



Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Assessment

Land to the South of Station Road, Cowfold

The Ecology Partnership, Thorncroft Manor, Thorncroft Drive, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 8JB

T +44 (0) 1372 364133

E info@ecologypartnership.com

W ecologypartnership.com

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LIABILITIES:

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living animals and plants are capable of migration/establishing and whilst such species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date.

This report provides a snap shot of the species that were present at the time of the survey only and does not consider seasonal variation. Furthermore, where access is limited or the site supports habitats which are densely vegetated only dominant species maybe recorded.

The recommendations contained within this document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to or during works.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Devine Homes to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for the proposed development at land to the south of Station Road, Cowfold, hereafter referred to as the 'site' (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The site is located on Station Road, A272, west of the village of Cowfold and south-east of Horsham (TQ 20984 22677). The site covers an area of c. 5.47 hectares and consists of two fields of sheep-grazed grassland in the north and south, separated by a line of mature trees. An area of woodland is present in the west of the site, and contains a large pond. A second larger area of woodland is present in the south of the site. An active allotment is present in the east of the site. Other than the wooded areas, all other boundaries of the site were bordered by mature treelines, with a hedgerow separating the site from Station Road to the north. The surrounding area comprises pasture to the north-south and west, and low-density residential areas to the east. 1.6 The aerial photograph below (Figure 1) shows the site and its immediate surroundings.



Figure 1: Site application boundary (red line).
Satellite imagery obtained from Google Earth Pro on 22/05/2024

- 1.3 The assessment is based on the landscape plans produced by IJLA (m384-201 to m384-207).

2.0 Statutory Biodiversity Metric

- 2.1 BNG principles are aimed to support both the aspired green infrastructural proposals set to define the created landscape and support biodiversity and habitat enhancement. BNG principles are set within the Environment Bill (2021).
- 2.2 In order to determine the on-site habitat baseline, habitats were mapped and subject to a condition assessment on 9th May 2024 following the standard metric guidelines. This work was undertaken by Principal Ecologist Matthew Pendry BSc (Hons) MCIEEM, an experienced botanist who holds a Level 4 Field Identifications Skills Certificate (FISC).
- 2.3 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric is used to calculate biodiversity losses and gains for terrestrial habitats within the application area. This metric underpins the Environment Bill's provisions for mandatory biodiversity net-gain in England.
- 2.4 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses habitat as a proxy for wider biodiversity with different habitat types scoring different values according to their relative biodiversity value and dependent on the condition and location of the habitat, to calculate 'biodiversity units'.

On-Site Habitat Baseline

- 2.5 The habitats currently present on site have been identified and assessed. These are shown in Figure 3 and in Tables 1 and 2, overleaf. A full condition assessment is presented in Appendix 1.



Figure 4: On-Site Habitat Baseline

Table 1. On-site habitat breakdown – Pre-Development

Habitat	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Total habitat units	Area retained	Area enhanced	Units lost	Comments
Modified grassland	2.378	Low	Poor	Low	4.76	-	-	4.76	Modified grassland dominated by palatable grasses, with low forb coverage/density.
Other neutral grassland	1.074	Medium	Poor	Low	4.30	0.172	0.095	3.23	Areas of more naturalistic grassland around the northern and western edges of the northern field.
Mixed scrub	0.445	Medium	Moderate	Low	3.56	0.378	-	0.46	Mixed scrub around the perimeter of the site. Majority of habitat to be retained except a small area between the northern and southern fields
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	1.39	High	Good	Low	25.02	1.39	-	-	Two small areas of oak woodland in the west and south-west of the site.
Allotments	0.159	Low	Moderate	Low	0.64	-	-	0.64	A small allotment in the east of the site.
Rural tree	0.106	Medium	Good	Low	1.27	0.106	-	-	Two retained large ash trees and one medium field maple on western boundary and a single retained medium oak on northern boundary
Ponds (non-priority habitat)	0.052	Medium	Good	Low	0.62	0.052	-	-	A large pond in the woodland at the west of the site and series of smaller pools in the southern woodland
Tall forbs	0.045	Low	Poor	Low	0.09	-	-	0.09	Field margins dominated by nettles
Total area (excluding trees)	5.54	Total units/area			41.24	2.1	0.1	9.25	

