Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment: Design Stage

October 2026

Land West of Billingshurst Road, Ashington

Prepared by
CSA Environmental

On behalf of
Devine Homes PLC

Report No: CSA/7799/02

CSA environmental

masterplanning | ecology | landscape | heritage

This report may contain sensitive ecological information. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to determine if this should be made publicly available.

Report Reference	Revision	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Comments
CSA/7799/02	-	18/06/2026	BW/JT	CC	Submission document
	A	23/06/2026	JT	CC	Minor updates
	B	19/10/2026	JT	CC	Updates following LPA comments

CONTENTS

		Page
	Executive Summary	**1**
1.0	**Introduction**	**4**
2.0	**Planning Policy & Legislation**	**6**
3.0	**Methods**	**8**
	Biodiversity Calculations	8
	Baseline Habitats	9
	Post-Development Habitats	9
	Strategic Significance	9
	Additionality & Wider Considerations	10
	Assumptions & Limitations	10
4.0	**Baseline Biodiversity**	**11**
	Strategic Significance	11
	Baseline Biodiversity Units	11
5.0	**Post-Intervention Biodiversity**	**13**
	Habitat Retention & Enhancement	13
	Habitat Creation	14
	Strategic Significance	15
	Significant On-site Gain	15
6.0	**Net Effect on Biodiversity**	**16**
	Biodiversity Units	16
	Habitat Coverage	16
	Qualitative Appraisal	17
8.0	**Management & Monitoring**	**19**
9.0	**Summary & Conclusions**	**20**
11.0	**References**	**21**

Appendices

Appendix A: Baseline Habitats Plan

Appendix B: Proposed Habitats Plan

Appendix C: Draft Biodiversity Gain Plan

Appendix D: Habitat & Hedgerow Condition Assessments

Appendix E: Outline Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Residential development is proposed at Land West of Billingshurst Road, Ashington. Outline planning permission with all matters reserved except for access is sought from Horsham District Council and, if granted, will be subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition in accordance with Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021).

CSA Environmental was instructed by Devine Homes PLC to undertake a Design Stage Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) in support of the planning application. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (Defra, 2025) has been used to determine pre- and post-development biodiversity values and to predict the net effect of the proposed development on biodiversity at the Site.

Baseline habitats at the Site comprise predominantly modified grassland of low distinctiveness, with smaller areas of bramble scrub, broadleaved woodland, individual trees and interconnected hedgerows, collectively including habitats of low to medium distinctiveness. Two irreplaceable trees, as defined under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024), are present within the Site (Trees T7 and T8).

Post-development habitats at the Site will comprise a mixed residential landscape including built form, private gardens, public open space, SuDS features, retained and enhanced hedgerows, newly created areas of other neutral grassland, mixed scrub, aquatic SuDS habitat and extensive tree planting.

Based on the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, the proposed development is predicted to result in a net change of +2.31 Habitat Units (+29.70%) and a net gain of +0.71 Hedgerow Units (+14.77%). These outcomes are subject to the retention, enhancement and creation of habitats on-Site. Trading rules for medium distinctiveness habitats have not been satisfied, therefore off-site Habitat Units will be purchased at the Biodiversity Gain Condition discharge stage. The required units are widely available on the Biodiversity Net Gain Register.

Subject to securing the proposed on-site biodiversity measures through appropriate planning conditions and/or legal mechanisms, including the implementation of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) for a minimum period of 30 years, the Biodiversity Gain Condition could be discharged following the grant of consent through submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan, as drafted in Appendix C. The proposals accord with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy, Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework, and deliver wider ecological and environmental benefits alongside the proposed development.

To assist Horsham District Council in their consideration of BNG and the proposed development, relevant statements have been set out in Box 1 and 2 in respect of applicable BNG policy and legal requirements.

Box 1. Biodiversity Net Gain Statements
Planning permission sought for the development, if granted, **would be subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition** as set out within Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021) given the following: • Planning permission is applied for after 12 February 2024 • Planning permission does not relate to development consented prior to 12 February 2024 ('major developments') and subject to a 'Section 73' amendment, or comprise a Reserved Matters application pursuant to such consent • Impacts to habitats are predicted on-site that either exceed 25 square metres per 5 linear metres with a value greater than zero, and/or impacts to any 'Section 41' habitat of principal importance • Planning permission sought does not relate to a 'householder application' or 'the high-speed railway transport network' • Planning permission is not for self-build or custom housebuilding and relates to more than 9 dwellings and/or proposals cover over 0.5ha • Planning permission does not relate directly to off-site gain developments to fulfil other BNG requirements
The biodiversity value of on-site habitats set out herein relate to the date of the planning application and not an earlier date.
The biodiversity value of on-site habitats set out herein are not lower than on date of application.
On-site biodiversity gain proposed herein is significant based upon the following: • Proposed habitats include those of medium and higher distinctiveness comprising 'other neutral grassland', 'urban trees', 'mixed scrub' and 'native' hedgerow • Proposed habitats include a SuDS in 'moderate' condition
The Site contains irreplaceable habitat as defined under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024). This comprises trees which meet the requirements under BNG guidance to be considered 'veteran', although do not necessarily meet the NPPF definition of a veteran tree.
As set out herein measures have been taken in a step-wise fashion to: • First avoid adverse effects of the development upon on-site medium or higher distinctiveness habitat and, where they cannot be avoided, the mitigate these effects; • Taking an approach to first seek on-site habitat enhancement, then habitat creation • Where the above cannot fully compensate, seek registered off-site gains • And finally, where off-site gains cannot be secured, seeking purchase of biodiversity credits

