

BNG Feasibility Report

Pine Hollow Barn, Stoke Lane, Higham on the Hill, CV13 6ES

Nov 2025



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Executive Summary

- Oak Ecology were commissioned by John Price to conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment on Pine Hollow Barn, Stoke Lane, Higham on the Hill, CV13 6ES.
- The application was for the sitting of four static caravans and two touring caravans for residential use, and the conversion of the existing barn into a day room.
- The baseline biodiversity net gain unit value was 0.09 area units and 0.14 linear units. A 10% net gain would require 0.10 area units, and 0.15 linear units.
- The proposed plan resulted in the post development of 0.12 area units, and 0.17 linear units. The proposed plans would meet the 10% net gain targets.
- The trading rules for the linear habitats have not been met and require scheme alterations to satisfy the rules.
- Alterations in the hedgerow planting should satisfy the trading rules.

	Baseline	10% Target	Post	Target met	Trading rules satisfied
Linear	0.14	0.15	0.17	Yes	No
Area	0.09	0.10	0.12	Yes	Yes

This report is valid for up to 12 months after the initial survey date. After this time, a new survey will be required.

The information within this report is based on the information gathered at the time of the survey, the possibility of other ecological issues arising in the cannot be eliminated.

This report remains the property of Oak Ecology Ltd until payment has been made in full.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Commission brief

Oak Ecology were commissioned by John Price to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of the land adjacent to Pine Hollow Barn, Stoke lane, Higham on the Hill, CV13 6ES (hereafter referred to as the “site”).

1.2. Site location

The site (centred at SP 38403 95775) was situated 0.5 Km northeast of Higham on the Hill village centre. The surrounding area was predominantly rural.



Figure 1: Red Line Boundary.



Figure 2: 1 Km Buffer zone around site.



Figure 3: Proposed site plans.

1.3. Proposed development

It is understood that the site would be subject to a planning application for the sitting of four static caravans & two touring caravans for residential use, and the conversion of the existing barn into a day room.

1.4. Scope of the survey

The purpose of this survey was to:

- Identify and provide a description of the habitats present on the site.
- Identify potential ecological enhancements on the site.
- Evaluate the biodiversity units of the habitats on site.

1.5. Legislation and planning policy

UK and European policies and legislation deal with conservation of biodiversity. This section briefly outlines the legal and policy protection afforded to species and habitats scoped into this survey and described within the report.

1.5.1. Priority habitats and species

The NERC Act 2006 places a duty on public authorities to conserve biodiversity. It also states that a list of priority species and actions must be drawn up and contains species and habitats of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. These lists of Priority Species and Priority Habitats, which encompass the previous UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species, are those identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action. Priority habitats and species were chosen based on international importance, rapid decline, and high risk. The list contains over 1000 habitats and species in total.

1.5.2. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Mandatory BNG is a part of the Environment Act 2021 requiring developments in England to have more or higher quality habitats than prior to the development. From 12th February 2024 all major developments were required to meet a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity units, calculated from the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. On 2nd April 2024, the mandatory 10% was extended to 'small sites'.

1.5.3. Exemptions

The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 lists several exemptions for BNG that may be applicable.

Temporary exemption for small developments —

The application for planning permission for small development was made before 2nd April 2024; or planning permission is granted for small development which has effect before 2nd April 2024.

De minimis exemption

The biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which meets the following conditions:

the development does not impact an onsite priority habitat and,

The development impacts— (a) less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value(b) greater than zero; and (b) less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat.

Householder applications

The biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which is the subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Self-build and custom build applications

The biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which— (a) consists of no more than 9 dwellings; (b) is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and (c) consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding. (2) In this regulation “self-build or custom housebuilding” has the same meaning as in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015(a)

2. Methodology

2.1. Surveyors and equipment

The site was attended by Matthew Kirby, an ecologist with over 9 years' experience, on 19th November 2025.

