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Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Langford Car Spares,
Semley,
SP7 9AQ

November 2025

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QUALITY CONTROL		
The information which we have prepared and provided is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.		
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Checked by	Principal Ecologist Olatz Gartzia BSc MSc ACIEEM	November 2025
This report remains valid for 12 months from date of issue. Survey data are valid for 12-24 months from the date the survey was undertaken.		

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The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to works.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report has been produced to provide the results of the Biodiversity Net Gain calculation a Langfords Car Spares in order to ensure compliance with the *National Planning Policy Framework (2024)* regarding no net-loss of biodiversity.
- 1.2. The proposals are for the installation of self storage units and associated access. It was informed by a desk study, habitat walkover survey.
- 1.3. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments calculate the change in ecological value at a site by comparing the number of 'biodiversity units' within the site pre- and post-construction, for both linear habitats and areas of habitat, and demonstrating measurable loss or gain. The ecological value of the site is expressed as a percentage change in total Biodiversity Units following implementation of the proposals. Various forms of the metric are available, the most current being *DEFRA: The Statutory Biodiversity Metric*, which has been used to complete this assessment.
- 1.4. This assessment has been informed by a habitat walkover survey and habitat condition assessment. Baseline habitats include artificial; unsealed surface, developed land; sealed surface, ruderal / ephemeral and bramble scrub.
- 1.5. Proposed habitats include artificial; unsealed surface, developed land; sealed surface, other neutral grassland, bramble scrub, and scattered trees.
- 1.6. The results of the metric can be summarised as follows:

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.08
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	11.78%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

- 1.7. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric demonstrates a 11.78% change in habitats.
- 1.8. Provided the proposed habitats are managed competently, the proposed development will be in compliance with the NPPF. It is recommended that a biodiversity management plan is written to ensure the habitats created met their target score.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Darwin Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Langfords Car Spares to undertake an Biodiversity Net Gain assessment of proposals for the buildings and habitats at Langford Car Spares, Semley SP7 9AQ¹. The assessment was informed by a desk study and habitat walkover survey.
- 2.2. This report has been produced to provide the results of the Biodiversity Net Gain calculation at Langford Car Spares, Semley SP7 9AQ in order to ensure compliance with the *National Planning Policy Framework (2024)* regarding no net-loss of biodiversity.
- 2.3. The assessment was required to support a planning application for installation of self storage units. The assessment is based on the landscape proposals as shown in the **Appendix**.

Site Overview

- 2.4. The site is in a rural location in the south west of Wiltshire. The town of Shaftesbury lies approximately 1 mile to the south.
- 2.5. The proposals show the development of a northern portion of a site currently used for vehicle/metal recycling. Rows of cars are currently stored on top of a stone scalping surface throughout the site, the rows are divided by access tracks. The site is enclosed by a strip of woodland to the south east which connects directly to adjoining deciduous woodland and arable fields. A 2m high chain link fence forms the eastern boundary, this, together with the western and northern section of the site give way to further areas of the recycling yard (see **Figure 1**).



Figure 1: Site location within the local landscape. Copyright Google Maps (Nov 2025)

¹ Grid reference ST 87257 26549

3. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY BACKGROUND

National Planning Policy

- 3.1. The *National Planning Policy Framework (2024)* aims to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity. Chapter 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' details what local planning policies should seek to consider with regard to planning applications.
- 3.2. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- 180 a) Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - 180 b) Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - 180 d) Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
 - 181) Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and local designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries;
 - 182) Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their settings should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated area.
- 3.3. Specific policies regarding habitats and biodiversity comprise:
- 185) To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation and
- b) Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

186) When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoid (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) Development on land within or outside of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the feature of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs;
- c) Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around development should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

4. METHODOLOGY

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

4.1. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments calculate the change in ecological value at a site by comparing the number of 'Biodiversity Units' within the site pre and post construction for both linear habitats and areas of other habitats. The ecological value of the site is expressed as a percentage change in total Biodiversity Units following the completion of the proposed development. This is an indicator of what the proposed development's impact would be on the site's existing ecological value and will establish if a net loss of biodiversity has been avoided.

