additionality delivered through enhancements that go beyond baseline conditions (e.g. native planting). Key risks and uncertainties, primarily the limited detail currently available for the final layout and landscape/green space extent, are clearly documented as assumptions and should be reviewed when detailed proposals are available. Delivery is intended to be practical and maintainable for a small residential scheme, with measures capable of being secured through the planning process and integrated into routine long-term management arrangements, thereby providing a clear, transparent pathway to a modest but credible BNG outcome consistent with CIEEM good practice.

5.2 Area Habitats Enhancement, Retention & Loss

The proposed layout results in the complete loss of the ruderal / ephemeral habitat. A small area of existing developed land / existing road infrastructure will be retained. It is assumed that the development can be designed around the retention of the mature oak in the north-west corner of the Site.

Table 2: Habitats Retained, Enhanced and Lost

Baseline Habitat Type	Retention Category	Area (ha)
Developed land; sealed surface	Retained	0.0024
Ruderal/Ephemeral	Lost	0.0479
Urban tree	Retained	0.0366

5.3 Area Habitats Creation and Enhancement

The proposed habitat plan is illustrated in Appendix C. Table 3 below describes the habitats proposed.

For the purposes of the BNG calculation, habitat creation within private residential gardens is limited in accordance with the statutory Metric guidance. Therefore, all proposed habitats have been assigned the habitat type 'vegetated garden'. At the time of writing, the extent of private amenity/green space has not been clearly defined on the proposal drawings. Accordingly, the area of 'vegetated garden' included within the metric is based on a reasonable assumption that some rear garden space will be provided to serve the proposed dwellings (as shown on the Proposed Habitats Plan). This assumption should be reviewed and the metric updated if the final layout results in a materially different extent of soft landscaping/vegetated garden.

Table 3: On-site Post-intervention Habitat Creation and Enhancement

Proposed Habitat Type	Proposed Condition	Retention Category	Area (ha)
Developed land; sealed surface	N/A - Other	Created	0.036
Vegetated garden	Condition Assessment N/A	Created	0.0119
Developed land; sealed surface	N/A - Other	Retained	0.0024

5.4 Biodiversity Unit Calculations

The baseline score has been calculated as 0.48 habitat units. Subsequently, a post-development scenario has been calculated from the proposed plans provided and will result in an on-site post-intervention score of 0.32 habitat units. Thus, the proposed development alone would result in an overall loss of -0.17 habitat units (-34.81% net loss). A summary of changes in habitat areas is provided in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Quantitative Assessment of Biodiversity Impact

Factor	Habitats (ha)
Total on-site area / length (baseline)	0.09
Total on-site units (baseline)	0.48
Total on-site baseline area retained	0.04
Total on-site baseline units retained	0.29
Total on-site area proposed for enhancement	0.00
Total on-site baseline units proposed for enhancement	0.00
Total on-site baseline area / length lost	0.05
Total on-site baseline units lost	0.19
Net Project Units	-0.17
Total project % change	-34.81%

5.5 Trading Summary

The loss of low distinctiveness habitats and limited scope to offset these impacts on-site mean that the trading rules have not been satisfied, and additional measures will be required to address this shortfall to achieve full compliance.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

Biodiversity Net Gain calculations, using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, have been undertaken for the proposed development at Capenhurst Close, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 2SL. Baseline habitat calculations have been informed by a UKHab survey and condition assessment on 05/01/2026. Post development habitats have been illustrated in the Proposed Habitat Plan in Appendix C.

A loss of -0.17 habitat units (-34.81% net loss) was identified following the completion of the baseline and post intervention calculations.

At present, the proposals do not demonstrate a measurable 10% biodiversity net gain in line with Chapter 15, paragraph 187(d) of the NPPF and the Environment Act, 2021.

To meet the statutory 10% net gain requirement, the scheme requires an additional 0.22 habitat units.

