BLADE

BIODIVERSITY MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY (BNG)

LAND AT ASHBY ROAD, MARKFIELD

ON BEHALF OF

ALLISON HOMES GROUP LTD

DECEMBER 2025

V1

BIODIVERSITY
LANDSCAPE
ARBORICULTURE
DESIGN
ECOLOGY

Report Data	
Title	Biodiversity Mitigation & Enhancement Strategy
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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 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 site was subject to two update visits, one during the optimal survey season to collect botanical quadrat information for grassland habitats and a second to update non-seasonally constrained habitats such as hedgerows and trees. The surveys were completed by and A. Elliott BSc (Hons) ACIEEM and E. Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM in accordance with the 'The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide' and 'Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments' documents (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2024).

1.6 The application site is approximately 3.66ha in area and comprises developed land; sealed surfaces (building/concrete), modified grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, native hedgerow (with trees/ associated with bank or ditch), mixed scrub, line of trees and bare ground.

1.7 In combination, the habitats on-site have a value of 19.16 Habitat Units and 5.26 Hedgerow Units. Details of each habitat's specific value can be found in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric which accompanies this report (See Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Ashby Road, Markfield - BLADE Ecology Ltd 2025).

1.8 This report has been based on the following plans produced by BLADE Landscape Architects: Illustrative Landscape Masterplan Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-200-V2 dated November 2025.

1.9 A completed Statutory Biodiversity Metric indicates that the current proposals will return a 31.92% net-loss in Habitat Units, and a 53.22% net-gain in Hedgerow Units. Proposed on-site area habitats include developed land; sealed surfaces, modified grassland, other neutral grassland, sustainable urban drainage system, introduced shrub, individual urban trees, mixed scrub, and vegetated gardens.

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

Biodiversity Impact Compensation

1.11 Given the nature of the proposed development (large areas of grassland being lost and replaced with urban habitats of low biodiversity value), achieving a net-gain on-site for habitat units is not feasible. As such, off-site compensation for biodiversity loss will be required. It is envisaged that this will be achieved and secured through the purchase of biodiversity units from local habitat banks. Should habitat units be available within the same National Character Area/Local Authority as the development, the following units will be required to reach a no-net loss position and satisfy the trading rules of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric:

- 2.08 'Low' distinctiveness or higher distinctiveness Habitat Units
- 4.02 Individual Tree Units (or other same broad habitat or 'higher' (high or v.high) distinctiveness habitat)
- A habitat bank (Broome Lane ref BGS-04042500) within Charnwood LPA listed on the BNG Register currently has units available. This should provide the most cost-effective option to securing biodiversity units and avoid the spatial risk multiplier penalty associated with out of area (LPA / NCA) units.

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 grassland), split by native hedgerows (with trees/associated with ditch), 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.

2.4 The application site boundary is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Application Site Boundary

2.5 Planning consent is being sought from both Charnwood Borough Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for "for 93 dwellings (outline refs: P/21/1260/2 & APP/K2420/W/22/3300552)". This report has been based on the following plans produced by BLADE Landscape Architects: Illustrative Landscape Masterplan Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-200-V3 dated December 2025.

Previous Survey Work and Ecological Baseline

2.6 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.

2.7 The BNGA utilised the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Biodiversity Offsetting Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator v19.0 and associated user guide.

2.8 An updated site visit was undertaken by E. Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM on 29 September 2025 in order to collect botanical quadrat data within the optimal survey season for grassland habitats. A second site visit was undertaken on November 17 2025, by A. Elliott BSc (Hons) ACIEEM to collect data to inform the Condition Assessments for input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric which has been utilised to inform the current Reserved Matters application.

2.9 These habitat condition assessments were used to inform the baseline units within the calculator. Habitats are mapped with the UK Habitat Classification Plan in Appendix A.

Survey Objectives

2.10 The objectives of the survey 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

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 governance, 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) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, 2023) provides guidance for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in creating development plans and determining applications.

3.5 Paragraph 180 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity value (in a manner commensurate with the statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- recognising the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of trees and woodland; and
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressure.

3.6 Paragraph 181 states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental value; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

3.7 Paragraph 185 states that in order to protect biodiversity, plans should:

- identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of internal, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- 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

3.8 Paragraph 186 states that when determining planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- 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;

- 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;

- 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

- 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.

3.9 Paragraph 187 states that the following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;

- listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and

- 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.

3.10 Paragraph 188 states that 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.

3.11 Paragraph 32 states that local plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains). Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).

Legislation

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitats and Species

3.12 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 METHODOLOGY

Condition Assessments

4.1 Condition assessments were completed on 29 September 2025 (grassland) and 17 November 2025 (other habitats). Habitat condition was assigned following guidance from the 'The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide' and 'Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments' documents (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2024) to be read in conjunction with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool. The condition of each broad habitat type was assessed following this guidance. Full details of condition assessments completed can be seen in Appendix B.

Desk Study and Strategic Significance

4.2 Strategic significance is used to assess the value of a habitat in relation to its spatial location using published local strategies and objectives for improving biodiversity, including local biodiversity actions plans, National Character Areas objectives, local green infrastructure strategies, as per the guidance of the 'User Guide' document (Natural England, 2023).

4.3 The following documents / sources were reviewed to determine the strategic significance of habitats:

- Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Plan (2006-2026)
- Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan (2021 -2037)
- Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Natural England National Character Area NCA Profile: 73 Charnwood (NE391)
- Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust - Charnwood Forest Living Landscape
- The Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) online database (http://magic.defra.gov.uk).
- A search of European statutory designated sites such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA) within 10km of the site boundary was also undertaken.

