LIZARD
Landscape Design and Ecology

# BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN STATEMENT

## Land East of Mossell Close, Ashington, West Sussex

On behalf of: Rocco Homes

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Client:** | Rocco Homes | | | |
| **Project:** | Land East of Mossell Close, Ashington, West Sussex | | | |
| **Reference:** | LLD3503-ECO-REP-002-01-BNG | | | |
| **Revision:** | **Date:** | **Author** | **Proof** | **Approved** |
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**Validity:**

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the final survey visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, to inform whether surveys should be updated.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology (LLDE) has been commissioned to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement for Land East of Mossell Close, Ashington, West Sussex. This report has been written with due regard to best practice guidance for ecological report writing (CIEEM, 2017) and the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, 2019) and the Biodiversity Net Gain User Guide (DEFRA, 2023).

1.2 The development does not appear to qualify under any exemption and will therefore be subject to the standard Biodiversity Gain condition.

### *Site Overview*

1.3 The site covers an area of c. 2.1ha, located towards the western edge of the developed area of Ashington in West Sussex. At the time of the initial site visit, the ground was recently cleared, and the site was dominated by bare ground. Hedgerows encompassed much of the site boundary with woodland along the southern edge. The site is bound by woodland to the south, residential properties to the west and east and further fields to the north, beyond Rectory Lane. The soil on site is described as slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy clayey soils.

### *Surrounding Landscape*

1.4 The site is located within a rural setting, c. 8.5km east of Pulborough and c. 14km north of Worthing. Nearby is the A24 which provides good connection to further towns and cities. To the east is the majority of Ashington's developed area, including shops, community centres, a school, a church and residential estates. The surrounding landscape to the north, west and south is predominately arable fields, with some woodland parcels. These are well connected by mature treelines and hedgerow.

### *Development Proposals*

1.5 It is understood that the proposals are for a residential development of approximately 74no. homes with associated soft and hard landscaping.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Desk Study - Assigning Strategic Significance

2.1.1 Due to the lack of Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) within West Sussex, strategic significance has been assessed as per table 8 of the User Guide (DEFRA, 2023). This included assessing whether the site was located within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as well as examining the local plan for any specific targets regarding creation or retention of certain habitat types.

2.1.2 Where sites were found to be located within any designated area, such as an AONB, policy statement and management plans for the relevant area were examined. High strategic significance was then assigned to any habitat identified as a priority within these documents.

2.1.3 For any sites not located within a designated area, habitats were generally assigned low strategic significance, unless they were considered to provide important ecological linkages in which case they were assigned medium strategic significance.

### 2.2 Desk Study – Statutory Designated Sites and Irreplaceable Habitat

2.2.1 To identify any designated sites for nature conservation, irreplaceable habitat and/or priority habitats (the presence of which may influence the feasibility of delivering BNG) within or adjacent to the Site, the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) and The Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory were reviewed.

## 2.3 Baseline Habitat Assessment

2.3.1 A baseline habitat assessment in accordance with the UK Habitats Classification Manual (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) was undertaken on the 4th of April 2025 by Sam Hall (Consultant Ecologist, LLDE). At the time of the initial site visit the site had been recently cleared leaving bare ground across much of the site. As per the 'Accounting for degraded sites' section on page 50 of the BNG user guide (DEFRA, 2024), aerial imagery and remnant floral species found on site were used to estimate the habitats present, their conditions and their extent before the recent site clearance. Full details of the habitats present are contained within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (LLD3503-ECO-REP-001-02-EcIA) and summarised herein.

2.3.2 It is understood that the site had been vacant for at least 2no. years following the death of the landowner and the recent clearance was carried out to return the site to its historic use of equine pasture.

2.3.3 All area based and linear habitats were mapped on site with the aid of aerial imagery and topographical survey where available. The condition of habitats was assessed in accordance with *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology* (DEFRA, 2023).

2.3.4 The habitats, their condition and strategic importance were input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (DEFRA, 2023). The area of habitats which would be retained or enhanced based upon the current proposals was also added to the calculator. This allowed the existing baseline value and loss of biodiversity units to be established.

## 2.4 Post-Development Habitats

2.4.1 The proposed landscape plan has been used to inform the post-development scenario. This plan was converted from PDF format to a GIS environment where it was overlaid on the baseline habitat data. Areas of proposed post development intervention (habitat creation and/or habitat retention / enhancement), including the built development, were calculated using QGIS.