4.2. The biodiversity calculations were undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, User Guide, Technical Supplement and Condition Assessment Sheets.

Calculation Components

4.3. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric takes account of all the habitats on site prior to development and post development using UK Habitat Classification System (UKHabs). Using this metric, area habitats are measured in hectares and inputted to three decimal places. Linear habitats are measured in Kilometres to the nearest three decimal places.

4.4. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric further assesses all habitats using the following:

4.5. *Distinctiveness*- Habitats are automatically given a distinctiveness score based on habitat type. This ranges from 'High' to 'Low'. 'High' distinctiveness habitats include those listed as Habitats of Principal Importance under the NERC act. Habitats of low wildlife value (such as ornamental planting) are given a 'low' distinctiveness score.

4.6. *Condition*- Habitat conditions are assessed for each individual habitat type using the technical supplement. Habitat condition uses criteria such as botanical diversity and invasive species cover.

4.7. *Strategic Significance*- This relates to the spacial location of a habitat type and if the location is 'ecologically desirable'. Habitats located in areas considered desirable are given larger weighting within the metric.

4.8. Once the post-development Biodiversity Units have been calculated, the mitigation hierarchy is applied. Application of the mitigation hierarchy is one of the guiding principles for biodiversity no net loss / net gain proposals. Through its application, the hierarchy highlights actions to avoid, minimise or restore biodiversity losses on site, and account for unavoidable losses off site.

4.9. The difference between the baseline Biodiversity Units and those calculated on the proposed development design indicate the number of units that would be needed to deliver no net loss or a net gain for biodiversity. Using this information the habitat types and the size of the area that would be needed off site to deliver no net loss or net gain can be identified if required.

4.10. The area calculations of existing and proposed habitat areas are made using QGIS.

4.11. The proposed habitats were calculated from the site landscaping proposals.

Good Practice Principles

4.12. Good practice principles for biodiversity net gain are set out in Table 1.1 of the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (Baker *et al*, 2019). The key principles include:

- Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy (CIEEM, 2018) and be additional by achieving outcomes that exceed existing obligations.
- Avoid losing biodiversity which cannot be off-sett elsewhere for example irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland.
- Address any risk (e.g. difficulty of achieving habitat creation or enhancement for net gain.
- Make a measurable net gain contribution for the site and ensure it is achievable.

Assumptions and Limitations

4.13. The accuracy of the habitat area measurements is limited by the form of the baseline data collection and resolution of development proposals plans. In this instance the baseline habitats for the site have been calculated by cross referencing illustrative habitat plans and aerial imagery. Post development habitats have been measured using QGIS by geo-referencing the proposed layout to the baseline dataset.

4.14. The proposed habitat baseline is calculated using both the landscaping plans and professional opinion on the target conditions that can be attained for each habitat type with proficient management. Therefore, all proposed habitat types rely on implementation of a long-term management plan and planting in line with the provided landscape proposals. Further information on this is provided in the conclusion.

5. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

Pre-development Habitats/Baseline

- 5.1. Below is a summary of the habitats and condition assessments recorded on site during the Habitat Survey undertaken by Ecologist Jonathan Bayliss BSc on 21st June 2024, which was updated by Senior Ecologist Jessie Forster BSc on 25th November 2025. Baseline habitats are shown within **Figure 2 Baseline Habitat Map**. No linear or watercourse habitats were recorded on site.

Tall Forbs

- 5.2. This habitat is prevalent where vegetation has grown on the thin (typically 20-50 cm wide) strips of fallow areas between the regular used trackways and the stored cars. The habitat comprises a sparse covering of annual and perennial herbaceous native plants together with some grasses, over a bare substrate of stone chippings (probably limestone). No one species of plant appears to be dominant.
- 5.3. The species present represent a pioneering community of plants in the early stages of ecological succession on a nutrient poor substrate. A wide ranging list of species was recorded with no more than 7- 8 species occurring per square metre. Total vegetation coverage did not generally exceed 30 % with bare ground comprising 70 - 90 % of the habitat. A species list for this habitat is presented in **Table 1** below.

