

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT

Assessment of the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain for the
proposal of an extension to the commercial unit at Unit 2a
Prospect Way, Victoria Business Park, Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent,
ST8 7PL

26/03/2025

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Hewitt&Carr Services (HCS) was commissioned by Piper Boats Ltd to produce a BNG Report to a proposed extension to the commercial unit located at Unit 2a, Prospect Way Victoria Business Park Biddulph Stoke-on-Trent ST8 7PL (Grid reference: SJ 97952 28768).

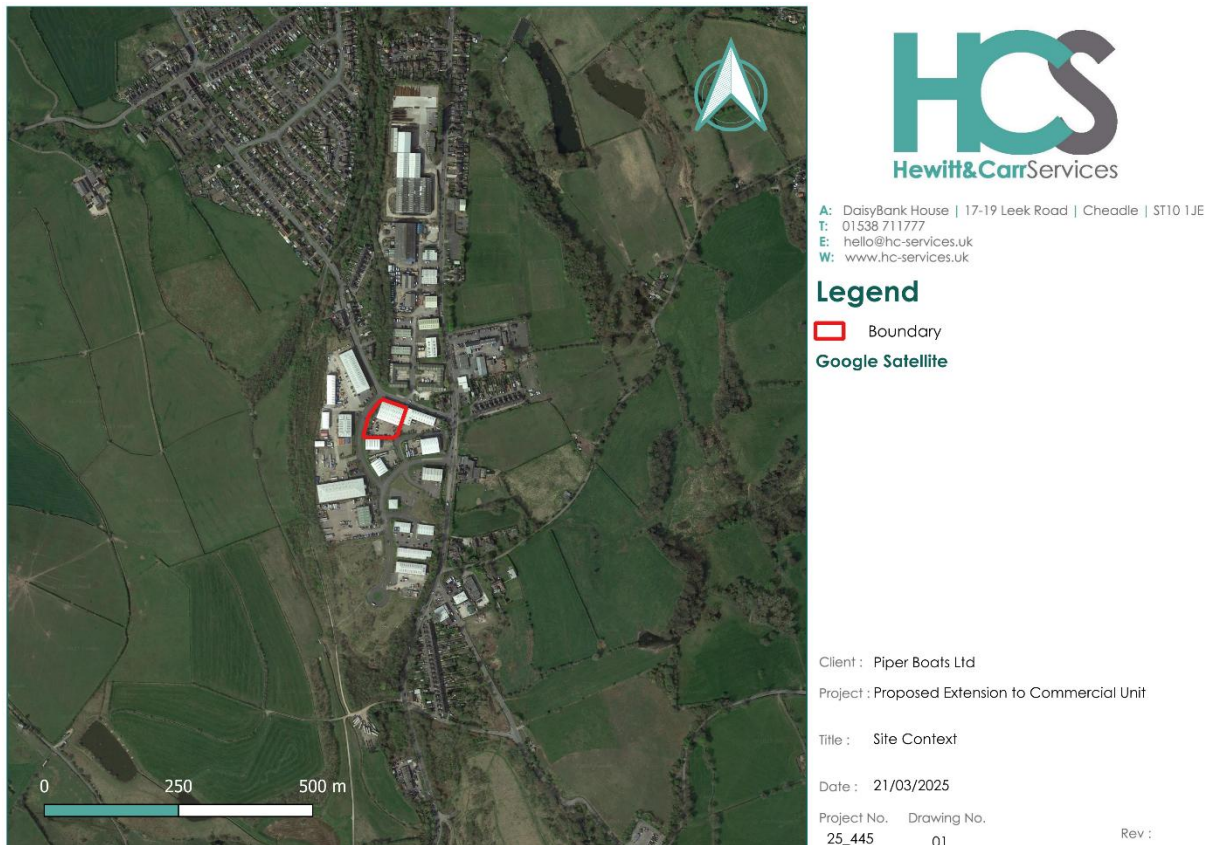
Aim

The purpose of this report is to inform the client and the local planning authority of the current habitat parcels on the site and achieve at least 10% net gain in biodiversity post-development using on-site habitat creation and/or enhancement.

Site Context

The site is situated within Victoria Business Park, south of Biddulph. The area surrounding the business park consists largely of agricultural grazing land with pockets of deciduous woodland.

Figure 1.
Site context



METHODOLOGY

Ecological record search

A desktop ecological site study with a 1km radial boundary around the site was undertaken. The spatial ecological data was obtained via request to the Staffordshire Ecological Record (SER) and the National Biodiversity Network. The records search also consisted of a search for designated sites using SER data, Natural England's Green Infrastructure map and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside map.