Measurement of Habitat and Hedgerow Units

4.4 Baseline habitat parcels were measured using habitat mapping and aerial imagery overlain in QGIS. A minimum mapping unit of 10m^2 and 5 linear metres was implemented.

4.5 Survey units for hedgerows have been recorded in line with the Hedgerow Survey Handbook, 2007:

A) *'An end point, or node, is:*

a. *any point or connection between two, or more, hedgerows to other features e.g. fences, walls, ditches, roads*

b. *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)*

c. *the point at which the hedgerow links to a woodland or other semi-natural habitat such as a pond*

B) *There may be significant variation along this length that may require refining lengths into 'survey units'. These additional points where changes occur as follows:*

a. *the point at which the hedgerow changes character from one hedgerow type to another for 20m or more*

b. *where there is a distinct change in hedgerow height for lengths of 20m or more*

c. *the ends of lengths (20m or more) of recent planting, coppicing or laying'*

Calculating Biodiversity Units

4.6 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool. was used to calculate the baseline (habitat and hedgerow). Metric calculations have been undertaken by A Elliott BSc ACIEEM.

Limitations

4.7 No limitations were encountered during the survey effort.

5.0 RESULTS

Strategic Significance

5.1 Habitats have been assessed for strategic significance in relation to its spatial location using published local strategies.

5.2 The Red Line Boundary falls within the Charnwood Forrest Living Landscape Area and NCA Profile: 73 Charnwood (NE391), for which the relevant primary aims of target habitats are:

- Protect and significantly increase the extent and quality of the unimproved grasslands, heathlands, open waterbodies and streams.
- Where appropriate, manage and expand the native woodlands throughout Charnwood to reinforce the wooded character.
- Increasing woodland creation and restoration, and strengthening hedgerow networks

5.3 The site does not fall within a formally targeted area for biodiversity enhancement.

5.4 Existing individual tree, line of trees and native hedgerow habitats have subsequently been given a value of 'Location strategically significant but not in local strategy' for their Statutory Biodiversity Metric strategic significance value.

5.5 Urban habitats (such as bare ground developed land; sealed surfaces) were not given any level of strategic significance.

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

5.6 A summary of baseline condition assessments has been provided below. Full condition assessments can be seen in Appendix B.

5.7 The majority of the site's area habitat baseline biodiversity value is found within the modified grassland across the site. This habitat did not meet the requirements of Criteria A for species richness and subsequently could not be assessed as being anything above 'poor condition'. Data was collected from 15 botanical quadrats within the modified grassland on-site by E Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM on 29 September 2025. The average number of species per meter squared was 4.

5.8 Developed land; sealed surface habitats present on-site do not require formal condition assessments for the purposes of biodiversity net gain calculations.

5.9 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	UK Hab Name/ Code	Assessment	Area (ha)	Habitat units	Parcel Ref
Urban	Developed Land; Sealed Surfaces (u1b5)	'Very Low' distinctiveness, condition assessment not required, not strategically significant.	0.011	0	U1
Sparsely vegetated land	Ruderal/ Ephemeral (u1f 82)	'Low' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'moderate', not strategically significant.	0.0082	0.03	U2
Urban	Bare Ground (u1 510)	'Low' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'moderate', not strategically significant.	0.0099	0.04	U3
Heathland and shrub	Mixed scrub (h1b)	'Medium' distinctiveness, condition assessment 'good', medium strategic significance	0.0468	0.56	B1
Grassland	Modified Grassland (g4)	This habitat automatically is given a low level of distinctiveness. Did not meet the 'Essential Criteria' for species-richness in order to be classed as 'Moderate' or 'Good' condition. Is subsequently in 'poor' condition as per the criteria assessment. Not strategically significant.	3.5804	7.16	G1

5.10 Twenty-three individual trees have been included within the baseline habitat assessment (including four that are within the line of trees habitat as they are being lost to development). Together, the trees contribute 11.36 Habitat Units to the site's baseline biodiversity value.

Table 3: Baseline Tree Assessment

Tree Size/Condition	Small	Medium	Large	X-Large
Poor	0	0	0	0
Moderate	5	1	0	0
Good	2	7	5	3

Table 4: Baseline Hedgerows & Line of Trees Assessment

Hedgerow Number	Hedgerow Type	Assessment	Length (km)	Biodiversity Units
Hedgerow 1 (H1)	Native hedgerow	'low distinctiveness' habitat, moderate condition, medium strategic significance.	0.08	0.35
Hedgerow 2 (H2)	Native hedgerow with trees	'medium distinctiveness' habitat, moderate condition, medium strategic significance.	0.05	0.44
Hedgerow 3 (H3)	Native hedgerow	'low distinctiveness' habitat, good condition, medium strategic significance.	0.16	1.06
Hedgerow 4 (H4)	Native hedgerow	'low distinctiveness' habitat, good condition, medium strategic significance.	0.19	1.25

Hedgerow 5 (H5)	Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch	'medium distinctiveness' habitat, moderate condition, medium strategic significance.	0.14	1.23
Line of Trees 1	Line of trees	'low distinctiveness' habitat, moderate condition, medium strategic significance.	0.21	0.92

Baseline Biodiversity Units & Post-Development Calculations

5.11 The on-site habitats have a total value of 19.16 Habitat Units and 5.26 Hedgerow Units.

5.12 Details of each habitat type and its relative biodiversity value can be found in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric that accompanies this report (Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Ashby Road BLADE Ecology Ltd 2025).

