



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

Land Adjacent to Pucks Croft Cottage, Rusper

On Behalf of ECE Planning

Client:	ECE Planning			
Project:	Land Adjacent to Pucks Croft Cottage, Rusper			
Reference:	LLD3245-ECO-REP-002-01-BNG			
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Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the site 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, and to inform a review of the conclusions and recommendations made.



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SUMMARY

Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by ECE Planning to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for development proposed at Land Adjacent to Pucks Croft Cottage, Rusper (located around central grid reference: *TQ 20425 36910* – hereafter referred to as ‘the site’). This report represents the results of a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment undertaken using the DEFRA statutory biodiversity metric to determine whether proposals would be compliant with the +10% mandate under the Environment Act (2021).

A preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) of the site was undertaken in accordance with the UK Habitats Classification Manual (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) on 23rd May 2024 which identified baseline habitats on site. The habitat types and conditions were inputted into the current *Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric* (DEFRA, 2023). The updated site visit and Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has shown that, based on the existing assemblage, distribution, and condition of the habitats on site, the on-site habitat baseline has a score of 1.80 Habitat Units.

Proposals are for the removal of partial areas of semi-natural habitat for the subsequent construction of residential dwellings. Proposals also include soft landscaping elements including the provision of grassland, pond, native tree planting and vegetated garden plots. In addition, new native species hedgerows are to be planted to provide privacy to dwellings and natural barriers between soft and hard landscaping elements.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by ECE Planning to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of development proposed at Land Adjacent to Pucks Croft Cottage, Rusper (located around central grid reference: TQ 61990 22814 – hereafter referred to as 'the site').
- 1.2 A preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) was conducted in 2023 in line with the UK Habitats Classification Manual (UKHabs Ltd., 2023), to appraise the existing ecological baseline of the site and the surrounding area, and to identify and map existing habitats. A BNG site walkover was conducted by Lizard (LLDE) on 23rd May 2024 to confirm the condition and distinctiveness of the habitats on-site. The results were then used to assess the existing habitats against the proposed soft landscaping design, to deliver a strategy on how to achieve at least +10% Biodiversity Net Gain.
- 1.3 The Biodiversity Net Gain calculations contained in this report were undertaken using the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric to provide a quantitative analysis of the biodiversity value of proposals in regard to emerging policy within the Environment Act (2021).

Site Information

- 1.4 The site consists of an existing dwelling, single garage, timber framed barn, hard landscape access areas, garden areas and a grassland paddock. The site is bordered with fences, hedges and trees forming a woodland edge. The north-western boundary borders the Horsham Road; the northern and eastern boundaries border extensive open grassland gardens; the southern boundary borders an area of open space known as Baldhorns Copse, and the western boundary borders an area of deciduous woodland. The site is approximately 5.85 metres above sea level and measures approximately 0.3 hectares (Ha). Soils on site are described as slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils. The nearest area of woodland is just outside the western boundary of the site.

Development Proposals

- 1.5 The development proposals consist of the extension and renovation of the existing dwelling, extension of the existing garage and demolition of the now derelict barn followed by the construction of 4no. new detached dwellings. The overgrown gardens shall be re-landscaped, and the existing access tracks shall be made into permanent hard surfaced access drives.

Scope

- 1.6 The aim of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment report is to provide a qualitative discussion of the quantitative analysis completed in the accompanying Statutory Biodiversity Metric (DEFRA, 2023).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 The Local Planning Authority website was consulted to inform of relevant information relating to the strategic significance of the site, including the location of areas of strategic significance for biodiversity, such as Nature Improvement Areas and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas etc.
- 2.1.2 A PEA was previously produced for proposals across the site, which provided important background information in relation to this assessment. Within the PEA, specific recommendations for protected species mitigation and ecological enhancements were provided to support a BNG assessment.

2.2 Field Visit

- 2.2.1 A baseline habitat survey was undertaken in line with the UK Habitats Classification Manual (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (Louise Barker, 8 year's professional experience).
- 2.2.2 The surveyor gathered condition assessment criteria in line with *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology* (DEFRA, 2023), which identified the distribution and extent of habitats across the site.