2.2. Survey

The survey consisted of a site walkover to identify the key habitats within the Site. The UK Habitat Classification v2.0 was used to categorize the habitats (UKHAB Ltd, 2023). A minimum mapping units of 5m for linear habitats and 25m² for area habitats was used when creating the maps.

Notes and photos were taken throughout the site to document the habitats present. Any habitats or features that would be suitable for protected species were identified and marked with a target note on the maps.

The baseline and proposed habitats were digitally mapped in QGIS software. Details from the site walkover were then inputted into the Small Site Metric BNG Calculation Tool to calculate the feasibility of a 10% BNG.

2.3. Limitations

No limitations.

3. Results

3.1. Weather Conditions

Table 1: Weather conditions at the site on 19/11/2025.

Parameter	
Temperature	8 °C
Precipitation	0 – Dry
Wind speed	0 Beaufort – Calm
Cloud cover	70%

3.2. Desk Study

3.2.1. Protected species

A 1km search radius was conducted using Magic (2025), to identify any previous confirmed records of protected or notable species in the area. The search returned zero record of licences within a 1 km radius. There were records of invertebrates, birds, and small mammals all within a 1 km radius, most notably Water vole. However, none were identified within the site boundary or the immediate vicinity.

3.2.2. Designated sites and priority habitats

There were zero designated sites within the 1km search radius of the site.

The priority habitat index (PHI) identified two habitat types: deciduous woodland, and lowland meadows within the 1km buffer zone.

3.3. Site visit results

3.3.1. Area habitats baseline

A-1.1 Developed land; sealed surface

Areas comprised of an existing static caravan, barn, and concrete slab.

Size: 0.0344 Ha, Distinctiveness: Very Low, Condition: N/A

A-1.2 Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

Primary area habitat of the site consisting solely of gravel.

Size: 0.2013 Ha, Distinctiveness: Very Low, Condition: N/A

A-1.3 Vegetated garden

A small patch of amenity grassland in the northern section of the site.

Size: 0.0132 Ha, Distinctiveness: Low, Condition: N/A

A-1.4 Rural tree

One medium sized Ash tree in the southern corner of the site.

Size: 0.0163 Ha, Distinctiveness: Medium, Condition: Poor*

*Area not included in total site area.

3.3.2. Linear habitat baseline

B-1.1 Line of trees

Line of trees that primarily consisted of Hawthorn, Blackthorn, and Bramble. The trees have been regularly managed.

Size: 24m, Distinctiveness: Low, Condition: Moderate

B-1.2 Non-native and ornamental hedgerow

A total of 39m of hedgerow along the boundary of the site, which consisted of Laurel.

Size: 39m, Distinctiveness: Very Low, Condition: Poor

3.3.3. Area habitats proposed

A-2.1 Developed land; sealed surface

Creation of caravan plots.

Size: 0.0152 Ha, Distinctiveness: Very Low, Condition: N/A

A-2.2 Artificially unvegetated; unsealed surface

Extension of the gravel surface across the site.

Size: 0.017 Ha, Distinctiveness: Very Low, Condition: N/A

A-2.3 Rural tree

Planting of two small native trees. Moderate condition was chosen as the most likely achievable and have a target completion of 27 years.

Size: 0.0081 Ha, Distinctiveness: Medium, Condition: Moderate

3.3.4. Linear habitats proposed

B-2.1 Non-native and ornamental hedgerow

Hedgerow to be planted to match the existing hedgerow.

Size: 130m, Distinctiveness: Very Low, Condition: Poor

3.4. Baseline units

3.4.1. Habitats

Any discrepancies between the values shown below and the calculations in the metric are due to rounding. The calculations in the metric were completed with unmodified values but rounded to 2 significant figures in the values below for clarity. The values from the metric should be used for any credit purchases.

Table 2: Area habitat summary.

Ref	Habitat	Area (Ha)	BNG units
A-1.1	Urban – Developed land; sealed surfaces	0.034	0.00
A-1.2	Urban – Artificial unvegetated ; unsealed surface	0.20	0.00
A-1.3	Urban – Vegetated garden	0.013	0.026
A-1.4	Rural tree	0.016*	0.064
Total	4	0.25	0.09

* Area not included in total.