Box 2. Accordance with 'Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development' (Baker et al., 2019).	
Principle 1. Apply the 'Mitigation Hierarchy'	Designs decisions have been documented within the prepared EcIA due consideration for the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) (CIEEM, 2018) including mitigation hierarchy. Trading rules have been adhered to in the prepared metric, and ecologically justified decisions have been taken in respect of proposed habitats. The Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy has also been followed where possible, with habitat of medium or higher distinctiveness retained on-site and mitigation of loss of habitats through creation/enhancement of other on-site habitats.
Principle 2. Avoid losing biodiversity which cannot be offset by gains elsewhere	No ancient woodland habitats are present on-site and those nearby have been protected from loss or deterioration through indirect impact pathways. Notable habitats and features (including hedgerows and mature trees) have been prioritised for protection as part of the proposed design.
Principle 3. Be inclusive & equitable	Design decisions taken have considered wider stakeholders including existing and new residents. Open space design has sought to balance biodiversity benefits and access to nature, with recreational uses and delivery of housing.
Principle 4. Address risks (e.g., difficulty of achieving habitat creation/enhancement)	A precautionary approach has been taken to grassland habitat type and condition for on-site biodiversity gain provision, with the highest provision comprising other neutral grassland in moderate condition.
Principle 5. Make a 'measurable' Net Gain contribution (e.g., calculated using an appropriate metric).	The Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been used to demonstrate a clear and quantified calculation of the net effect of development upon biodiversity, using habitat as a proxy for wider biodiversity.
Principle 6. Ensure that Net Gain design achieves the best outcomes for biodiversity (quantitative and qualitative assessment) and create a net gain legacy for long-term benefits.	Informal Open Space has been designed to provide the best outcomes for biodiversity, including habitat creation comprising open grassland, mixed scrub and a wet SuDS which will enhance connectivity across the Site.
Principle 7. Be additional	Informal Open Space has been designed to deliver a net gain in biodiversity for the Site, in addition to providing the required levels of recreational and other public open space.
Principle 8. Create a Net Gain legacy	Habitat creation at the Site will be subject to on-going management to ensure long-term benefits
Principle 9. Optimise sustainability	Informal Open Space has been designed to provide wider environmental benefits for users of the Site, providing a combination of spaces for recreational use alongside those dedicated for wildlife.
Principle 10. Be transparent Communicate all Net Gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders.	A full copy of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool and Condition Assessments will be provided alongside this report for transparency with regard to how the BNG for the Site has been calculated

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared by CSA Environmental on behalf of Devine Homes PLC and sets out the findings of a 'Design Stage' Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment. Residential development is proposed at Land West of Billingshurst Road, Ashington (hereafter 'the Site'). This report details the predicted net effect of the proposed development upon biodiversity.

1.2 This report has been prepared with due consideration for the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's guidance for design stage reporting on Biodiversity Net Gain (CIEEM, 2021). The report also takes into account wider CIEEM best-practice guidance (2017 & 2024), Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (Baker et al., 2019) and the Biodiversity: Code of Practice for Planning and Development, published by the British Standards Institute (BS 42020:2013).

1.3 The Site occupies an area of c. 3.20ha and consists of grassland fields bordered and interlinked by a network of hedgerows and mature trees, as well as buildings and hardstanding associated with the farm (see Habitats Plan in Appendix A). The Site is located around central grid reference TQ 13161 16820, to the north-west of Ashington, a village to the north-east of the town of Storrington.

1.4 This report should be read in conjunction with the Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) (CSA/7799/01) prepared for the proposed development which provides full baseline habitat information upon which the post-development biodiversity value set out herein is based.

1.5 This 'Design Stage' BNG Assessment aims to:

- Confirm whether outline planning permission sought for the development, if granted, would be subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition as set out within the Environment Act (2021) [see Box 1].
- Provide information about "...the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the on-site habitat and any other habitat". Furthermore, evidence is provided as to how the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy, as set out in as set out in the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024), has been applied.
- Establish the following using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation, which uses habitat as a proxy for biodiversity and comprises three separate modules (Habitat Units, Hedgerow Units & Watercourse Units):
    - 'pre-development' (baseline) biodiversity value of the Site
    - 'post-development' (post-intervention) biodiversity value of the Site

    - Any off-site biodiversity values (baseline & post-intervention)
    - Net effect of the proposed development
    - Whether relevant 'trading' rules and other controls have been accorded with
    - Whether the Biodiversity Gain Objective (10%) is met or not
- State whether "...the biodiversity value of the on-site habitat will be lower on the date of application (or an earlier date) because of the carrying on of activities ('degradation') in which case the value is to be taken as immediately before the carrying on of the activities, and if degradation has taken place supporting evidence of this".
- State whether any on-site biodiversity provision is 'significant' and if so, how the specific gains would be secured for 30 years, in accordance with Paragraph 9, Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act (1990).
- Confirm the presence and location of any irreplaceable habitat at the Site, as set out in the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024).
- Clearly identify any assumptions made or deviation from the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Guidance.
- Detail any legal frameworks for how Biodiversity Net Gain would be secured subject to grant of planning permission.

1.6 In accordance with the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations (2024) the following drawings have also been prepared:

- Baseline Habitats Plan (CSA/7799/114) provided in Appendix A
- Proposed Habitats Plan (CSA/7799/115) provided in Appendix B

1.7 To assist the authority in their consideration of the application, a Draft Biodiversity Gain Plan is provided in Appendix C and an Outline Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) is provided in Appendix E in compliance with Horsham District Council's local validation list. A Biodiversity Gain Plan would be prepared to discharge the Biodiversity Gain Condition, including an updated Statutory Metric and HMMP, following the grant of any relevant consent.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY & LEGISLATION

2.1 The following legislation brings into force Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021), making Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) a condition of planning permission in England from 12 February 2024:

- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain Site Register (Financial Penalties and Fees) Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain Site Register Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024) sets out existing government planning policies for England and how they should be applied. Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, paragraph 187, states that the planning system and planning policies should minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity.

2.3 Accompanying the NPPF, central government guidance on the implementation of planning policies is set out within online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). That relating to the protection and enhancement of the Natural Environment was most recently updated in May 2024. The Natural Environment PPG addresses principles across a broad spectrum of topics targeting biodiversity conservation, from individual site and species protection through to the supporting of ecosystem services, and the use of local ecological networks to support the national Nature Recovery Network. In particular, the PPG promotes the delivery of measurable Biodiversity Net Gain through the creation and enhancement of habitats alongside development.