2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

- 2.3.1 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment was conducted to calculate the existing baseline biodiversity unit score of habitats across the site, to then determine the extent to which improvements could benefit / detriment biodiversity interests.
- 2.3.2 The calculation was based upon the existing extent, distinctiveness, and condition of the habitats on site, compared with the extent, distinctiveness, and condition of proposed habitats on site. The BNG assessment uses the latest DEFRA statutory biodiversity metric (DEFRA, 2024) in accordance with the *Statutory Biodiversity Metric – User Guide* (DEFRA, 2024).

Existing Habitats

- 2.3.3 The extent of existing habitats was calculated using GIS software alongside measurements taken in the field and satellite imagery. The distinctiveness of the existing habitats was assessed using the *UK Habitat Classification system* (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) and the condition of existing habitats was assessed in accordance with *Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology* (DEFRA, 2024).

Proposed Habitats

- 2.3.4 The extent and distribution of the proposed habitats was extrapolated from the ECE Proposed Layout (7436 - PL-03G) - Proposed Site Plan, 2025 and Indicative Soft Landscape Mitigation Layout, (PJC.1339.002 Rev C). The condition of the proposed habitats was based upon what could reasonably be expected to be achieved through the provision of an appropriate Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).

Principles of Biodiversity Net Gain

- 2.3.5 In order to achieve a BNG a project must be able to demonstrate that it has followed all 10 of the Principles of Biodiversity Net Gain (CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA, 2016) which are to:

1. Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy (BSI, 2013);
2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere;
3. Be inclusive and equitable;
4. Address risks;
5. Make a measurable Net Gain contribution;
6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity;
7. Be additional;
8. Create a Net Gain legacy;
9. Optimise sustainability; and
10. Be transparent.

- 2.3.6 Maps to illustrate the extent of the existing and proposed habitats on site are provided in *Figure No. 01 – Site Habitat Plan* and *Figure No. 02 – Proposed Habitat Plan*. Details of the existing condition of the habitats on site are provided in *Appendix A – Habitat Condition Assessment*.

2.4 Evaluation and Assessment

- 2.4.1 This report has been written with due regard to best practice *Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing* (CIEEM, 2017) and the *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2019).

2.5 Survey Constraints / Considerations

- 2.5.1 Given that the conditions of some habitats on-site are subject to seasonal variation, the BNG score has the potential to be affected and so extent of habitat areas and conditions have been assessed using a precautionary approach. i.e., where the existing habitat conditions were subject to potential seasonal variations, as a precaution they were scored higher to account for a reasonable worst-case scenario.
- 2.5.2 The minimum mapping unit has been classified as 0.0005 Hectares or 0.001 km for the purposes of this assessment, for the sake of simplicity as accuracy below this level is not realistically attainable or likely to result in a significant outcome and given the relative quantum of development proposed. Due care and attention was paid to ensure that the accuracy of the assessment is not misleading and is appropriate for the scale of development proposed.
- 2.5.3 The Biodiversity Net Gain calculation does not take into account the provision of wildlife boxes, such as bat, bird and insect boxes, or log piles, which can provide unquantified betterments for wildlife.

2.6 Mitigation Hierarchy

- 2.6.1 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.

3.0 RESULTS & DISCUSSION

3.1 Existing Habitat Assessment

Site Habitat Baseline

3.1.1 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment concluded that the baseline biodiversity score for the site was 1.80 Habitat units, consisting of:

- 0.029ha of 'Developed Land; Sealed Surface', for which a condition assessment is not applicable;
- 0.05ha of 'Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface', for which a condition assessment is not applicable;
- 0.05ha of 'Other Neutral Grassland', currently assessed as '**poor**' condition;
- 0.016ha of 'Other Neutral Grassland', currently assessed as '**moderate**' condition;
- 0.081ha of 'Other Neutral Grassland', currently assessed as '**good**' condition;
- 0.021ha of 'Bramble Scrub', for which a condition assessment is not applicable;
- 0.009ha of 'Blackthorn Scrub', which was assessed as being of '**poor**' condition;
- 0.006ha of 'Modified Grassland' currently assessed as '**poor**' condition;
- 0.01ha of 'Mixed Scrub', currently assessed as '**poor**' condition.
- 0.02ha of 'Introduced Shrub', for which a condition assessment is not applicable;
- 0.0081ha of 'Rural Trees', currently assessed as '**moderate**' condition.

