

BLADE

BIODIVERSITY MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

LAND AT ASHBY ROAD, MARKFIELD

ON BEHALF OF

ALLISON HOMES GROUP LTD.

JUNE 2026

V2

BIODIVERSITY
LANDSCAPE
ARBORICULTURE
DESIGN
ECOLOGY

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 A Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy has been produced and detailed herein to support the Reserved Matters Application for the land at Ashby Road, Markfield which received Outline Planning Permission on 12 May 2023 (Planning Ref: P/21/1260/2 and P/25/2604/2 Charnwood Borough Council; APP/K2420/W/22/3300552 Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council).
- 1.2 The site was subject to a Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain baseline assessment in March and May 2021 respectively. This work was undertaken by Aspect Ecology Ltd and subsequent reports were used to support the Outline Application for the site, which was "for residential development of up to 93 dwellings, public open space, landscaping and associated works."
- 1.3 Given the initial ecological assessments are now 4+ years of age, and approval for a Reserved Matters application is now being sought by Allison Homes Group Ltd., an updated Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has been undertaken by BLADE Ecology Ltd to inform the Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy (BMES). A BMES is required for submission under obligation via an s106 agreement for the scheme. The application site falls within two local authorities: Charnwood Borough Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council. Aside from new access and a turning head, all development proposed will be within the boundary of Charnwood Borough Council.
- 1.4 The Outline application was submitted on 24 May 2021, and as such preceded the date where 10% Biodiversity Net Gain became a mandatory requirement for all non-exempt planning applications as per the Environment Act 2021. Therefore, the scheme is required only to deliver a measurable net gain in line with the local planning policy at the time of application, rather than a 10% net-gain now mandated by the Environment Act (2021).
- 1.5 The application site is approximately 3.67ha in area and comprises developed land (building/concrete), bare ground, modified/amenity grassland, semi-improved neutral grassland, tall ruderal, native hedgerow (with trees), mixed scrub, line of trees and bare ground.
- 1.6 In combination, the habitats on-site have a value of 14.96 Habitat Units and 4.96 Hedgerow Units. Details of each habitat's specific value can be found in the Warwickshire Biodiversity Impact Assessment Tool which accompanies this report (baseline approved as per outline application with minor remapping of redline).
- 1.7 This report has been based on the following plans produced by BLADE Landscape Architects: Landscape BNG Strategy Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-201-V1 dated June 2026.
- 1.8 A completed BIA Tool indicates that the current proposals will return a net loss of 9.80 habitat units and a gain of +0.32 hedgerow units. Proposed on-site area habitats include developed land (buildings/hardstanding), modified/amenity grassland, other neutral grassland, introduced shrub, mixed scrub, and vegetated gardens.

- 1.9 The programme for the creation, ongoing management and maintenance of the proposed habitats on-site can be seen in Section 6 of this report.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Background to the Development

- 2.1 BLADE Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Allison Homes Group Ltd to produce a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Scheme for a Reserved Matters Application for the land at Ashby Road, Markfield, Leicestershire (centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference SK 48816 10701).
- 2.2 The site is located to the north of Markfield, a small village within the Hinckley & Bosworth district of Leicestershire. The A50 dual carriageway represents the site's northern boundary, whilst Ashby Road represents the southern boundary. Altar Stones Nature Reserve is located to the west of the site, whilst private rural residences are present to the east.
- 2.3 The existing ecological baseline of the site consists of grassland dominated parcels (horse grazed, modified/amenity grassland and semi-improved neutral grassland), divided by and surrounded by a mix of fencing and native hedgerows (some with trees), individual trees and line of trees. Four buildings are present on site, with small areas of dense scrub, bare ground and tall ruderal habitats also present. The application site boundary is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Application Site Boundary

- 2.4 Outline planning consent has been granted by both Charnwood Borough Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for "residential development of up to 93 dwellings, public open space, landscaping and associated works. All matters reserved except for access.". Reserved matters approval is now being sought (Ref: P/25/2604/2). This report has been based on the following plans produced by BLADE Landscape

Architects: Landscape BNG Strategy Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-201-V1 dated June 2026 and Detailed Soft Landscape Proposals Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-301-V3 sheets 1,2 and 3.

Previous Survey Work and Ecological Baseline

- 2.5 This Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline has been informed by the Ecological Appraisal undertaken for the site by Aspect Ecology Ltd. during March 2021 and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) during May 2021, also by Aspect Ecology Ltd.
- 2.6 The BNGA utilised the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Biodiversity Offsetting Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator v19.0 and associated user guide.
- 2.7 An updated site visit was undertaken by E. Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM on 29 September 2025 in order to assess the grassland within the optimal survey season; however the grassland was significantly degraded (horse-grazed, dessicated etc.). Therefore baseline conditions have been taken from documentation produced by Aspect Ecology and approved at outline. A second site visit was undertaken on November 17 2025, by A. Elliott BSc (Hons) ACIEEM.
- 2.8 These habitat condition assessments were used to inform the baseline units within the calculator. Habitats are mapped with the UHabitats and Ecological Features Plan in Appendix A.

Objectives

- 2.9 The objectives of this survey and report were to:
 - Classify the type, distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance of existing habitats.
 - Calculate baseline for existing habitat and hedgerow units for the site.
 - Inform the masterplan in line with applying the mitigation hierarchy in line with Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (Baker et al., 2019).
 - Calculate the net-change in biodiversity value of the site in line with the proposed layout.
 - Identify where net-gain can be delivered off-site to ensure the proposals meet the local planning requirements.