2.4 The following policy from the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 makes reference to biodiversity and the protection and enhancement of priority habitats and species:

Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

1. *Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing green infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that mitigates or compensates for this loss, and ensures that the ecosystem services of the area are retained.*

2. *Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity, and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate. The Council will support new development which retains and /or enhances significant features of nature conservation on development sites. The Council will also support development which makes a positive contribution to biodiversity through the creation of green spaces, and linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks.*

3. *Where felling of protected trees is necessary, replacement planting with a suitable species will be required…*

4. *…*

    b. *Where development is anticipated to have a direct or indirect adverse impact on sites or features for biodiversity, development will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that:*

        i. *The reason for the development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site; and,*

        ii. *That appropriate mitigation and compensation measures are provided...*

3.0 METHODS

Biodiversity Calculations

3.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2025) was used to determine baseline (pre-development) and post-intervention (post-development) biodiversity values, and to calculate the net effect of the development upon biodiversity. Specifically, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool was populated and used to run all calculations present herein, and in accordance with the Statutory Metric User Guide (Defra, 2025).

3.2 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses habitat (vegetation and edaphic conditions) as a proxy for measuring biodiversity more widely. This reductive approach allows for the relative biodiversity 'value' of land to be calculated and expressed as transferrable 'Biodiversity Units'. The metric adopts the UK Habitat Classification (UK Hab; Butcher *et al*., 2023) system with some minor deviation.

3.3 The metric consists of a primarily 'Area' module which calculates 'Habitat Units' such as grassland, woodland and urban habitats, as well as two linear modules for 'Hedgerow Units' (including lines of trees) and 'Watercourse Units' (including rivers, canals and ditches). The separate Biodiversity Unit types cannot be converted between these modules and are addressed separately herein.

3.4 'Habitat trading' controls are integrated into the Statutory Metric to ensure any losses of habitat are mitigated or compensated for appropriately, in respect of conservation priorities and ecological functionality. Any deviation from habitat trading is cleared flagged within the Statutory Metric, and justifications, where necessary, are set out herein.

3.5 Any consideration of temporary impacts, those where habitats can be reinstated within 2 years of impacts as set out within the User Guide, will are explained in full herein.

3.6 A Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool has been prepared for the proposed development and is provided separately in full for interrogation by Horsham District Council, relevant consultees and stakeholders.

3.7 All metric calculations have been reviewed by Bethany Wilson MCIEEM and Jeff Turton MCIEEM who have completed numerous net gain assessments.

Baseline Habitats

3.8 The accompanying EcIA report (CSA/7799/01) provides details of the UKHab surveys undertaken at the Site on 31 January 2024 and 26 February 2026 (update survey) including full survey methods.

3.9 Baseline (pre-development) habitat areas and linear measurements were taken from the Baseline Habitats Plan (Appendix A) prepared in mapping software Quantum Geographic Information Systems (QGIS). Mapping is based upon field survey, topographical survey in association with the Tree Survey and Constraints Plan (BHA_7339_01) prepared by Barton Hyett Associates, aerial photography and OS mapping to an accuracy of 10m^2/0.001ha for area-based polygons and 5m for linear features.

Habitat & Hedgerow Condition Assessment

3.10 An assessment of habitat and hedgerow condition was undertaken on all habitats between April and August 2024 by Jeff Turton MCIEEM (FISC Level 3), in accordance with the Statutory Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024). Published condition assessment templates have been completed and are provided in Appendix D alongside wider condition information.

Post-Development Habitats

3.11 Post-development habitat areas and linear measurements were taken from the Proposed Habitats Plan (Appendix B) prepared in mapping software QGIS. This plan is based upon the Illustrative Master Plan (Plan Ref: DEV1250921-IMP-01 P4) prepared by Thrive Architects and the Landscape Sketch Plan (Plan Ref: LLD3780-LAN-DWG-002) prepared by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology on behalf of Devine Homes PLC. Wider consideration of construction methods, future land-use and management were used to determine the extent of existing habitat loss/deterioration, retention/enhancement and creation which would occur-post development.

3.12 Professional judgement was required throughout the calculation process to ensure target habitats were reasonable, achievable and ecologically justified. Habitat condition for both enhanced and created habitats was assigned taking a precautionary approach and with consideration of biotic and operational phase conditions (i.e. those which may limit the extent to which 'good' condition is likely to be reached).

Strategic Significance

3.13 A desktop assessment was undertaken to determine relevant strategic significance multipliers for pre- and post-development habitats in accordance with Tables 7 and 8 of the Statutory Metric User Guide

(Defra, 2025) with particular consideration of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS).

Additionality & Wider Considerations

3.14 In accordance with the good practice principles as set out above, the following additional considerations have been given:

- Wider consideration of ecological functionality, with a qualitative ecological assessment presented herein
- Consideration of non-ecological stakeholders, such as end-users (e.g. residents) of the scheme and choices with regard to access and multi-functionality
- Identification of opportunities to deliver wider environmental gain (e.g. carbon sequestration, water quality and climate resilience) guiding habitat/design choices beyond certain ecological outcomes

Assumptions & Limitations

3.15 Effort has been taken to ensure mapping, and measurements taken from mapping, are accurate to the level stated. However, given the nature of habitats, methods of field survey and the potential for inaccuracies in aerial photography and some other mapping, there remain some potential for errors in the calculations presented herein.

3.16 Professional judgement and a precautionary approach are required to establish baseline and post-development scenarios to assess current habitat type and condition, and to predict future changes. Accordingly outcomes for habitats and biodiversity more widely may differ from those presented herein.

3.17 Specific assumptions with regard to certain existing and proposed habitats have been identified within Section 5.0 below.

4.0 BASELINE BIODIVERSITY

4.1 For full habitat descriptions and species lists, please refer to the EcIA (CSA/7799/01) with baseline habitats illustrated on the Habitats Plan (Appendix A). Appendix D sets out full details of habitat condition assessment including completed standard templates.

Strategic Significance

4.2 The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Horsham district was published in June 2026. The Site was not identified to fall within any areas considered to be of strategic significance based on the Strategy resources and interactive mapping. Therefore, the baseline Habitat Units and Hedgerow Units are assigned as 'Low' strategic significance.