3.1.2 The condition assessment criteria for the existing habitats, are laid out in *Appendix A – Habitat Condition Assessments*.

3.2 Baseline Hedgerow Value

3.2.1 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment concluded that the existing baseline biodiversity value of the site was **0.14** Hedge Units, consisting of:

- 0.071km of 'Native Hedge' currently assessed as '**poor**' condition.

- 3.2.2 The condition assessment criteria for the existing hedgerows, are laid out in *Appendix A – Habitat Condition Assessments*.

3.3 Proposed Habitat Assessment

Proposed Habitat & Hedge Retention and Loss

- 3.3.1 The northern section of the site's habitats, including all semi-natural habitats are to be removed for the provision of the residential units and gardens. It is not possible to include retention of these habitats given the quantum of the development proposal and will result in the loss of 1.80 Habitat Units and 0.14 Hedge Units.
- 3.3.2 All existing 'Developed Land; Sealed Surface' areas including derelict buildings and 'Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface' are proposed to be used for new parking and access requirements.

Proposed Habitat Creation

- 3.3.3 Proposals are for the provision of 0.154 ha of 'Developed Land; Sealed Surface', which will comprise the proposed new building, access, and parking. Alongside, 0.076ha of 'Vegetated Garden'. No condition assessment is applicable for these habitat types since BNG guidelines assumes these to be of no ecological value, and therefore it will not result in the provision of any habitat units.

Proposed Other Neutral Grassland

- 3.3.4 An area of 0.053 ha 'moderate' condition 'Other Neutral Grassland' is proposed on the northwest corner of the site to provide opportunities for wildlife and offset the loss of baseline grassland habitats. This can be achieved through an appropriate management plan, which ensures that the grassland habitat meets at least 3 of the criteria outlined for grassland habitats including essential criteria A in *Habitat Condition Assessment Criteria*. This will result in a total of 0.35 Habitat Units.

Proposed Modified Grassland

- 3.3.5 'Modified Grassland' parcels are proposed within the site, totalling an area of 0.011ha. Given that these areas will likely be subject to regular disturbance from mowing they are proposed to reach no greater than 'poor' condition. This will result in the provision of a total of 0.02 Habitat Units.

Proposed Urban Trees

- 3.3.6 Proposals are for the provision of 22no. individual 'Urban Trees' totalling an area of 0.0896ha along the perimeter of the developed site, which will be entirely comprised of native species, and subject to an appropriate management plan to ensure the trees reach at least 'moderate' condition by achieving at least 3 of the criteria for urban trees outlined in *Habitat Condition Assessment Criteria*. This will result in the provision of a total of 0.27 Habitat Units.

Proposed Pond (Non-priority)

- 3.3.7 Reinstated attenuation ponds ('Pond' (Non-Priority) 0.008ha) shall be created adjacent to the site entrance. To ensure this habitat reaches 'moderate' condition by achieving at least 6 of the 9 criteria, as outlined in the Habitat Conditions Assessment.

Proposed Hedge Creation

- 3.3.8 The proposed developed site boundary and buildings are proposed to be enclosed by hedgerows to improve privacy. The aforementioned hedgerows would comprise native species, totalling a length of 0.12km. For the purposes of BNG, it is not necessary for the hedgerows to achieve anything greater than native hedgerows of 'poor' condition. Although, management and planting recommendations to maximise the ecological value of the hedgerows would be included as part of a management plan regardless. This will provide a minimum of 0.37 Hedgerow units.

