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10071: BURLEIGH OAKS WASTE TRANSFER AND RECYCLING CENTRE, WEST SUSSEX

BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Introduction

1. Ecology Solutions was instructed to undertake a Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) of the land at Burleigh Oaks Waste Transfer and Recycling Centre, West Sussex.
2. The purpose of this assessment work is to ascertain the baseline habitat value of the site, to determine the likely 'biodiversity impact' of the proposals, and to assess the opportunities to generate biodiversity enhancements within the site.
3. The biodiversity impact in this instance has been quantified through the use of the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric v3.1, a widely used calculator tool as advocated by Natural England. Habitat conditions were assessed in line with the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 guidance using the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets.
4. The assessment work has been undertaken using the habitat baseline as collated by Ecology Solutions during specific Phase 1 Habitat survey work in March 2022.
5. The proposals are targeting the delivery of a 10% biodiversity net gain, as measured through the DEFRA metric. This will likely meet the aspirations of the local planning authority (in any forthcoming planning policy documents) and the Environment Act 2021 (which makes reference to provision for net gain but does not yet mandate a 10% net gain¹).
6. The following sections of this note are structured as follows:
 - The baseline biodiversity (habitat) value of the site;
 - The post-development value of the site; and
 - Conclusions and future considerations.

¹ Section 98 of Part 6 of the Environment Act 2021 states that 'Schedule 14 makes provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England'. Part 1 of Schedule 14 contains the requirement for biodiversity net gain. However, Section 147(3)(s) states that Part 6 of the Environment Act 2021 only comes into force 'on such day as the Secretary of State may by regulations appoint'. As such, it is not until further secondary legislation is made by the Secretary of State that Part 6 of the Environment Act (where the 10% requirement exists) applies.

Biodiversity Baseline

7. The majority of the site comprises hardstanding with small areas of bramble scrub with improved grassland and a pond.
8. A habitat plan showing the baseline habitats is provided at Plan ECO3.
9. **Bramble Scrub.** A small area of Bramble scrub is present in the west of the site. This habitat type is classified as 'medium distinctiveness' in the DEFRA Metric and this habitat cannot be given a condition.
10. **Modified Grassland (Improved Grassland).** There is an area of improved grassland within the east of the site that are dominated by grasses with a very low and infrequent herbaceous content. This habitat type is classified as 'low distinctiveness' in the DEFRA Metric and is considered to be in **poor condition** (failing criteria 1 [*There must be 6-8 species per m²*] which is essential to achieve moderate condition).
11. **Ponds (Non-priority Habitat).** The site supports one non-priority habitat pond. Ponds (Non-priority Habitat) as a habitat type are classified as 'medium distinctiveness' within the DEFRA Metric and it is considered to be in **poor condition** (failing criteria 1 [*The pond of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution.*], criteria 2 [*there is semi-natural habitat (i.e. moderate distinctiveness or above) for at least 10m from the pond edge.*], criteria 3 [*Less than 10% of the pond is covered with duckweed or filamentous algae.*], and criteria 8 [*In non-woodland ponds, plants, be there emergent, submerged or floating (excluding duckweeds), should cover at least 50% of the pond areas that is less than 3m deep.*] therefore meeting 5 out of 9 criteria).
12. **Hardstanding.** These habitat types are inputted as 'Developed land; sealed surface' into the DEFRA Metric and are considered not to have any biodiversity value.
13. **Site-wide Biodiversity Value.** Having mapped the existing habitats and biodiversity features present within the site, and undertaken an assessment with the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric, the baseline value of the site equates to **1.04 habitat units**.
14. In order to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity, the emerging proposals would therefore need to generate an uplift of 0.104 habitat units (1.144 units in total).

Post Development Value

15. As above, a post-development baseline has been calculated for the site. The proposed habitats are shown in Table 1.

Proposed Land Use		Area (ha)	Notes
Retained	Modified Grassland	0.02	
	Pond (Non-Priority Habitat)	0.063	
	Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.67	
Created	Other Neutral Grassland	0.08	Wildflower Meadow
	Mixed Scrub	0.01	
	Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.079	New building area

Table 1. Proposed land uses, quantities, and the presumed semi-natural habitat composition.