3.0 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN AND PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.1 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is defined as 'development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, and an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation'.
- 3.2 In 2016, the BNG: Good practice principles for development was published to support developments across the UK achieve BNG in accordance with good practice. These principles aimed to set a benchmark of 'what good looks like' and they include the mitigation hierarchy and avoiding impacts of irreplaceable habitats. In 2019, the principles were supplemented with practical guidance on designing, implementing and the long-term maintenance and monitoring of BNG through the project lifecycle.
- 3.3 Good practice principles for biodiversity net gain are set out within Table 1.1 of Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (Baker et al., 2019):

Table 1: The UK's good practice principles for biodiversity net gain (after Baker, 2016)

Principle	In Practice
Apply the mitigation hierarchy	Do everything possible to first avoid and then minimise impacts on biodiversity. Only as a last resort, and in agreement with external decision makers where possible, compensate for losses that cannot be avoided. If compensating for losses with the development footprint is not possible or does not generate the most benefits for nature conservation, then offset biodiversity losses by gains elsewhere.
Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere	Avoid impacts on irreplaceable biodiversity – these impacts cannot be offset to achieve no net loss / net gain.
Be inclusive and equitable	Engage stakeholders early, and involve them in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the approach to net gain. Achieve net gain in partnership with stakeholders where possible.
Address risk	Mitigate difficulty, uncertainty and other risks to achieving net gain. Apply well-accepted ways to add contingency when calculating biodiversity losses and gains in order to account for any remaining risks, as well as compensate for the time between the losses occurring and the gains being fully realised.
Make a measurable net gain contribution	Achieve a measurable, overall gain for biodiversity and the services ecosystems provide while directly contributing towards nature conservation priorities.
Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity by using robust credible evidence and local knowledge to make clearly justified choices when:

Principle	In Practice
	- delivering compensation that is ecologically equivalent in type, amount and condition that accounts for the location and timing of biodiversity losses - compensating for losses of one type of biodiversity offsetting by providing a different type that delivers greater benefits for nature conservation - achieving net gain locally to the development whilst also contributing towards nature conservation priorities at local, regional, and national levels. - enhancing existing or creating new habitat - enhancing ecological connectivity by creating more bigger, better and joined areas for biodiversity.
Be additional	Achieve nature conservation outcomes that demonstrably exceed existing obligations i.e. do not deliver something that would occur anyway
Create a net gain legacy	Ensure net gain generates long-term benefits by: - engaging stakeholders- and jointly agreeing practical solutions that secure Net Gain in perpetuity - planning for adaptive management and securing dedicated funding for long-term management - designing net gain for biodiversity to be resilient to external factors, especially climate change - mitigating risks from other land uses - avoiding displacing harmful activities from one location to another - supporting local-level management of net gain activities
Optimise sustainability	Prioritise BNG and, where possible, optimise the wider environment benefits for sustainable society and economy
Be transparent	Communicate all net gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government) provides guidance for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in creating development plans and determining applications.

Paragraph 8

- 3.5 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Paragraph 151

- 3.6 Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

Paragraph 187

- 3.7 Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with the statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising 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;

- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- 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 and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

Paragraph 193

3.8 When determining planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (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 a Site of Special Scientific Interest, 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 features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- 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 developments 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.

Paragraph 194

3.9 The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and

- c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

Paragraph 195

- 3.10 The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Legislation

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitats and Species

- 3.11 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (HMSO 1995, 1998; UKBAP 2007) lists species and habitats which have undergone significant declines in recent years and for which conservation is a priority in order to preserve biodiversity in the UK. The BAPs provide a list of actions to be implemented to halt or reverse these declines. These species and habitats are identified as Habitats and Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biological diversity in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Section 40 of the NERC Act, planning policy and underpinning guidance (ODPM, 2005).

4.0 METHOD

Condition Assessments

- 4.1 A detailed botanical survey of the grassland within the site was completed by Aspect Ecology on 9 September 2021 and recorded within the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Biodiversity Offsetting Biodiversity Impact Calculator. As a result of the grassland demonstrating degradation in September 2025; this baseline has been used to inform the assessment. For full details, please refer to the respective reports (Aspect Ecology, 2021a, 2021b).

Measurement of Habitat and Hedgerow Units

- 4.2 Survey units for hedgerows were recorded in line with the Hedgerow Survey Handbook, 2007:

- 'An end point, or node, is:
 - any point or connection between two, or more, hedgerows to other features e.g. fences, walls, ditches, roads.
 - the point at which a hedgerow stops and there is a gap of more than 20m to the next hedgerow (e.g. where the hedgerow ends in the middle of a field).
 - the point at which the hedgerow links to a woodland or other semi-natural habitat such as a pond.
- There may be significant variation along this length that may require refining lengths into 'survey units'. These additional points where changes occur as follows:
 - the point at which the hedgerow changes character from one hedgerow type to another for 20m or more.
 - where there is a distinct change in hedgerow height for lengths of 20m or more.
 - the ends of lengths (20m or more) of recent planting, coppicing or laying'.