On-Site Assessment

The site survey was conducted on 10/03/2025 and utilised UKHAB mapping symbology and survey methodology which was used to define the site into habitat parcels.

Metric Calculation

The baseline habitat parcels are inputted into the statutory small site's biodiversity metric calculation tool. Habitat creation and/or enhancements will be inputted to achieve a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain post-development.

Habitat plan

The proposed habitats used to generate a post-development net gain will be given creation, enhancement and maintenance methodologies.

Figure 2.
SER protected species records map

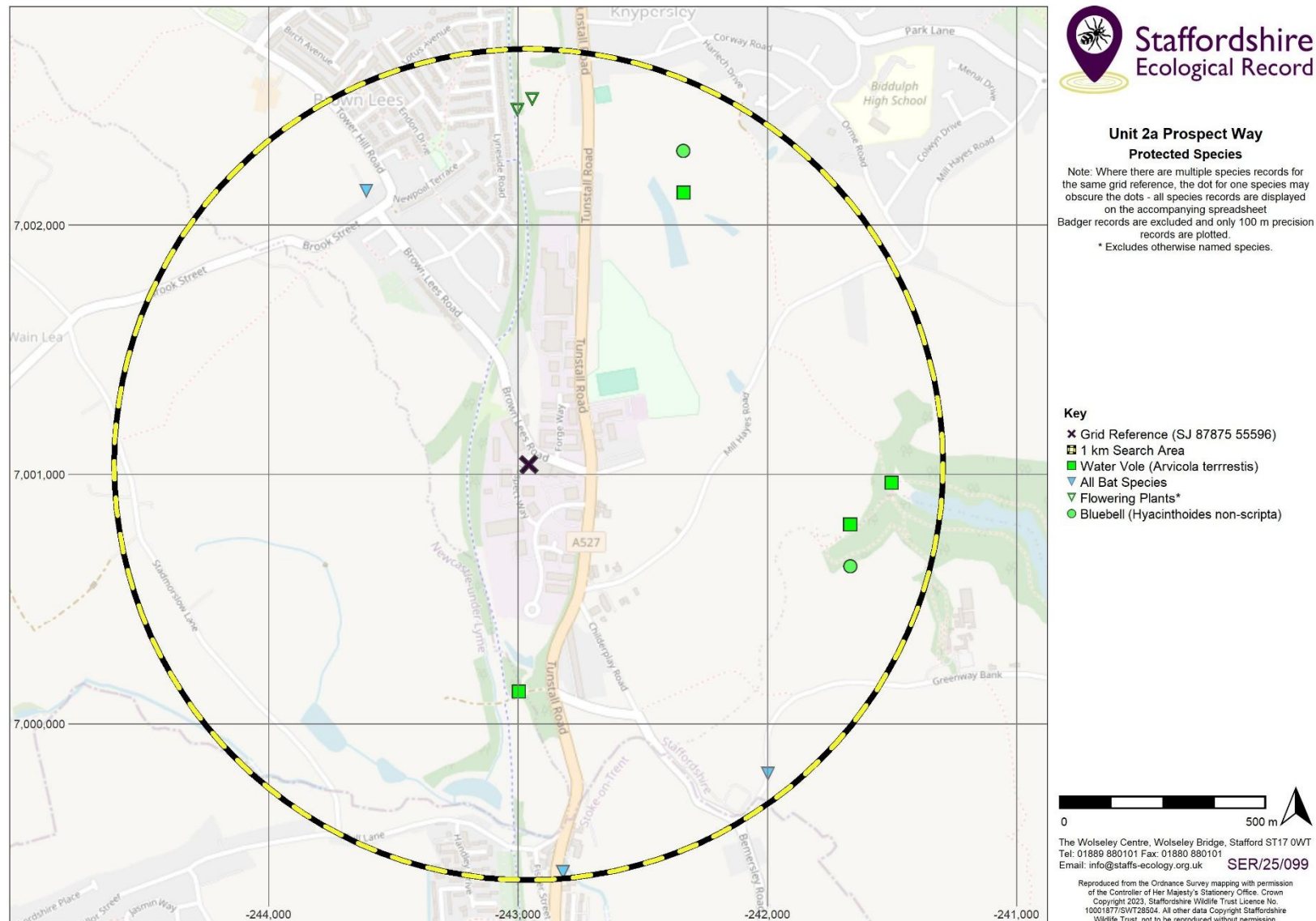


Figure 3.
SER non- statutory sites map

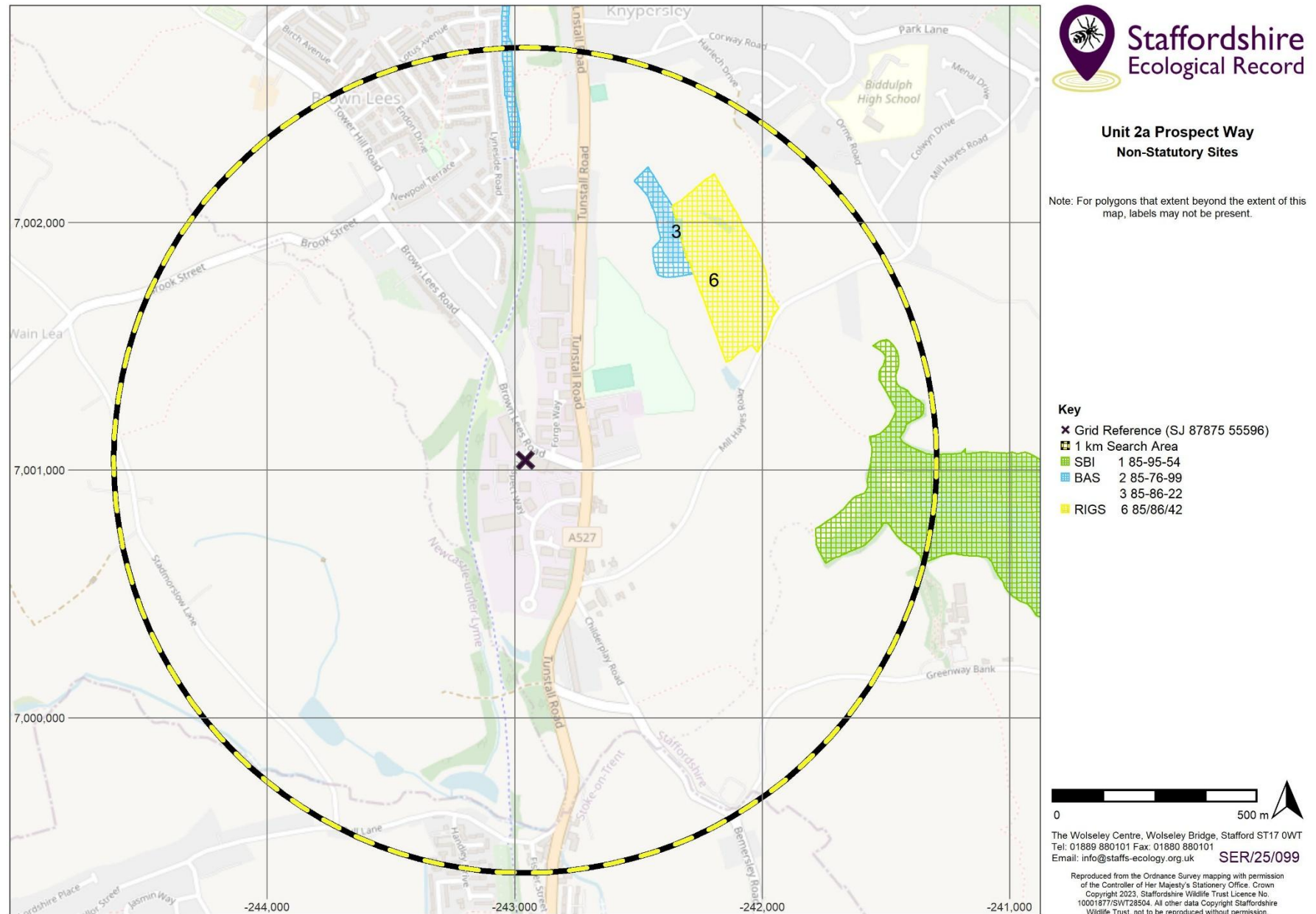


Figure 4.
SER map of ancient woodland sites

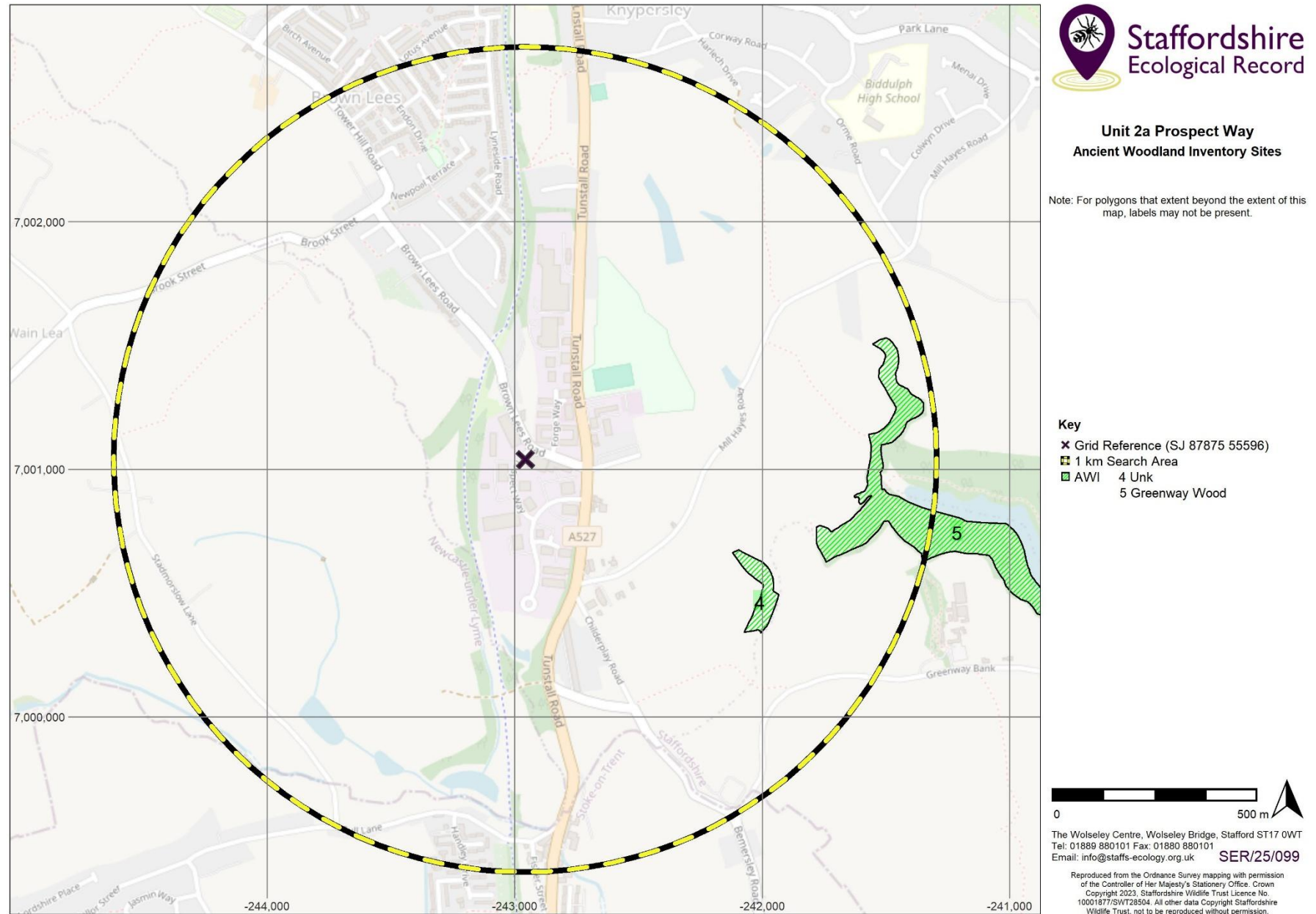
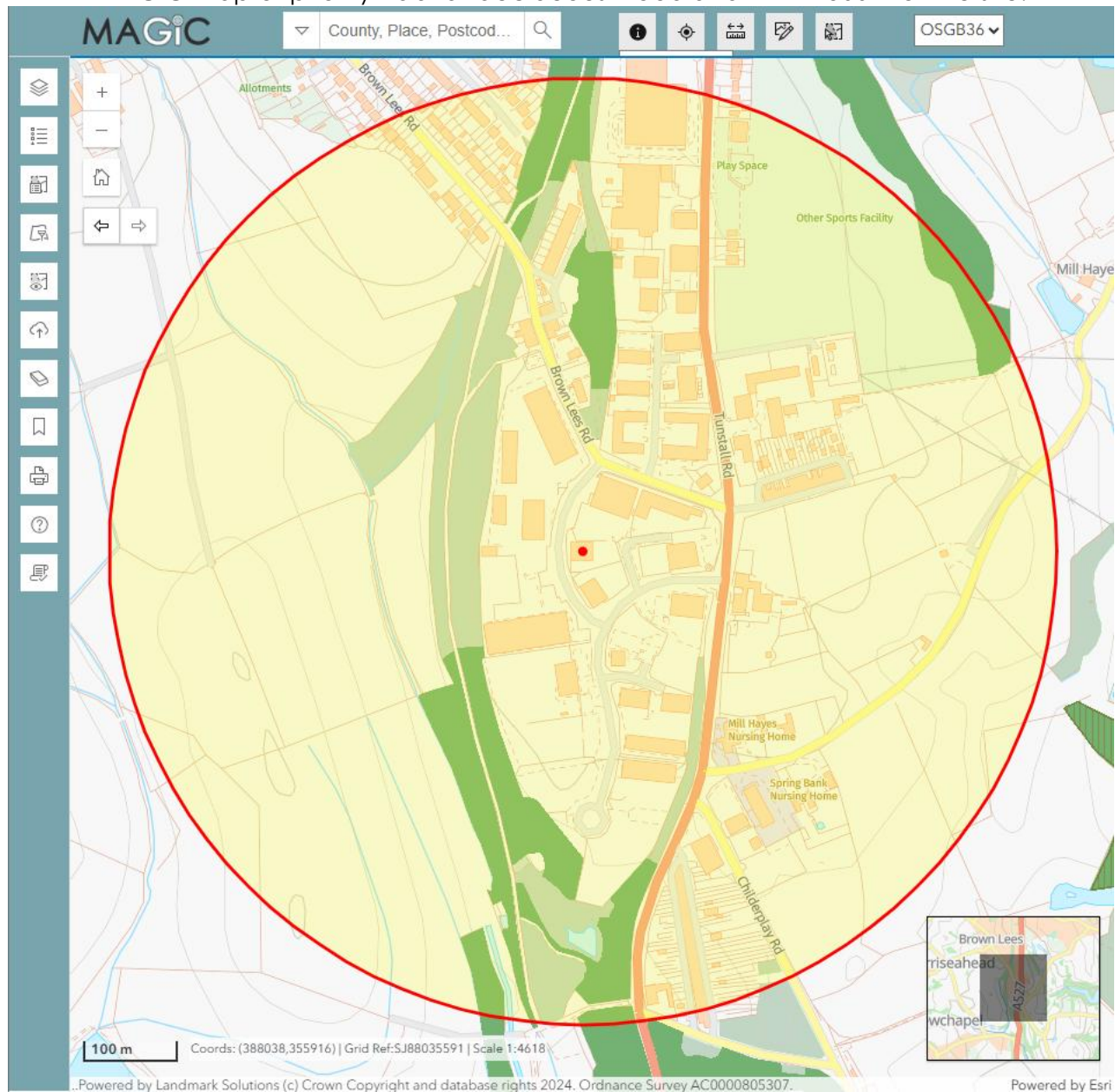