Table 1. Species list for Tall Forbs	
Species, Common and Latin names	
Milk Thistle <i>Silbum marianum</i>	Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i>
Herb Robert <i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Oxeye daisy <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
Perennial Rye Grass <i>Lolium perenne</i>	Spear Thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Barrel Medic <i>Medicago truncatula</i>	Feverfew <i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>
Broome. Spp	Hoary Willowherb <i>Epilobium parviflorum</i>
Cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i>	Smooth cats ear <i>Hypochaeris glabra</i>
Hedge Woundwort <i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Common Ragwort <i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Broadleaved Willowherb <i>Epilobium montanum</i>	Prickly wild lettuce <i>Lactuca serriola</i>
Rough meadow grass <i>Poa Trivialis</i>	Horsetail's <i>Equisetum arvense</i> ;
Broad Plantain <i>Plantago major</i>	Cut leaf Cranes Bill <i>Geranium dissectum</i>
Water Figwort <i>Scrophularia auriculata</i>	White clover <i>Trifolium repens</i>
Bristly Oxtongue <i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>	Broad leaf dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Rough Hawkbit <i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Chamomile. sp <i>Chamaemelum.sp</i>
Bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Teasle <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>
Forget me not <i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	Hogweed <i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>

- 5.4. This habitat was assessed using the Urban habitat type sparsely vegetated land - Tall Forbs condition assessment sheet. This habitat passes 2 of 3 criteria, therefore it is assessed to be in **Moderate condition** (Table 2).

Table 2 Tall Forbs.

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criteria Met
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Yes
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Yes
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	No

Ruderal / Ephemeral

- 5.5. A section of ruderal / ephemeral vegetation was recorded at the north-east corner of the site. Species recorded within this habitat included common nettle, herb Robert, broad leaved dock, bramble, and hogweed.
- 5.6. This habitat was assessed using the Urban habitat type sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal / Ephemeral condition assessment sheet. This habitat passes 2 of 3 criteria, therefore it is assessed to be in **Moderate condition** (Table 3).

Table 3: Ruderal / ephemeral

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criteria Met
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Yes
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Yes
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	No

Bramble Scrub

- 5.7. Sections of bramble scrub were present along the north east fence line and south east boundary, these sections extended a few metres from the boundary where they merged with the sparsely vegetated urban land.
- 5.8. A condition assessment is not applicable for this habitat.

Other Neutral grassland

- 5.9. A section of other neutral grassland was located at the north of the site. Species recorded within this habitat included false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, and dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., wild Angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, broadleaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, doves-foot cranes bill *Geranium molle*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, perennial rye *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, and red fescue *Festuca rubra*.
- 5.10. This habitat passes 3 of 6 criteria, including essential criteria A and F and therefore it is assessed as having a **moderate condition (Table 4)**.

Table 4: Neutral Grassland Habitat Condition Score

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criteria Met	Condition Score
A	The grassland is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific grassland habitat type. Indicator species listed by UKHab for the specific grassland habitat type are consistently present. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	Yes - The habitat is a good representation of the UKHab description	Moderate
B	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.	No - The sward length was consistent throughout the entire plot	
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.	No - Bare ground within the plot was 0%	
D	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%.	Yes - No bracken or scrub was present within the habitat	
E	Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition 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. If any invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	No - There was an over 5% cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition, including nestle, creeping thistle and creeping buttercup	
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition.	Yes - An average of 10 grass and forb species were recorded per quadrant	

Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface

- 5.11. This habitat formed the majority of the site, making up the tracks and the ground beneath the stored vehicles. It comprised compacted stone chippings, with no vegetation present, a condition assessment is not applicable for this habitat.

Developed land ; sealed surface

- 5.12. This habitat comprised an asphalt type surface forming the car parking area at the entrance to the site.
- 5.13. A condition assessment is not applicable for this habitat.