Calculating Biodiversity Units

- 4.3 The Warwickshire Biodiversity Impact Assessment tool. was used to calculate the baseline and post-development habitat and hedgerow units. Metric calculations have been undertaken by A. Elliott BSc ACIEEM and A. Woodman BSc ACIEEM.

5.0 RESULTS

Existing On-site Area Habitats and Linear Habitats/Hedgerows Condition Assessment

- 5.1 A summary of baseline condition assessments has been provided below. Full condition assessments can be seen in the reports by Aspect Ecology (2021a and b).
- 5.2 The majority of the site's area habitat baseline biodiversity value is found within the grassland across the site. The grassland had been divided into a number of field parcels, with the level of horse grazing varying between the parcels. As such a range of grassland types were present, from amenity grassland through poor semi-improved grassland to semi-improved neutral grassland.
- 5.3 Developed land; sealed surface habitats present on-site do not require formal condition assessments for the purposes of biodiversity net gain calculations.
- 5.4 Full habitat descriptions can be seen within the Ecological Appraisal produced by Aspect Ecology Ltd (2021). No significant habitat changes were noted during the site visits undertaken to inform this assessment.

Table 2: Baseline Habitat Assessment

Broad Habitat	Habitat Name/ Code	Assessment	Area (ha)	Habitat units	Parcel Ref
Built Environment	Buildings / hardstanding (n/a)	'None' distinctiveness, condition assessment not required.	0.01	0	B1 & B2
Other	Bare ground (u1 510)	'Low' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'poor'.	0.03	0.06	
Other	Tall ruderal (C31)	'Medium-Low' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'poor'.	0.05	0.15	
Woodland	Dense continuous scrub (A21)	'Medium-Low' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'poor'.	0.04	0.12	
Wetland	Inundation vegetation	'High' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'poor'.	0.04	0.24	
Grassland	Amenity grassland (J12)	'Low' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'poor'.	0.25	0.50	
Grassland	Poor semi-improved grassland	'Medium-Low' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'poor'.	1.39	4.17	G5

Grassland	Semi-improved neutral grassland	'Medium' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'poor'.	1.29	5.16	G2, G3, G4
Grassland	Semi-improved neutral grassland	'Medium' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'moderate'.	0.57	4.56	G1

- 5.5 Three hedgerows and one line of trees are also present within the application site. An additional two hedgerows are present immediately adjacent to the application site but do not fall within the red line.

Table 3: Baseline Hedgerow Assessment

Hedgerow Number	Hedgerow Type	Assessment	Length (km)	Biodiversity Units
Hedgerow 2 (H2)	None_species rich hedge	'Low distinctiveness' habitat, condition score 2.	0.14	0.56
Hedgerow 5 (H5)	None_species rich hedge with trees	'Medium-High distinctiveness' habitat, condition score 2.	0.14	1.40
Hedgerow 6 (H6)	None_species rich hedge	'Low' habitat, condition score 3.	0.08	0.18
Line of Trees 1 (LOT1)	Line of trees of value	'Medium distinctiveness' habitat, condition score 3.	0.21	2.52

Baseline Biodiversity Units & Post-Development Calculations

- 5.6 The on-site habitats have a total value of 14.96 Habitat Units and 4.96 Hedgerow Units.
- 5.7 Details of each habitat type and its relative biodiversity value can be found in the Warwickshire Biodiversity Impact Assessment tool that accompanies this report.
- 5.8 The proposals include a combination of retained, enhanced and newly created habitats – locations of proposed habitats can be seen in the Landscape BNG Strategy produced by BLADE Landscape Architects (Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-201-V2 dated June 2026. Full details of proposed areas/lengths and proposed conditions can be found within the accompanying BIA tool.
- 5.9 Retained GI habitats include:
- Dense continuous scrub
 - Amenity grassland

- Semi-improved neutral grassland
- Part of H2, H6 and LOT1

5.10 Proposed GI habitats include:

- Gardens (0.66ha) (Low Distinctiveness; Poor Condition)
- Introduced shrub (0.02ha) (Low Distinctiveness; Poor Condition)
- Amenity grassland (0.12ha) (Low Distinctiveness; Poor Condition)
- Poor semi-improved grassland (0.03ha) (Medium-Low Distinctiveness; Poor Condition)
- Semi-improved neutral grassland (0.63ha) (Medium Distinctiveness; Moderate Condition)
- Dense continuous scrub (0.01ha) (Medium-Low Distinctiveness; Moderate Condition)
- Species-rich native hedgerow (0.32km) (Medium Distinctiveness; Condition Score: 3)

5.11 The summary of habitat and hedgerow unit changes can be seen below

Site name: Land at Ashby Road, Markfield Planning reference number: P/25/2604/2						
	Habitat Area (ha)	Hedgerow impact (km)	Connectivity Features (km)	Habitat Biodiversity Value	Hedgerow Biodiversity Value	Connectivity Biodiversity Value
Existing						
Onsite Biodiversity Impact	3.30	0.22	0.00	14.96	4.96	0.00
Indirect Biodiversity Impact	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total habitat / linear features impacted	3.30	0.22	0.00	14.96	4.96	0.00
Retained / Created / Enhanced						
Onsite biodiversity retained	0.19	0.24	0.00	0.60	0.44	0.00
Onsite Creation	3.30	0.32	0.00	3.54	2.78	0.00
Biodiversity retained and enhanced	0.18	0.11	0.00	2.04	0.16	0.00
Total biodiversity retained/enhanced	3.67	0.67	0.00	6.18	3.38	0.00
Trading Down	n/a	n/a	n/a	-1.02	-0.68	0.00
Biodiversity Impact	n/a	n/a	n/a	-9.80	0.32	0.00

Biodiversity Impact Compensation

5.12 The details for creation techniques and on-going maintenance practices of these habitats, alongside how their target conditions will be reached is detailed in Section 6.