Figure 5.

DEFRA MAGIC map of priority habitat deciduous woodland within 500m of the site.



DESK STUDY ANALYSIS

The site is located within 500m of 10 sites of deciduous woodland priority habitats with the closest site being 125m southwest of the site boundary. It is highly unlikely that the proposed development will impact these sites due to the scope of the works proposed being solely based on previously developed hardstanding. There is no apparent woodland closer to the site that may risk noise disturbance to nesting birds during the proposed works.

Within 1km of the site, there are records of water voles, bat species and bluebells. However, the site contains no features that may form suitable habitat for these species and does not threaten the ecological connectivity of neighbouring habitats. Consequently, the impact of the proposed development on local protected species is deemed to be negligible.

There are 3 non-statutory sites within 1km of the proposed development site. The closest to the site at 515m northeast is the retained Biodiversity Alert site (BAS) of Knypersley Fishing Pool which consists of a pool surrounded by tall herbaceous vegetation and goat willow. 720m east of the site is Greenway Bank Country Park which consists of semi-natural ancient woodland. 750m north of the site is Newpool retained BAS, this site consists of broadleaved semi-natural woodland with neutral grassland along a linear north to south pathway.

It is highly unlikely that the development will affect any of these sites due to the small scale of the proposed scope of works and the site not containing any habitats of value to the local ecosystem. Consequently, mitigation methodologies to avoid disruption to these sites is not required.

ON-SITE ASSESSMENT

Figure 6.

Habitat designations and species found on site with DAFOR abundance scale

Species	DAFOR
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	
N/A	N/A

The development site consists entirely of hardstanding with no vegetation present.