2.4.2 The proposed habitats and strategic importance were input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (DEFRA, 2023). Target condition scores were assigned based upon what could realistically be achieved on site. The area of habitats which would be retained or enhanced based upon the current proposals was also added to the calculator.

2.4.3 The Metric takes into account whether habitat creation or enhancement is delivered in advance of any impact, or whether there will be any significant delay in an intervention relative to the impact. Where delays in habitat creation are anticipated, or habitat creation is to be undertaken in advance, this has been included within the metric and fully explained within section 3 of this report. Where no delays or advance creation shall occur, a standard temporal multiplier has been applied to created habitats.

2.4.4 Once all measures have been input into The Biodiversity Metric Calculation, the overall change in value of the site could then be determined.

## 2.5 Mitigation Hierarchy

2.5.1 Biodiversity net gain planning practice guidance and Articles 37A and 37D of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, sets out a list of priority actions to ensure adherence to the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy:

- First, in relation to onsite habitats which have a medium, high and very high distinctiveness (a score of four or more according to the statutory biodiversity metric), the avoidance of adverse effects from the development and, if they cannot be avoided, the mitigation of those effects; and
- Then, in relation to all onsite habitats which are adversely affected by the development, the adverse effect should be compensated by prioritising in order, where possible, the enhancement of existing onsite habitats, creation of new onsite habitats, allocation of registered offsite gains and finally the purchase of biodiversity credits.

## 2.6 Survey Constraints / Considerations

2.6.1 Areas and linear lengths have been rounded to the nearest 10m$^2$ and 10m (respectively) and measurements input to the metric using three decimal places for areas and two for linear lengths. Due to the output of the Metric being displayed to two decimal places, slight imprecision in output may occur.

## 3.0 RESULTS

### 3.1 Strategic Significance, Irreplaceable Habitat and Designated Sites.

3.1.1 The site is not within any ecological designation, such as a *Nature Improvement Area* and no habitats on site are directly referenced in any local plan or other such document. Habitats on site have therefore been classified as being of low strategic significance.

3.1.2 The Sussex Nature Partnership website was not accessible (08.07.25) to view Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.

3.1.3 Woodland located adjacent to the south of the site is not designated as UK priority habitat but was assessed as Lowland Mixed Deciduous woodland and would be retained and protected throughout construction and operation of the development.

3.1.4 The site is not located within any statutory designated site.

### 3.2 Baseline Habitat Value

*Existing On-Site Habitats*

3.2.1 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment concluded that the existing baseline biodiversity value of the site was **13.78** Habitat Units, consisting of:

- 1.589ha of modified grassland in good condition providing 9.55 habitat units.
- 0.503ha of mixed scrub in moderate condition providing 4.02 habitat units.
- 0.0163ha of individual tree in good condition providing 0.2 habitat units.

3.2.2 A full condition assessment for each existing habitat type is detailed in Appendix A.

*Habitat Retention*

3.2.3 Some of the existing habitat on site is to be retained in its current condition, meaning the retention of **0.41** habitat units comprised of:

- 0.051ha of mixed scrub along the northern and western site boundaries.

## 3.3 Baseline Hedgerow Value

*Existing On-Site Hedgerows*

3.3.1 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment concluded that the existing baseline biodiversity value of the site was **1.56** Hedgerow Units, consisting of:

- 0.13km of species-rich native hedgerow with trees (H01) in moderate condition providing 1.56 hedgerow units.

3.3.2 A full condition assessment for each existing hedgerow type is detailed in Appendix A.

*Hedgerow Retention*

3.3.3 0.12km of the existing species-rich hedgerow with trees on site is to be retained in its current condition, meaning the retention of **1.44** hedgerow units.

## 3.4 Baseline Watercourse Value

*Existing On-Site watercourses*

3.4.1 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment concluded that the existing baseline biodiversity value of the site was **0.44** watercourse Units, consisting of:

- 0.11km of ditches (D1) in poor condition providing 0.44 watercourse units.

3.4.2 A full condition assessment for the existing watercourse type is detailed in Appendix A.

*Watercourse Retention*

3.4.3 All of the existing watercourse on site is to be retained in its current condition, meaning the retention of **0.44** watercourse units comprised of:

- 0.11km of ditches.