5.13 Given a net-loss on-site has been calculated for area habitats, and a net-gain position (no percentage specified, any gain is appropriate) is required as part of the BMES for planning approval, the purchase of off-site biodiversity units will be required. This is formally known as Biodiversity Impact Compensation (BIC) within the BMES.

- 5.14 The Outline Application (Planning Ref: P/21/1260/2 Charnwood Borough Council/ APP/K2420/W/22/3300552 Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council) utilised the Warwickshire Biodiversity Impact Assessment (WBIA) Calculator, and subsequently the BIC was calculated using a cost model within the WBIA (such as WWC19.1). The BIA Tool has given an indicative offset contribution of £318,938 for habitat units.

6.0 HABITAT CREATION, MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

Amenity/Modified Grassland

- 6.1 Amenity/modified grassland will be created across the development site using an appropriate general-purpose seed mix sown onto a well-prepared, weed-free soil substrate. Following establishment, the grassland will be managed through a regime of regular cuts during the growing season to maintain a short, even sward appropriate for public use while supporting long-term habitat quality. Arisings will be collected and removed to prevent nutrient enrichment and discourage dominance of coarse or undesirable species.
- 6.2 Management will focus on preventing scrub encroachment by undertaking annual inspections and removing any woody growth to ensure scrub remains below 20% cover. Routine monitoring by the management contractor will identify and address any sources of physical damage, such as erosion or access pressures, so that affected areas remain under 5% of the total grassland extent; damaged patches will be repaired through light soil preparation and localised reseeded. Bracken will be suppressed where necessary through targeted cutting or rolling to maintain cover below 20%. The grassland will also be subject to yearly checks for invasive non-native species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; any occurrences will be removed promptly using appropriate control methods to prevent establishment or spread.
- 6.3 This management approach will ensure the amenity grassland remains resilient, visually attractive, and compliant with ecological targets for the site.

Neutral Grassland

Translocated Grassland

- 6.4 Turfs from the most species-rich parts of the existing grassland will be translocated to a northern area of the site.

Translocation Method Statement

- 6.5 The translocation of grassland turves will occur during Autumn months. The work will be undertaken during warm weather when the soils are moist (most frequently occurring during Autumn). This will promote root growth prior to winter, in preparation for the following growing season. Periods of wet weather where damage to grassland turves may occur will be strictly avoided.
- 6.6 Prior to any contractors commencing on-site, the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECOWs) will undertake a walkover and mark out the area(s) with target species to be translocated to ensure their protection.
- 6.7 A 'toolbox talk' will be provided to site-based personnel will be undertaken by the Ecological Clerk of Works to inform on agreed policies, discuss key aims and objectives of translocation and minimise impacts during construction, generally avoiding unnecessary disturbance.

Donor Site

- 6.8 A mechanical excavator using a bucket will be utilised to cut large translocation turves from the donor site. A wheeled excavator will be used to avoid ground damage. The final choice of machinery will be discussed between the ECoW and project contractor prior to works commencing and likely be determined by achieving sufficient torque to sufficiently cut turves. The turves will be carefully cut to a minimum depth of 40cm. Deeper turves may be cut where it is deemed necessary to maintain soil chemistry.

Receptor Site

- 6.9 The turves will be relocated to suitable on-site receptor locations along the north-western corner of the site.
- 6.10 Cut turves will be immediately transported to pre-identified and pre-prepared receptor sites (no turves will be stored). The receptor sites will be prepared by carefully removing a minimum of 40cm of topsoil to match up with the size and number of turves to be relocated. A loose surface will be created within the receptor scrapes using rollers (e.g. Cambridge rollers). The scrape should be moist; if required, watering will be undertaken immediately prior to translocation.
- 6.11 The turves will be carefully placed within the receptor site and carefully trodden down to ensure contact between the turves and underlying donor soil. Turves will tightly abut each other with any remaining gaps to be filled with topsoil to be taken from the donor site.

Seed Collection

- 6.12 As a number of less common plant species are present and given that grassland habitats are species-rich, seeds will be collected during the Autumn from these species. All seeds collected will be stored in clean containers and kept in a cool dark location.
- 6.13 Seeds may be attained either via hand collection, using a seed vacuum harvester or brush harvesting. Seeds will then be re-distributed across the receptor site, created grassland and retained grassland to promote species-richness and retain the existing seed bank.

Proposed Grassland

- 6.14 New areas of neutral grassland will be created across the site using a mix of Emorsgate EL1 - Flowering Lawn Mixture, EM3 – Special General Purpose Meadow Mixture, EH1 - Hedgerow Mixture and EM8 - Meadow Mixture for Wetlands.