Table 2. On-site linear habitat breakdown – Pre-Development

Habitat	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Total units	Length retained	Length enhanced	Units lost	Comments
Species-rich native hedgerow	0.185	Medium	Good	Low	2.22	0.141	-	0.53	Hedgerow along northern site boundary
Ecologically valuable line of trees	0.068	Medium	Good	Low	0.82	0.063	-	0.06	Line of mature oaks between the northern and southern fields
Ecologically valuable line of trees	0.195	Medium	Good	Low	2.34	0.191	-	0.05	Line of mature oaks along the eastern boundary of the southern field
Total length	0.45	Total units/length			5.38	0.4	0	0.64	

On-Site Habitat Creation

- 2.6 The proposed development is largely centred on the modified grassland, whilst retaining/enhancing most of the boundary habitats, as well as the two areas of woodland and ponds within. Parts of the eastern boundary are to be planted up with a mix of native shrubs. The margins and majority of the southern field will primarily be made up of species-rich grassland, with scattered trees and a SUDS basin designed for wildlife. The proposed habitat areas are detailed in Tables 3, & 4, and Figure 5 below.



Figure 5. Proposed habitats

Table 3. On-site habitat breakdown – Post-Development Creation

Habitat	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Target Condition	Strategic significance	Years to target condition	Difficulty	Total habitat units	Comments
Allotments	0.18	Low	Moderate	Low	1	Low	0.69	New allotments.
Vegetated garden	0.446	Low	Condition Assessment N/A	Low	1	Low	0.86	Private garden space
Developed land; sealed surface	1.083	V.Low	N/A - Other	Low	0	Low	0.00	New roads, and houses
Introduced shrub	0.022	Low	Condition Assessment N/A	Low	1	Low	0.04	Non-native shrub and herbaceous planting
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.04	V.Low	N/A - Other	Low	0	Low	0.00	Children's play area (LEAP)
Modified grassland	0.125	Low	Poor	Low	1	Low	0.24	Areas of shorter grassland not seeded with wildflowers
Other neutral grassland	0.123	Medium	Moderate	Low	5	Low	0.82	New areas of wildflower-rich grassland along the western edge of the development and within the southern field, to be managed to a mix of short and tall swards.
Mixed scrub	0.111	Medium	Good	Low	10	Low	0.93	Area of mixed native shrubs with sheltered pathways in the east of the northern field and south-east of southern field
Other neutral grassland	1.209	Medium	Moderate	Low	5	Low	8.09	Areas of wildflower-rich grassland to be consistently managed to a shorter sward
Other neutral grassland	0.118	Medium	Moderate	Low	5	Low	0.79	SUDS basin seeded with wildflower grassland
Rural tree	0.216	Medium	Moderate	Low	27	Low	0.66	53 new small native trees
Rural tree	0.086	Medium	Poor	Low	10	Low	0.24	21 new small non-native trees
Total area	3.46						Total units	13.38

Table 4. On-site linear habitat breakdown – Post-Development Creation

Habitat	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Years to target condition	Difficulty	Total habitat units	Comments
Species-rich native hedgerow	0.57	Medium	Moderate	Low	5	Low	3.82	Areas of new native hedges to be created throughout the development.

Table 5. Final results

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	4.40
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	3.18
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	10.70%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	59.15%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

- 2.7 The final results are shown in table 5 on the previous page.
- 2.8 The calculations confirm that the development results in a **+10.7% net gain** in habitat units and a **+59.15% net gain** in hedgerow units based on the current proposal and all trading rules have been satisfied.
- 3.0 Conclusions**
- 3.1 The baseline value of the site is **41.14 area units** and **5.38 linear units**.
- 3.2 Post-development the proposed value of the site would be **45.55 area units** and **8.56 linear units**, equating to a change of **+10.11%** and **+59.15%** respectively.
- 3.3 All trading rules have been satisfied.
- 3.4 To achieve this net-gain the development will retain the two areas of woodland, ponds, and much of the existing boundary treelines, scrub, and hedgerow habitat and create new habitats including wildflower-rich grassland, species-rich hedgerows, and mixed native shrub and tree planting.