Table 3: Linear habitat summary.

Ref	Habitat	Length (m)	BNG units
B-1.1	Line of trees	24	0.096
B-1.2	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	39	0.039
Total	2	63	0.14

3.5. Post – development units

3.5.1. Habitat creation

Table 4: Area habitat creation summary.

Ref	Habitat	Area (Ha)	BNG units
A-2.1	Urban – Developed land; sealed surfaces	0.015	0.00
A-2.2	Urban – Artificial unvegetated ; unsealed surface	0.017	0.00
A-2.3	Rural tree	0.0081*	0.025
Total	3	0.032	0.025

Table 5: Linear habitat creation summary.

Ref	Habitat	Length (m)	BNG units
B-2.1	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	130	0.13
Total	1	130	0.13

3.6. Habitat change

Table 6: Area habitat change.

Ref	Enhanced Ha	Lost Ha	Retained Ha	BNG unit change
A-1.1	0	0.018	0.016	0.00
A-1.2	0	0.014	0.19	0.00
A-1.3	0	0.00	0.013	0.00
A-1.4	0	0.00	0.016*	0.00
Total	0	0.032	0.22	0.00

Table 7: Linear habitat change.

Ref	Enhanced m	Lost m	Retained m	BNG unit change
B-1.1	0	24	0	-0.096
B-1.2	0	0	39	0.00
Total	0	24	39	-0.096

Table 8: Area distinctiveness change.

Distinctiveness	Lost	Created	Trading rules satisfied
Very High	N/A	N/A	N/A
High	N/A	N/A	N/A
Medium	0.0	0.02	Yes
Low	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 9: Linear distinctiveness change.

Distinctiveness	Lost	Created	Trading rules satisfied
Very High	N/A	N/A	N/A
High	N/A	N/A	N/A
Medium	N/A	N/A	N/A
Low	0.10	0.00	No
Very Low	0.00	0.12	Yes

Table 10: BNG breakdown, rounded to 2 decimal places.

Unit Type	a) Base unit	b) Units lost	c) Units created	d) Post unit	e) 10% Target(a*1.1)	f) Net Change (d-a)	g) Unit deficit/surplus (d-e)
Habitat	0.09	0.00	0.03	0.12	0.10	+0.03	+0.02
Linear	0.14	0.10	0.13	0.17	0.15	+0.03	+0.02

BNG targets **have** been met.

Trading standards **have not** been met



Figure 4: Wider landscape map.