## 3.5 Proposed Habitat Creation

3.5.1 Proposals are to result in the creation of new habitat on site including:

- 1.04ha of developed land, sealed surface which includes the proposed dwellings and associated hard landscaping (condition assessment N/A).
- 0.05ha of bioswale in good condition which includes the attenuation area to the southeast of the site.
- 0.648ha of vegetated garden which includes the private gardens of the proposed residences and scattered ornamental planting (condition assessment N/A).
- 0.169ha of modified grassland in good condition which includes the grassland areas outside of the private residences labelled as M2.
- 0.072ha of modified grassland in poor condition which includes the grassland areas outside of the private residences labelled as M1.
- 0.4072ha of individual trees in poor condition which includes all non-native individuals.
- 0.2117ha of individual trees in moderate condition which includes all native individuals.
- 0.066ha of mixed scrub in poor condition which includes all areas of native scrub planting.

3.5.2 The proposed modified grassland is separated into M1 areas and M2 areas. Management of M1 grassland areas is proposed to be as amenity lawn and so condition criteria would be difficult to achieve. Proposed management of M2 grassland areas would be less regular and would allow the different species in an appropriate wildflower seed mix to flower each year. Where proposed new trees are native, they have been assigned moderate condition and poor where non-native is proposed. Such target conditions are achievable within the context of the site.

3.5.3 A full target condition assessment for each proposed habitat creation type is detailed in Appendix B. Proposed habitats would deliver **4.25** habitat units.

3.5.4 For each created habitat the delay in starting habitat creation column has been set to 1 year to account for the expected delay between site clearance and the start of the proposed habitat creation on site (as per guidance found on page 50 of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric user guide).

### 3.6 Proposed Hedgerow Creation

3.6.1 Proposals are to result in the creation of new hedgerow on site including:

- 0.06km of species-rich native hedgerow with trees (H02) which includes a new hedgerow to the west of the site.
- 0.01km of species-rich native hedgerow (H03) which includes a new hedgerow to the south of the site.

3.6.2 A target condition of moderate has been assigned to the new proposed hedgerows which is achievable within the context of the site.

3.6.3 A full target condition assessment for each proposed hedgerow creation type is detailed in Appendix B. Proposed hedgerows would deliver **0.58** hedgerow units.

### 3.7 Proposed Watercourse Creation

3.7.1 Proposals are to result in the creation of new watercourse on site including:

- 0.08km of ditches which includes a new ditch at the south of the site.
- 0.01km of culvert which would be part of the new ditch at the south of the site.

3.7.2 Please note that creation of ditch habitat would be achieved through the wetting of an existing dry ditch, a habitat that is not accounted for in BNG.

3.7.3 Target condition assessment criteria will not be targeted for the proposed watercourse creation, achieving poor condition. Proposed watercourses would deliver **0.22** watercourse units.

## 3.8 Adherence to the Mitigation Hierarchy

*Avoidance and Mitigation*

3.8.1 The scheme has been designed to avoid impacts to higher value habitats that remain on site after the site clearance. A full arboricultural package has been included in this application and outlines protection measures for the majority of the existing boundary vegetation that is made up of medium and high distinctiveness habitats and hedgerows, respectively.

*Compensation*

3.8.2 New hedgerow/watercourse creation has focused on medium and high distinctiveness unit types which are appropriate to the location and size of habitat parcels. This has included the creation of a length of species-rich native hedgerow with trees and a new ditch. Due to the requirements for usable public open space, areas of low distinctiveness modified grassland were necessary within the scheme, however good condition has been targeted in selected area (M2) and would be achieved with a flowering lawn mix and appropriate future management.

## 3.9 Trading Summary

3.9.1 Details of off-site provision have not been agreed yet, and so currently trading rules have not been satisfied for habitat units. Trading rules have been met for both hedgerow and watercourse units.

## 3.10 Overall Results

3.10.1 Once all retention, enhancement and habitat creation measures are taken into the account, the scheme currently results in the delivery of **4.46** Habitat Units, resulting in a net decrease of **9.12** units and a **-66.2%** change in Habitat Units.

3.10.2 The scheme shall currently result in **2.02** Hedgerow Units, resulting in a net increase of **0.46** units and a **29.35%** Biodiversity Net Gain in Hedgerow Units.

3.10.3 The scheme shall also currently result in **0.66** Watercourse Units, resulting in a net increase of **0.22** units and a **49.02%** Biodiversity Net Gain in Watercourse Units.

3.10.4 Horsham District Council requires a draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) with this planning application, pre-validation.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 Metric calculations have identified that the proposed scheme currently does not result in a minimum of +10% Biodiversity Net Gain in Habitat Units. Therefore, habitat Units shall be purchased from a third-party provider to satisfy the current deficit and ensure that the current proposals abide by the trading rules.