Appendix 1: Habitat Condition Assessments

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Grassland - Modified grassland (included amenity grassland)			
Condition Assessment Criteria		North field	South field
1	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m present, including at least 2 forbs (this may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 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.	Fail 5.6 species per m ² (based on 5 quadrats)	Fail 4.8 species per m ² (based on 5 quadrats)
2	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.	Fail All greater than 7cm	Fail All greater than 7cm
3	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. <i>Note: patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90% cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.</i>	Pass	Pass
4	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.	Pass	Pass
5	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens?.	Fail Bare ground less than 1%	Fail Bare ground less than 1%
6	Cover of bracken is less than 20%.	Pass	Pass
7	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species? (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA*).	Pass	Pass
Condition		Poor	Poor
Condition Assessment Result			
Good	Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including essential criterion 1		
Moderate	Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion 1		
Poor	Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR 4-6 of criteria but failing criterion 1		

Footnote 1 - Creeping thistle, spear thistle, curled dock, broad-leaved dock, common nettle, creeping buttercup, greater plantain, white clover and cow parsley.

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high & very high distinctiveness)		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): All other grassland types and tall ruderal (ie. not amenity/modified)		
Condition Assessment Criteria		North field
1	The grassland is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific grassland habitat type. Indicator species listed by UKHab for the specific grassland habitat type are consistently present. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Fail Considered poor example of its type owing to dominance of grasses
2	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.	Fail All greater than 7cm
3	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens (Footnote 1)	Fail Bare ground <1%
4	Cover of bracken is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble) is less than 5%.	Pass
5	Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition (Footnote 2) 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 (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Fail Greater than 5%cover of thistles and white clover
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types		
6	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m* present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 2 and 4 cannot contribute towards this count). <i>Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.</i>	Fail 6 species per m ² (based on 5 quadrats)
Condition		Poor
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 5 of 6 criteria, including essential criterion 1 and 6	
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 of 6 criteria, including essential criterion 1	
Poor	Passes 0, 1, 2 criteria of 6 criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion 1 and 6	
Footnote 1. For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover. Footnote 2. Species indicative of sub-optimal condition for this habitat type include: Creeping thistle, spear thistle, curled dock, broad-leaved dock, common nettle, creeping buttercup, greater plantain, white clover, cow parsley.		

Condition Sheet: SCRUB Habitat Type		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): All forms of scrub		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Mixed scrub
1	The scrub is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description (where in its natural range). The appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific scrub type. At least 80% of scrub is native, and there are at least three native woody species ¹ , with no single species comprising more than 75% of the cover (except hazel, common juniper, sea buckthorn or box, which can be up to 100% cover).	Pass
2	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ²) shrubs are all present.	Pass
3	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition ⁵ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Pass
4	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	Pass
5	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	Fail
Condition		Moderate
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 5 of 5 criteria	
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria	
Poor	Passes 2 or fewer criteria	
Footnote 1 - Native woody species as defined and listed in the Hedgerow Survey Handbook: DEFRA (2007) Hedgerow Survey Handbook: A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK. 2nd ed. [online]. Defra, London. PB1195. Available from: Hedgerow Survey Handbook (publishing.service.gov.uk).		
Footnote 2 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran species. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)		
Footnote 3 - Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.		
Footnote 4 - Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).		
Footnote 5 - Species indicative of sub-optimal condition for this habitat type may include: non-native conifers, tree-of-heaven, holm oak, European turkey oak, cherry laurel, snowberry, shallon, American skunk cabbage, buddleia, cotoneaster, Spanish bluebell and hybrid bluebells. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.		

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Urban tree: Covers the following topographical formations most commonly found in urban areas ¹ : Individual Trees (urban or rural): Young trees over 75mm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching. Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only): Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies must overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.		
Condition Assessment Criteria		T2,5,6,29
1	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Pass
2	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).	Pass
3	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	Pass
4	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.	Pass
5	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Pass
6	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Pass
Condition		Good
	Condition Assessment Result	
Good	Passes 5 or 6 criteria	
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 criteria	
Poor	Passes 2 or fewer criteria	
Footnote 1 - Veteran trees can be classified if they have four out of the five following features: 1. Rot sites associated with wounds which are decaying >400cm ² ; 2. Holes and water pockets in the trunk and mature crown >5 cm diameter; 3. Dead branches or stems >15 cm diameter; 4. Any hollowing in the trunk or major limbs; 5. Fruit bodies of fungi known to cause wood decay.		