Baseline Biodiversity Units

4.3 A summary of the on-site habitat areas and baseline Biodiversity Units, as calculated using the accompanying Statutory Biodiversity Metric are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of On-site Baseline Biodiversity Units

HABITATS		
Habitat Type (Condition)	**Area (ha)**	**Habitat Units**
Modified grassland (moderate)	0.11	0.44
Modified grassland (poor)	2.60	5.2
Bramble scrub (n/a)	0.11	0.44
Other woodland; broadleaved (moderate)	0.10	0.80
Developed land; sealed surface (n/a/)	0.28	0.00
Rural trees (good) - irreplaceable	0.1529	N/A
Rural trees (good)	0.0529	0.63
Rural trees (moderate)	0.0326	0.26
Total*	**3.17ha**	**8.49**
HEDGEROWS		
Hedgerow Type	**Length (km)**	**Hedgerow Units**
H1 Species-rich native hedgerow (good)	0.25	3.00
H5 Native hedgerow with trees (good)	0.09	1.08
H6 Native hedgerow (good)	0.07	0.42
H7 Native Hedgerow (moderate)	0.08	0.32
Total	**0.49km**	**4.82**

*Area measurements attributed to 'individual trees' are not included in the total area as trees oversail other habitats.

4.4 The majority of the Site area (87%) comprises habitats of 'low' or 'very low' distinctiveness such as 'modified grassland' and 'developed land; sealed surface', contributing the majority of its overall -biodiversity value (63%). Smaller areas (12%) of 'medium' distinctiveness habitats such as 'bramble scrub', 'other woodland; broadleaved' and individual 'rural trees' are present and contribute a modest proportion (37%) of overall biodiversity value.

4.5 The majority of the total hedgerow length (69%) comprises hedgerows of 'medium' distinctiveness, which are 'species-rich native hedgerow' and 'native hedgerow with trees', contributing the majority of the overall hedgerow biodiversity value (85%). Smaller lengths (31%) of 'low' distinctiveness hedgerows, such as 'native hedgerow' are present and contribute a modest proportion (15%) of overall hedgerow biodiversity value.

5.0 POST-INTERVENTION BIODIVERSITY

5.1 The proposed development comprises the construction of 65 dwellings with associated private gardens, access infrastructure, Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features and Public Open Space.

5.2 The proposed scheme was subject to an iterative design process between January to June 2026, with the following specific aims provided in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy:

- Minimise necessary losses of hedgerows
- Enhancement of boundary hedgerows alongside development
- Habitats proposed will contribute towards the aims of adopted Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 and the Horsham District Council Green Infrastructure Strategy 2024.

5.3 The following assumptions have been made with regard to the Proposed Habitats in line with the Statutory Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024) and professional judgement taking a precautionary approach where necessary:

- All newly planted individual trees are assumed to be 'small' in size and in 'poor' condition when sited within 'urban'/street contexts. Those within public greenspaces are assessed to be able to reach 'moderate' condition due to oversailing other vegetation (therefore able to satisfy criterion F)
- In line with The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, where post development grassland habitats represent a continuation of baseline grassland conditions and/or enhancements thereof (to 'other neutral grassland', for instance) it has been assumed that these habitats can be replaced/enhanced within 2 years of development starting, and as such a two-year delay in starting habitat enhancements has been accounted for on the metric.

5.4 On-site habitat retention, enhancement and creation set out below would be secured through a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) and/or a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) and appropriate application of a planning condition or legal condition. An Outline HMMP is provided within Appendix E.

Habitat Retention & Enhancement

5.5 The majority of area habitats at the Site will be lost to development, comprising principally low-value modified grassland, with the majority of linear habitats retained. The following habitats will be retained and/or enhanced:

- c. 0.05ha of modified grassland in moderate condition will be enhanced to 'other neutral grassland' in moderate condition. c. 0.03ha will be retained.
- c. 0.466ha of modified grassland in poor condition will be enhanced to 'other neutral grassland' in moderate condition. c. 0.175ha will be retained.
- c. 0.02ha of bramble scrub will be retained and enhanced to mixed scrub in moderate condition
- c. 0.2018 ha of good condition individual 'rural trees' will be retained (including the 'very large' irreplaceable trees T7 and T8 at the boundary, by the access point)
- Hedgerow H5 (native hedgerow with trees) will be enhanced via the planting of one additional native woody species such that it becomes species-rich
- Approximately 0.22km of H1 (species-rich native hedgerow) will be retained.

5.6 As set out within the accompanying EcIA the retention of these habitats will require protections during construction and in operation through the following:

- Tree protection measures in line with standard arboricultural practice (BS5837: 2012)
- Construction Environmental Management Plan, to include standard pollution control measures to be implemented during construction
- Landscape and Ecology Management Plan

5.7 Enhancement works would be delivered and secured through the approved HMMP, to be fully completed to meet Statutory Biodiversity Gain Condition requirements at reserved matters.

Habitat Creation

5.8 Residential dwellings and associated developed infrastructure such as roads and parking are represented on the metric as developed land; sealed surface and account for c. 1.27ha (34%) of the proposed 'habitat' creation on-Site. The remaining 66% of the proposed habitat creation consists of the following categories:

- c. 0.83ha of vegetated gardens (condition assessment n/a), equal to 26% of proposed habitat creation)
- c. 0.04ha of other neutral grassland in moderate condition (1%)
- c. 0.193ha of new mixed scrub in moderate condition (6%)
- c. 0.194ha of sustainable drainage system (collective) in moderate condition (6%)
- c. 0.015ha of non-priority pond, equal to 10% of the total area of the large attenuation basin which will have a permanently wet core (0.5%)
- c. 0.098ha of individual 'urban' trees in poor condition (3%)

- c. 0.554ha of individual 'rural' trees in moderate condition (18%)
- Modified grassland creation has been accounted for where direct landscaping/construction activities will be required, such as in the central open space and at road verges. Each represent c. 0.01ha and are in moderate and poor condition, respectively (0.6%)
- c. 0.107km of species-rich native hedgerow with trees in good condition (59% of hedgerow creation)
- c. 0.042km of species-rich native hedgerow (23%)
- c. 0.032km of non-native and ornamental hedgerow (17%)

Strategic Significance

5.9 An equivalent approach to strategic significance has been taken for post-intervention Biodiversity Units as for baseline units above, with all habitats having 'low' strategic significance.

