

Biodiversity Statement

Land to the rear of 84 Leicester Road,
Hinckley, LE10 1LT

February 2025

Project	Land to the rear of 84 Leicester Road, Hinckley, LE10 1LT – Biodiversity Statement
Client	Merrywell Properties Ltd
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	Name	Date	Comments
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Executive Summary

Background

CW Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Merrywell Properties Ltd to undertake a biodiversity net gain assessment (BNG) in support of a planning application for the construction of three residential bungalows with associated gardens, parking and landscaping.

The red line boundary covers approximately 0.3ha and the proposals affect more than the *de minimis* threshold of 25sqm of habitat. The application is therefore considered subject to the general biodiversity gain condition.

Site Survey

A UK Habitat Classification survey was undertaken on the 5th of February 2025 to collect habitat condition assessment information in accordance with the statutory metric condition assessment sheets. The information collected was entered into the main statutory metric to determine baseline and proposed biodiversity values.

No priority or irreplaceable habitats were recorded during the habitat survey. There is evidence of degradation prior to the application, namely the removal several trees, including two medium trees.

Outcomes

The metric calculation results in a 39.15% loss for area habitat and no change for hedgerows between the onsite baseline and post-development habitat values. The area habitat loss occurs primarily through removal of bramble scrub, modified grassland and tall forbs. It is not possible to compensate for this loss fully within the red line application boundary. A further 1.44 area units and 0.01 hedgerow units are required to meet the statutory 10% gain.

An off-site provider has not yet been identified and a revised calculation will be required to show the details of the off-site units and how the statutory gain will be achieved.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 CW Ecology was commissioned by Merrywell Properties Ltd to undertake a biodiversity net gain assessment for the land to the rear of 84 Leicester Road, Hinckley, LE10 1LT.
- 1.1.2 The assessment is in relation to a planning application for development of three detached residential bungalows with gardens, garages and parking. To inform this design stage report, a site visit was undertaken to collect information for a UKHab survey and habitat condition assessment.
- 1.1.3 The site has a central grid reference of SP 43531 94829.
- 1.1.4 The site is located in a residential area of Hinckley. The site is surrounded on all four sides by housing. Greens space is present to the west as part of Ashby Road Cemetery, and to the south east as sports field adjacent to a secondary school. Beyond the school, is a golf course and Burbage Common and Woods Country Park. The nearest main road is the M69 to the south. The East Midlands Railway line runs approximately 900m southeast of the site.

1.2 Proposed project

- 1.2.1 The proposals include building three detached bungalows with associated single garages, hardstanding for parking, gardens and landscaping. A new private entrance is created for plot three.
- 1.2.2 The proposals for attaining biodiversity net gain are dependant on gaining off site habitat units and on onsite hedgerow units. A construction programme is yet to be determined and assumptions have been made in relation to timescales of the work in relation to delivery of units.



Figure 1: Red line site boundary illustrating surrounding area.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

1.3.1 The surveyor is unaware of any existing ecological reports detailing habitat information prepared in relation to this application. A tree report is available. The aims of this biodiversity statement are, therefore, to:

- establish the baseline habitat unit value, using UKHab and habitat condition assessment;
- calculate changes to onsite biodiversity units as a result of the proposed development;
- outline proposed mitigation measures (as far as reasonably possible and where suitable identify enhancement opportunities to demonstrate an overall minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity);
- satisfy the minimum information requirements at the planning stage for applications subject to the biodiversity planning condition.

1.4 Planning Policy and Legislation

1.4.1 The premise of biodiversity net gain is that developments contribute to an overall increase in biodiversity. This is underpinned by the National Planning and Policy Framework 2023 and the Environment Act 2021.

1.4.2 Mandatory biodiversity net gain was introduced in February 2024 for large sites and April 2024 for small sites. A summary of relevant legislation is provided in Appendix 4.

2. Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 A data search was undertaken as part of the preparation of this report. This included a search of MAGIC Maps for statutory sites and Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory for priority habitats within 2km of the site. Previous aerial imagery was screened to identify potential degradation that may have occurred prior to survey.
- 2.1.2 In addition to the information gathered above, local nature recovery policies have been reviewed to provide information about local priorities and strategic significance, specifically:
 - Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy (draft). January 2025.
 - Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy – Local Habitat Map GIS Mapping.
 - Space for Wildlife. Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2016 - 2026.
- 2.1.3 This desk study has been used to inform the biodiversity calculation, and considerations for habitat enhancement and creation in terms of complementing the wider landscape and contributing to local species recovery measures.