5.13 The proposals include a combination of retained, enhanced and newly created habitats – locations of proposed habitats can be seen in Proposed Habitats – UK Habitat Classification Map in Appendix A. The plan illustrates a UK Habitat Classification version of the Masterplan produced by BLADE Landscape Architects: Illustrative Landscape Masterplan Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-200-V2 dated November 2025. Full details of proposed areas/lengths and proposed conditions can be found within the accompanying Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

5.14 Retained GI habitats include:

- Mixed scrub
- Native hedgerows/with trees
- Individual Trees
- Modified grassland

5.15 Proposed GI habitats include:

- Modified grassland (2900m^2) (Poor Condition)
- Sustainable urban drainage system (700m^2) (Poor Condition)
- Other neutral grassland (6700m^2) (Poor Condition)

- Vegetated gardens (6800m^2) (Condition N/A)
- Individual trees (90 small) (Moderate Condition)
- Mixed scrub (700m^2) (Poor Condition)
- Introduced shrub (800m^2) (Condition Assessment N/A)
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees (377m) (Poor Condition)
- Species-rich native hedgerow (136m) (Poor Condition)

5.16 The summary of habitat and hedgerow unit changes can be seen below in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5: On-site Habitat Biodiversity Impact

Factor	Units
On-site Baseline units	19.16
Post-intervention biodiversity units	13.04
Total net unit change	-6.12
Total net % change	-31.92%
Trading Rule Satisfied	No

Table 6: On-site Hedgerow Biodiversity Impact

Factor	Units
On-site Baseline units	5.26
On-site post-intervention biodiversity unit	8.06
Total net unit change	2.80
Total net % change	53.22%
Trading Rule Satisfied	Yes

Biodiversity Impact Compensation

5.17 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.

5.18 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.

5.19 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). However, this Reserved Matters application has utilised the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (a now standard approach for all applications nationally) to calculate the site's biodiversity baseline. Subsequently, a different output has been achieved in terms of required units to achieve a no-net loss position, as the Statutory Biodiversity Metric utilises different methods to calculate biodiversity loss, most notably the incorporation of individual tree habitats (which are not present within the WBIA).

5.20 Biodiversity Net Gain best practice guidelines encourage that the 'trading rules' of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric should be met prior to net-gain being achieved – although this is not a legal requirement in this case, it is considered a pragmatic guide for off-setting the biodiversity losses incurred by the scheme.

5.21 It is envisaged that a net-gain position will be achieved and secured through the purchase of biodiversity units from local habitat banks. Should habitat units be available within the same National Character Area/Local Authority as the development, the following units will be required to reach a no-net loss position and satisfy the trading rules of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric:

- 2.08 'Low' distinctiveness or higher distinctiveness Habitat Units
- 4.02 Individual Tree Units (or other same broad habitat or 'higher' (high or v.high) distinctiveness habitat)

5.22 A habitat bank (Broome Lane ref BGS-04042500) within Charnwood LPA on the BNG Register currently has units available. This should provide the most cost-effective option to securing biodiversity units and avoid the spatial risk multiplier penalty associated with out of area (LPA / NCA) units.

6.0 HABITAT CREATION, MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

6.1 The on-site Biodiversity Net Gain position will achieve a -31.92% (-6.12 habitat unit) loss and +53.22% (+2.80 hedgerow unit) gain. The target condition of the on-site proposed habitats contributing to this position can be seen below in Table 7.

Table 7: Condition targets of proposed habitats

Proposed GI Habitats (UK Habitat Classification)	Target Condition	Condition Assessment Criteria Targeted	Targeted Condition Assessment Criteria Description
Modified Grassland (g4)	Poor	C,D,F,G	C) Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. D) Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities. F) Cover of bracken is less than 20%. G) There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 WCA, 1981).
Other neutral Grassland	Poor	D, E	D) Cover of bracken Pteridium aquilinum is <20% and cover of scrub (including bramble) is <5%. E) Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for <5% of total area.
SuDS	Poor	C, E1	C) Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA) and others which are detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area. E1) Plant species are mostly native. If non-native species are present, they should not be detrimental to the habitat or native wildlife.
Individual Urban Trees	Moderate	B,D,F	B) 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). D) There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism or herbicide use). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height. F) >20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.

Mixed Scrub (h3b)	Poor	C	C) There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition make up <5% of ground cover. Species indicative of sub-optimal condition for this habitat type may include: non-native conifers, tree-of-heaven *Alianthus altissima*, holm oak *Quercus ilex*, European turkey oak *Quercus cerris*, cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, snowberry *Symphoricarpos* spp., shallon *Gaultheria shallon*, American skunk cabbage *Lysichiton americanus*, buddleia *Buddleja* spp., cotoneaster *Cotoneaster* spp., Spanish bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica* and hybrid bluebells *Hyacinthoides x massartiana*. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.
Species-rich Native Hedgerow	Poor	A1, B2, C2, D2	A1) >1.5 m average along length B2) Gaps make up <10% of total length and no canopy gaps >5 m C2) Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground. The indicator species used are nettles *Urtica spp.,* cleavers *Galium aparine* and docks *Rumex spp.* Their presence, either singly or together does not exceed 20% cover threshold. D2) 90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities. This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (e.g. excessive hedge cutting).w2
Species-rich Native Hedgerow With Trees	Poor	A1, B2, C2, D2	A1) >1.5 m average along length B2) Gaps make up <10% of total length and no canopy gaps >5 m. C2) Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground. The indicator species used are nettles *Urtica spp.,* cleavers *Galium aparine* and docks *Rumex spp.* Their presence, either singly or together does not exceed 20% cover threshold. D2) 90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities. This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (e.g. excessive hedge cutting).

Modified Grassland

6.2 Modified grassland will be created across the development site using a species-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.

6.3 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 reseeding. 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.