Baseline

- 5.14. The total area of pre-development habitat is 0.5581ha with a total of **0.67 baseline Habitat Units**. The proposals will retain 0.0741ha of developed land; sealed surface, 0.1817ha of artificial unvegetated unsealed surface and 0.0178ha of other neutral grassland. Therefore, the proposals will result in the loss of 0.25ha of habitats which reduces the biodiversity value of the site by 0.37 habitat units.

Post Development Habitats

- 5.15. The post-development proposals for the site comprise the erection of self storage units and associated access. Proposed habitats include; artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, developed land; sealed surface, bramble scrub, other neutral grassland, and trees. Habitats are shown within **Figure 3: Proposed Habitats Map**.

Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface,

- 5.16. Gravel based access tracks will be created across the site as part of the development. These will be perpendicular to the existing rows of cars and tracks and cross the existing. This habitat will measure 0.0342ha.
- 5.17. A condition assessment is not applicable for this habitat.
- 5.18. The proposed creation of habitats as part of this development will provide **0 habitat units**.

Developed land ; sealed surface

- 5.19. Rows of storage units placed on top of the existing unsealed surface will create areas of sealed surface across the site. These will be perpendicular to the existing rows of cars and tracks and cross the existing. This habitat will measure 0.1689ha.
- 5.20. A condition assessment is not applicable for this habitat.
- 5.21. The proposed creation of habitats as part of this development will provide **0 habitat units**.

Bramble scrub

- 5.22. Sections of bramble scrub will be created around the perimeter of the site. The total area of bramble scrub to be created will measure 0.0471ha.
- 5.23. A condition assessment is not applicable for this habitat.
- 5.24. The proposed creation of habitats as part of this development will provide **+0.20 habitat units**.

Scattered trees

- 5.25. 18 native trees will be planted across the site. Tree species that may be planted may include but are not limited to; English oak *Quercus robur*, cherry *Prunus avium*, rowan *Sorbus subg. Sorbus*, sliver birch *Betula pendula*, buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica*, apple *Malus sp*, and lime *Tilia sp*. blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, and dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*. The trees will be managed to a **moderate condition**.
- 5.26. The proposed creation of habitats as part of this development will provide **+0.25 habitat units**.

6. RESULTS AND EVALUATION

- 6.1. Overall, the site will achieve a **11.78% (0.08 units) net gain for habitats** within the site based on the current proposals as set out in **Appendix 1**. A summary of these results within the metric can be found below:
- 6.2. The Metric in an excel spreadsheet will also be provided along with comments where deemed necessary.

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.08
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	11.78%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Further Recommendations

- 6.3. A biodiversity management plan should be written for the site to ensure that all habitats created obtain their target scores. The Biodiversity Net Gain Principles document stipulates that created habitats must be maintained over a period of at least 25-30 years, along with providing monitoring and review, therefore any management plan must take this into account. .

7. REFERENCES

CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*.

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Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular (2005) *Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System* [online] www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7692/147570.pdf [November 2025]

Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Local Development Framework, Wiltshire Core Strategy Adopted January adopted 2015.



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|-------------------------|
|  | Red Line Boundary |  | Other neutral grassland |
|  | Artificial unvegetated,unsealed surface |  | Ruderal/Ephemeral |
|  | Bramble scrub |  | Tall forbs |
|  | Developed land; sealed surface | | |



Project: Langfords Car Spares

Figure 2: Baseline Habitat Map

Date: 27/11/2025

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Legend

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Red Line Boundary |  Developed land; sealed surface |
|  Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface |  Other neutral grassland |
|  Bramble scrub |  Proposed Small Rural Tree |