6.2 BNG Statement of Intent

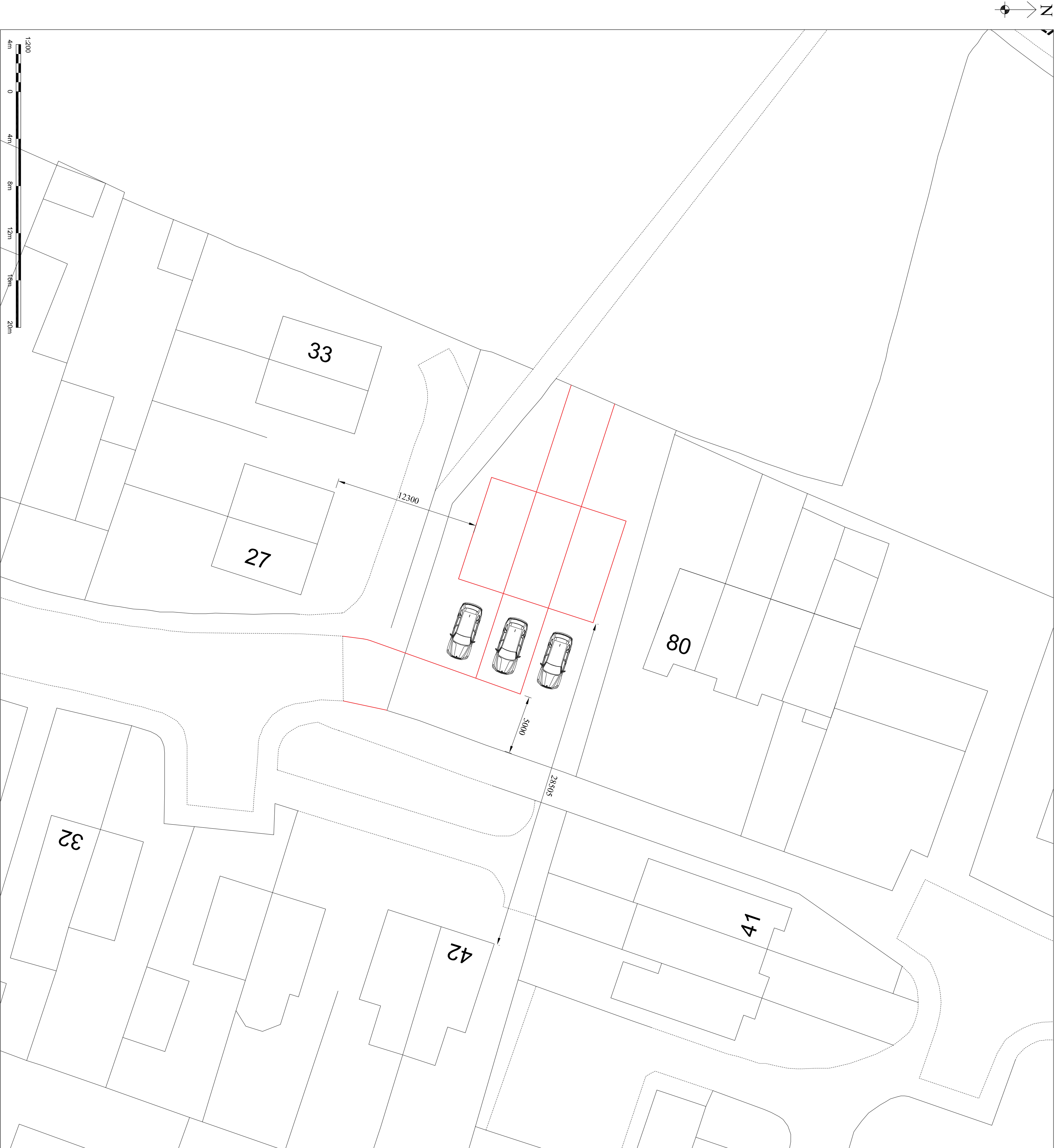
The Applicant confirms that the proposed development cannot achieve a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain through on-site measures due to the Site's small size and residential curtilage context. The Applicant therefore intends to secure the residual biodiversity unit shortfall entirely through off-site delivery, comprising 0.22 area habitat units (as reported by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric for the current design iteration).

Off-site units will be purchased from a reputable habitat bank / recognised unit provider, preferably within the same Local Planning Authority (LPA) or Natural Character Area (NCA), subject to availability and compliance with the Metric trading rules. The off-site biodiversity units will be legally secured for a minimum of 30 years via a suitable mechanism (e.g. Section 106 agreement or conservation covenant) and will include appropriate monitoring and remedial provisions. Evidence of the secured off-site units (provider, location, unit type and quantity, and legal securing mechanism) and an updated Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation will be provided to the LPA in advance of commencement (and/or at the stage required by the LPA) to demonstrate that the scheme delivers at least 10% BNG and complies fully with the trading rules.