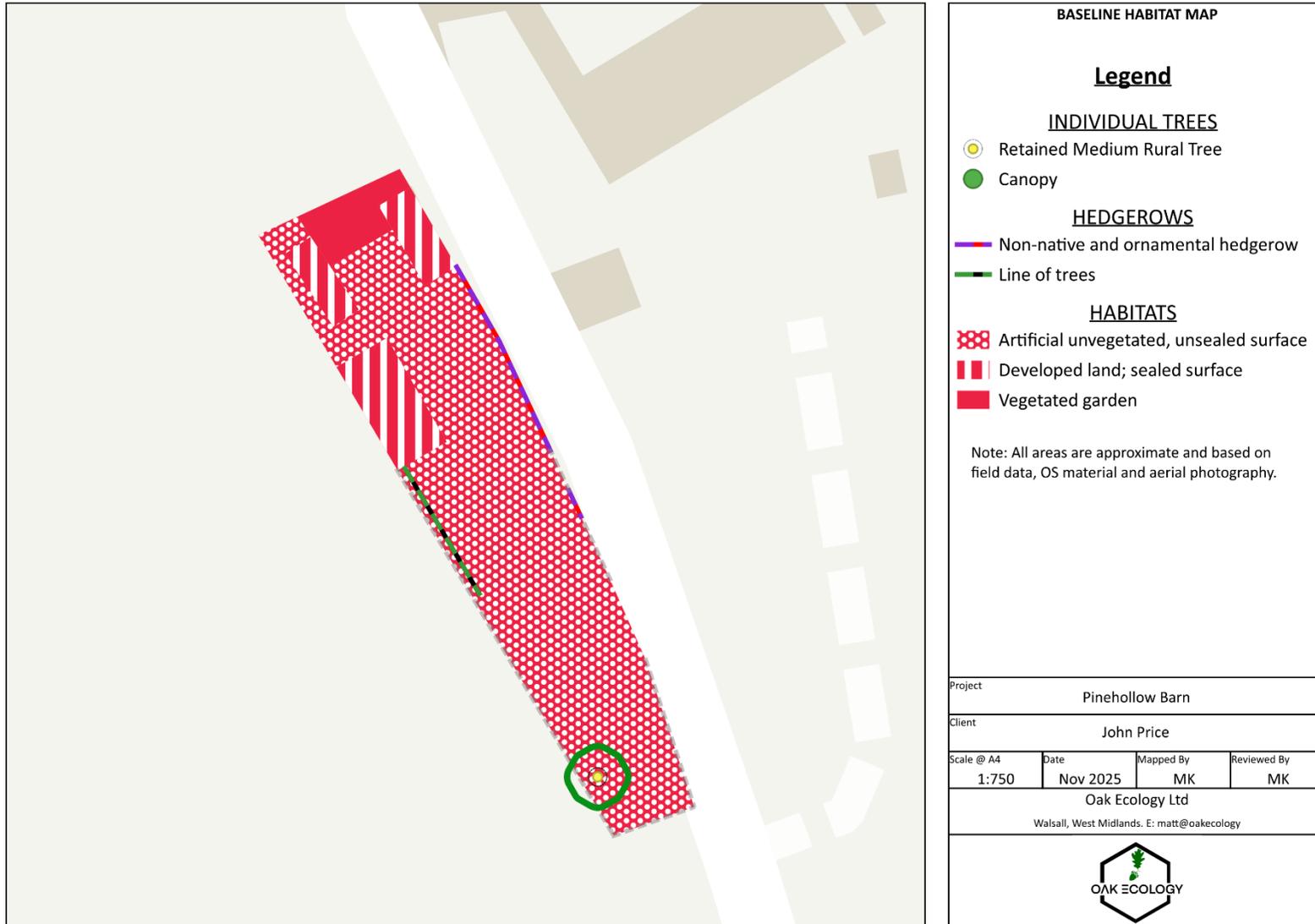


Figure 5: Baseline Habitat Map.