4.2 Metric calculations have identified that the proposed scheme currently results in a minimum of +10% Biodiversity Net Gain in Hedgerow and Watercourse Units and all trading rules for these unit types have been met.

4.3 To ensure all proposed habitat creation is managed into the future, a suitable Habitat Creation Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) should be produced. This should include management prescriptions for new habitats including aspects such as mowing regimes, which shall ensure the target conditions are achieved. The HMMP should include details of monitoring intervals and methods for the 30-year period to ensure that the target conditions are achieved. These measures shall ensure that the scheme accords with The Environment Act 2021 and can be secured by the standard Biodiversity Gain pre-commencement planning condition.

4.4 The purchase of units from a private habitat provider, shall be sought post-planning approval to allow the shortfall in units to be addressed. Purchased units shall include a minimum of 3.39 units of a heathland and shrub habitat unit type or a higher distinctiveness and 7.26 units of low distinctiveness or better habitat to meet all trading rules. Purchase of those units would also secure a minimum gain of 10% in habitat area units for the scheme. This approach is in accordance with Government guidelines, with the completion of a full metric with inclusion of off-site habitats provided pre-commencement as part of the standard Biodiversity Gain Condition.

## 5.0 REFERENCES

*CIEEM. (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.*

*CIEEM. (2019). Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development. Winchester*

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2023). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool.*

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2023). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology.*

*UKHab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.1*

**Appendix A – Condition Assessment for Existing Habitats**

## Modified Grassland in Good Condition:

| | Condition Assessment Criteria | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | There are 6-8 vascular plant species per $m^2$ present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). **Note – this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.**<br><br>Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per $m^2$ (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| B | Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| C | Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. may be present).<br><br>Note – patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| 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. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| E | Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2]. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| F | Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| G | There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]). | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| | **Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)** | | Yes |
| | **Number of criteria passed** | | 7 |

| Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria) | Condition Assessment Score | Score Achieved x/✓ | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A | Good (3) | x | |
| Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A | Moderate (2) | | |
| Passes 3 or fewer criteria;<br>OR<br>Passes 4 – 6 criteria (excluding criterion A) | Poor (1) | | |

## Existing Mixed Scrub in Moderate Condition:

| | Condition Assessment Criteria | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range).[1]<br>- At least 80% of scrub is native,<br>- There are at least three native woody species[2],<br>- No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel *Corylus avellana*, common juniper *Juniperus communis*, sea buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* (only in its restricted native range), or box *Buxus sempervirens*, which can be up to 100% cover). | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| B | Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran[3]) shrubs are all present. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| C | There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[4] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[5]) and species indicative of suboptimal condition[6] make up less than 5% of ground cover. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| D | The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat. | Yes | No evidence to suggest otherwise |
| E | There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges. | No | Aerial imagery suggests that clearings etc were not present |
| | | Number of criteria passed | 4 |

| Condition Assessment Result (out of 5 criteria) | Condition Assessment Score | Score Achieved ×/✓ |
|---|---|---|
| Passes 5 criteria | Good (3) | |
| Passes 3 or 4 criteria | Moderate (2) | x |
| Passes 2 or fewer criteria | Poor (1) | |

## Existing Species-rich Hedgerow with Trees in Moderate Condition:

| Hedgerow favourable condition attributes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E) | | Criteria – the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition' | Criteria description | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
| Core groups – applicable to all hedgerow types | | | | | |
| A1. | Height | >1.5 m average along length | The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees.<br><br>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).<br><br>A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height). | Yes | Noted as such |
| 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.<br><br>Outgrowths (such as blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height.<br><br>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 practice). | No | Clearance did not appear to have taken away from hedge but much of the hedge was less than 1.5m |
| 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.<br><br>Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook). | Yes | Noted as such |
| 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).<br><br>Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate). | No | Multiple large gaps in hedge noted |
| C1. | Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation | >1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length:<br>· Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and<br>· Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least). | This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow.<br><br>Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow.<br><br>This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow 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. | Yes | Precautionary pass as part of assumed condition of the adjacent grassland |
| C2. | Nutrient-enriched 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 the 20% cover threshold. | Yes | Precautionary pass as part of assumed condition of the adjacent grassland |
| D1. | Invasive and neophyte species | >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[3]) 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 archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website[4], as well as the BSBI website[5] where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora'[6] 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[7]. | Yes | Precautionary pass as part of assumed condition of the adjacent grassland |
| 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.<br><br>This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting). | Yes | Precautionary pass as part of assumed condition of the adjacent grassland |
| Additional group – applicable to hedgerows with 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[8]), and there is on average at least one mature, ancient or veteran tree present per 20 – 50m of hedgerow. | This criterion addresses if there are a range of age-classes or morphologies which allow for replacement of trees and provide opportunities for different species. | No | Mature trees only |
| E2. | Tree health | At least 95% of hedgerow trees are in a 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. | Yes | Trees appeared in broadly fair condition |