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criteria achieved?
Hedgerows		Northern hedge
Height >1.5 m average along length		Pass
Width >1.5 m average along length		Pass
Gap – hedge base Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length		Pass
Gap – hedge canopy continuity Gaps make up <10% of total length and No canopy gaps >5 m		Pass
Undisturbed perennial vegetation >1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length (on one side of the hedge (at least))		Pass
Undesirable species Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground. The indicator species used are nettles, cleavers and docks.		Pass
Invasive species >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native and neophyte species		Pass
Current Damage >90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities - This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (e.g., excessive hedgerow cutting).		Pass
Criteria failed		0
Condition (G = good; M = moderate; P = poor)		Good
Condition Assessment Result		
	Hedgerow without trees	
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 in any functional group.	
Moderate	No more than 4 failures in total; AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1 & C2 = Moderate condition).	
Poor	Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; OR <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1 & B2 = Poor condition).	

Condition Sheet: LINE OF TREES Habitat Type		
Condition Assessment Criteria		All treelines
1	More than 70% of trees are native species.	Pass
2	Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide.	Pass
3	One or more trees has veteran features and or natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates, such as presence of standing and attached deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Pass
4	There is an undisturbed naturally-vegetated strip of at least 6 m on both sides to protect the line of trees from farming and other human activities (excluding grazing). Where veteran trees are present, root protection areas should follow standing advice ²	Pass
5	At least 95% of the trees are in a healthy condition (deadwood or veteran features valuable for wildlife are excluded from this. There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	Pass
Condition		Good
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 5 of 5 criteria	
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria	
Poor	Passes 0, 1 or 2 of 5 criteria	
Footnote 2 -Veteran trees can be classified if they have four out of the five following features:		
1. Rot sites associated with wounds which are decaying >400 cm ² ;		
2. Holes and water pockets in the trunk and mature crown >5 cm diameter;		
3. Dead branches or stems >15 cm diameter;		
4. Any hollowing in the trunk or major limbs;		
5. Fruit bodies of fungi known to cause wood decay.		

Condition Sheet: Ponds		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Lakes - Ponds (priority habitat)/Ponds (non-priority habitat)/Temporary ponds and pools/ Ornamental pond [Use Lake condition sheet for lakes]		
Condition Assessment Criteria		All ponds
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.	Pass
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) complete surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	Pass
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna spp.</i> or filamentous algae.	Pass
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Pass
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams ² , pumps or pipework.	Pass
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species ²	Pass
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Pass
Additional Criteria – must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:		
G	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed) ⁴ cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3m deep.	n/a
H	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	n/a
Condition		Good
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 7 of 7 criteria for woodland ponds or 9 of 9 for non-woodland ponds	
Moderate	Passes 5 or 6 of 7 criteria for woodland ponds or 6 - 8 of 9 for non-woodland ponds	
Poor	Passes <5 of 7 criteria for woodland ponds or <6 of 7 for non-woodland ponds	
Footnote 1 - A woodland pond will be surrounded on all sides by woodland habitat. Footnote 2 - This excludes natural dams such as those created by Eurasian beaver <i>Castor fiber</i>. Footnote 3 - Any species included on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) UKTAG GB High Impact Species List should be absent: WFD UKTAG (2021) <i>Classification of aquatic alien species according to their level of impact</i> [online]. Available from: UKTAG classification of alien species working paper v8.pdf (wfduk.org). - Frequently occurring non-native plant species include water fern <i>Azolla filiculoides</i>, Australian swamp stonecrop <i>Crassula helmsii</i>, parrot's feather <i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>, floating pennywort <i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i> and Japanese knotweed <i>Reynoutria japonica</i>, giant hogweed <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i> (on the bank). - Frequently occurring non-native animals include signal crayfish <i>Pacifastacus leniusculus</i>, zebra mussels <i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>, killer shrimp <i>Dikerogammarus villosus</i>, demon shrimp <i>Dikerogammarus haemobaphes</i>, carp <i>Cyprinus carpio</i>. Footnote 4 - If the pond is seasonal (as in, it dries out in most summers) then emergent species alone are likely to be found.		