Significant On-site Gain

5.10 In reference to the FAQs provided online by Horsham District Council, HDC define 'significant' on-Site BNG as:

- Where the overall net change in Biodiversity Units is 0.5 or more; and/or
- The gain relates to habitats of high or very high distinctiveness (as defined within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide); and/or
- In the case of major development, where the gain relates to habitats of medium distinctiveness

5.11 As such, as the development is considered 'major development', the following proposed habitat enhancement and creation proposals are likely to be considered 'significant' by Horsham District Council:

- Creation and enhancement of habitats of medium distinctiveness, including other neutral grassland, individual trees and mixed scrub
- Creation of SuDS in 'good' condition
- Creation and enhancement of native hedgerows

5.12 In accordance with Paragraph 9, Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act (1990) these habitats contributing to significant on-site gains require additional mechanisms to secure their creation/enhancement and management over 30-years, such as through an appropriate planning condition and/or legal agreement in accordance with an on-site HMMP. An Outline HMMP is provided at Appendix E.

6.0 NET EFFECT ON BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity Units

6.1 The net effect on biodiversity as a result of the proposed development is set out within the accompanying Statutory Biodiversity Metric and summarised below in Tables 2A and 2B.

Table 2A. Net Effect on Biodiversity: Habitat Units

	Habitat Units	**% Change**
On-site baseline	7.78	
On-site post-intervention	10.08	
Total net change	**+2.31**	**+29.70%**
Trading rules not satisfied		

Table 2B. Net Effect on Biodiversity: Hedgerow Units

	Hedgerow Units	**% Change**
On-site baseline	4.82	
On-site post-intervention	5.53	
Total net change	**+0.71**	**+14.77%**
Trading rules satisfied		

6.2 It is demonstrated that whilst the proposed development will result in a net gain in excess of 10% for Habitat Units, trading rules have not been satisfied. This is because of the loss of 0.80 Habitat Units of 'medium' distinctiveness 'other broadleaved woodland' that have not been offset on-site. To achieve a statutorily compliant 10% net gain, 0.80 Habitat Units of either 'medium' distinctiveness woodland or any 'high' distinctiveness habitat are required off-site.

6.3 The Government Biodiversity Net Gain Register holds records for various registered sites that can supply 'other woodland; broadleaved' habitat units (or units of higher distinctiveness habitats), and multiple off-site unit providers will be able to provide the small unit provision required to meet the trading rules. Following any grant of planning permission and any detailed design/reserved matters applications, the mandatory Biodiversity Gain Condition would be discharged through submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan and an updated Statutory Metric, which will provide the full details of where these units will be sourced from.

6.4 The proposed development will result in a net gain of Hedgerow Units above 10% and meets the trading rules on hedgerow habitats.

Habitat Coverage

6.5 The net change in cover (area and linear) for broad and priority habitat is summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Net Effect Habitat Coverage

	Area (ha)/Length (km) change	% Change
Urban	+1.92ha	+685%
Woodland	-0.10ha	-100%
Grassland	-1.93ha	-71%
Scrub	+0.10ha	+91%
Ponds	+0.02ha	+100%
Individual trees	+0.61	+254%
Hedgerow (priority habitat)	+0.21km	+15%

6.6 The proposed development will inevitably result in the net loss of grassland habitats and a significant increase in urban habitats within residential development parcels. Several habitats, entirely unrepresented at the Site are proposed, including other neutral grassland, mixed scrub and aquatic SuDS basin and swale habitats.

6.7 No net loss of priority hedgerow habitat is predicted through the enhancement of existing hedgerows and planting of new hedgerows within the proposed development.

Qualitative Appraisal

6.8 A wider appraisal of the proposed development's effects upon biodiversity is set out below in Table 4 below. This includes factors not fully captured through the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, which uses only habitat type and condition as a proxy for biodiversity, omitting important factors such as connectivity and functioning of habitats.

Table 4. Qualitative Appraisal of effects upon Biodiversity

Ecological Features, Functions & Factors	Baseline Conditions	Potential Effects
Habitat Connectivity	Short sward grassland at the Site contributes little to local ecological networks, with the exception of woodland and field hedgerows to the boundaries of the Site.	Residential development will impede habitat connectivity through the Site for many species. Garden habitats provide some ancillary benefits to certain mobile species. New habitats to the peripheries of the Site, including hedgerows and grassland provide some increase in habitat connectivity for certain species, contributing to wider ecological networks.
Structural Diversity	The Site has very limited habitat structure with little or no interfaces between broad habitat types.	Proposed development and landscaping on-site will increase the structural diversity of habitat at the Site. Interfaces between formal (short mown) and informal habitats, as well as between broad habitat types (grassland, scrub and hedgerow) will provide a greater number of opportunities for biodiversity, at a range of scales.
Habitat Mosaics	The Site has a very low diversity of habitats.	Proposed development and habitats on-site will increase the number of habitat types and their structural diversity. The combination of grassland, scrub, aquatic features (SuDS), trees and hedgerow will provide a medium-scale mosaic of habitat to benefit biodiversity.
Soil Biodiversity	The grassland which dominates the Site is subject to frequent chemical inputs (fertiliser, pH correction and herbicides) and physical disturbance. The soil biota is likely to be significantly impacted by such works, reducing soil carbon, other nutrient cycling and wider environmental benefits.	Residential development will include the loss and damage of soils to built form and will prevent natural functioning of this habitat. Soil biodiversity in retained areas or those subject to landscaping/habitat creation efforts will recover and likely flourish under suitable management.

8.0 MANAGEMENT & MONITORING

8.1 Full details of management and monitoring for delivery of on-site biodiversity gains will be provided within a Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan (HMMP) for a 30-year period at reserved matters, prior to the commencement of development. This HMMP will include the following principal elements:

- Establishment and management of the following 'significant' biodiversity gains:
    - Other neutral grassland creation/enhancement
    - Mixed scrub creation/enhancement
    - SuDS feature creation
    - Hedgerow creation/enhancement measures
    - Individual tree planting
- Adaptive management options
- Monitoring regime and reporting process
- Roles and responsibilities
- Processes to ensure remedial measures can be undertaken in the event that target habitat or condition is not achieved

8.2 In accordance with HDC's local validation list, a condensed Outline HMMP is provided in Appendix E.

9.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Outline planning permission sought for the proposed development will be subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition in accordance with Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021).

9.2 As set out herein, a change in biodiversity is predicted as a result of the proposed development, based upon provision of significant on-site gains. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool was used to calculate the following outcomes:

- +2.31 Habitat Unit gain or +29.70%, but trading rules have not been satisfied due to a shortfall of 0.80 units from the loss of c. 0.1ha of 'other woodland; broadleaved'
- +0.71 Hedgerow Unit gain or +14.77%, with trading rules satisfied

9.3 Following any grant of planning permission and any detailed design/reserved matters applications, the Biodiversity Gain Condition would be discharged through submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan and an updated Statutory Metric, which will detail the offsite unit provision to meet the trading rules.