## Existing Species-rich Hedgerow with Trees in Moderate Condition (continued):

| Condition categories for hedgerows with trees | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Category** | **Category Requirements** | **Metric score** |
| Good | No more than 2 failures in total;<br>**AND**<br>No more than 1 failure in any functional group. | 3 |
| Moderate | No more than 5 failures in total;<br>**AND**<br>Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition). | 2 |
| Poor | Fails a total of more than 5 attributes;<br>**OR**<br>Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition). | 1 |
| | **Score achieved:** | 2 |

## Existing ditch in Poor Condition:

| | Condition Assessment Criteria | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | The ditch is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. | No | High turbidity noted |
| B | A range of emergent, submerged and floating-leaved plants are present. As a guide >10 species of emergent, floating or submerged plants present in a 20 m ditch length. | No | negligible vegetation noted |
| C | There is less than 10% cover of filamentous algae and or duckweed *Lemna* spp. (these are signs of eutrophication). | Yes | No duckweed noted. Negligible algae noted |
| D | A fringe of aquatic marginal vegetation is present along more than 75% of the ditch. | No | negligible vegetation noted |
| E | Physical damage is evident along less than 5% of the ditch, with examples of damage including: excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, or any other damaging management activities. | Yes | None noted |
| F | Sufficient water levels are maintained - as a guide a minimum summer depth of approximately 50 cm in minor ditches and 1 m in main drains. | No | Water levels did not exceed 10cm |
| G | Less than 10% of the ditch is heavily shaded. | No | 100% shaded |
| H | There is an absence of non-native plant and animal species[1]. | Yes | None noted |
| | Number of criteria passed | 3 | |

| Condition Assessment Result (out of 8 criteria) | Condition Assessment Score | Score Achieved ×/✓ |
|---|---|---|
| Passes 8 criteria | Good (3) | |
| Passes 6 or 7 criteria | Moderate (2) | |
| Passes 5 or fewer criteria | Poor (1) | x |

**Appendix B – Target Condition Assessment for Proposed Habitats**

## Proposed Modified Grassland = Good Condition

| | Condition Assessment Criteria | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | There are 6-8 vascular plant species per $m^2$ present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). **Note – this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.**<br><br>Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per $m^2$ (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet. | Yes | Seeded with native flowering lawn mix and mown appropriately |
| B | Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed. | No | Not targeted |
| C | Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. may be present).<br><br>Note – patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type. | Yes | Will be managed |
| 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. | Yes | Grassland will be managed appropriately including rectifying damage |
| E | Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2]. | Yes | Bare ground unlikely to exceed 10% |
| F | Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%. | Yes | None proposed and will be managed |
| G | There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]). | Yes | None proposed and will be managed |
| | **Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)** | | Yes |
| | **Number of criteria passed** | | 6 |

| Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria) | Condition Assessment Score | Score Achieved x/✓ |
|---|---|---|
| Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A | Good (3) | x |
| Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A | Moderate (2) | |
| Passes 3 or fewer criteria;<br>OR<br>Passes 4 – 6 criteria (excluding criterion A) | Poor (1) | |

## Proposed Individual trees = Poor and Moderate Condition

| Condition Assessment Criteria | | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species). | Yes/No | 100 non 52 native |
| 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). | Yes | Auto pass |
| C | The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1]. | No | Not likely in 30 years |
| D | 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. | No | almost all trees close to roads and houses. Will need pruning for safety |
| E | Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark. | No | |
| F | More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath. | Yes | Trees to be planted in vegetated areas |
| | Number of criteria passed | 2/3 | |

| Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria) | Condition Assessment Score | Score Achieved ×/✓ |
|---|---|---|
| Passes 5 or 6 criteria | Good (3) | |
| Passes 3 or 4 criteria | Moderate (2) | x |
| Passes 2 or fewer criteria | Poor (1) | x |
| Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type. | | |