2.2 BNG Assessment

Site Survey

- 2.2.1 The baseline UKHab survey and habitat condition assessment were conducted on 5th of February 2025 by Kate Williams, BSc, MSc (Species Identification & Survey Skills), AECOW, who holds a class 2 bat survey licence (2019-42888-CLS-CLS) and a class 1 great crested newt licence. Kate has ten years' experience in ecological consultancy.
- 2.2.2 The weather was dry, with high cloud cover, and a temperature of 5°C. No rain occurred during the survey.

Baseline Habitat Assessment

- 2.2.3 Habitat data was collected using the UK Habitat classification scheme version 2.0 (UK Habitat Classification, Habitat Definitions V2.0). Each habitat parcel was mapped using the fine scale mapping unit.
- 2.2.4 Habitat condition assessments were completed for each habitat parcel, using the relevant condition assessment sheet associated with the Statutory Metric (The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment

Sheets and Methodology, July 2024). This assessment assigns a condition (poor, moderate, good) to each habitat parcel by considering a set of a standard criteria such as the presence of invasive species, the structure of the vegetation and species richness.

2.2.5 A baseline habitat map was produced in QGIS 3.34.4 to determine the areas associated with each habitat parcel. Habitat information was then translated into the metric.

Metric Calculation

2.2.6 Biodiversity value was determined using the Main Statutory Metric (released July 2024) and calculated by a competent person as defined in BS8683:2021 namely: Hazel Crossley, BSc, MSc (Conservation Biology), who has eight years' experience in ecological consultancy and habitat survey. Hazel has undertaken training in UKHab Classification and Biodiversity Metric 4.0.

2.2.7 Mapped habitat areas were calculated in meters squared using the area values generated from the QGIS template (released 28/11/2023) provided by Natural England as an additional tool to support the Statutory Metric.

2.2.8 The Metric automatically assigns the level of habitat distinctiveness, based on a national dataset of instances of the habitat and the level of rarity. The strategic significance was determined by reviewing local policies including interim guidance.

2.2.9 The calculations presented in this report have been based on red line boundary and architectural drawings provided by DCI Architecture on the 5th of February 2025. The cad drawings were transformed to create a georeferenced shapefile using an affine transformation.

Iterative Design

2.2.10 The proposed habitats and final metric calculation has been established through an iterative design process considering the priorities of the biodiversity gain hierarchy.

2.3 Limitations

2.3.1 The areas calculated for the habitat assessment have been based on drawings provided by DCI Architecture. There may be a discrepancy between the cad drawing file areas and the QGIS shapefile areas due to differences in the software used. It is not considered that this would result in values that would significantly affect the output of the metric.

- 2.3.2 For this assessment, habitat areas have been calculated to the nearest square metre and lengths to the nearest metre. Resultant values have been input into the metric as hectares or kilometres to the equivalent decimal places.
- 2.3.3 It is not possible to compare different versions of the Metric. Future comparisons should be made using the same metric or reinput the equivalent habitat if a newer version is available.

3. Baseline Biodiversity Value

3.1 Desk Study

Designates Sites (statutory)

- 3.1.1 No statutory sites occur within 500m of the site.
- 3.1.2 Burbage Common and Woods LNR 770 metres east at the nearest point, Burbage Wood and Aston Firs SSSI, 1.4km east, are located within 2km of the site.

Designated sites (non-statutory)

- 3.1.3 No non-statutory sites were identified within 2km. Magic Maps does not, however, provide reliable information on local wildlife sites.

Habitats

- 3.1.4 An area of potential open mosaic habitat on previously developed land is located 290 metres to the northwest. This was the only priority habitat type returned within 500 metres of the red line boundary. With a 2km search buffer, lowland dry acid grassland, is present. This occurs 770 metres to the east associated with Burbage Common LNR. Further grassland, good semi-improved grassland, is associated with Aston Firs SSSI. Ancient and semi-natural woodland is present within both the LNR and SSSI, whilst deciduous woodland is found as scattered parcels notable by the railway line and around the golf course.

3.2 Baseline Conditions

- 3.2.1 No priority or irreplaceable habitats were identified with the red line boundary.
- 3.2.2 The 'relevant date' for onsite pre-development biodiversity value is taken to be the date of application. The baseline surveys have been timed shortly prior to this date to give an accurate depiction of site conditions.
- 3.2.3 The survey and desk study did not indicate that activities had been carried out prior to the date of application that would have degraded the baseline habitats. The habitats have therefore been entered into the metric as observed through survey.
- 3.2.4 A description of the habitats is presented below with UKHab classification in brackets.

Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

- 3.2.5 The red line boundary comprises a parcel of land located behind two recently constructed houses, accessible via tarmac road (u1b6 839) which turns into a loose stone driveway (u1c 839). A second entrance is present at the eastern side of the site, although this is not currently in use.

Grassland

- 3.2.6 The site is a mosaic of grassland, tall forb and bramble scrub with a current management regime that includes an annual clearance. The site boundaries are formed by shiplap fencing along the northern and western edges.
- 3.2.7 The grassland (g4) is modified and includes the grasses cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), rough meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), and red fescue (*Festuca rubra* agg.). Herbs recorded include cleavers (*Galium aparine*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), dandelion (*Taraxacum* sp.), common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Canadian fleabane (*Erigeron canadensis*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Spanish bluebell, creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), broad-leaved willowherb (*Epilobium montanum*), dove's-foot crane's-bill (*Geranium molle*), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), wild teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), autumn hawkbit (*Scorzoneroidea autumnalis*), selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*). There are patches of garden escapees such as evening-primrose (*Oenothera* sp.) and along the western boundary two types of bamboo were noted.

Scrub and Tall Forb

3.2.8 Throughout the site are several patches of bramble scrub (h3d) interspersed with tall forbs (g 16). These habitats are prominent around a bund of topsoil, created from the construction of the roadside properties, which is located in the north east corner of the site. The bramble scrub has scattered rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*), Canadian fleabane, creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), common ragwort, ribwort plantain, broad-leaved willowherb, hairy bitter-cress (*Cardamine hirsute*), Spanish bluebell, common nettle, common sorrel, creeping buttercup and, cleavers. The tall forb areas by contrast have frequent broad leaved willowherb, cow parsley, common nettle, and creeping thistle. Bramble is also found within the disused access track at the eastern boundary.

Hedgerows

3.2.9 There is a cypress hedgerow (h2b 11), along the northern boundary, H1. Several mature trees are present within this hedgerow, see below. A second manicured privet hedgerow (h2b), H2, is present along the eastern boundary.

Urban Trees

3.2.10 Five tree occur along the northern boundary integrated within a non-native hedgerow. These are sycamore, ash, and sessile oak, all medium-sized with DBH ranging between 33cm – 58cm. A further seven urban trees, T5 – T11, are present along the remaining site boundaries. The species are goat willow, leylandii, grey willow and sycamore. T5 – T8 are adjacent to the eastern boundary. T9 is grey willow at the edge of the soil bund. All of the trees are small apart from T11 which is a medium-sized leylandii.

3.3 Baseline Metric

3.3.1 The full metric calculation has been provided in a separate accompanying document. Table 1 below details the pre-development area-based habitats and their corresponding biodiversity value. Condition assessments for the habitats are presented in Appendix 3.

Table 1 - Baseline distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance for non-linear features including their habitat value.

Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic Significance	Biodiversity Value
Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	0.0107	Very Low	N/A	Area not in local strategy	0.00
Bramble scrub	0.1012	Medium	N/A	Area not in local strategy	0.40
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0047	Very Low	N/A	Area not in local strategy	0.00
Modified grassland	0.1757	Low	Good	Area not in local strategy	1.05
Tall forbs	0.0376	Low	Moderate	Area not in local strategy	0.15
Urban tree	0.0855	Medium	Good	Area not in local strategy	1.03
Urban tree	0.0366	Medium	Moderate	Area not in local strategy	0.29

3.3.2 The total area baseline biodiversity value for the site is 2.93 units.

3.3.3 The individual trees T0 – T11 have been entered as urban trees with a combined area of 0.1221 ha calculated using the metric 'tree helper' tool.

3.3.4 A local nature recovery strategy (LNRS) is under development for Leicestershire and a draft version was published in January 2025. The draft mapping did not show the site as within an existing ecological network or an area that could become of particular importance. Review of the priority species map did highlight a buffer for Barbastelle bat which includes the site. This species is commonly associated with deciduous woodland. The site is surrounded by residential buildings with little connectivity to the surrounding landscape and although potentially favourable for some foraging bats, it is unlikely to offer significant ecological value for Barbastelle bats. The strategic significance of all habitat has, therefore, been classified as low or not within the local strategy.

3.3.5 The total hedgerow baseline biodiversity value for the site is 0.07 units. Details are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 - Baseline distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance for hedgerow features including their habitat value.