6.4 This management approach will ensure the amenity grassland remains resilient, visually attractive, and compliant with ecological targets for the site.

Other Neutral Grassland

6.5 A large area of other neutral grassland will be created at the north of the site The proposed areas will be sown with Emorsgate EM3 – Special Purpose Meadow Mixture. The planting of non-native species, particularly invasive species, will be strictly avoided in these areas.

- 80% grasses including common bent *Agrostis capillaris* (8%), crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* (28%), red fescue *Festuca rubra* (24%), smaller cat's-tail *Phleum bertolonii* (4%) and smooth meadow-grass *Poa pratensis* (16%).

- 20% wildflowers including yarrow *Achillea millefolium* (0.4%), common agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria* (0.2%), betony *Betonica officinalis* (1.2%), common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* (2.0%), wild carrot *Daucus carota* (1.0%), viper's-bugloss *Echium vulgare* (0.6%), meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* (0.2%), hedge bedstraw *Galium album* (0.8%), lady's bedstraw *G. verum* (0.4%), meadow crane's-bill *Geranium pratense* (0.4%), oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare* (1.0%), musk mallow *Malva moschata* (1.0%), black medic *Medicago lupulina* (0.4%), sainfoin *Onobrychis viciifolia* (0.2%), wild parsnip *Pastinaca sativa* (0.2%), ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (1.4%), salad burnet *Poterium sanguisorba ssp sanguisorba* (0.6%), cowslip *Primula veris* (1.0%), selfheal *P. vulgaris* (1.6%), meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris* (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 *Taraxacum* sp. (0.2%) and tufted vetch *Vicia cracca* (0.2%).

6.6 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.

6.7 The proposed areas of grassland will be sown and enhanced with the above seed mixes in September or Spring (March-May). The seed mixtures will then be sown as per the manufacturer's prescribed sowing rate.

6.8 The areas will be fully watered to ensure healthy establishment, particularly during prolonged dry periods.

Existing Trees and Hedgerows

6.9 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

6.10 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.

6.11 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/strimmer 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.

Table 8: target condition for proposed trees (moderate condition)

Condition Assessment Criteria		Relevant Features	Creation / Enhancement Approach	Management Approach
A	The tree is a native species (or more than 70% within the block are native species)	All existing trees. All proposed individual trees.	All existing trees will be retained in their current condition. All proposed trees are native species that are suitable for the local conditions and	The above prescriptions will be adhered to in order to ensure the trees successfully establish. Where trees fail, they will be replaced with

			landscape context, with a mix of species selected to promote diversity and resilience to pests, diseases, and climate stress factors.	suitable specimens as soon as possible.
B	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).	All existing trees. All proposed individual trees.	All existing trees will be retained in their current condition. The majority of the proposed trees are individual and therefore automatically pass this criterion.	Where canopy suppression occurs selective thinning will be undertaken.
C	The tree is mature (or > 50% of the block are mature).	Not targeted	N/A	N/A
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism or herbicide use). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Not targeted	N/A	N/A
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Not targeted	N/A	N/A
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	All existing trees. All proposed individual trees.	All existing trees will be retained in their current condition. All proposed trees will be planted in vegetated habitats (e.g. grassland), with sufficient space that even when mature 20% of the canopy will be oversailing vegetation.	The vegetated habitats will be maintained in line with the relevant sections below to ensure their continued success.

Proposed Hedgerow Planting

6.12 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 377m of species-rich hedgerow with tree and 136m of species-rich native hedgerow is proposed across the site (the detailed landscape plan in Appendix A should be referred to for location and species mixes).

6.13 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

6.14 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.

6.15 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.

6.16 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.

6.17 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.

6.18 Removal of any vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens as soon as possible and replacement with an appropriate specimen during next available planting season.

6.19 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.

6.20 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

6.21 The previously prescribed actions will be continued as necessary.

6.22 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+

6.23 The previously prescribed actions will be continued as necessary.

6.24 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 9: maintenance schedule for existing and proposed hedgerows and trees

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Undesirable species control	12												
Removal of Litter	12												
Watering as required	13												
Slow-release fertiliser	1												
Top up mulch	1												
Replacement of vandalised, unhealthy or dead trees	1												
Inspection for deadwood/ structural defects	1												
Inspection of anchors, stake and ties; spiral guards.	-	As required											

Inspection for pests and diseases	-	As required											
Re-firming of trees	-	As required											
Trunks of trees to be kept clear of sucker growth to a height of 4m	1												
Selective/formative pruning of all other trees	1												
Selective/formative pruning of hedgerows	1												

SuDS

6.25 To ensure successful establishment of new habitats for nature conservation, promote biodiversity and ensure the functionality/purpose of the soft SuDS remains uninhibited the following maintenance operations will need to be adhered to:

- Regular inspection for litter and other debris and removal as necessary.
- The features will not be used for the disposal of any arisings from maintenance operations or other waste.
- Periodic clearance of vegetation and silt from open water may be required to prevent these areas filling in over time. Some cutting, or strimming of the vegetation around the edges may also be necessary to prevent a build-up of vegetation litter.
- All aquatic features on-site 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.

Native Scrub Planting

6.26 Native scrub (700m^2) 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.

6.27 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.