## Proposed Hedgerow with Trees = Moderate Condition

| Hedgerow favourable condition attributes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E) | | Criteria – the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition' | Criteria description | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
| **Core groups – applicable to all hedgerow types** | | | | | |
| A1. | Height | >1.5 m average along length | The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees.<br><br>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).<br><br>A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height). | Yes | Will be targeted through management |
| 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.<br><br>Outgrowths (such as blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height.<br><br>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 practice). | No | Space unlikely to allow |
| 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.<br><br>Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook). | Yes | Will be targeted through management |
| 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).<br><br>Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate). | Yes | Will be targeted through management |
| C1. | Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation | >1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length:<br>· Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and<br>· Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least). | This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow.<br><br>Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow.<br><br>This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow 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. | No | Adjacent flowering lawn will be regularly managed |
| C2. | Nutrient-enriched 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 the 20% cover threshold. | Yes | Flowering lawn specified |
| D1. | Invasive and neophyte species | >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[3]) 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 archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website[4], as well as the BSBI website[5] where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora'[6] 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[7]. | No | Undisturbed ground not achieved |
| 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.<br><br>This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting). | No | Undisturbed ground not achieved |
| **Additional group – applicable to hedgerows with 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[8]), and there is on average at least one mature, ancient or veteran tree present per 20 – 50m of hedgerow. | This criterion addresses if there are a range of age-classes or morphologies which allow for replacement of trees and provide opportunities for different species. | No | Trees will be 1 age class |
| E2. | Tree health | At least 95% of hedgerow trees are in a 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. | Yes | Trees will be managed appropriately |

## Proposed Hedgerow with Trees = Moderate Condition (continued)

| Condition categories for hedgerows with trees | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Category** | **Category Requirements** | **Metric score** |
| Good | No more than 2 failures in total;<br>**AND**<br>No more than 1 failure in any functional group. | 3 |
| Moderate | No more than 5 failures in total;<br>**AND**<br>Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition). | 2 |
| Poor | Fails a total of more than 5 attributes;<br>**OR**<br>Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition). | 1 |
| | **Score achieved:** | 2 |