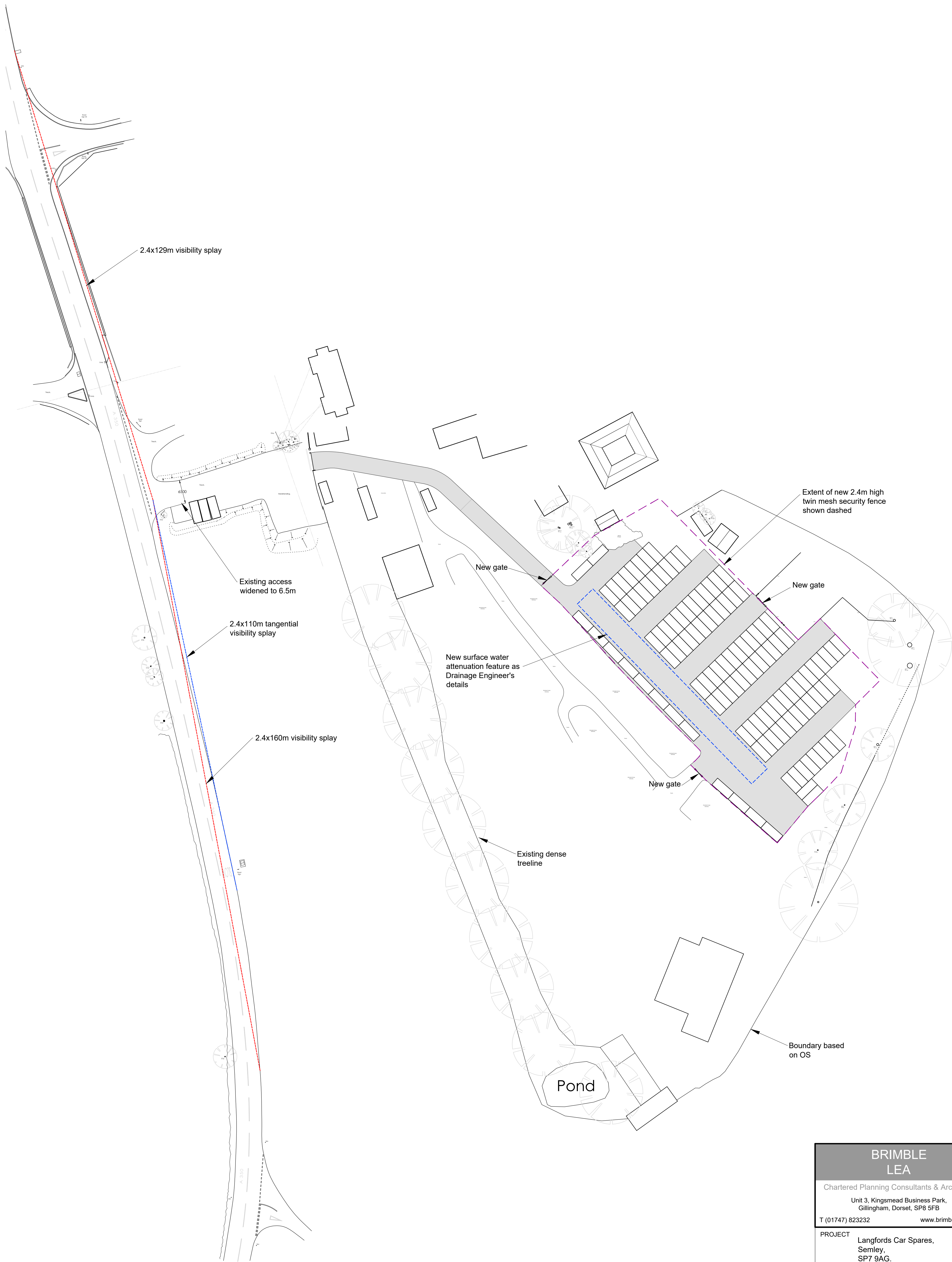
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Project: Langfords Car Spares

Figure 3: Post Development
Habitat Map

Date: 27/11/2025

Rev	Dm	Date	Description
-	-	-	-



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PROJECT
Langfords Car Spares,
Semley,
SP7 9AG.