EL1

- 80% grasses including common bent *Agrostis capillaris* (8.00%), crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* (28.00%), red fescue *Festuca rubra* (24.00%), smaller cat's-tail *Phleum bertolonii* (4.00%), and smooth-stalked meadow-grass *Poa pratensis* (16%).

- 20% wildflowers including kidney vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria* (1.0%), betony *Betonica officinalis* (1.0%), common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* (1.6%), hedge bedstraw *Galium album* (1.0%), oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare* (1.4%), bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* (0.1%), black medic *Medicago lupulina* (0.7%), ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (2.4%), cowslip *Primula veris* (1.0%), selfheal *P. vulgaris* (1.2%), meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris* (1.6%), bladder campion *Silene vulgaris* (1.0%), dandelion *Taraxacum* sp. (0.4%) and white clover *Trifolium repens* (5.6%).

EM3

- 80% grasses including common bent (8%), crested dog's-tail (28%), red fescue (24%), smaller cat's-tail (4%) and smooth meadow-grass (16%).
- 20% wildflowers including yarrow *Achillea millefolium* (0.4%), common agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria* (0.2%), betony (1.2%), common knapweed (2.0%), wild carrot *Daucus carota* (1.0%), viper's-bugloss *Echium vulgare* (0.6%), meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* (0.2%), hedge bedstraw (0.8%), lady's bedstraw *G. verum* (0.4%), meadow crane's-bill *Geranium pratense* (0.4%), oxeye daisy (1.0%), musk mallow *Malva moschata* (1.0%), black medic (0.4%), sainfoin *Onobrychis viciifolia* (0.2%), wild parsnip *Pastinaca sativa* (0.2%), ribwort plantain (1.4%), salad burnet *Poterium sanguisorba ssp sanguisorba* (0.6%), cowslip (1.0%), selfheal (1.6%), meadow buttercup (1.6%), bulbous butter *R. bulbosus* (0.6%), yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor* (0.4%), common sorrel *Rumex acetosa* (0.4%), small scabious *Scabiosa columbaria* (0.2%), red campion *Silene dioica* (0.8%), bladder campion *S. vulgaris* (1.0%), dandelion sp. (0.2%) and tufted vetch *Vicia cracca* (0.2%).

EH1

- 80% grasses including common bent (4.8%), crested dog's-tail (28.0%), cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* (6.0%), tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* (1.6%), red fescue (20.0%), Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* (9.6%), wood meadow-grass *Poa nemoralis* (6.0%), and rough-stalked meadow-grass *Poa trivialis* (4.0%).
- 20% wildflowers including yarrow (0.9%), common agrimony (0.4%), garlic mustard *Alliaria petiolata* (0.4%), lesser burdock *Arctium minus* (0.4%), common knapweed (2.0%), rough chervil *Chaerophyllum temulum* (0.4%), crosswort *Cruciata laevipes* (0.6%), wild carrot (1.0%), hedge bedstraw (2.0%), meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* (0.2%), narrow-leaved everlasting-pea *Lathyrus sylvestris* (0.4%), oxeye daisy (1.0%), wild marjoram *Origanum vulgare* (0.2%), ribwort plantain (1.0%), cowslip (0.8%), selfheal (2.0%), meadow buttercup (2.0%), red campion (2.0%), bladder campion (1.0%), hedge woundwort *Stachys sylvatica* (0.1%), upright hedge-parsley *Torilis japonica* (0.8%) and tufted vetch *Vicia cracca* (0.4%).

EM8

- 80% grasses including common bent (8.0%), Star Sedge *Carex echinata* (4.8%), crested dog's-tail (36.0%), tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* (3.2%), red fescue (20.0%), smaller cat's-tail (1.6%) and smooth meadow-grass (6.4%).
- 20% wildflowers including yarrow (1.0%), common agrimony (0.4%), Wild Angelica *Angelica sylvestris* (0.1%), betony (2.0%), common knapweed (3.0%), meadowsweet (0.8%), lady's bedstraw *Galium verum* (1.6%), meadow vetchling

(0.4%), rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus* (0.2%), oxeye daisy (1.6%), bird's-foot trefoil (0.2%), greater bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus* (0.1%), ribwort plantain (0.4%), cowslip (2.0%), selfheal (2.0%), meadow buttercup (2.0%), common sorrel *Rumex acetosa* (0.6%), ragged robin *Silene flos-cuculi* (1.00%), dandelion sp. (0.4%) and tufted vetch (1.0%).

- 6.15 The planting of non-native species, particularly invasive species, will be strictly avoided in these areas.
- 6.16 Prior to seeding, the areas will be cleared of all debris, litter, undesirable plant species (e.g. *Rumex* sp.) and dead plant material, with any existing grass cut and harrowed to achieve at least 50% bare soil in order to allow the seeds good contact with the soil. Existing compacted or nutrient-enriched soils will be lightly cultivated and levelled. Where necessary, topsoil will be stripped or ameliorated to reduce nutrient levels and improve sward composition over time.
- 6.17 The proposed areas of grassland will be sown and enhanced with the above seed mixes in September or Spring (March-May) when climatic conditions are suitable. The seed mixtures will be sown as per the manufacturer's prescribed sowing rate.
- 6.18 The areas will be fully watered to ensure healthy establishment, particularly during prolonged dry periods.