Condition Sheet: URBAN - NON PRIORITY Habitat Type			
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/ephemeral and Tall forbs; Urban – Allotments/Bioswale/Cemeteries and churchyards/Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land(OMH)/Rain garden/SUDs/bare ground/all green walls and roofs			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Tall forbs (nettles)	Allotments
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.	Fail (more than 80% nettle)	Fail Dominated by raised beds with vegetables
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.	Fail (poor diversity)	Pass Diverse assortment of vegetables
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 . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Pass	Pass
Condition		Poor	Moderate
Condition Assessment Result			
Good	Passes 3 of 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3		
Moderate	Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3		
Poor	Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria		
Footnote 1 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).			
Footnote 2 – Sources of information about detrimental non-native species can be found on the GB Non-native Species Secretariat (GBNNSS) website: Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org) and Natural England Access to Evidence page should also be checked for up-to-date information: Horizon-scanning for invasive non-native plants in Great Britain - NECR053 (naturalengland.org.uk)			
For criterion C – For green roof habitat types only – buddleia <i>Buddleja davidii</i> should be assessed alongside Schedule 9 species. This species impairs the health of the local ecosystem and reduces the biodiversity potential of the roof. It is also a sign that a roof has not been planted and seeded correctly in subsequent years.			
Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.			

Condition Sheet: WOODLAND Habitat Type						
UKHab Habitat Type(s): All woodlands (except wood pasture)						
Condition Assessment Criteria						
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator	
					West woodland	South woodland
A	Age distribution of trees Footnote 1	Three age-classes ¹ present	Two age-classes ¹ present	One age-class ¹ present	2	2
B	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage Footnote 2	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland ²	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or less of whole woodland ²	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland ²	3	3
C	Invasive plant species Footnote 3	No invasive species ³ present in woodland	Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, other invasive species ³ < 10% cover	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ³ > 10% cover	3	3
D	Number of native tree species Footnote 4	Five or more native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel	Three to four native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel	None to two native tree or shrub species ⁴ across woodland parcel	3	3
E	Cover of native tree and shrub species Footnote 5	> 80% of canopy trees and > 80% of understory shrubs are native ⁵	50-80% of canopy trees and 50-80% of understory shrubs are native ⁵	< 50% of canopy trees and < 50% of understory shrubs are native ⁵	3	3
F	Open space within woodland Footnote 6 and 7	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted ⁷	21- 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category ⁷ .	3	3
G	Woodland regeneration Footnote 8	All three classes present in woodland ⁸ ; trees 4-7cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth	One or two classes only present in woodland ⁸	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland ⁸	2	2

H	Tree health Footnote 9	Tree mortality less than 10%, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback ⁹	11% to 25% mortality and/or crown dieback or low risk pest or disease present ⁹	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high risk pest or disease present ⁹	3	3
I	Vegetation and ground flora Footnote 10	Recognisable NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ present at ground layer present	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present	2	2
J	Woodland vertical structure Footnote 11	Three or more storeys across all survey plots or a complex woodland ¹¹	Two storeys across all survey plots ¹¹	One or less storey across all survey plots ¹¹	2	2
K	Veteran trees Footnote 12	Two or more veteran trees ¹² per hectare	One veteran tree ¹² per hectare	No veteran trees ¹² present in woodland	3	3
L	Amount of deadwood Footnote 13	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	3	3
M	Woodland disturbance Footnote 14	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident ¹⁴	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area and/or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴	More than 1 hectare of nutrient enrichment and/or more than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴	2	2
Total score (out of a possible 39)					34 - Good	34 - Good
Condition Assessment Score						
Good	Total score >32 (33 to 39)					
Moderate	Total score 26 to 32					
Poor	Total score <26 (13 to 25)					
Footnotes below refer to the EWBG woodland condition assessment details: EWBG (No date). <i>Assessing your Woodland's Condition</i> [online]. Available from: Woodland Wildlife Toolkit (sylvia.org.uk)						

The woodland condition assessment survey methodology is outlined in the EWBG toolkit. However the criteria on this sheet are those specific to the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and must be used when assessing woodland condition.