DRAWING
Proposed Site Plan

SCALE
1:500 @ A1

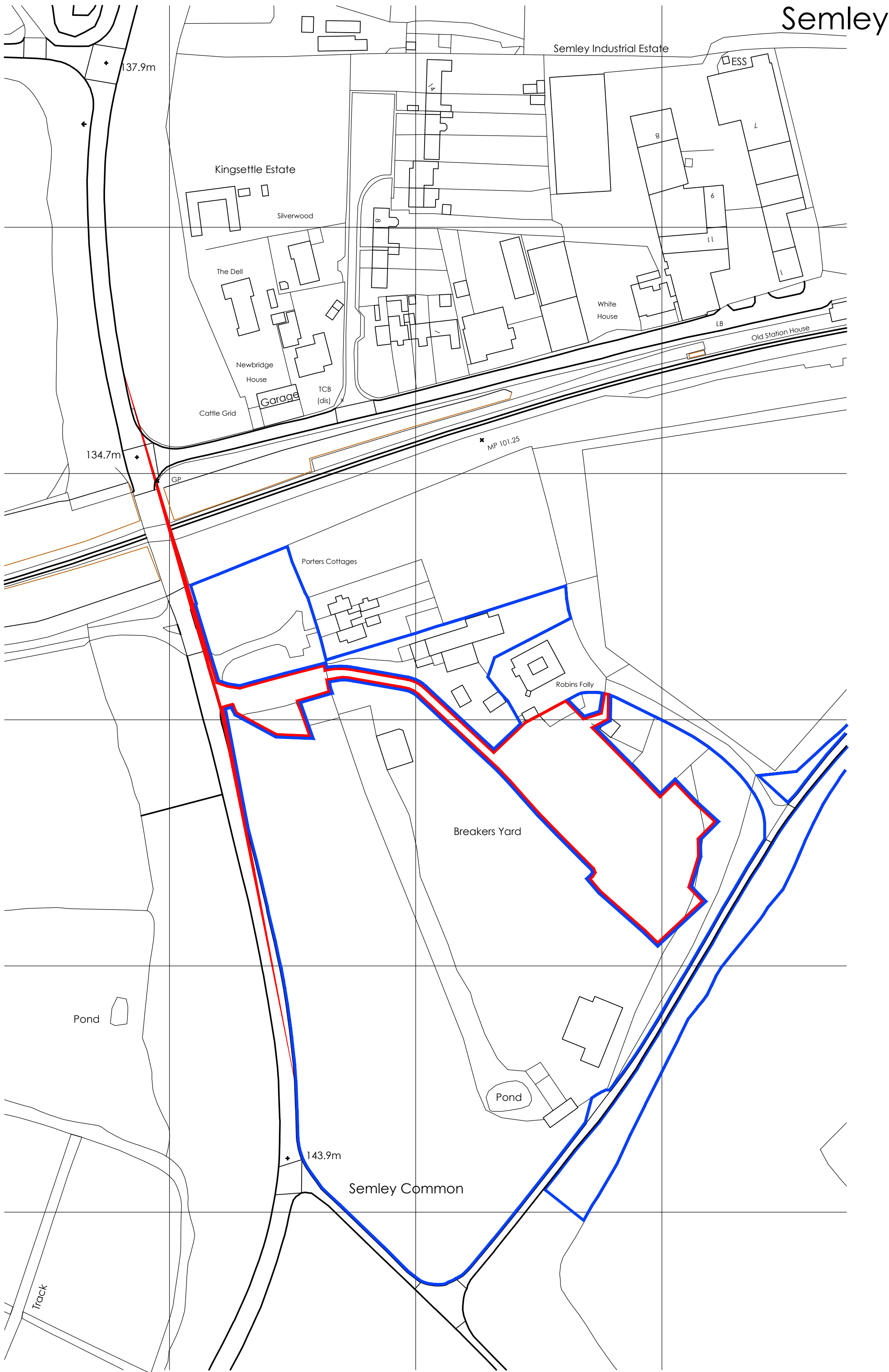
DRAWING ORIGINATOR
DWR

DRAWING No.
23091 - 3

REVISION
D

DATE
18.04.2024

Rev	Dm	Date	Description
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PROJECT	Langfords Car Spares, Semley, SP7 9AG.	
DRAWING	Site Location Plan	
SCALE	1:1250 @ A1	
DRAWING ORIGINATOR DWR	DRAWING No.	REVISION
DATE 30.04.2024	23091 - 4	C