Management Principles for Years 1-5

- 6.19 Prior to cutting all areas will be cleared of litter and debris. Mowers or strimmers will not be used within 100mm of tree stems. Edges adjacent to footpaths/kerbs should be left neat after each visit.

Establishment (Year 1)

- 6.20 Most sown wildflowers will not flower during the first growing seasons, with annual plants from the soil seed bank usually dominating at first. This, however, offers shelter to the wildflower seedlings and so can help the wildflowers fully establish.
- 6.21 Newly sown flowering lawns will be mown regularly (every 7 -10 days during growing season) to a height of 40-60mm. Cuttings will be left in situ for 24 hours to allow seed dispersal before being collected and either removed from the site or added to any compost / habitat piles.
- 6.22 Cutting of all other neutral grassland areas will be avoided in spring and early summer, with the first cut occurring in mid-summer (ideally early-August), with a second cut in early October. The grass will be cut to 150mm
- 6.23 Arisings will remain in-situ for 1-5 days to release seeds prior to being removed to prevent a build-up of nutrients. These will either be used to create compost heaps in undisturbed areas of the site or removed from the site.

Maintenance (Years 2-5)

- 6.24 From Year 2, the flowering lawn areas will be mown regularly to 25-40mm, with mowing relaxed to every 4-8 weeks from late Spring to late Summer to permit flowering. Alternately, if cowslips are present, mowing should be suspended earlier in the year to allow their flowering. As before, arisings will be left in situ for 24 hours and collected and added to the compost heap / removed.
- 6.25 The species-rich grassland will be managed as long grass, with the management following that of traditional meadows.
- An annual cut to a height of 150mm will be undertaken in late summer or early Autumn (August or September). The grassland will then be maintained to 50mm by mowing through late autumn, early winter and early Spring (November to March), as required. No cutting will be undertaken between April and August to allow plants to flower and set seed.
 - Arisings from the first cut of the year will remain in-situ for 1-5 days to release seeds prior to being collected and added to the compost heap / removed as before. Arisings from any additional cuts will be collected immediately.
- 6.26 As required, the build-up of dead grass and thatch conditions will be removed through scarification. The grassland will then be spiked if necessary to improve drainage and aerate soil.
- 6.27 Worn or damaged areas are to be repaired by turf re-installation or over seeding into a prepared seed bed at the next maintenance visit, dependent on seasonal limitations and subject to suitable weather and ground conditions in accordance with best practice.
- 6.28 Tall herb and scrub species will be monitored and cut back as necessary to prevent encroachment of the grassland.
- 6.29 All grassland areas will be monitored annually for the presence of invasive species. If invasive species are recorded, this management plan will be amended accordingly in line with specialist advice to prevent spread and facilitate eradication.

Management Principles for Years 6+

- 6.30 The previously prescribed actions will be continued as necessary.
- 6.31 The condition of the grassland will be annually reviewed with appropriate management undertaken to maintain desired condition.
- 6.32 After Year 10, this management plan will be reviewed and its ongoing scope agreed with a qualified ecologist and the Local Planning Authority.

Trees and Hedgerows

Existing Trees and Hedgerows

- 6.33 BS 5837: 2012 '*Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction*' will be implemented on site in order to ensure that retained trees and hedgerows are protected adequately from construction-related damage. Existing trees will be subject to regular inspection and maintained as per their current condition.

Proposed Individual Trees

- 6.34 A total of 90 individual small native trees will be planted across the site to provide structural landscaping, ecological enhancement, and long-term visual interest. Trees will be locally appropriate native species, nursery-grown and supplied as containerised or root-balled stock. Each tree will be planted into a suitably prepared pit with improved backfill where required, fitted with a biodegradable mulch mat and a low, unobtrusive stake-and-tie system to ensure establishment without constraining natural form. A 1m diameter mulch zone will be maintained around each stem to suppress undesirable plants and reduce competition.
- 6.35 Management will focus on maintaining good tree health and preventing impacts caused by human activities. Regular site inspections will be undertaken to identify and rectify any signs of vandalism, bark damage, mower/trimmer impacts, or accidental herbicide drift. Protective guards or low timber edging will be installed or replaced as needed to minimise these risks. Tree health will be monitored annually to ensure each specimen retains more than 75% of its expected canopy spread and form for its age and height; as such, there will be no routine pruning regime, with intervention restricted only to the removal of dead, diseased, or dangerous limbs. Watering during dry periods, weeding of the mulch zone, and replacement of failed trees within the first five years will support successful establishment.

Proposed Hedgerow Planting

- 6.36 Hedgerows are valuable ecological features, which will maintain the connectivity of the site by providing feeding and nesting habitats and dispersal routes for a range of fauna. A total of 320m of species-rich hedgerow is proposed across the site (the detailed landscape plan in Appendix A should be referred to for location and species mixes).
- 6.37 To ensure successful establishment of newly planted hedges so that they can be suitably maintained for ecological and BNG value, the following maintenance operations will be adhered to:
- All new planting will take place over the winter period between October and March and be in accordance with BS4428:1989 Code of practice for general landscape operations. Newly planted specimens will be protected from animal damage by the use of rabbit-proof fencing, netting or individual tree guards as necessary.
 - Control and removal of undesirable species from hedge trenches. The use of herbicides on native hedgerows will be avoided.