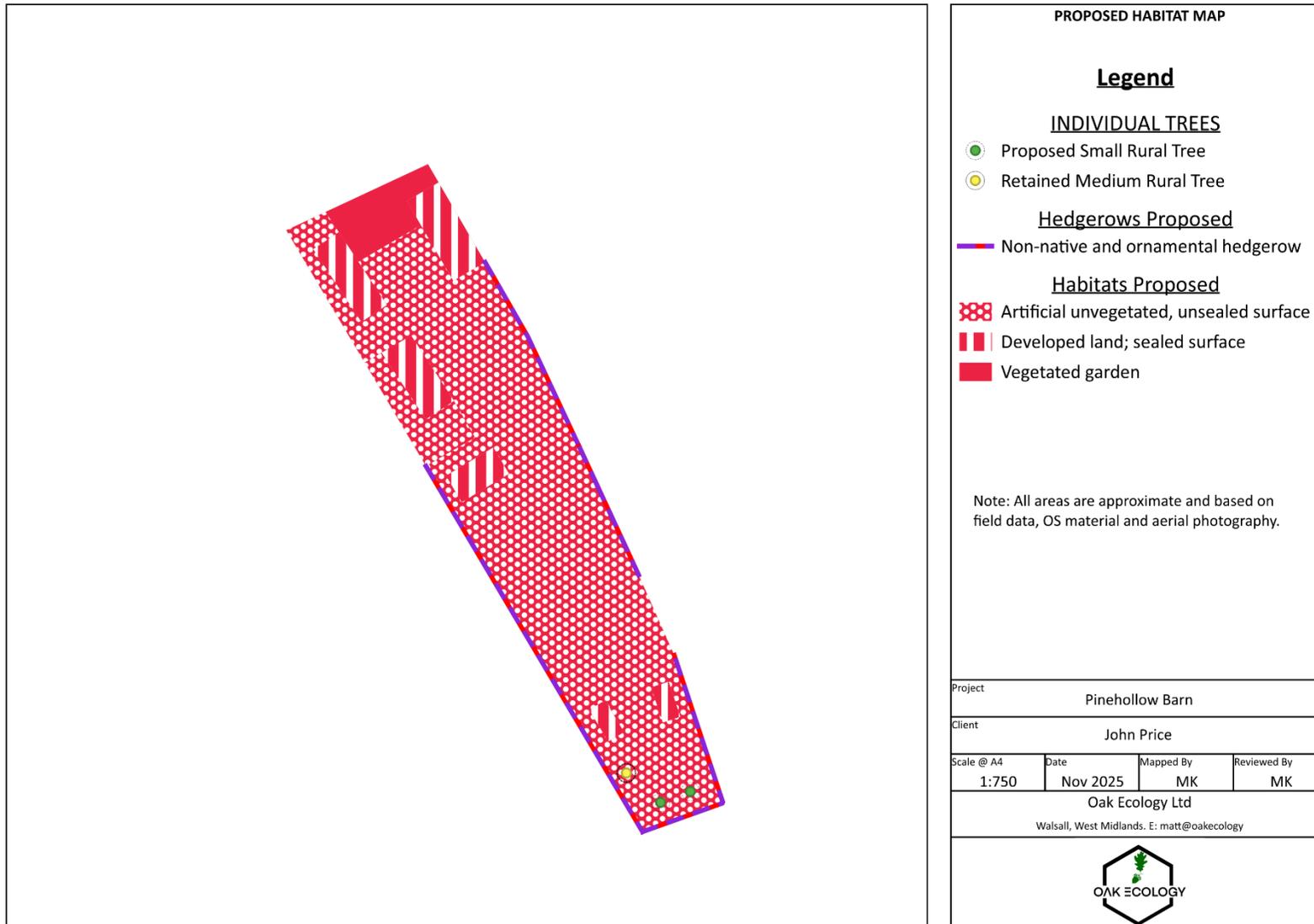