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

Table 10: proposed native scrub maintenance schedule

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Undesirable species 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

6.29 A total of 800m^2 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 11: Proposed tree 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 trees	1												
Inspection of anchors, stake and ties; spiral guards, pests and diseases	-	As required											
Re-firming of trees	-	As required											
Selective/formative pruning	1												
Top up mulch	1												

7.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A

Plans

UK Habitat Classification Plan

Landscape Plan (appended separately due to file size)

Proposed Habitats – UK Habitat Classification Plan

Lost Habitats Plan – UK Habitat Classification Plan

Retained Habitats Plan – UK Habitat Classification Plan

Botanical Quadrats Plan

UK Habitat Classification

Key

- Line of trees
- Native hedgerow (with trees - H2)
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Mixed scrub
- Modified grassland
- Ruderal/Ephemeral
- Bare ground
- Application Site Boundary

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PROJECT
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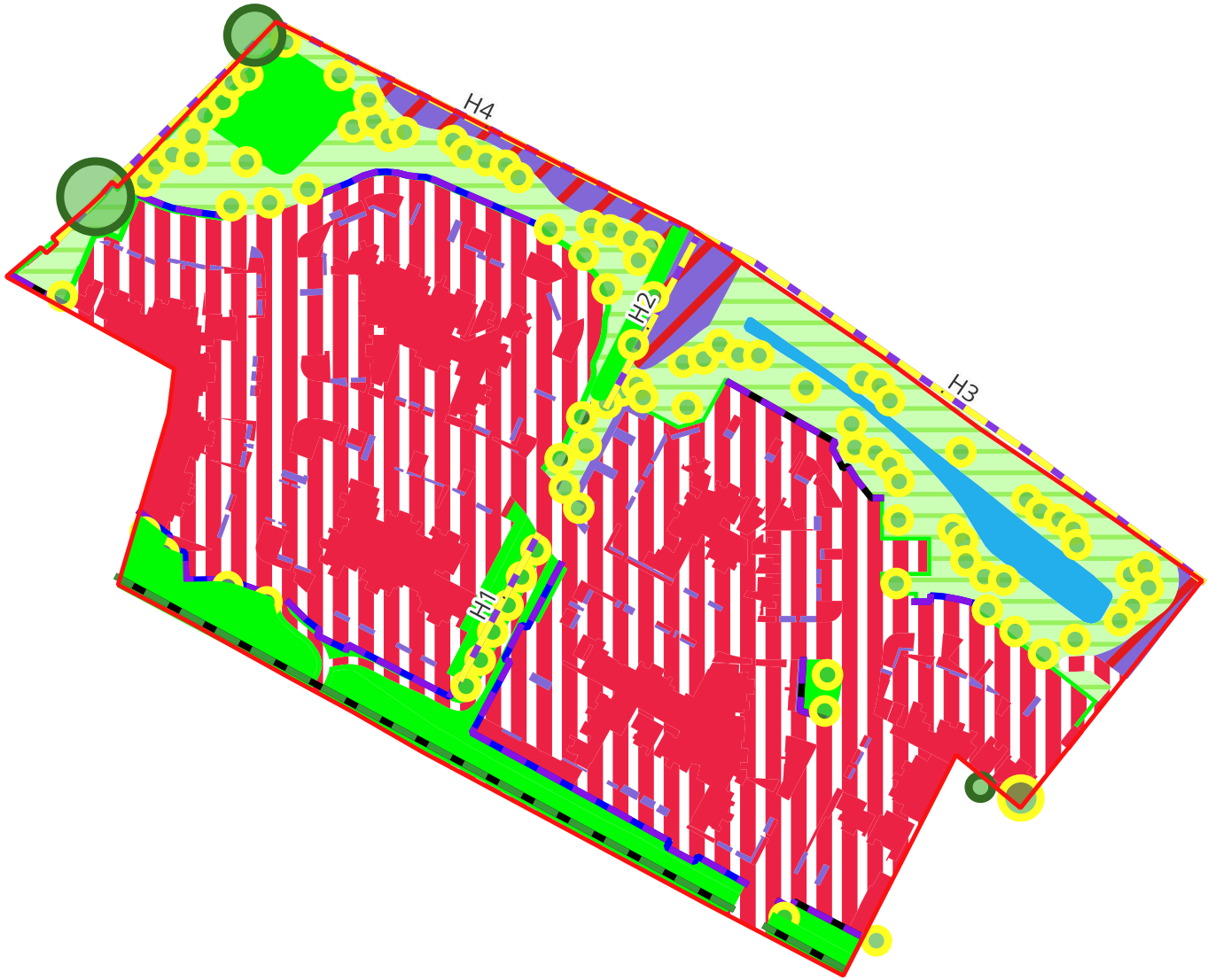
DRAWING TITLE
UK Habitat Classification Plan

DRAWING NO.	REVISION
269-E-RP-PL-2053BMES	V1
SCALE @ A4	**DATE**
1:1,700	Nov 2025

Proposed Habitats (UK Habitat Classification)



N

0 50 m

Key

Application Site Boundary

Retained Trees
- Trees (Good Condition)
- Trees (Moderate Condition)

Retained Hedgerows
- Line of trees
- Native hedgerow (with trees - H3)
- Retained Scrub
- Retained Modified Grassland

Proposed Trees
- Small Trees (Moderate Condition)

Proposed Hedgerow
- Species-rich native hedgerow
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees

Proposed Habitats
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Introduced shrub
- Mixed scrub
- Modified grassland
- Other neutral grassland
- Sustainable drainage system
- Vegetated garden