Management Principles for Years 1-5

- 6.38 Watering of all new planting to ensure moisture levels are to be maintained appropriately for optimum growth during establishment period. Newly planted trees will be watered a minimum of 13 times in the first year after planting, or more if the weather requires. The trees will be watered a minimum of 7 times in years 2 and 3, and then as required in the following years. Watering will be carried out by bowser.
- 6.39 The base of each newly planted tree is to be kept free from undesirable species, including a 1m diameter ring of mulch to be topped up as necessary for at least three years post-planting (unless the tree is planted within an associated habitat such as scrub). Mulch to hedgerow planting to also be topped up as necessary.
- 6.40 Anchors, stakes, ties and guards to be inspected at each visit and maintained/adjusted as necessary and removed once the tree is self-supporting. Any unauthorised items that have been attached to the trees to be removed. All new planting to be re-firmed after strong winds, frost heave or other disturbances.
- 6.41 All plants will be subject to regular inspection, particularly after storms. Inspections for pests and diseases will also be undertaken. Any damaged, diseased or dangerous timber shall be reported, and a schedule of appropriate operations agreed with a qualified arboriculturist.
- 6.42 Removal of any vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens as soon as possible and replacement with an appropriate specimen during next available planting season.
- 6.43 Newly planted specimen trees will be allowed to develop without thinning out due to generous spacing. Apart from formative crown pruning after the first three years, some subsequent light trimming may be necessary.
- 6.44 Pruning of trees as necessary to remove suckers or diseased wood and achieve healthy growth and natural shape. Pruning will favour a single leader except for multi-stem trees where several leaders will be favoured.

Management Principles for Years 6-10

- 6.45 The previously prescribed actions will be continued as necessary.
- 6.46 All trees and hedgerows will be reviewed for future longevity and restocked accordingly with the same species to ensure continuity of the landscape features.

Management Principles for Years 10+

- 6.47 The previously prescribed actions will be continued as necessary.
- 6.48 After Year 10, this management plan will be reviewed and its ongoing scope agreed with a qualified ecologist, arboriculturist and the Local Planning Authority.

Table 4: maintenance schedule for existing and proposed hedgerows and trees

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Weed control	12												
Watering as required	-												
Removal of litter	-												
Slow-release fertiliser	1												
Top up mulch	1												
Inspection for deadwood/ structural defects	1												
Replacement of vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens	1												
Inspection for pests and diseases	-	As required											
Inspection of anchors, stake and ties; spiral guards. Re-firming of trees	-	As required											
Selective/formative pruning of all trees.	1												
Trunks to be kept clear of sucker growth to a height of 4m	1												
Selective/formative pruning of hedgerows	1												

Native Scrub Planting

6.49 Native scrub will be created across the site. The scrub will be managed to maintain a varied age and condition and provide multiple micro-climates for biodiversity.

6.50 To ensure successful establishment of scrub planting areas, the following maintenance operations will need to be adhered to:

- Watering to ensure moisture levels are maintained appropriate for optimum growth during establishment period only.
- Removal of any vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens as soon as possible and replace with the same size to those adjacent, during next available planting season.
- Inspection for pests and diseases with remedial action taken swiftly.

- Pruning of species to ensure correct form, to promote flowering/berry production/retention where appropriate and to remove weak, damaged or diseased branches.

6.51 Beds to be monitored with species to be thinned/removed in stages, as required, to retain character and biodiversity value.

Table 5: proposed native scrub maintenance schedule

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Weed control	12												
Watering as required	-												
Removal of litter	-												
Slow-release fertiliser	1												
Replacement of vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens	1												
Inspection for pests and diseases	-	As required											
Selective/formative pruning	1												
Top up mulch	1												

Introduced Shrub Planting

6.52 Introduced shrub is proposed across the site. To ensure successful establishment of the plant beds, the following maintenance operations will need to be adhered to:

- Control and removal of weeds, with mulch to be topped up and a selective herbicide to be applied as per manufacturers recommendations as necessary.
- Watering to ensure moisture levels are maintained appropriate for optimum growth during establishment period only.
- Application of a slow-release fertiliser to ensure soil fertility is maintained.
- Removal of any vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens as soon as possible and replace with the same size to those adjacent, during next available planting season.
- Removal of litter.
- Pruning of species to ensure correct form to promote flowering/berry production/retention where appropriate and pruning of shrubs for floral, foliage and stem colour to remove weak, damaged or diseased branches.

- Inspection for pests and diseases with remedial action taken swiftly.
- Top up of mulch to planting areas.
- Supply and apply selective herbicide to manufacturers recommendations;
- Beds to be monitored with species to be thinned/removed in stages, as required, to retain character.

Table 6: Proposed introduced shrub maintenance schedule

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Weed control	12												
Watering as required	-												
Removal of litter	-	As required											
Slow-release fertiliser	1												
Replacement of vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens	1												
Inspection for pests and diseases	-	As required											
Selective/formative pruning	-	As per species requirements											
Top up mulch	1												
Supply and apply selective herbicide	1												

7.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A

Plans

Habitats and Ecological Features Plan

Landscape BNG Strategy Plan



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Key

Red Line Boundary

Hedgerow Retention

Enhanced

Retained

Lost

Habitats Retention

Enhanced

Retained

Lost



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CLIENT
Allison Homes Group Ltd.