3.4 Biodiversity Net Gain Metric Results

- 3.4.1 Overall, proposals would result in the delivery of a net loss of **-0.95** Habitat Units, which would equate to a net loss of **-52.62%** Habitat Units.
- 3.4.2 Native hedge planting would result in the delivery of a net gain of **+0.09** Hedgerow Units, which would equate to a net gain of **91.27%** Hedge Units.
- 3.4.3 To ensure that the proposed habitats and hedgerows are managed to achieve at least their target condition and retained in perpetuity, a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) would be required, which could be secured through an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 3.4.3 Although some of the proposed habitats are of medium distinctiveness these areas are small and limited in extent and therefore a formal Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP) would not be required.

4.0 MEASURES TO ACHIEVE MINIMUM REQUIRED LEVELS OF BNG

- 4.1 Proposal currently result in a deficit of -0.95 habitat units. Trading rules trading rules for medium distinctiveness habitats are not currently met due to the deficit in units.
- 4.2 The purchase of units from a private habitat provider, such as the Environment Bank, shall be sought post-planning approval to allow the shortfall in units to be addressed. Purchased units shall include a minimum of 1.13 units of a medium distinctiveness grassland or a higher distinctiveness habitat type to ensure that all trading rules are met. 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 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Metric calculations have identified that the proposed scheme currently does not result in a minimum of +10% Biodiversity Net Gain in Habitat and Hedgerow Units, however 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.
- 5.2 No significant gains are proposed and as such a formal HMMP should not be required. Management measures to ensure the suitable management of vegetation around the ponds should be detailed within a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan or similar. 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.

4.0 REFERENCES

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

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Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London. This publication is available [online] at www.gov.uk/government/publications [last accessed 20/03/2024]

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FIGURES

Figure No. 01 – Site Habitat Plan

Figure No. 02 – Proposed Habitat Plan



Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Existing Small Rural Tree
- Native hedgerow
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Blackthorn scrub
- Bramble scrub
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Introduced shrub
- Mixed scrub
- Modified grassland
- Other neutral grassland
- Bare ground

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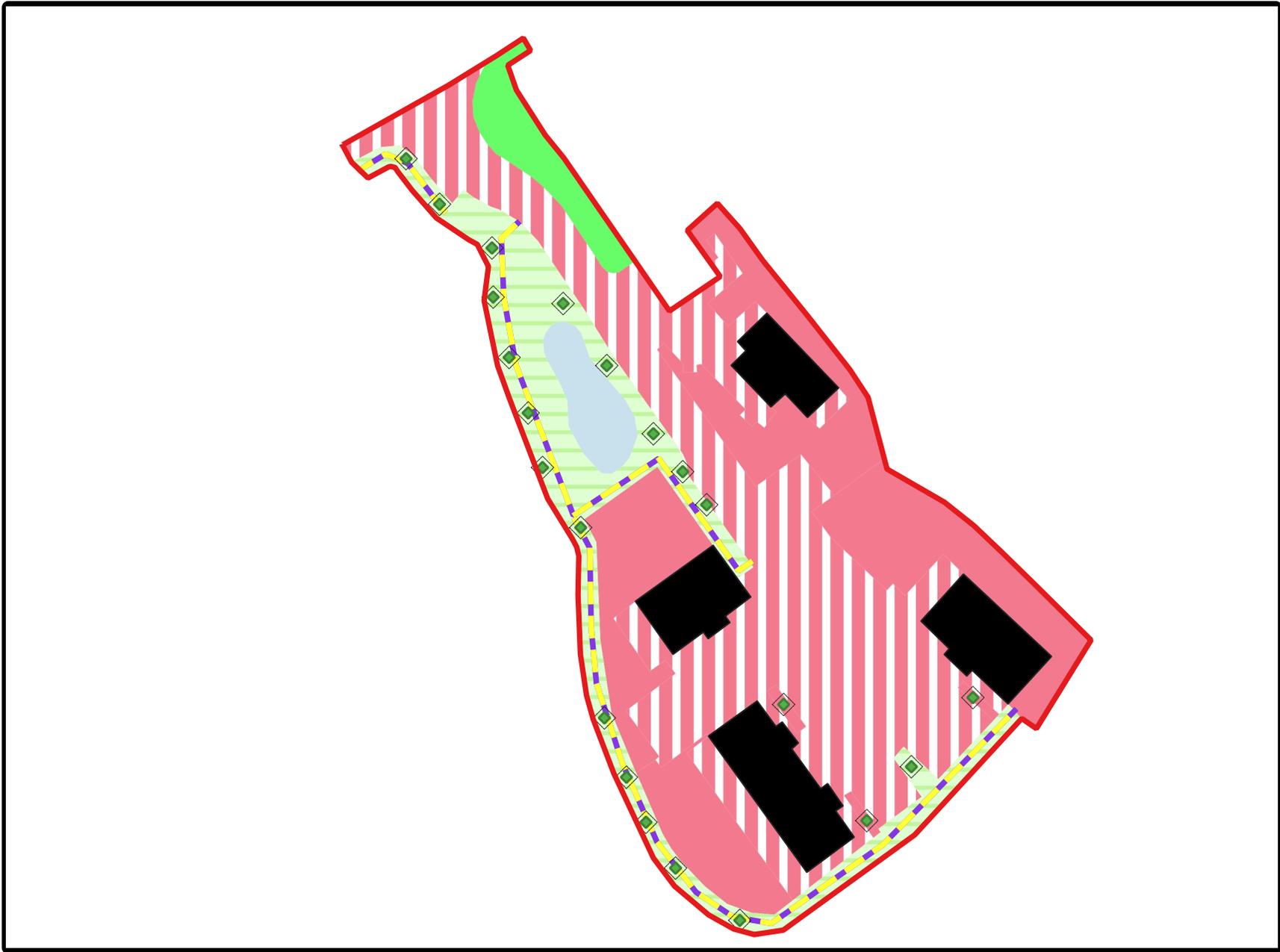
Client
ECE Planning
Project Title & Location
Pucks Croft cottage, Rusper