## Proposed Hedgerow = Moderate Condition

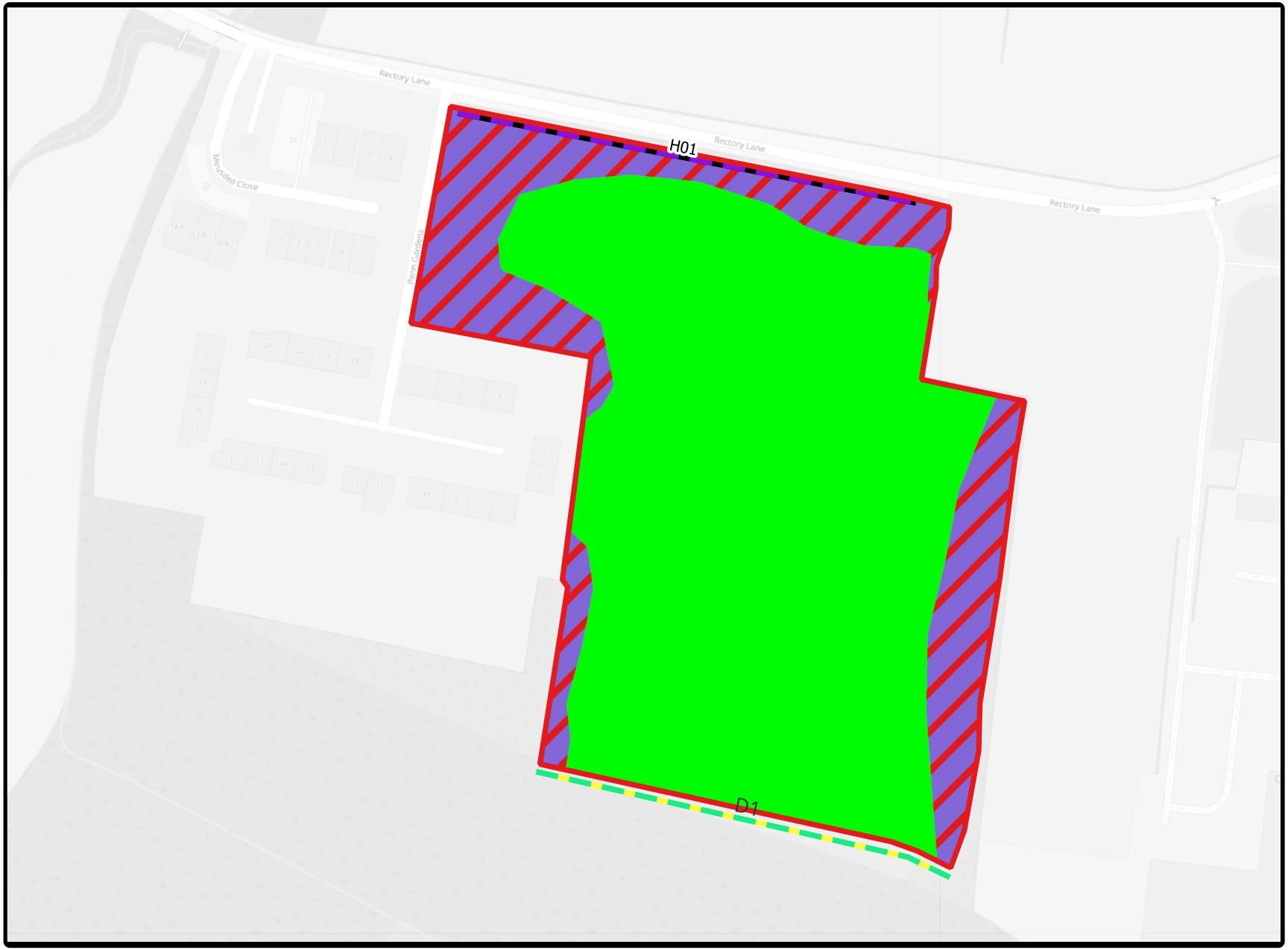
| Hedgerow favourable condition attributes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E) | | Criteria – the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition' | Criteria description | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
| Core groups – applicable to all hedgerow types | | | | | |
| A1. | Height | >1.5 m average along length | The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees.<br><br>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).<br><br>A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height). | Yes | Will be targeted through management |
| 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.<br><br>Outgrowths (such as blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height.<br><br>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 practice). | No | Space unlikely to allow |
| 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.<br><br>Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook). | Yes | Will be targeted through management |
| 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).<br><br>Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate). | Yes | Will be targeted through management |
| C1. | Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation | >1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length:<br>· Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and<br>· Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least). | This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow.<br><br>Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow.<br><br>This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow 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. | No | Adjacent flowering lawn will be regularly managed |
| C2. | Nutrient-enriched 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 the 20% cover threshold. | Yes | Flowering lawn specified |
| D1. | Invasive and neophyte species | >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[3]) 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 archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website[4], as well as the BSBI website[5] where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora'[6] 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[7]. | No | Undisturbed ground not achieved |
| 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.<br><br>This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting). | No | Undisturbed ground not achieved |

**Proposed Hedgerow = Moderate Condition (continued)**

| Condition categories for hedgerows without trees | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Category** | **Category Requirements** | **Metric Score** |
| Good | No more than 2 failures in total;<br>**AND**<br>No more than 1 failure in any functional group. | 3 |
| Moderate | No more than 4 failures in total;<br>**AND**<br>Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and C2 = Moderate condition). | 2 |
| Poor | Fails a total of more than 4 attributes;<br>**OR**<br>Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition). | 1 |
| | **Score achieved:** | 2 |

## Proposed Bioswale = Good Condition

| | Condition Assessment Criteria | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 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. | Yes | A variety of wildlife friendly species proposed |
| 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. | Yes | A variety of wildlife friendly species proposed |
| C | Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[1]) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement)[2] cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area[3].<br><br>**Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).** | Yes | No schedule 9 species proposed with a focus on appropriate wildlife friendly speices and avoiding those with invasive tendencies |
| Additional Criteria - must be assessed for **Bioswale and SuDS** habitat types only: | | | |
| E1 | Plant species are mostly native. If non-native species are present, they should not be detrimental to the habitat or native wildlife[4]. | Yes | A variety of wildlife friendly species proposed |
| E2 | The vegetation is comprised of plant species suited to wetland or riparian situations. | Yes | A variety of wildlife friendly species suited to wetland habitats proposed |




## Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees
- Ditches
- Mixed scrub
- Modified grassland