Hedge Type	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic Significance	Biodiversity Value
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.071	Very Low	Poor	Area not in local strategy	0.07

3.3.6 No watercourse habitat was identified.

4. Post-development Biodiversity Value

4.1 Proposed Habitats

Developed land

- 4.1.1 An overall increase in developed land of 1,436 sqm is generated through the construction of the new dwellings. This includes a new access road, garages and parking.
- 4.1.2 Developed land does not have an associated biodiversity value and the condition is set by default.

Vegetated garden

- 4.1.3 Approximately 1,363sqm of vegetated garden is created through conversion of the existing grassland, forb and bramble scrub. The condition for vegetated garden is fixed.

Modified grassland

- 4.1.4 A 335 sqm area of modified grassland will be created as roadside verge around the new access road. Part of this area, 160 sqm, is existing grassland. This has been entered into the metric as lost and recreated. A decline in condition is anticipated due to contraction of the area and change in management. A target condition of 'moderate' has been applied.

Urban trees

- 4.1.5 Of the baseline trees all are retained apart from T9. No change in condition has been applied, and trees T0 – T8 will be incorporated into the gardens. Nine small native street trees are proposed within the roadside verge. The target condition for these trees has been set to 'moderate'.

Hedgerow

4.1.6 The two non-native hedgerows, H1 and H2, are retained. The condition for non-hedgerow is fixed at 'poor'.

4.2 Proposed Biodiversity Value

4.2.1 Table 3 below details the proposed development area-based habitats and their corresponding biodiversity value.

Table 3 - Proposed distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance for area features including their habitat value.

Habitat Type	Status	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Biodiversity Value
Developed land; sealed surface	Retained	0.0046	Very Low	N/A	0.00
Urban tree	Retained	0.0855	Medium	Good	1.03
Urban tree	Retained	0.0326	Medium	Moderate	0.26
Developed land; sealed surface	Created	0.1544	Very Low	N/A	0.00
Modified grassland	Created	0.0346	Low	Moderate	0.12
Urban tree	Created	0.0366	Medium	Moderate	0.11
Vegetated garden	Created	0.1363	Low	N/A	0.26

4.2.2 The strategic significance of all of the habitat parcels post development has been left as low or not within the local strategy.

4.2.3 The total post-development biodiversity value for area habitats is 1.78 units. This is equivalent to a loss of 39.15%. The post-development hedgerow value remains the same and is 0.07 units, Table 4.

4.2.4 It has not been possible to compensate for the loss of area habitat within the red line application boundary. As a minimum, a further 1.44 area units and 0.01 hedgerow units will be required. At least 0.40 of these units must be generated from the broad habitat type heathland and shrub or units of a higher distinctiveness to satisfy the trading rules. A further 1.04 units of any low distinctiveness habitat type will be needed to meet the 10% gain. As an illustration this could be fulfilled by an off-site provider creating of 1,000 sqm of moderate condition mixed scrub and enhancing 2,200 sqm of other neutral grassland from poor to moderate condition. This would result in an overall gain of 11.34% for area habitats with the assumption that units can be sourced in a formerly targeted area within the same planning authority. The hedge units

could be met through enhancement of 10 metres of native hedgerow to moderate condition to generate a 29.11% gain using the same assumptions.

Table 4 - Proposed distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance for hedgerow features including their habitat value.

Hedge Type	Status	Length(km)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Biodiversity Value
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	Retained	0.071	Very Low	Poor	0.07

4.3 Application of the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy

- 4.3.1 The biodiversity gain hierarchy is a process which first considers minimising the loss of ecologically valuable habitat through iterative design. If loss cannot be avoided, on-site enhancement is then prioritised, with off-site solutions being considered as a last resort.
- 4.3.2 In line with the hierarchy, several potential solutions for delivering biodiversity net gain have been considered for these proposals. The design has gone through a number of iterations including an initial proposal with six properties. This has been reduced to three which has enabled retention of the hedgerow and mature trees at the back of the site as well as incorporation of new tree planting. Despite this, conversion of the land to housing still results in a deficit due to a reduction of area available for habitat and limited options for meaningful habitat creation within this space. Compensation for this loss cannot be met within the red line boundary. The proposals will therefore require off-site units.

5. Project Implementation

5.1 Off-site provisions

5.1.1 For the proposals to meet mandatory net gain, off-site units will need to be secured from a suitable off-site provider. An illustration of the type and quantity of required units is presented in Table 5. The precise units delivered will be subject to the availability of units from the provider, location of units, and timescales of habitat enhancement relative to project timescales. A construction programme should be established with the provider which sets out a timeframe for habitat loss and creation.