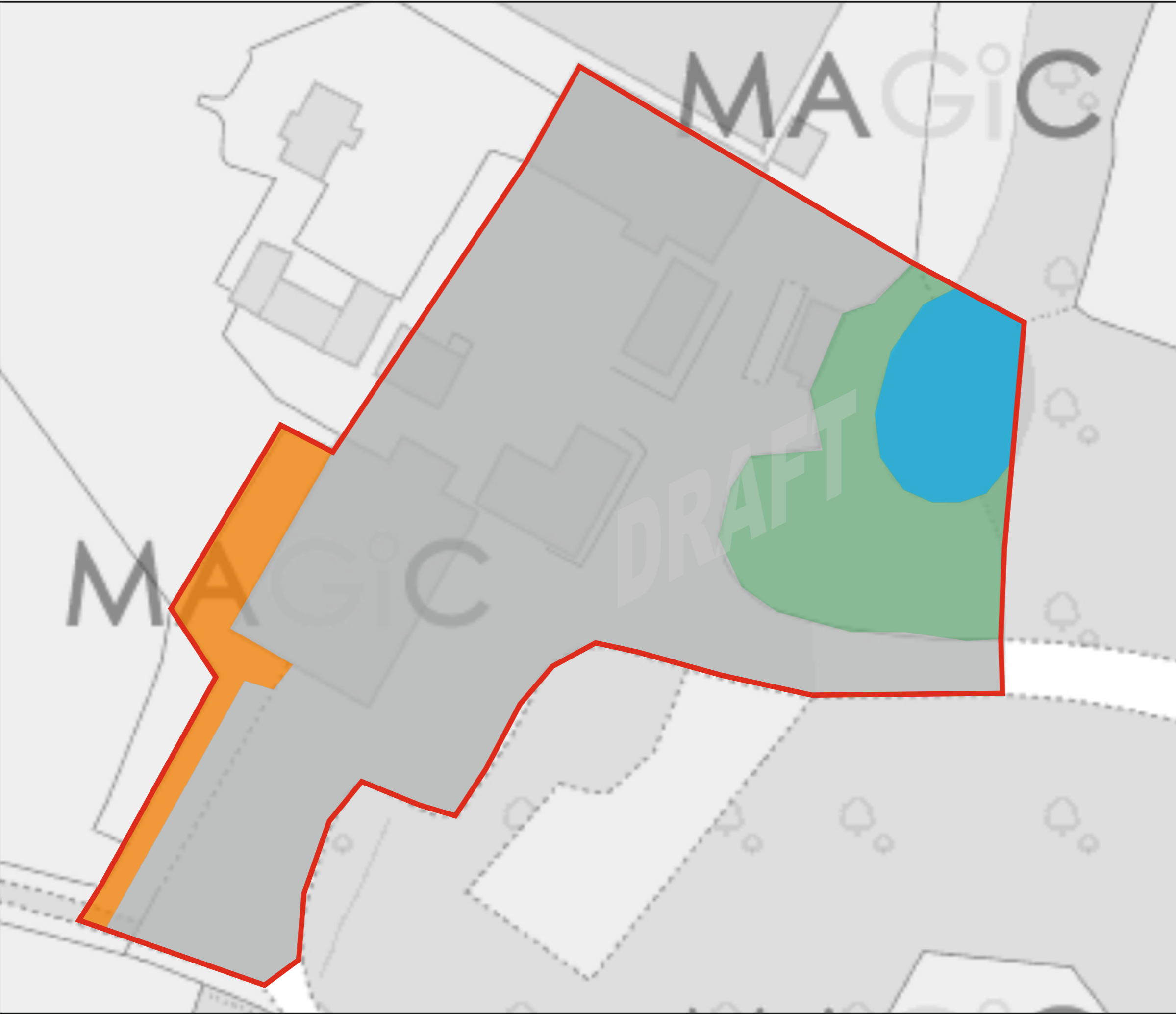
16. A habitat plan showing the proposed habitats is provided at Plan ECO4.
17. The proposed development would result in a post development score of **1.15 habitat units**, achieving an overall increase of **10.24%**.
18. It should be noted that the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric calculation does not take into consideration measures relating to protected or notable species. The creation of other neutral grassland will provide enhanced opportunities for a range of wildlife over the existing situation including bats, birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates.
19. A number of additional enhancements will also be provided as part of the proposed development, that are not accounted for within the net gain calculation. This includes bat boxes providing enhanced roosting opportunities for bats and bird boxes providing enhanced nesting opportunities for birds.