Drawn by	Approved by	Rev	Date
LB	COR	00	29/08/2024
LB	COR	01	17/06/2025

25 50 m

N 1:600

Figure No. 01 - Site Habitat Plan



- Legend**
- Red Line Boundary
 - Proposed Urban Tree
 - Native hedgerow
 - Buildings
 - Developed land; sealed surface
 - Modified grassland
 - Other neutral grassland
 - Watercourse footprint
 - Vegetated garden

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Project Title & Location
 Land adj to Pucks Croft
 Cottage, Rusper

Drawn by	Approved by	Rev	Date
LB	COR	01	29/08/2024
LB	COR	02	17/06/2025

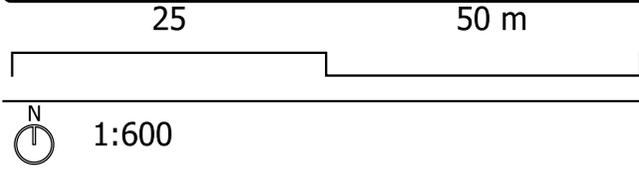


Figure No. 02 - Proposed Habitat Plan

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Habitat Condition Assessment for Existing Habitats
Appendix B – Target Condition Assessment for Proposed Habitats

Appendix A – Habitat Condition Assessment for Existing Habitats

Modified Grassland in Poor Condition:

ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
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. 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.	N	4 species per m2
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.	N	All over 7cm in length
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	None within grassland
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.	Y	None noted
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Y	Some localised bare ground
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y	None noted
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Y	None noted
		Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)	No
		Number of criteria passed	5
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/y	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)		
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	x	

Existing Other Neutral Grassland in Poor, Moderate & Good Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Grid reference										Notes (such as justification)		
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)												
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Y	Y	N	Y									
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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	N	N	N	N									
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.	Y		N	N									
D	Cover of broken /bracken sward is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble Rubus fruticosus agg.) is less than 5%.	Y	Y	Y	Y									
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition ³ 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 less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y	Y	N	Y									
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types														
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Y	N	N	N									
Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		Y	N	N	N									
Number of criteria passed		5	3	1	3									
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved = 4/7												
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)														
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)													
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)													
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)													
Non-acid grassland types (Result out of 6 criteria)														
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	Good (3)	X												
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	Moderate (2)		X		X									
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F	Poor (1)			X										