9.4 On-site significant biodiversity gain would be secured through an appropriate legal mechanism (as such planning condition) subject to an on-site HMMP for a 30-year period.

11.0 REFERENCES

Baker, J., 2016. *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development*. CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA.

Baker, J., Hoskin, R., and Butterworth, T., 2019. *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development. A practical guide*. CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA.

Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP), 2018. *Business Planning for Biodiversity Planning: A Roadmap*. Available at: https://www.forest-trends.org/bbop_pubs/business-planning-bng [Accessed April 2026].

Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L., and Treweek, J., 2023. *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* [pdf] UKHab Ltd. Available at http://www.ukhab.org/ [Accessed April 2026].

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2017. *Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing*. Winchester: CIEEM.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2024. *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine version 1.3*. Winchester: CIEEM.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2021. *Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Audit Templates*. Winchester: CIEEM.

Defra, 2025. *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide*. London: Defra.

Gurnell, A., England, J., Scott, S. & Shuker, L., 2024. *A Guide to Assessing River Condition Part of the Rivers and Streams Component of the Biodiversity Metric Watercourse Module for calculating Biodiversity Net Gain*. Modular River Survey.

Horsham District Council, no date. *Biodiversity Net Gain: Frequently Asked Questions.* Available at: https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/biodiversity-net-gain#minimum [Accessed April 2026].

Horsham District Council, 2024. *Green Infrastructure Strategy and Guide*.

Horsham District Council, 2021. *Horsham District Nature Recovery Network Report*. Available at: https://www.horsham.gov.uk/climate-and-environment/climate-action-across-the-district/wilder-horsham-district/horsham-district-nature-recovery-networks/horsham-district-nature-recovery-network-report [Accessed April 2026].

Horsham District Council, 2015. *Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park)*.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024. *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. London Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

Natural England, 2020. *National Habitat Network Maps; User Guide V.2*. Available at: https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/Habitat%20Network%20Mapping%20Guidance.pdf [Accessed April 2026].

Sussex Nature Partnership, no date. *Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs)*. Available at: https://sussexlnp.org.uk/ [Accessed April 2026].

Appendix A

Baseline Habitats Plan



- Site Boundary
- Modified grassland (g4)
- Bramble scrub (h3d)
- Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)
- Buildings (u1b5)
- Other broadleaved woodland (w1g)
- Native hedgerow (h2a)
- Species-rich native hedgerow (h2a5)
- Native hedgerow with trees
- Baseline trees

0 25 50 m

Contains Google maps © Google 2024.
For reference purpose only. No further copies may be made.

CSA environmental
Office 20, Citibase, 95 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 4ST
t 01273 573871
e brighton@csaenvironmental.co.uk
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

Project	Land West of Billinghurst Road, Ashington	Date: June 2026	Drawing No.: CSA/7799/114
Drawing Title	Baseline Habitats Plan	Scale: 1:1,500	Rev: -
Client	Devine Home PLC	Drawn: WC	Checked: JT

Appendix B

Proposed Habitats Plan



- Site Boundary
- Other neutral grassland (g3c)
- Modified grassland (g4)
- Mixed scrub (h3h)
- Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)
- Buildings (u1b5)
- Sustainable urban drainage feature
- Vegetated garden
- Native hedgerow (h2a)
- Species-rich native hedgerow (h2a5)
- Native hedgerow with trees
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees
- Retained trees
- Planted trees

0 25 50 m

Contains Google maps © Google 2024.
For reference purpose only. No further copies may be made.

CSA environmental
Office 20, Citibase, 95 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 4ST
t 01273 573871
e brighton@csaenvironmental.co.uk
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

Project	Land west of Billinghurst Road, Ashington	Date: June 2026	Drawing No.: CSA/7799/115
Drawing Title	Proposed Habitats Plan	Scale: 1:1,500	Rev: -
Client	Devine Home PLC	Drawn: WC	Checked: JT

Appendix C

Draft Biodiversity Gain Plan

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Biodiversity gain plan

Submit a biodiversity gain plan to show how your development will achieve biodiversity net gain.

When to use this form

A biodiversity gain plan shows how a development will achieve 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG). Submit this form to your local planning authority after they approve your planning application.

Unless your development is exempt, you cannot start the development until the LPA approves your biodiversity gain plan and biodiversity metric calculation tool.

1. Submission details

1.1 Date

For example, 3/11/2023

TBC

1.2 Planning application reference number

TBC

1.3 Local planning authority (LPA)

Horsham District Council

1.4 Development site address

If the site does not have an address, enter the OS grid reference.

Land West of Billingshurst Road, Ashington

1.5 Describe the development

Tell us about the proposed development and any changes of use (250 words).

The proposed development comprises the construction of up to 65 dwellings and associated garden, parking and access infrastructure, as well as a play area and foul water pump station.

2. Developer details

2.1 Applicant name

TBC

2.2 Company name

Devine Homes PLC

2.3 Address

TBC

2.4 Email address

TBC

2.5 Telephone number

TBC

2.6 Declaration

By signing this declaration, you confirm that the information you give is complete and correct. Any opinions are your genuine opinions.

2.7 Signature

TBC

2.8 Date

TBC

3. Responsible person details

Tell us about who is responsible for completing the biodiversity gain plan. For example, a consultancy ecologist or planning agent.

3.1 Name

Jeff Turton

3.2 Company name

CSA Environmental

3.3 Address

Office 20, Citibase, 95 Ditchling Road, Brighton, BN1 4ST

3.4 Email address

[redacted]

3.5 Telephone number

[redacted]

3.6 Declaration

By signing this declaration, you confirm that the information you give is complete and correct. Any opinions are your genuine opinions.

3.7 Signature

TBC

3.8 Date

TBC

4. Biodiversity net gain strategy

4.1 Is the relevant date for the pre-development biodiversity value the same date as the planning application?

☒ Yes
☐ No

4.2 If no, what earlier date did you agree with the LPA?

4.3 How have you met the guidance on 'what counts towards your BNG'?

Find out what you can count towards a development's BNG

All habitat creation on site counts towards the BNG in full. No creation is for mitigation purposes and would otherwise be counted for in part.