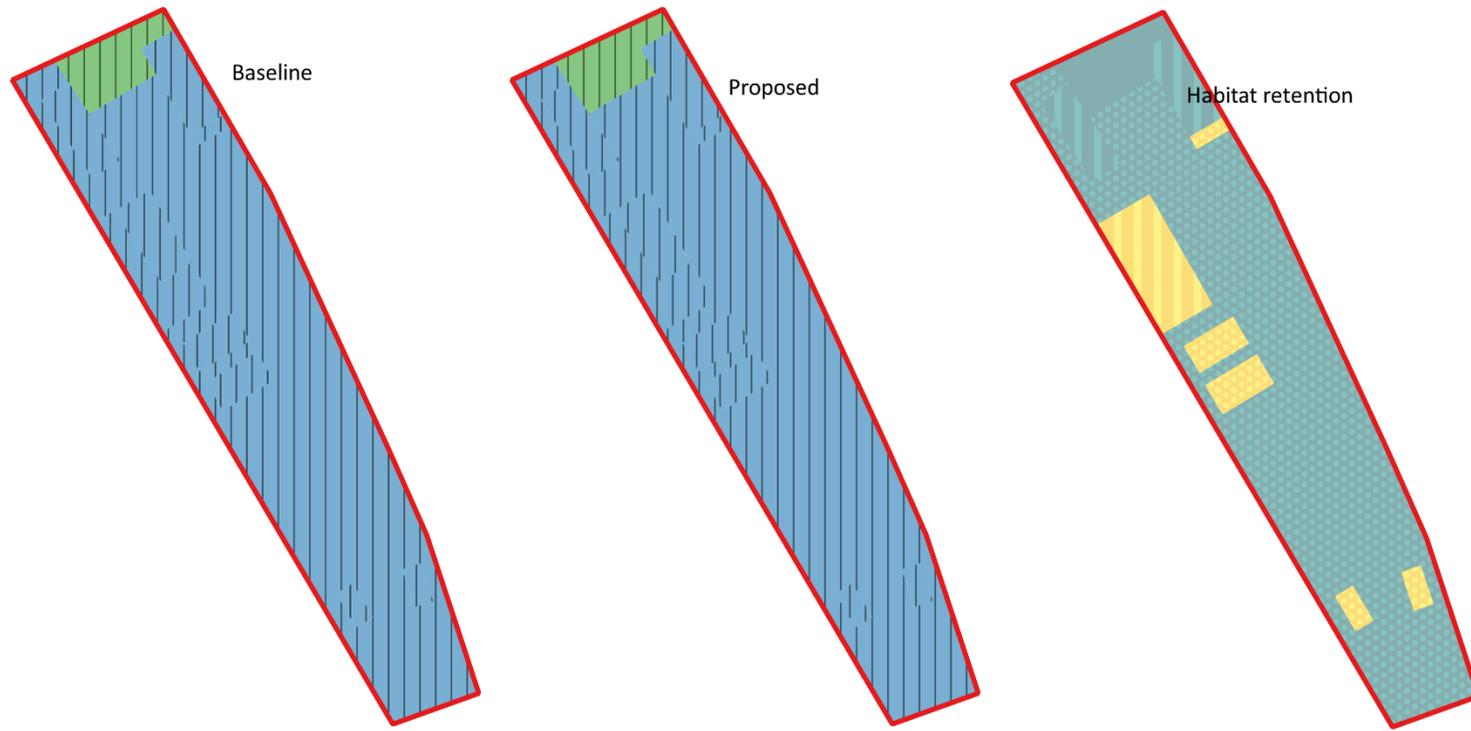