7 REFERENCES

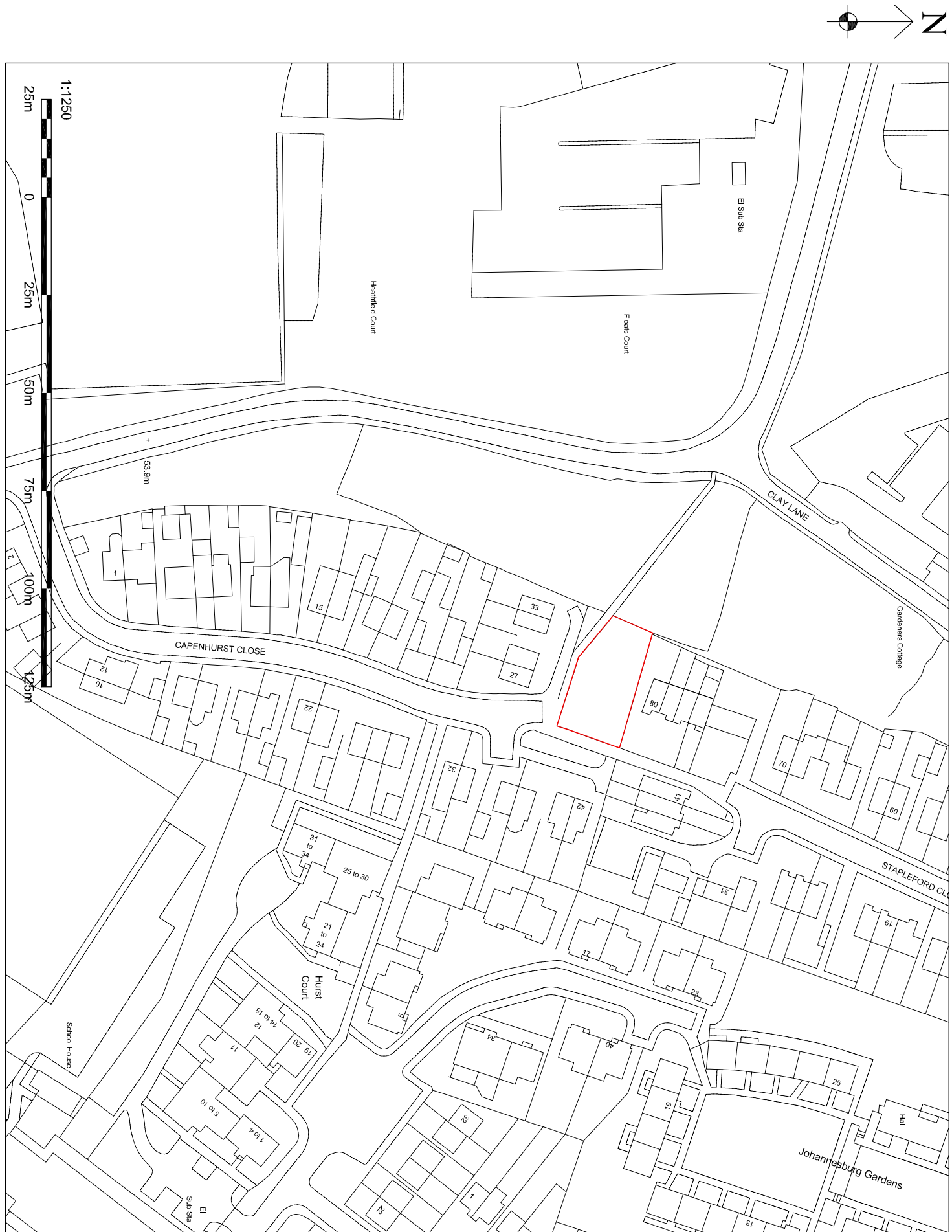
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APPENDIX A – Proposed Plan



PROPOSED SITE PLAN

(SCALE 1:200)



LOCATION PLAN

(SCALE 1:1250)

A				14.04.25				ISSUED FOR PRE PLANNING			
DRAWING STATUS				PRE PLANNING							
PROJECT				LAND ADJACENT CAPENHURST CLOSE, WYTHENSHAWE, MANCHESTER							
TITLE				NEW DWELLINGS TO THE LAND ADJACENT TO CAPENHURST CLOSE, WYTHENSHAWE							
SCALE & SIZE		STATUS		DATE		REV					
1:200 @ A1 UNO		PLANNING APP		APR. 25							
PROJECT No.		DRAWING No.									
CH-001		001									

APPENDIX B – Baseline Habitat Plan



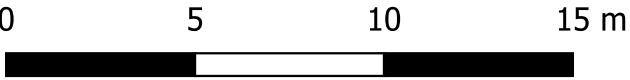
Legend

Red Line Boundary

Developed land; sealed surface

Ruderal/Ephemeral

Existing Large Urban Tree



APPENDIX C – Proposed Habitats Plan



Legend

Red Line Boundary

Developed land; sealed surface

Vegetated garden

Retained Large Urban Tree

A scale bar with markings for 0, 5, 10, and 15 meters.

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Project	Capenhurst Close, Wythensahwe	Date	27/01/2026	Drawing No	CCW-EVE-DR-02
Drawing Title	Proposed Habitat Plan	Scale	As shown	Revision	01
Client	Gary Walker	Drawn	KK	Checked	HG