6.0 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

6.1 In order assess the probable impact of the proposal on the measured biodiversity value of the site, a quantitative assessment of the likely change has been carried out using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool, published by the Government on 23.7.24.

Baseline assessment

6.2 The pre-development habitat map of the site following the UKHabs approach is provided on Drawing 0054-1109-4. Condition assessments for habitats that require it, are provided at Appendix 4. The condition of bramble scrub is locked in the metric.

6.3 The completed Metric is provided together with this report. This indicates that the site has **a pre-development baseline habitat value of 17.99 habitat units (HaU) and a hedge baseline value of 1.55 hedge units (HeU).**

Biodiversity net gain

6.4 It is assumed that the planning consent for the proposal, if granted, will be subject to the statutory Biodiversity Condition. As such, details of how the proposal will achieve the mandatory 10% net gain in biodiversity required by the Environment Act 2021, will be agreed via the approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan submitted pursuant to this condition.

6.5 Nevertheless, in order to quantify the likely quantum of enhancement required to achieve 10% net gain, an assessment of possible post-development biodiversity interventions has also been completed based on the proposed landscape strategy prepared by Landscape Perspective and the post-development habitats shown on Drawing 0054-0402-1. These are incorporated in the completed metric and primarily include enhancing the retained grassland to good condition 'other, neutral grassland'. In addition, 46 individual trees are also proposed to planted and 444m of beech hedge is to be created around the plots.

6.6 Based on these parameters, the Metric indicates that the site could achieve a post-development biodiversity value of 20.24 HaU and 2.37 HeU. **This is equivalent to a 12.47% net gain in the biodiversity value of the habitats, and a 52.96% net gain in the biodiversity value of the hedges.**