Figure 6: Proposed Habitat map based on clients proposed plans.



HABITAT CONDITION			
Habitat Distinctiveness	Habitat Condition	Habitat Retention	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> V.High High Medium Low V.Low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good Fairly Good Moderate Fairly Poor Poor N/A - Other Condition Assessment N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Retained Lost 	
Project		Client	
Pinehollow Barn		John Price	
Scale @ A4	Date	Mapped By	Reviewed By
1:800	Nov 25	MK	MK
Note: All areas are approximate and based on field data, OS material and aerial photography.			
Oak Ecology Ltd			
Walsall, West Midlands. E: matt@oakecology			
			

Figure 7: Condition area map.

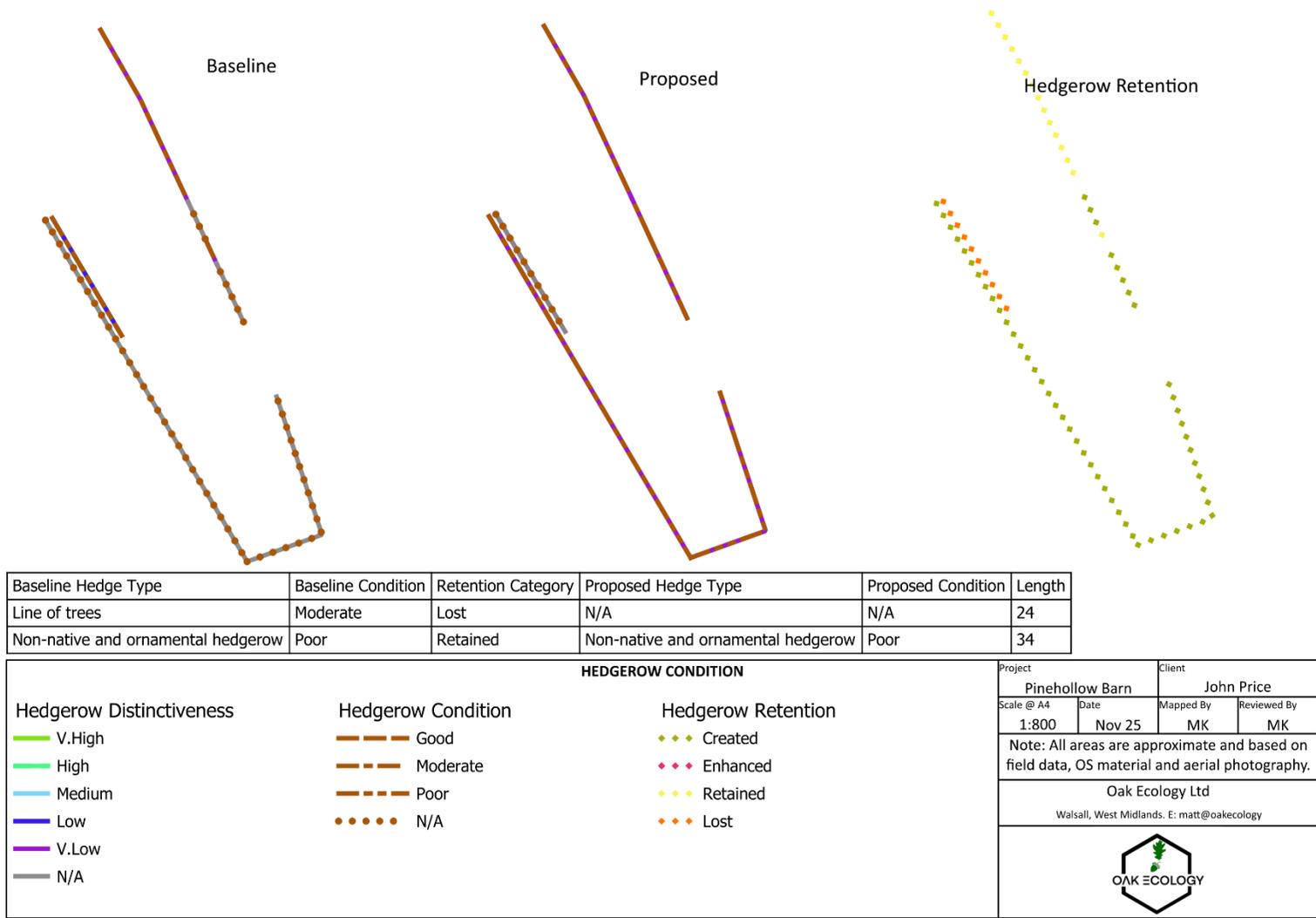


Figure 8: Condition hedgerow map.

4. Feasibility of Biodiversity Net Gain

4.1. Area habitats

The site had a baseline BNG unit value of 0.09 and required a total post development unit value of 0.10 to achieve the 10% target. With the planting of at least two small moderate condition trees the site should achieve a post development unit value of 0.12, a 27.03% net gain and surplus of 0.02 BNG units.

The planting of trees would have a target condition time of 27 years' and would need to be legally secured.

The trading rules for area habitats **have** been met.

4.2. Linear habitats

The site had a baseline BNG unit value of 0.14 and required a total post development unit value of 0.15 to achieve the 10% target. Planting non-native and ornamental hedgerow creates a total post-development unit value of 0.17, a 21.81% net gain and surplus of 0.02 BNG units.

The site would lose a section of low distinctiveness habitat which is not replaced with the same or better habitat. Therefore, the site would not meet the trading rules for linear habitats.

4.3. Conclusion

As the site has not met all the trading rules the proposed plans do not currently meet all the requirements of BNG and require scheme alterations.

A method of achieving the trading rules could be done through the planting of Native hedgerow in place of ornamental hedgerow. Native hedgerow would have a distinctiveness of 'Low' and would satisfy the trading rules.

5. Photographs



Figure 9: A-1.1 Example of developed land.



Figure 10: A-1.2 Example of Artificial unvegetated



Figure 11: A-1.4 Rural tree.



Figure 12: B-1.1 Line of trees.



Figure 13: B-1.2 Non-native and ornamental hedgerow.

6. References

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