Conclusions and Future Considerations






20. As above, a Biodiversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken to assess the viability of achieving a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain through the proposed development. This assessment work indicates that a Biodiversity Net Gain in excess of 10% would be achieved with the current proposals, which is referenced as the minimum net gain requirement in the recent Environment Act 2021 (although not yet mandatory through Regulation at time of writing).

PLAN ECO3
Baseline Habitats

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KEY:

	SITE BOUNDARY 0.092ha
	BRAMBLE SCRUB 0.079ha
	DEVELOPED; SEALED SURFACE 0.67ha
	MODIFIED GRASSLAND 0.11ha
	POND (NON-PRIORITY) 0.063ha



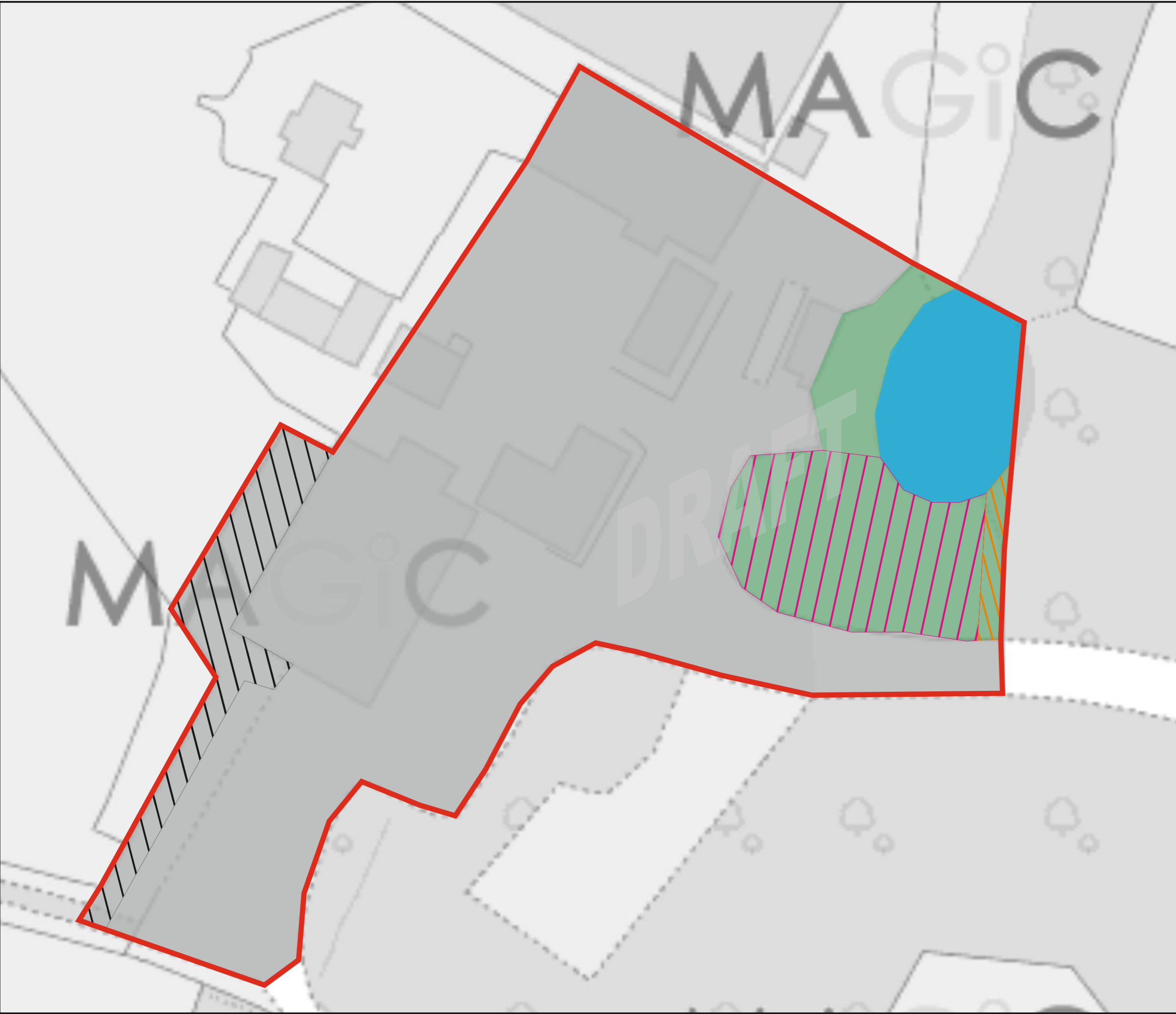
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PLAN ECO3: EXISTING HABITATS	Rev: A Aug 2022
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PLAN ECO4
Proposed Habitats