Table 5 – Illustration of type of units required to meet statutory requirements.

Habitat Type	Units	Distinctiveness	Quantity	Reasoning
Area				
Heathland and shrub	0.40	Medium (or above)	e.g. creation of 1,000 sqm of mixed scrub	To meet trading rules for loss of bramble scrub.
Any broad habitat type	1.04	Low (or above)	e.g. enhancement of 2,200 sqm of other neutral grassland	To meet mandatory 10% gain
Hedgerow				
Any hedgerow type	0.01	Low (or above)	e.g. enhancement of 10m native hedgerow	To meet mandatory 10% gain

5.1.2 Off-site credits will be funded upfront by the applicant and include provision for management and monitoring of outcomes. The off-site provider will be responsible for delivering the agreed units, including the production of the relevant management plans and taking remedial action where required. Optimum habitat benefits are obtained through local delivery, therefore providers able to deliver enhancements within the same local authority to the planning application should be prioritised.

5.2 Construction, Management and Monitoring

5.2.1 A habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) should be prepared which details the approach to habitat creation and also includes planting specifications. Management prescriptions should cover a 30-year duration HMMP. It is recommended that this document is either secured via a legal or planning condition.

5.2.2 If the application is successful, a biodiversity gain plan will need to be submitted to discharge the general biodiversity gain condition. Construction will not commence until the gain plan has been approved. A finalised metric will need to be submitted alongside the biodiversity gain plan.

- 5.2.3 If there is a delay to the construction programme or design change, an updated assessment must take place, to remodel for any changes that may have taken place, either on the ground or through the proposed plans.
- 5.2.4 The initial habitat creation and long-term management and monitoring will be funded by the applicant.
- 5.2.5 Any managed or ornamental borders should be comprised of species listed within the "RHS Plants for Pollinators" guide "rhs.org.uk/plantsforpollinators". This should be a mixture of day and night scented flowers to encourage bees, butterflies, and moths.

References

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UKHab Ltd. (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0*. Cheshire: UKHab Ltd.

Appendix 1 – Maps





PROPOSED HABITATS

- red line boundary
- developed land with a sealed surface
- modified grassland
- vegetated garden
- non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- proposed small urban tree
- retained medium urban tree
- retained small urban tree

Outline drawing provided by dci architecture ltd.

Proposed Biodiversity Value

DRAWING TITLE PR-BNG-24-060-03
DRAWING REFERENCE
SITE Land R/O 84 Leicester Road, LE10 1LT SP 43531 94829

DRAWING DATE 09/05/25 REVISION v1.1
DRAWN BY HC SCALE 1 : 400 @ A3
SURVEY DATE 05/02/25 SURVEYOR/S KW, HC

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Appendix 2 – Site Photographs

	
Image 1: Existing access.	Image 2: Stone access track.
	
Image 3: Grassland, bramble and tall forb mosaic.	Image 4: Bramble scrub with T10 and T11 in background.
	
Image 5: Tall forb.	Image 6: Modified grassland.



Image 7: Northern hedgerow, H1, with mature trees.



Image 8: Eastern hedgerow, H2.



Image 9: Bamboo at the western boundary.



Image 10: T5 and T6.



Image 11: T7 and T8.



Image 12: T9



Image 13: T10



Image 14: Well.

Appendix 3 – Condition Assessments

Grassland Low

Habitat Description		
Species-poor semi-improved grassland with several grasses present. Lacking in forb cover but with 6-8 species per sqm. Current management includes an annual clearance. Garden escapees present.		
Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed	Assessors Comments
	A1	
There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	Y	Grassland averaged 6 -8 species per square metre.
Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7cm and at least 20 % is more than 7cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Y	Grassland has good variation in heights, with taller tussocks and areas of short vegetation.
Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i> may be present).	Y	Small patches of scattered scrub are present but this does not exceed 20% of total area.
Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use of storage, erosion caused by high levels or access, or any other damaging management activities.	Y	There is no notable physical damage.
Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	N	Although a small amount of bare ground is present it is less than the 1% threshold on average.
Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y	No bracken was present.
There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	Y	No invasive species recorded.
Criteria Passed	6	
Suggested enhancement interventions		

Adapted from Statutory Metric – Technical Annex 1 Condition Assessment Sheets.