4.4 How will you avoid or minimise impacts to habitats?

Tell us about the steps you've taken on site, including to avoid or minimise the impact on irreplaceable habitats.

Irreplaceable habitats will be retained and protected behind tree protection fencing during construction and root protection zones have been accounted for in scheme design such that the built form is pulled back from these trees.

4.5 Did you use your local nature recovery strategy to inform the strategic significance of habitats?

This includes other specified strategies if you do not have a local nature recovery strategy.

☒ Yes
☐ No

4.6 How will you achieve the target net gain percentage?

☐ On-site
☐ Off-site
☒ Both

4.7 Are any of your on-site enhancements considered 'significant'?

Find out what counts as a significant on-site enhancement.

☒ Yes

☐ No

4.8 If yes, tell us about the significant on-site enhancements

Include the appropriate planning condition or how you've secured the habitat.

Creation of medium distinctiveness pond, mixed scrub, other neutral grassland and planting of individual trees will count as 'significant'.

4.9 How many off-site biodiversity units do you need to meet 10% net gain?

0.80

4.10 Explain why you're using off-site biodiversity units

Only answer this question if you're planning to use off-site biodiversity units (250 words).

The metric does not meet the trading rules due to the loss of a c. 0.1ha area of 'other woodland; broadleaved' which is a medium distinctiveness habitat, leading to a shortfall of 0.80 habitat units in the medium distinctiveness band which is not being accounted for by creation efforts in the same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness. The scheme is otherwise at a net gain. There is a good availability of units for this habitat type on the Government BNG Register.

4.11 Explain why you're planning to use statutory biodiversity credits

Only answer this question if you're planning to use statutory biodiversity credits (250 words).

N/A

4.12 Do you have a habitat management and monitoring plan?

☒ Yes
☐ No

4.13 Have you used the statutory biodiversity metric tool?

☒ Yes
☐ No

4.14 Biodiversity metric calculation

Send your biodiversity metric calculation to the LPA and enter the file name.

7799_Metric V3_20260617_ISSUE

4.15 Condition assessments

Send your condition assessments to the LPA and enter the file name.

Attached to report no. 7799_02_BNG Design Stage

4.16 Pre-development habitat survey report and map

Send your baseline habitat survey report and map to the LPA. Enter the file name.

Attached to report no. 7799_02_BNG Design Stage

4.17 Post-development habitat map or landscape plan

Send your post-development habitat survey report and map to the LPA. Enter the file name.

Attached to report no. 7799_02_BNG Design Stage

4.18 Have you included an approved habitat degradation in the baseline?

If yes, include the relevant consenting body and reference number.

☐ Yes
☒ No

Consenting body

Horsham District Council

Reference number

TBC

5. Irreplaceable habitats

5.1 Does the development impact any irreplaceable habitats?

If yes, tell us if you've submitted an approved compensation plan.

☒ Yes
☐ No

5.2 Have you submitted an approved compensation plan?

☐ Yes
☒ No

6. On-site habitat enhancements

Answer this section if your development includes on-site habitat enhancements.

6.1 Survey date

For example, 3/11/2023

N/A

6.2 Survey constraints

For example, access issues, weather, or seasonal constraints.

N/A

6.3 Total pre-development biodiversity value

Enter the number from the headline results in your statutory biodiversity metric calculation.

Number of area habitat biodiversity units

7.78

Number of hedgerow biodiversity units

4.82

Number of watercourse biodiversity units

-

6.4 Total post-development biodiversity value

Enter the number from the headline results in your statutory biodiversity metric calculation.

Number of area habitat biodiversity units

10.08

Number of hedgerow biodiversity units

5.53

Number of watercourse biodiversity units

-

6.5 Total net change in biodiversity units

Enter the number from the headline results in your statutory biodiversity metric calculation.

Area habitat biodiversity units

2.31

Area habitat biodiversity units % change

29.70

Hedgerow biodiversity units

0.71

Hedgerow biodiversity units % change

14.77

Watercourse biodiversity units

N/A

Watercourse biodiversity units % change

N/A

6.6 Will you register and allocate any biodiversity units from your site to other developments?

If yes or provisionally, give details.

☐ Yes

☒ No

6.7 Give details

Tell us about the amount of biodiversity units and the development location (250 words).

-

7. Off-site habitat enhancements

Answer this section if your development includes off-site habitat enhancements.

7.1 Tell us about the off-site habitat enhancements

Include whether you're delivering the off-site enhancements or buying biodiversity units.

TBC

7.2 Biodiversity gain site register reference number

TBC

7.3 How have you secured the off-site habitat enhancements?

Tell us about any responsible bodies and whether you've used an S106 or conservation covenant.

TBC

7.4 Total baseline biodiversity value

Enter the number from the headline results in your statutory biodiversity metric calculation.

Number of area habitat biodiversity units

TBC

Number of hedgerow biodiversity units

TBC

Number of watercourse biodiversity units

N/A

7.5 Total biodiversity value post-intervention

Enter the number from the headline results in your statutory biodiversity metric calculation.

Number of area habitat biodiversity units

TBC

Number of hedgerow biodiversity units

TBC

Number of watercourse biodiversity units

N/A

7.6 Total net change in biodiversity units

Enter the number from the headline results in your statutory biodiversity metric calculation.

Area habitat biodiversity units

TBC

Area habitat biodiversity units % change

TBC

Hedgerow biodiversity units

TBC

Hedgerow biodiversity units % change

TBC

Watercourse biodiversity units

N/A

Watercourse biodiversity units % change

N/A

8. Statutory biodiversity credits

Answer this section if you need to use statutory biodiversity credits.

8.1 Do you need to use statutory biodiversity credits?

☐ Yes
☒ No

8.2 How many statutory biodiversity credits do you need?

Tell us the unit shortfall by tier, including the spatial risk multiplier. Enter the number from the headline results in your statutory biodiversity metric calculation.

A1

A2

A3

A4

A5

H

W

8.3 What evidence is there that no units are available through the market?

Send a message from at least 3 habitat providers, or a search result from online registers.

8.4 Proof of purchase

Send proof of purchase and enter the reference number.

