

University Cycle Storage – Whiteknights House

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 Ecological Planning and Research Ltd (EPR) was commissioned by the University of Reading to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculation for the construction of a cycle storage unit north of Whiteknights House (hereafter referred to as “the Site”). The calculation was commissioned to inform planning consent for the construction of the unit.

Site Location and Context

- 1.2 The Site is located within the University of Reading Whiteknights Campus, immediately north of Whiteknights House. The Site is comprised entirely of hardstanding.
- 1.3 The wider area of Whiteknights Campus is comprised mainly of regularly mown amenity grasslands and managed hedgerows with areas of ornamental planting and trees.

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- 1.4 The Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 contains the de minimis exemption, which states:

(1) The biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which meets the first and second conditions.

(2) The first condition is that the development does not impact an onsite priority habitat.

(3) The second condition is that the development impacts—

(a) less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value(1) greater than zero; and

(b) less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat.

(4) For the purposes of this regulation—

(a) “priority habitat” means a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006(2);

(b) a habitat is impacted where the habitat is lost or degraded such that there is a decrease in the biodiversity value of that habitat;

(c) “linear habitat” means the types of hedgerow habitat or watercourse habitat identified for the purposes of the biodiversity metric(3) (which are measured by length (expressed in kilometres) rather than area).

1.5 In addition, the BNG Planning Practice Guidance goes on to state that:

“Decision makers should not give weight to local policy which requires biodiversity gains for types of development which would now be exempt under the statutory framework. Other local biodiversity policies which require specific enhancements to support biodiversity would continue to apply to these applications where appropriate.”

Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 74-020-20240214

ENHANCEMENTS AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

1.6 The Site is comprised entirely of hard standing, and therefore has no habitats with a biodiversity value greater than zero. Therefore, the Site meets the conditions of the de minimis exemption, rendering a full BNG metric calculation unnecessary.

1.7 Furthermore, as the Site baseline in the BNG metric would be zero, any BNG delivered would not be quantifiable as a percentage, but would result in a net gain.

2. CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

2.1 The Site is exempt from mandatory BNG requirements under the de minimis exemption.

2.2 As the Site currently has a BNG baseline of zero, any enhancements for biodiversity would result in net gain.

2.3 A Working Method Statement in relation to Great Crested Newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* has been adopted as the Site lies within a Red Zone for GCN as modelled by Naturespace. Due to the lack of ecologically valuable habitats onsite, no further ecological considerations are required.