PROJECT
Ashby Road, Markfield

DRAWING TITLE
Development Impacts Plan

DRAWING STATUS
Planning

DRAWING NO. 269-E-RP-PL-2053BMES	REVISION V2
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SCALE @ A4 1:1,600	DATE JUN 2026
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LEGEND	
	Boundary
	Existing trees retained
	Existing trees removed
	Existing hedgerows to be removed
	Existing species-rich native hedgerows to be retained/enhanced
	Existing groundcover to be retained
	Existing translocated grassland
	Proposed species-rich native hedgerows underlain with stonegate F111
	Proposed native trees
	Proposed introduced shrub
	Proposed vegetated garden (front)
	Proposed vegetated garden (rear)
	Proposed modified grassland
	Proposed other neutral grassland (Emmorgate EM3)
	Proposed other neutral grassland (EL3)
	Proposed other neutral grassland (Emmorgate EM8)
	Proposed trim trail
	Proposed LEAP play area



30 St Georges Square, Worcester, WR1 1HX 01905 947558 www.wetareblade.co.uk			
CLIENT Allison Homes			
PROJECT Land off Ashby Road, Markfield			
DRAWING TITLE Landscape BNG Strategy			
DRAWING STATUS Planning			
DRAWING NO. 1880-LD-PL-201			REVISION V1
DRAWN AB	CHECKED ST	SCALE 1:500	PAPER SIZE A1 DATE JUNE-2026

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V1	First Issue	11/06/26
REV	Description	Date

APPENDIX B

Photographs



Photograph 1: Line of trees along the southern site boundary



Photograph 2: Grassland habitat



Photograph 3: Mixed scrub edge



Photograph 3: Gap along Hedgerow 5



Photograph 5: The tall ruderal habitat



Photograph 6: Hedgerow 2

APPENDIX C

Qualifications and Experience

BLADE Ecology Ltd is Registered Practice of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). A comprehensive range of ecological services are offered including Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) and European Protected Species (EPS) Surveys / Licensing.

The practice works closely work closely with clients to achieve their aspirations alongside securing the best outcomes for the environment. With wildlife legislation and policy as its basis; commercial awareness, pragmatism and defensible advice is combined to form BLADE Ecology's approach.

As well as offering a wide range of ecological services, BLADE Ecology offers an in-house collaborative approach in conjunction with BLADE Landscape Architects and BLADE Trees.

Aimmie Woodman BSc (Hons) ACIEEM

Aimmie holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Conservation Biology and Ecology from the University of Exeter. Her ecological experience includes Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, Ecological Impact Assessments (EclA) and surveying for notable / European Protected Species, with particular experience with bats as a volunteer bat carer since 2016. She has held Natural England survey licences for bats (Class 2) and great crested newts since 2021. Aimmie is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

Andrew Elliott BSc (Hons)

Andy holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Biological Sciences (Zoology) from the University of Birmingham, and has a particular passion for ornithology, as well as social ecology. After graduating, Andy spent time in Southern Africa contributing to research projects in fields such as evolutionary sociality in birds, black rhinoceros behavioural ecology and linear infrastructure wildlife-mortality mitigation. Andy holds a Class 1 survey licence for bats and great crested newts, and has a broad range of consulting experience, working on large and small-scale projects across the UK. Andy is a published author in the Journal of Ethology and is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

Cassie Needham BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Cassie holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Geography with Ecology from the University of Sussex and an MSc in Conservation from University College London. Her ecological experience includes Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, Ecological Impact Assessments (EclA) and Habitat Regulations Assessments (HRA) as well as surveys for protected species; great crested newts, reptiles, white-clawed crayfish, bats, hazel dormice and water voles. She also holds Natural England survey licences for bats (Class 2), great crested newts, hazel dormice and white-clawed crayfish and is a Certificated Surveyor in Japanese Knotweed. Cassie has held Natural England

Mitigation (development) licences for great crested newts and numerous Natural England licences to close or disturb badger setts. Cassie is a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

Emma Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Emma holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Biology from the University of Sheffield and has since gained a postgraduate certificate in Ecological Consultancy. Her ecological experience includes Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, Ecological Impact Assessments (EIA), surveying for notable / European Protected Species, mitigation / licensing advice and providing Continued Professional Development (CPD) sessions for developers on Biodiversity Net Gain. She has held Natural England survey licences for bats (Class 2), great crested newts and white-clawed crayfish since 2015. She is also a Registered Consultant under the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) licence and Earned Recognition consultant under the Natural England Bat Pilot Project.

Chloe Cookes BSc (Hons) MSc

Chloe joined BLADE Ecology in 2024 as an Assistant Ecologist. She holds a BSc (Hons) in Animal Biology and an MSc in Applied Ecology from The University of Gloucester. She also has experience of co-leading a biodiversity audit at a wildlife reserve, carrying out ecological research on South African savanna grasslands and volunteering with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.

Izzy Moorton BSc (Hons) MSc

Izzy joined BLADE Ecology in 2025 as a Seasonal Ecologist. She holds a BSc (Hons) in Zoology from Aberystwyth University and an MSc in Global Conservation Science from The University of Leeds. She also has experience carrying out ecological research in the Lake District National Park within woodland and moorland habitats, as well as previously contributing to conservation efforts in Canada by interning in wildlife rehabilitation.

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