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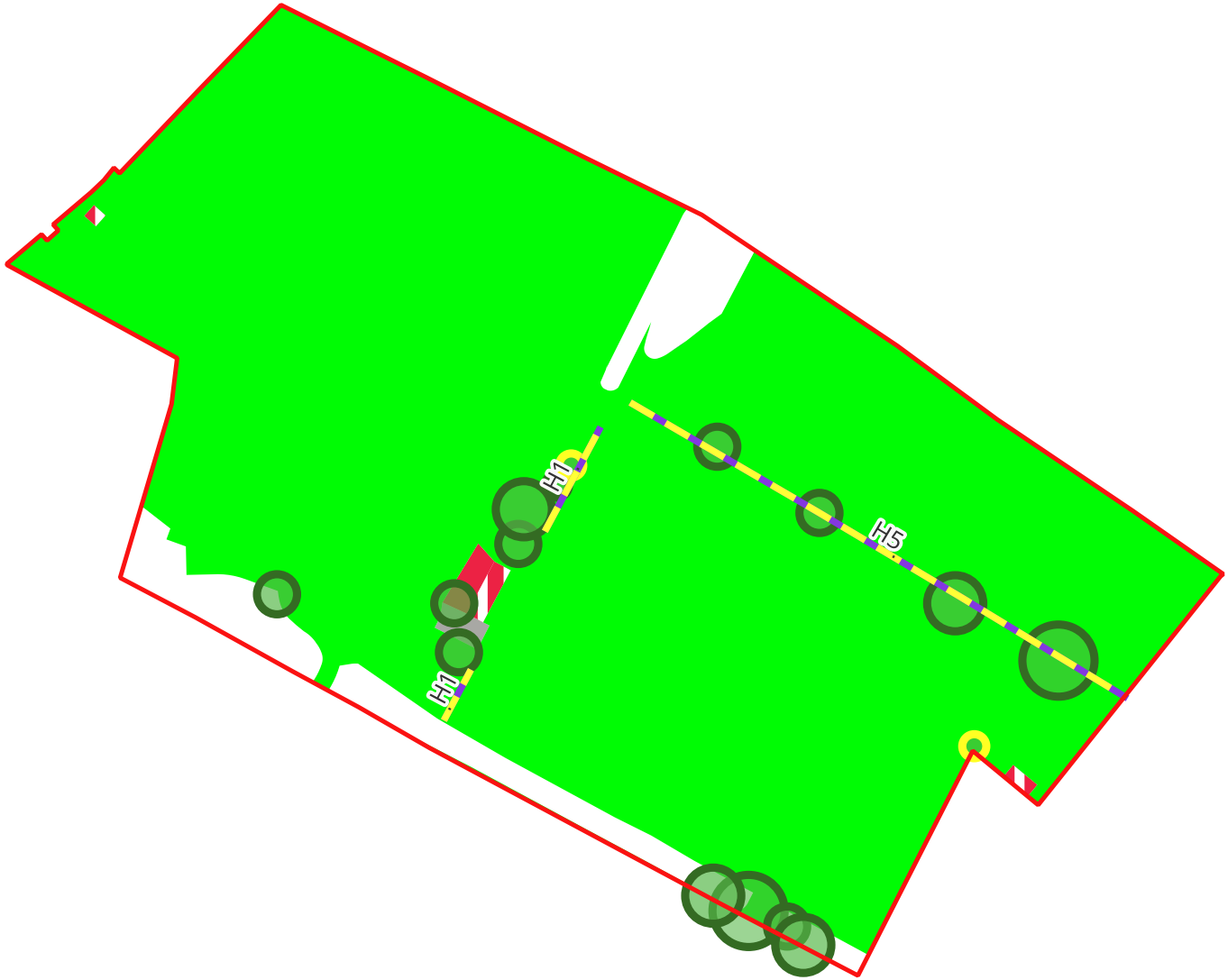
DRAWING TITLE
Proposed Habitats Plan

DRAWING NO.	REVISION
269-E-RP-PL-2053Prop	V1
SCALE @ A4	DATE
1:1,700	Nov 2025

Lost Habitats (UK Habitat Classification)



N

0 50 m

Key

Application Site Boundary

Lost Hedgerow

Native hedgerow (associated with ditch - H5)

Lost Trees

Lost Trees (Good Condition)

Lost Trees (Moderate Condition)