Figure 7.

Table of Phase 1 site survey images

Grid Reference	Description	Image
SJ 87875 55587	View from southern boundary of the development site facing north	 A photograph showing a dirt path leading towards a building with a corrugated metal roof. There are some white bags and debris on the ground.
SJ 87881 55606	View south along western boundary	 A photograph showing a dirt area with some debris and a building in the background. There are some white bags and debris on the ground.
SJ 87877 55599	Unvegetated surface of the site	 A photograph showing a dirt area with some debris and a building in the background. There are some white bags and debris on the ground.

Figure 8.
Baseline Habitats on-site

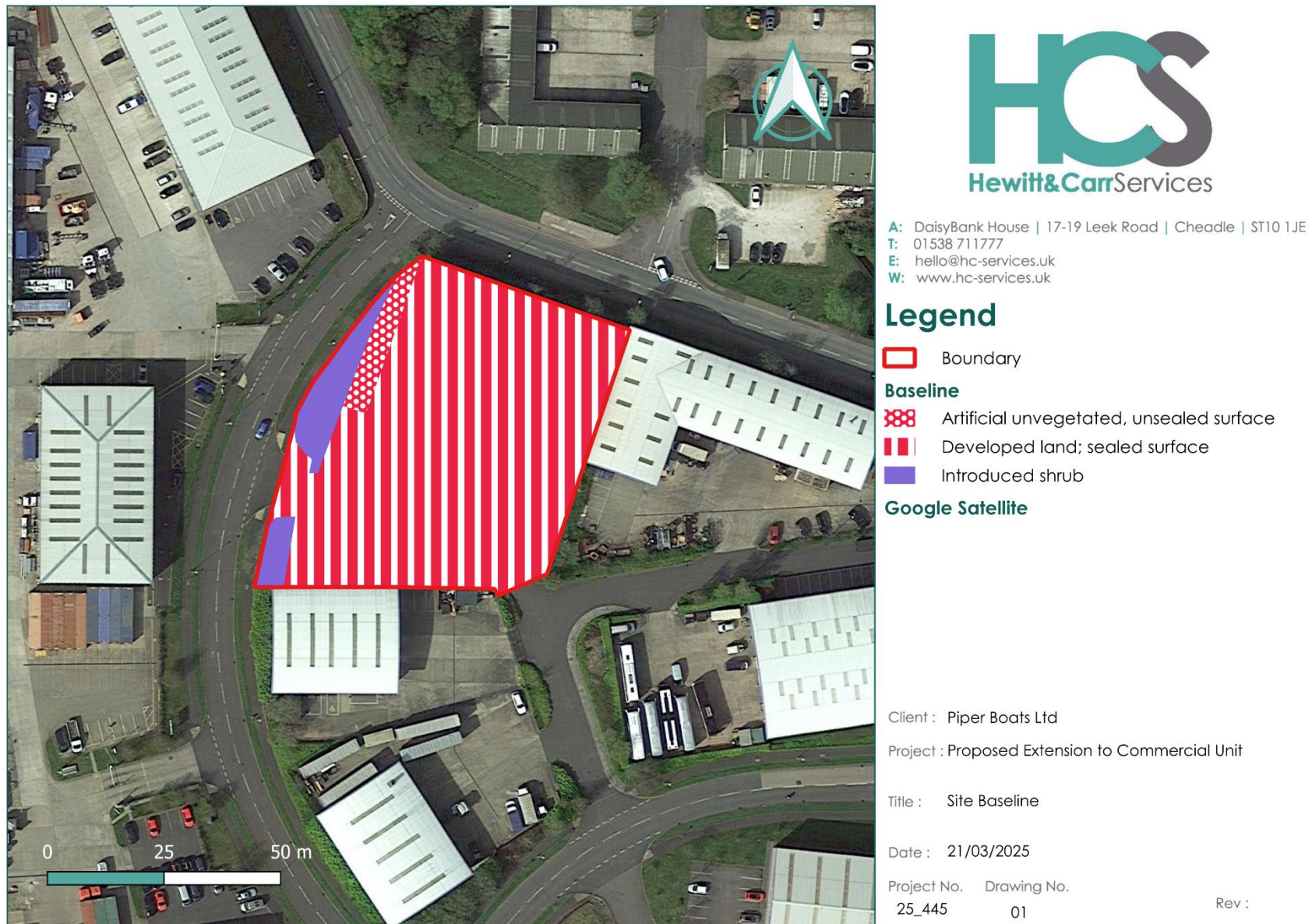
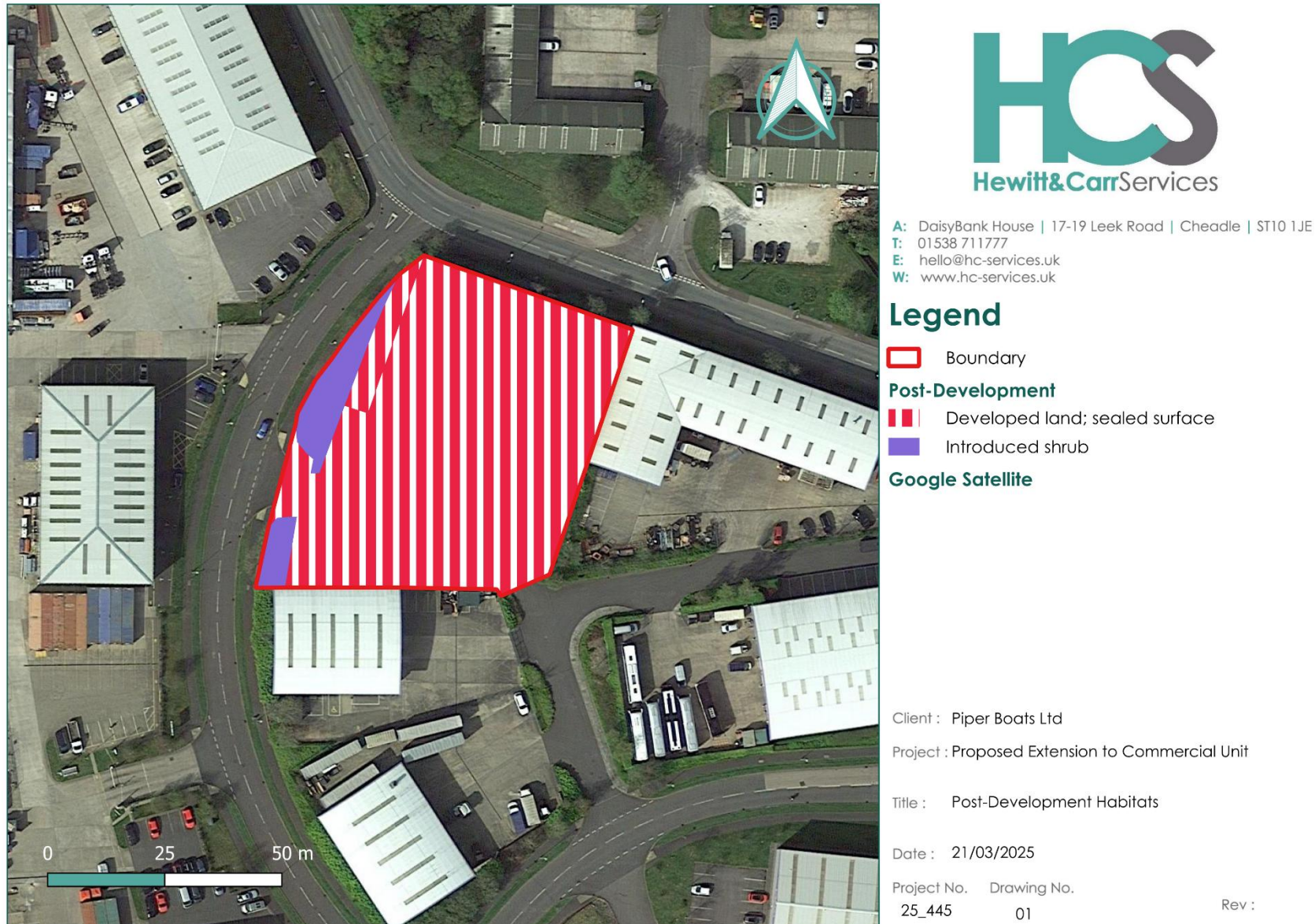


Figure 9.

Post-development habitat map



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

In accordance with the on-site survey, no habitats of value exist within the boundary of the proposed site of works. Consequently, the development will fall under the De Minimis exemption on the basis that no habitat over 25 square meters of value to biodiversity will be affected. As a result, no habitat retention, enhancement or creation is required.

Figure 10.