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- KEY:**
-  SITE BOUNDARY
0.092ha
- RETAINED:**
-  DEVELOPED; SEALED SURFACE
0.67ha
 -  MODIFIED GRASSLAND
0.02ha
 -  POND (NON-PRIORITY)
0.063ha
- CREATED:**
-  DEVELOPED; SEALED SURFACE
0.079ha
 -  OTHER NEUTRAL GRASSLAND
0.08ha
 -  MIXED SCRUB
0.01ha



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PLAN ECO4: PROPOSED HABITATS	Rev: A Aug 2022
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APPENDIX 1

Habitat Measurements Biodiversity Metric 3.1

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A-1 Site Habitat Baseline

Condense / Show Columns

Condense / Show Rows

Main Menu

Instructions

Ref	Habitats and areas			Distinctiveness		Condition		Strategic significance			Suggested action to address habitat losses	Ecological baseline Total habitat units	Retention category biodiversity value						Response compensation spread for unavoidable losses	Comments	
	Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance	Strategic significance multiplier	Strategic significance multiplier			Area retained	Area enhanced	Baseline units retained	Baseline units enhanced	Area habitat lost	Units lost		Assessor comments	Reviewer comments
1	Urban	Developed land: sealed surface	0.97	V.Low	0	N/A - Other	0	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Compensation Not Required	0.00									
2	Heathland and shrub	Bramble scrub	0.079	Medium	4	Condition Assessment N/A	1	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat (e.g. wet heath)	0.32									
3	Lakes	Ponds (Non-Priority Habitat)	0.063	Medium	4	Moderate	2	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat (e.g. wet heath)	0.50									
4	Grassland	Modified grassland	0.11	Low	2	Poor	1	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same distinctiveness or better habitat (e.g. wet heath)	0.22									
5																					
6																					
7																					
8																					
9																					
		Total habitat area	0.98									1.04									

Total area lost (excluding area of Urban trees and Green walls) 0.17

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APPENDIX 2

Headline Results Biodiversity Metric 3.1

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Headline Results

[Return to results menu](#)

On-site baseline	<i>Habitat units</i>	1.04
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
On-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	1.15
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
On-site net % change <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	10.24%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>River units</i>	0.00%
Off-site baseline	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.00
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
Off-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.00
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
Total net unit change <small>(including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.11
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>River units</i>	0.00
Total on-site net % change plus off-site surplus <small>(including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	10.24%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>River units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules Satisfied?	Yes ✓	

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