Lost Habitats

Developed land; sealed surface

Modified grassland

Ruderal/Ephemeral

Bare ground

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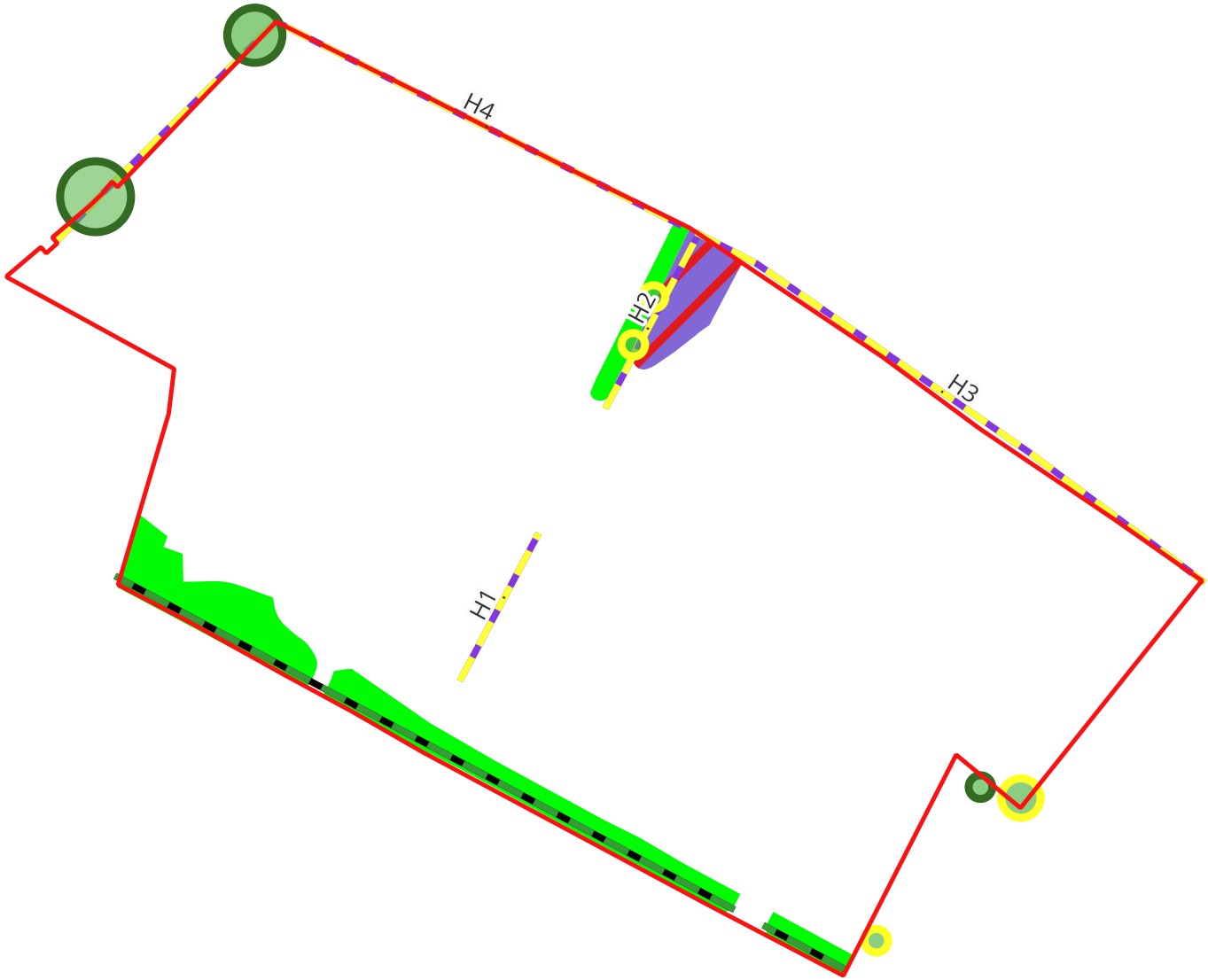
DRAWING TITLE
Lost Habitats Plan

DRAWING NO.	REVISION
269-E-RP-PL-2053Lost	V1
SCALE @ A4	DATE
1:1,700	Nov 2025

Retained Habitats (UK Habitat Classification)



N

0 50 m

Key

Application Site Boundary

Retained Trees

- Trees (Good Condition)
- Trees (Moderate Condition)

Retained Hedgerows

- Line of trees
- Native hedgerow (with trees - H3)
- Retained Scrub
- Retained Modified Grassland

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DRAWING TITLE
Retained Habitats Plan

DRAWING NO.	REVISION
269-E-RP-PL-2053Ret	V1
SCALE @ A4	DATE
1:1,700	Nov 2025

Botanical Quadrat Survey Points - September 29th 2025

Key

- Quadrat Points
- Modified grassland
- Application Site Boundary

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DRAWING TITLE
UK Habitat Classification Plan

DRAWING NO.	REVISION
269-E-RP-PL-2053Quad	V1
SCALE @ A4	**DATE**
1:1,700	Sep 2025

APPENDIX B

Photographs

Photograph 1: Line of trees along the southern site boundary

Photograph 2: Modified grassland habitat

Photograph 3: Mixed scrub edge

Photograph 3: Gap along Hedgerow 5

Photograph 5: The tall ruderal habitat

Photograph 6: Hedgerow 1

APPENDIX C

Condition Assessments

Table 8: Grassland – Low Distinctiveness. Condition Assessment Criteria

Condition Assessment Criteria	
A	There must be 6-8 species per m^2 present, including at least two forbs (this may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note – this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are ≥9 of these characteristic species present (excluding those in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland.
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is <7 cm and at least 20% is >7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.
C	Some scattered scrub (including *bramble fructicosus agg.*) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.
D	Physical damage evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.
E	Cover of bare ground between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens, see Footnote 2).
F	Cover of bracken Pteridium aquilinum is less than 20%.
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (Footnote 3; as listed on Schedule 9 WCA, 1981).

Footnote 1 – Creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, spear thistle *C. vulgare*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, broad-leaved dock *R. obtusifolius*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, greater plantain *Plantago major*, white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*.

Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.

Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including essential criterion A	Good
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including essential criterion A.	Moderate
Passes 3 or fewer criteria;	Poor

OR Passes 4-6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	

Table 9: Grassland – Low Distinctiveness. Assessment Results

Parcel	Criteria							Score
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Modified Grassland Across Site	No (4)	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Poor

Table 10: Individual Tree Condition Assessment Criteria

Condition Assessment Criteria	
A	The tree is a native species (or ≥70% within the block are native species).
B	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).
C	The tree is mature (or > 50% of the block are mature).
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism or herbicide use). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.
F	>20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score
Passes 5 or 6 of 6 criteria	Good
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate
Passes 2 or fewer criteria;	Poor

Table 11: Individual Tree Assessment Results

Tree	Criteria						Score
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
T13	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T14	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T15	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T16	x	x		x		x	Good

T17	x	x		x		x	Moderate
T18	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T19	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T20	x	x		x		x	Moderate
T21	x	x		x		x	Moderate
T22	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T23	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T24	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T25	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T26	x	x		x		x	Moderate
T27	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T28	x	x		x		x	Moderate
T29	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T30	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T31		x		x	x	x	Moderate
T32 (T3 TPO)	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T33 (G1 TPO)	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T34 (G2)	x	x	x	x	x	x	Good
T35 (G1 TPO)	x	x		x	x	x	Good

Table 12: Line of Trees Condition Assessment Criteria

Condition Assessment Criteria	
A	≥70% of trees are native species.
B	Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5m wide.
C	One or more trees has veteran features and/or natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates, such as presence of standing and attached deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.
D	There is an undisturbed naturally-vegetated strip of ≥6m on both sides to protect the line of trees from farming and other human activities (excluding grazing). Where veteran trees are present, root protection areas should follow standing advice.