Post-development Biodiversity units on-site

On-site Baseline	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.00	
	<i>Hedgerow</i>	0.00	
	<i>Watercourse</i>	0.00	
On-site post-intervention	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.00	
	<i>Hedgerow</i>	0.00	
	<i>Watercourse</i>	0.00	
On-site net change	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.00	De Minimis
	<i>Hedgerow</i>	0.00	De Minimis
	<i>Watercourse</i>	0.00	De Minimis

REFERENCES

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LEGISLATION & POLICY

Badgers

Protection and Legislation:

Protection of Badgers Act 1992;

- Illegal to deliberately disturb, kill, injure, or capture a badger.
- Illegal to damage, destroy, obstruct, and interfere with a badger sett.

Nesting Birds

Protection and Legislation:

Wildlife and Countryside Act WCA 1981 (as amended):

- Offence to deliberately disturb, kill, injure, or capture any wild bird.
- Offence to take, damage or destroy any wild bird nest in use of being built.

Great Crested Newts

Protection and Legislation:

- ☐ Bern Convention
- ☐ Conservation Regulations 1994 (as amended)
- ☐ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- ☐ EU Habitats Directive
- ☐ Nature Conservation Act 2004
- ☐ NERC Act 2006
- ☐ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- ☐ UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)
- Illegal to damage, destroy or obstruct any structure or place used for shelter, protection, or breeding.
- Illegal to deliberately disturb, kill, injure, or capture.

Reptiles

Protection and Legislation:

All reptile species:

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981:

- protected from deliberate disturbance, killing, injury or capture.

Smooth snake and Sand Lizard:

Habitats Directive:

- Habitat where Smooth snakes and sand lizards live is fully protected against damage or destruction.
- Habitat disturbance requires a licence from the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Bats

Protection and Legislation:

- ☐ Bern Convention
 - ☐ Bonn Convention
 - ☐ Conservation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995
 - ☐ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
 - ☐ Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000
 - ☐ Eurobats Agreement
 - ☐ Habitats Directive
 - ☐ Habitats Regulations 1994 (as amended)
 - ☐ NERC Act 2006
 - ☐ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
 - ☐ Wild Mammals Protection Act
-
- Illegal to possess or control any live or dead bat species.
 - Illegal to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter, protection, or breeding.
 - Illegal to intentionally disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (As amended)

The WCA consolidates and amends national wildlife legislation to implement the Bern Convention and Birds Directive. It complements the Conservation Regulations 1994, offering protection to a wider range of species and establishing Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Schedules detail protected species and possible offenses.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 consolidate and update the previous regulations, primarily implementing the EEC Council Directive 92/43 into English and Welsh law. The regulations require the government to identify sites of importance to the habitats and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive, which are designated as Sites of Community Importance and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) by EU member states. They also establish a register of European protected sites, known as Special Protection Areas (SPA), under the Birds Directive. The regulations introduce the precautionary principle for protected areas, requiring projects to have no adverse effect on the site's integrity. They also protect individual species of European conservation concern listed in Schedules 2 and 5, including otter and great crested newt, which are protected from unlawful destruction, uprooting, or trade.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP), published in 1994 and updated in 2007, is a government initiative aimed at preserving and enhancing species and habitats in the UK. It includes a list of priority habitats and species, along with biodiversity initiatives. The UKBAP also mandates county-level conservation through the creation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs), which target specific species of conservation concern. Local authorities and large organizations have also produced their own BAPs, with these targets being a crucial part of the planning process.

Planning Policy (England) and National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaced previous guidance in 2012, with a presumption towards sustainable development. The latest update, updated in 2019, includes a section on conserving the natural environment. Section 15 outlines how the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimizing impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains. Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity gains should be encouraged, and planning permission should be refused if a proposed development would result in significant harm to the natural environment that cannot be avoided, mitigated, or compensated for.

Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan

The Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP) was established in 1998 to coordinate conservation efforts and deliver UK BAP targets at a local level, focusing on specific habitats and species.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations outline the restrictions on removing significant hedgerows that require permission from the Local Planning Authority.

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000

The CROW Act, introduced in 2000, strengthens wildlife legislation in England and Wales, requiring government departments and the National Assembly for Wales to prioritize biodiversity and increase protection powers for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). It also lists habitats and species for conservation measures.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Section 40 of the NERC Act mandates local authorities and public bodies in England and Wales to enhance biodiversity in all their functions. It lists habitats and species of principal importance to biodiversity conservation, superseding Section 74 of the CRoW Act 2000.

Biodiversity 2020

The government's Biodiversity 2020 policy aims to prevent biodiversity loss and promote healthy ecosystems by establishing ecological networks for wildlife and people, involving individuals, communities, local authorities, charities, businesses, and the government in their roles.