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**Client**

Rocco Homes

**Project Title & Location**

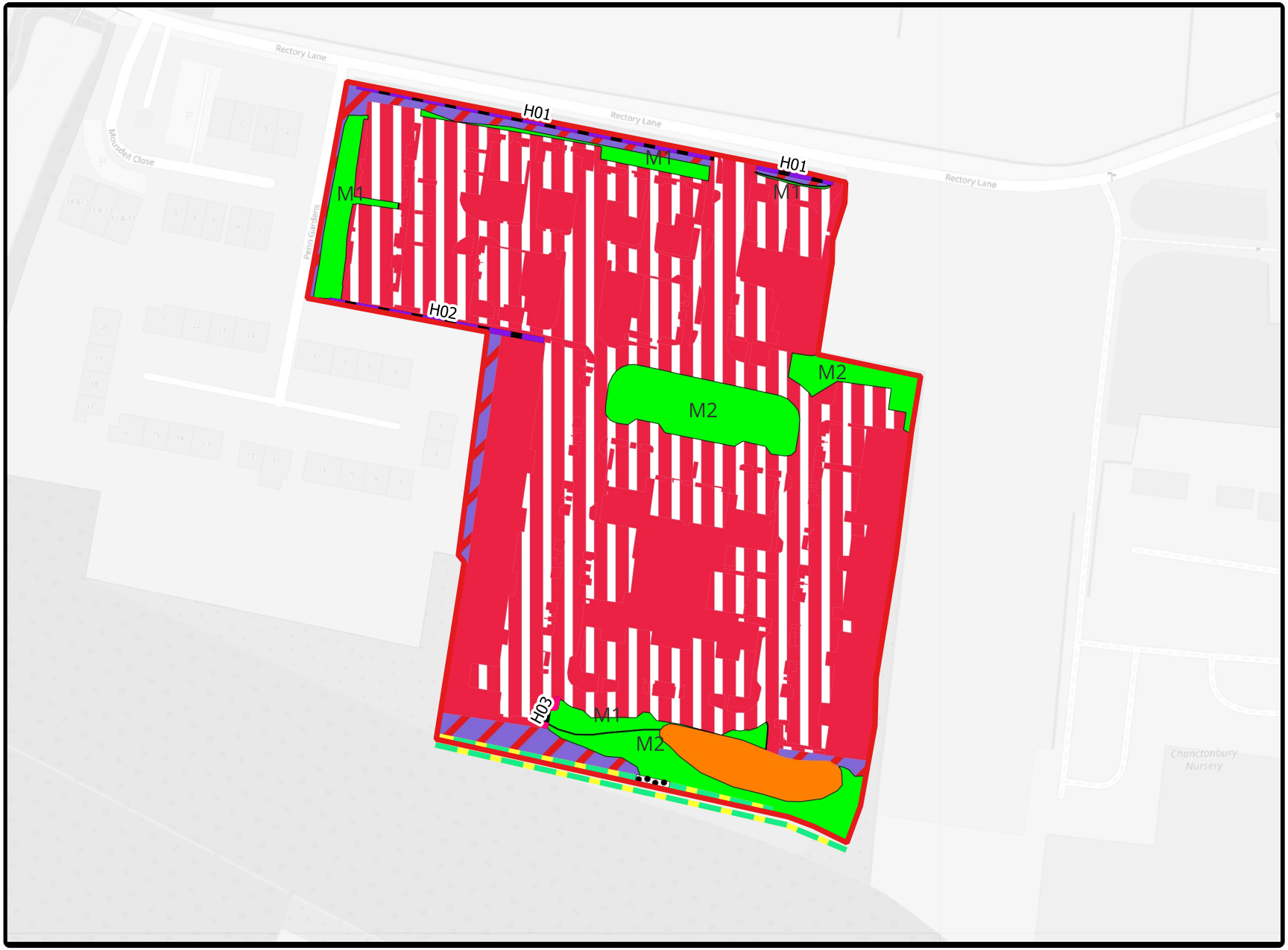
Land East of Mousdell Close, Ashington

| Drawn by | Approved by | Rev | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| SH | LB | 01 | 28/11/25 |

25 50 m

1:1,500

# Figure No. 01 - Baseline Habitat Plan




## Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Species-rich native hedgerow
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees
- Culvert
- Ditches
- Bioswale
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Mixed scrub
- Modified grassland
- Vegetated garden

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**Client**
Rocco Homes

**Project Title & Location**
Land East of Mousdell Close, Ashington

| Drawn by | Approved by | Rev | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| SH | LB | 02 | 28/11/25 |

25 50 m

# Figure No. 02 - Proposed Habitat Plan

N

1:1,500