E	At least 95% of the trees are in a healthy condition (deadwood or veteran features valuable for wildlife are excluded from this). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases or human activity.

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score
Passes 5 of 5 criteria	Good
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate
Passes 2 or fewer criteria;	Poor

Table 13: Line of Trees Assessment Results

Reference						Score
	A	B	C	D	E	
Line of Trees (Southern Boundary)	x		x		x	3 (Moderate)

Table 14: Sparsely Vegetated Land Condition Assessment Criteria

Condition Assessment Criteria	
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.
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA1) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement)2 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).

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score
Passes all 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Good (3)
Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Moderate (2)
Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.	Poor (1)

Table 12: Sparsely Vegetated Land Assessment Results

Habitat	Criteria			Score
	A	B	C	
Bare Ground	x		x	Moderate
Ruderal/Ephemeral	x		x	Moderate

Table 15: Hedgerow Condition Assessment Criteria

Attribute	Criteria	Description
A1. Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is > 1.5 m height).
A2. Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practie).
B1. Gap – hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for 90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).
B2. Gap – hedge canopy continuity	Gaps make up <10% of total length and No canopy gaps >5 m	This is the horizontal 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness', but are not subject to the >5m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).
C1. Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>1m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: · measured from outer edge of hedgerow, and · is present on one side of the hedge (at least)	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedge. Undisturbed ground should be present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length greater than 1m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedge. This criterion recognises the value of a hedge base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.

C2. Undesirable perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground	The indicator species used are nettles *Urtica spp.,* cleavers *Galium aparine* and docks *Rumex spp.* Their presence, either singly or together does not exceed 20% cover threshold.
D1. Invasive and neophyte species	90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native species (including those on Schedule 9 of WCA) and recently introduced species.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on neophytes see the JNCC website, as well as the BSBI website where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website.
D2. Current Damage	90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (e.g. excessive hedge cutting).
Additional group – applicable to hedgerow trees only		
E1. Tree class	There is more than one age-class (or morphology) of tree present (for example, young, mature, veteran and or ancient) and there is on average at least one mature, ancient or veteran tree present per 20-50m of hedgerow.	This criterion address if there are a range of age-classes or morphologies which allow for replacement trees and provide opportunities for different species.
E2. Tree health	≥95% of hedgerow trees are in healthy condition (excluding veteran features valuable for wildlife). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	This criterion identifies if the trees are subject to damage which compromises the survival and health of the individual specimens.

Condition Assessment Result for Hedgerows without Trees	Condition Assessment Score
No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	Good
No more than 4 failures in total; AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and C2 = Moderate condition).	Moderate
Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; OR	Poor

Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1 & B2 = Poor condition).	
Condition Assessment Result for Hedgerows with Trees	Condition Assessment Score
No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	Good
No more than 5 failures in total AND Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition).	Moderate
Fails a total of more than 5 attributes; OR Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1 & B2 = Poor condition).	Poor

Table 16: Hedgerow Assessment Results

Reference	Criteria										Score
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2	E1	E2	
H1	PASS	FAIL	PASS	PASS	FAIL	FAIL	PASS	PASS	N/A		Moderate
H2 (with trees)	PASS	FAIL	PASS	PASS	PASS	FAIL	PASS	PASS	FAIL	PASS	Moderate
H3	PASS	PASS	PASS	PASS	PASS	FAIL	PASS	PASS	N/A		Good
H4	PASS	PASS	PASS	PASS	PASS	FAIL	PASS	PASS	N/A		Good
H5	FAIL	FAIL	PASS	PASS	PASS	FAIL	PASS	PASS	N/A		Moderate

Botanical Quadrat Data

Q1: Perennial ryegrass, white clover, creeping thistle

Q2: Perennial ryegrass, creeping bent, ribwort plantain, common nettle

Q3: Perennial ryegrass, dandelion, herb-Robert

Q4: Perennial ryegrass, creeping bent, white clover, creeping thistle

Q5: Perennial ryegrass, common mouse-ear, ribwort plantain, dandelion sp.

Q6: Perennial ryegrass, common ragwort, broadleaved dock, common nettle, cleavers

Q7: Perennial ryegrass, red fescue, creeping bent, creeping thistle

Q8: Perennial ryegrass, crested dog's-tail, daisy, creeping buttercup, common nettle

Q9: Perennial ryegrass, crested dog's-tail, yarrow, common mouse-ear, ribwort plantain

Q10: Perennial ryegrass, creeping bent, broadleaved dock, cleavers, herb-Robert

Q11: Perennial ryegrass, crested dog's-tail, creeping thistle

Q12: Perennial ryegrass, creeping bent, cock's-foot, white clover, common sorrel

Q13: Perennial ryegrass, broadleaf dock, false oat-grass

Q14: Perennial ryegrass, false oat-grass, common nettle

Q15: Perennial ryegrass, creeping buttercup, common nettle

APPENDIX D

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 (EcIA), 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.

Andy Elliott BSc (Hons) ACIEEM

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. Since graduating, Andy has spent considerable time on the African continent, 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 an Associate 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 (EcIA), 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. Emma is a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

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