Individual Trees

Habitat Description						
Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed				Assessors Comments	
	T0	T1	T2	T3	T4	
The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	N	N	Y	Y	Y	
The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	The canopy of all trees within group are interconnected by hedgerow. T0-T3 have direct overlap, T4 is independent.
The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	No indication of adverse impact or regular pruning regime.
Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	The trees have a covering of ivy which provides opportunities for insects and nesting birds.
More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	All trees have canopies oversailing vegetation
Criteria Passed	5	3	6	6	6	
Suggested enhancement interventions						

Adapted from Statutory Metric – Technical Annex 1 Condition Assessment Sheets.

Individual Trees (cont.)

Habitat Description								
Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed							Assessors Comments
	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	
The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	
The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	T5 – T8 group canopy has a gap but this does not exceed 5m. T9 is an individual tree. T10 and T11 are a group without significant canopy gap.
The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	T5-T8 group is has no mature trees. T11 is a mature tree.
There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Non of the trees have evidence of adverse impact or regular pruning regime.
Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	T5 has flaking bark and a canker. T6 – T11 have limited opportunities.
More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	All trees have canopies oversailing vegetation
Criteria Passed	5	3	3	3	4	4	4	
Suggested enhancement interventions								

Urban

Habitat Description			
An area of tall forb including willowherbs, common nettle, cow parsley and creeping thistle.			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed	Assessors Comments
		A2	
Core Criteria – must be assessed for all urban habitat types			
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.	Y	The area is varied and not a single structural habitat.
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	N	The range of flowering species/ nectar sources could be improved to provide better suitability for invertebrates.
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA) and other which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area. Note – to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Y	No invasive species recorded.
Additional Criterion – must be assessed for Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land only:			
D	The parcel shows spatial variation and forms a mosaic of bare substrate PLUS: - At least four successional communities (a) to (i); Communities: (a) annuals; (b) mosses/liverworts; (c) lichens; (d) ruderals; (e) inundation species; (f) open grassland; (g) flower-rich grassland; (h) heathland, (i) pools.	N/A	
Additional Criterion – must be assessed for Bioswale and SuDS habitat types only:			
E1	Plants species are mostly native. If non-native species are present, they should not be detrimental to the habitat or native wildlife.	N/A	
E2	The vegetation is comprised of plant species suited to wetland or riparian situations.	N/A	
Additional Criterion – must be assessed for Intensive green roofs only:			
F	The roof has a minimum of 50% native and non-native wildflowers. 70% of the roof area is soil and vegetation (including water features).	N/A	
Additional Criterion – must be assessed for Biodiverse green roofs only:			
G	The roof has a varied depth of 80 – 150mm; at least 50% is at 150mm and is planted and seeded with wildflowers and sedums or is pre-prepared with sedums and wildflowers. Note – to achieve Good condition some additional habitat, such as sand piles, stones, logs etc. are present.	N/A	
		Criteria Passed	2
Suggested enhancement interventions			

Adapted from Statutory Metric – Technical Annex 1 Condition Assessment Sheets.

Appendix 4 – Legislation and Status

Environment Act 2021

The environment Act 2021 sets out the key components of mandatory biodiversity gain, under schedule 14:

- It amends **Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA)**, namely section 90A, where the provision for grants of planning permission in England to be subject to a condition to secure that the biodiversity gain objective is met as detailed below.

(1) The biodiversity net gain objective is met in relation to development for which planning permission is granted if the biodiversity value attributable to the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by at least the relevant percentage.

(2) The biodiversity value attributable to the development is the total of

- a. The post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat,
- b. The biodiversity value, in relation to the development, of any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development, and
- c. The biodiversity value of any biodiversity credits purchase for the development

(3) the relevant percentage is 10%

The Environment Act 2021, also makes the follow recommendations;

- A minimum of 10% gain is required, calculated by using the Biodiversity Metric along with the approval of a biodiversity gain plan;
- Habitat must be secured for a minimum of 30 years via planning obligations or conservation covenants;
- Net gain can be delivered either on-site, off-site or via a new statutory biodiversity credits scheme; and
- There will be national register for net gain delivery sites

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024, covers multiple areas of interest, however, those which concern biodiversity are highlighted below:

187: Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

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.

192: To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

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.

193: When determining planning applications, local 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.
- 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.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

Section 40: public bodies, including Local and Regional Planning Authorities, have a duty to 'have regard' to the conservation of biodiversity in England when carrying out their normal functions, which includes consideration of planning applications. In compliance with Section 41 of the Act, the Secretary of State has published a list of species considered to be of principal importance for conserving biodiversity in England.