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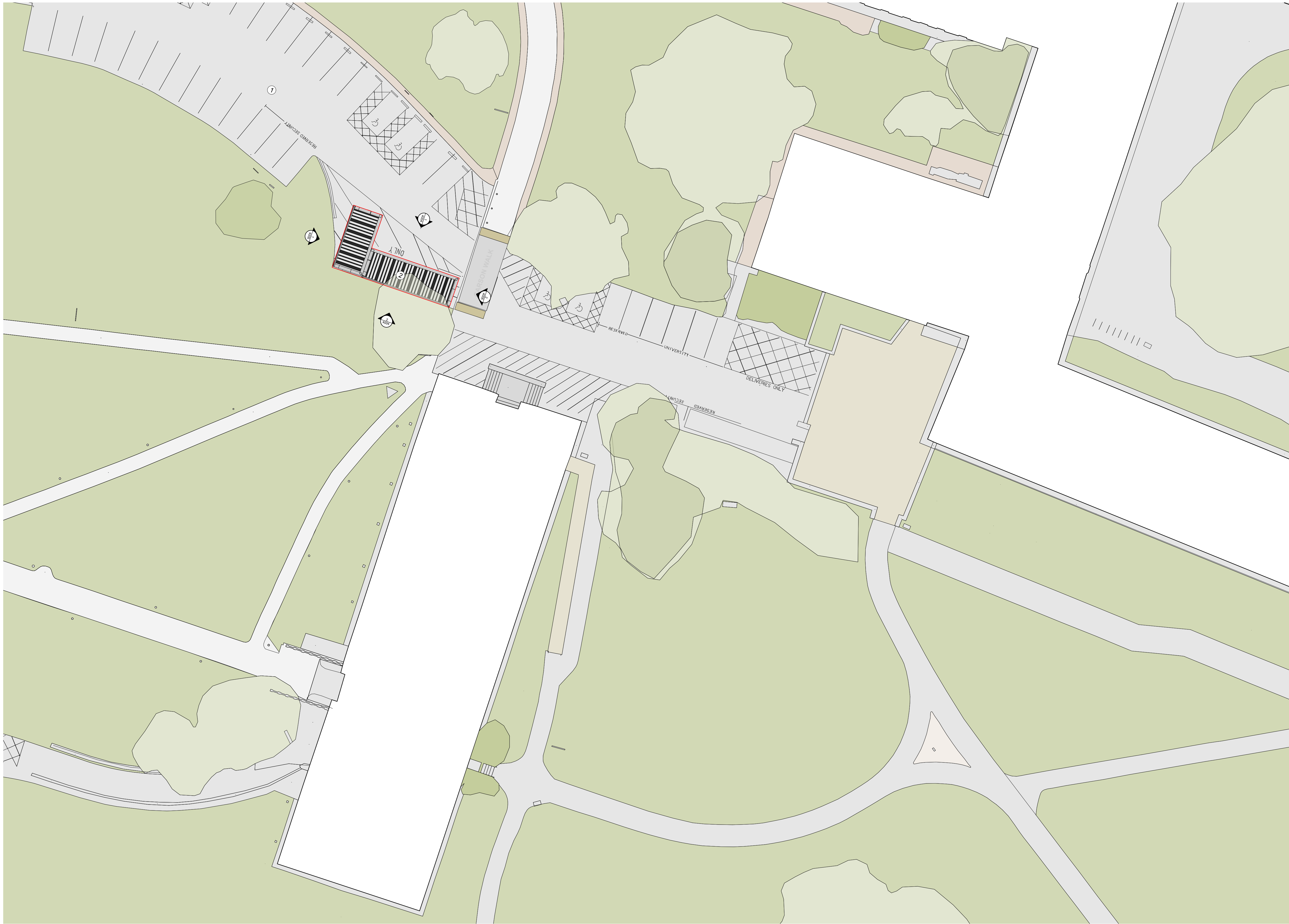
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Reviewed By: Katie Cammack BSc (Hons) MSC MCIEEM



Appendix 1

484-ACG-XX-RF-DR-A-1055-Proposed Cycle Store-Whiteknights House Site Plan

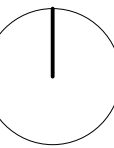


1 Proposed Whiteknights House Site Plan
Scale: 1:200

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1:200

NOTES:

All dimensions to be checked on site.
Drawing to be read with all relevant Architectural, Interiors, Structural, M&E, Drainage/Public Health, Landscape, Civils and Interiors drawings and specifications. Any discrepancies between consultant's drawings to be reported to the Architect before any work commences.
The Contractor's attention is drawn to the Health & Safety matters identified in the Health & Safety plan as being potentially hazardous.
These items should not be considered as a full and final list.
The Work Package Contractor's normal Health & Safety obligations still apply when undertaking constructional operations both on and off site.
Ayre Chamberlain Gaunt take no responsibility for the location of legal boundaries indicated on this drawing and advise a separate drawing be completed by a specialist surveyor in order to establish exact boundaries.
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Site Boundary Line

Notes

- Existing Whiteknights Car Park
- Proposed Whiteknights House Cycle Store

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PROJECT
University of Reading
Whiteknights Campus

DRAWING TITLE
Proposed Cycle Store-Whiteknights
House Site Plan

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
A	22/05/2025	ISSUED FOR PLANNING

REV.	VER.	APPROVED BY
PA	.01	DG

DRAWING NO.
project code - originator - volume - level - type - role - number
484-ACG-XX-RF-DR-A-1055

SUITABILITY
code description
D5 SUITABLE FOR PLANNING