Footnote 1 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 1 for more information. If tree species is not a birch *Betula* sp., cherry *Prunus* sp. or *Sorbus* sp.: 0 - 20 years (Young); 21 - 150 years (Intermediate); and >150 years (Old). For birch, cherry or *Sorbus* species; 0 - 20 years = Young; 21 - 60 years = Intermediate; >60 years = Old. A recognisable age-class should be a consistent recognisable layer across the woodland or stand being assessed. Presence of a few saplings would not indicate that the woodland has an 'age-class' of young trees.

Footnote 2 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 2 for more information. Browsing pressure is considered to be significant where >20% of vegetation visible within each survey plot shows damage from any type of browsing pressure listed.

Footnote 3 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 3 for more information. Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly. Check for the presence of all plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), particularly the following invasive non-native species: American skunk cabbage *Lysichiton americanus*; Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*; Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*; cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*; shallon *Gaultheria shallon*; snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*; variegated yellow archangel *Lamium galeobdolon subsp. argentatum*; rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*; and tree-of-heaven *Ailanthus altissima*.

Footnote 4 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 4 and Table 2 for more information. The number of different native tree or shrub species including young trees and shrubs. A list of commonly found native tree and shrub species is provided in Table 2. Not all species listed are native to all parts of the UK. Note a list of commonly found non-native tree species are also included and should be recorded if present.

Footnote 5 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 5 and for more information. The abundance of native tree species in upper (>5 m) and understorey (up to 5 m) layers including young trees and shrubs.

Footnote 6 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 6 for more information. Open space within woodland in this context is temporary open space in which trees can be expected to regenerate (for example, glades, rides, footpaths, areas of clear-fell). This differs from permanent open space where tree regeneration is not possible or desirable (for example, tarmac, buildings, rivers). Area is at least 10 m wide with less than 20% covered by shrubs or trees.

Footnote 7 - Given the increased ratio of edge habitat to woodland where the woodland is <10ha.

Footnote 8 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 8 for more information. This indicator measures regeneration potential of the woodland by considering three classes: seedlings; saplings; and young trees of 4-7 cm DBH. All three classes would fall in the 'young' category of the 'age distribution of trees' indicator, but the regeneration indicator gathers additional information by considering regeneration potential - if seedlings, saplings and young trees are all present that means natural regeneration processes are happening.

Footnote 9 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 9 for more information and Table 3 for a list of diseases and pests and their risk level.

Footnote 10 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 10 directing to NVC key for more information. The 'UKHab to NVC translation table' in the UK Habitat Classification resources may also be useful to assess this.

Footnote 11 - This criterion looks at structural diversity and is useful to understand in conjunction with the age of trees in a woodland. Vertical structure is defined as the number of canopy storeys present. Possible storey values are: 1) Upper; 2) Complex: recorded when the stand is composed of multiple tree heights that cannot easily be stratified into broad height bands (such as upper, middle or lower); 3) Middle; 4) Lower; and 5) Shrub layer. There might be no storeys where the woodland has been felled. See EWBG INDICATOR 11 for more information.

Footnote 12 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: [Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keepers-of-time-ancient-and-native-woodland-and-trees-policy-in-england) and: [Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions). EWBG INDICATOR 12 is the relevant indicator.

Footnote 13 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 13 for more information. This includes logs, large dead branches on the forest floor and stumps (<1 m tall) >20 cm diameter at narrowest point and >50 cm long. Also includes standing dead trees (>1 m tall) and also deadwood on standing live trees. Diameter is measured at the narrowest point on the stem. Minimum diameter of 20 cm.

Footnote 14 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 15 for more information. Examples of disturbance are: significant nutrient enrichment; soil compaction from trampling, machinery, animal poaching or litter.

The Ecology Partnership

Thorncroft Manor

Thorncroft Drive

Leatherhead

KT22 8JB

Tel: 01372 364 133

www.ecologypartnership.com

Reviewed: Alexia Tamblyn MA (Oxon) MSc CEcol CEnv MCIEEM FRGS

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