Blackthorn Scrub in Poor Condition:

Limitations (if applicable)		Habitat parcel reference										Notes (such as justification)	
		1	2										
Condition Assessment Criteria		Grid reference										Notes (such as justification)	
		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 - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species ² , - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> , sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> (only in its restricted native range), or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , which can be up to 100% cover).	No	No										
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ³) shrubs are all present.	No	No										
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.	No	No										
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	Yes										
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	No	No										
		Number of criteria passed											
		1	1										
Condition Assessment Result (out of 5 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score		Score Achieved x/√									
Passes 5 criteria		Good (3)											
Passes 3 or 4 criteria		Moderate (2)											
Passes 2 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)		x	x								

Individual Trees in Moderate Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)										Notes (such as justification)	
		Yes	No										
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).												
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	Yes										
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	No	Yes										
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	No										
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Yes	No										
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is overhanging vegetation beneath.	Yes	Yes										
Number of criteria passed		4	3										
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√											
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)												
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	x	x										
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)												
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.													

Native Hedge in Poor 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. 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).	No >1.5m ave 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 (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m 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 practice).	No <1.5m in places
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).	No Gaps noted <90% of length.

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 >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).	No >10% Gaps noted.
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 hedgerow (at least).	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is 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 hedgerow. 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 Undisturbed ground.
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 <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	No Docks, nettles >20%
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 BSB 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 Buddleia present
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 (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	Yes None noted.

The hedgerow condition assessment generates a weighting (score) ranging from 1 - 3, which is used within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The scores for each are set out in the tables below.

Condition categories for hedgerows without trees		
Category	Category Requirements	Metric Score
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	3
Moderate	No more than 4 failures in total; AND 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; OR Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1
Score achieved:		1

Appendix B – Target Condition Assessment for Proposed Habitats

Proposed Modified Grassland = Moderate Condition

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	<p>There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m² 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.</p> <p>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 m² (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.</p>	Y	Flowering lawn or similar mix to be used
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.	N	To continue being cut to uniform height
C	<p>Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present).</p> <p>Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.</p>	Y	None noted, presence 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.	Y	None noted, any present to be rectified
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	N	None noted
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y	None noted, presence will be managed
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Y	None noted, presence will be managed
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			No
Number of criteria passed			5
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	X	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)		

Proposed Other Neutral Grassland = 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, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). ¹ Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Y	UKHab category very broad for this habitat.
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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	N	Sward to be managed by 1-2 yearly cut. Unable to guarantee >20% shall be less than 7cm.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ² .	Y	Area to be monitored and bare ground re-seeded.
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Y	Scrub encroachment shall be managed by mowing.
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition ³ 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 less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y	Area managed to avoid damage and monitored for presence of invasive species.
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	N	This cannot be guaranteed.
Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		N	
Number of criteria passed		4	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√	
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)			
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	x	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		

Proposed Individual Trees = 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).	Y	Native species proposed
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).	Y	Automatic pass
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	N	Trees will not reach maturity in BNG period
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.	Y	Trees planted in locations where heavy crown reduction etc is not expected.
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N	Unlikely to develop within BNG period.
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Trees planted within grassland areas.
Number of criteria passed		4	
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)	

Pond = Moderate Condition

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - applicable to all ponds (woodland¹ and non-woodland):			
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	Yes	To be managed
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	No	Some edges are nearer to hard standing
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. or filamentous algae.	Yes	To be managed
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	No	Potentially connected to field ditches.
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams ² , pumps or pipework.	Yes	
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species ³ .	Yes	To be managed
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Yes	Managed as such.
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:			
H	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed) ⁴ cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3 m deep.	Yes	Designed and managed
I	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	No	A number of trees are planted around the perimeter.
Number of criteria passed		6	
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/√
Results for woodland ponds which require assessment of 7 core criteria			
Passes 7 criteria		Good (3)	
Passes 5 or 6 criteria		Moderate (2)	
Passes 4 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)	
Results for non-woodland ponds which require assessment of 9 criteria			
Passes 9 criteria		Good (3)	
Passes 6 to 8 criteria		Moderate (2)	Yes
Passes 5 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			