9. Trading summary

9.1 Distinctiveness group

Tell us if you met the BNG trading rules on habitat compensation for each distinctiveness group. If you did not meet the trading rules, tell us if you agreed bespoke habitat compensation.

Check the rules on habitat compensation in the statutory biodiversity metric user guide.

Very high

N/A

High

N/A

Medium

No – Offsite solution TBC

Low

Yes

10. Sharing data (optional)

10.1 Can we share your ecological survey data with the Local Environmental Records Centre or other bodies?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Appendix D

Habitat & Hedgerow Condition Assessments

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)													
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type													
Grassland - Modified grassland													
Habitat Description													
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification													
On-site or off-site, site name and location	7799 Land West of Billinghurst, Ashington	Survey date and Surveyor name	15.08.2024 JMT & WC										
		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	N/A										
Limitations (if applicable)	None	Habitat parcel reference	F3	F1	F6	F5	F4	F2					
		Grid reference	TQ 13148 16730	TQ 13040 16762	TQ 13206 16887	TQ 13121 16892	TQ 13135 16801	TQ 13026 16856					
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	N	N	N	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 vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N					
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). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y					
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.	N	Y	Y	N	N	N					
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2].	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N					
F	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]).	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)	N	N	N	N	N	Y					
	Number of criteria passed	5	6	5	3	5	4					

Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓									
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)	N	N	N	N	N	N				
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	N	N	N	N	N	Y				
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N				

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Footnotes

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

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

Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive 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).

Condition Sheet: WOODLAND Habitat Type

UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types

Woodland and forest - Lowland beech and yew woodland
Woodland and forest - Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
Woodland and forest - Native pine woodlands
Woodland and forest - Other coniferous woodland
Woodland and forest - Other Scot's pine woodland
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; mixed
Woodland and forest - Upland birchwoods
Woodland and forest - Upland mixed ashwoods
Woodland and forest - Upland oakwood
Woodland and forest - Wet woodland

Habitat Description

ukhab – UK Habitat Classification

This condition sheet is based on the England Woodland Biodiversity Group (EWBG) Woodland Condition Survey Method, available here:

Woodland Wildlife Toolkit (sylva.org.uk)

IMPORTANT: This biodiversity metric woodland condition assessment must be used to assess woodland being input into the biodiversity metric. The outputs of this condition assessment are not equivalent to, nor are they comparable with the scores from the EWBG condition assessment, because the EWBG assessment has been adapted for the biodiversity metric, including the removal of EWBG Indicator 7 (Proportion of favourable land cover around woodland) and Indicator 14 (Size of woodland), and minor changes to other indicators.

On-site or off-site, site name and location	7799 Land West of Billinghurst, Ashington	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	17.04.2024 JMT
Limitations (if applicable)		**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	
Grid reference	TQ 13156 16872	**Habitat parcel reference**	Woodland W1

Condition Assessment Criteria

	Indicator	Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator	Notes (such as justification)
A	**Age distribution of trees**	Three age-classes[1] present.	Two age-classes[1] present.	One age-class[1] present.	1	
B	**Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage**	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland[2].	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland[2].	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland[2].	3	
C	**Invasive plant species**	No invasive species[3] present in woodland.	Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* or cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* not present, and other invasive species[3] <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species[3] ≥10% cover.	3	
D	**Number of native tree species**	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.	Two or less native tree or shrub species[4] across woodland parcel.	2	

E	**Cover of native tree and shrub species**	>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	
F	**Open space within woodland**	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].	1	
G	**Woodland regeneration**	All three classes present in woodland[8]; trees 4 - 7 cm 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].	3	
H	**Tree health**	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback[9].	11% to 25% tree 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	
I	**Vegetation and ground flora**	Recognisable NVC plant community[10] at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community[10] at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community[10] at ground layer present.	1	
J	**Woodland vertical structure**	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	
K	**Veteran trees**	Two or more veteran trees[12] per hectare.	One veteran tree[12] per hectare.	No veteran trees[12] present in woodland.	1	
L	**Amount of deadwood**	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].	2	
M	**Woodland disturbance**	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].	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground[14].	2	
				Total Score (out of a possible 39)	27	

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Result Achieved
Total score >32 (33 to 39)	Good (3)	Moderate
Total score 26 to 32	Moderate (2)	
Total score <26 (13 to 25)	Poor (1)	

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type

Habitat Types

Individual trees – Urban trees
Individual trees – Rural trees
Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.

Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of rural trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in rural locations.

Habitat Description

Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment):
Young trees over 7.5 cm 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 should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.

On-site or off-site, site name and location		**Survey date and Surveyor name**									
		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)									
Limitations (if applicable)		**Habitat parcel reference**									
		T3	T4	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T13		
		Grid reference									
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	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y		
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	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1].	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N		
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	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N		

F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N			
	Number of criteria passed											

Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	**Condition Assessment Score**	**Score Achieved ×/✓**									
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)		X	X	X						
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	X				X	X	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.											

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score[2]

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type

Habitat Types

Individual trees – Urban trees
Individual trees – Rural trees
Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.

Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of rural trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in rural locations.

Habitat Description

Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment):
Young trees over 7.5 cm 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 should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.

On-site or off-site, site name and location		**Survey date and Surveyor name**	
		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Limitations (if applicable)		**Habitat parcel reference**	G5 G7
		Grid reference	

	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	Y									
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	Y									
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1].	Y	N									
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	Y									
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Y	Y									

F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Y									
	Number of criteria passed	6	5									

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

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score[2]

Condition sheet: HEDGEROW Habitat Types

Habitat Type

Native hedgerow
Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch
Native hedgerow with trees
Native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch
Species-rich native hedgerow
Species-rich native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch
Species-rich native hedgerow with trees
Species-rich native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch

Habitat Description

See EcIA/BNG Reports

ukhab – UK Habitat Classification

On-site or off-site, site name and location	4705 Ashington, On-Site	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	17.04.2024 JMT & WC
Limitations (if applicable)	None	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	N/A

Condition Assessment Details

A series of ten attributes, representing key physical characteristics are used for this assessment. Each attribute is assigned to one of five functional groups (A – E) and the condition of a hedgerow is assessed according to the number of attributes from these functional groups which pass or fail the 'favourable condition' criteria.

This assessment is based on the Hedgerow Survey Handbook[1] and Favourable Conservation Status document[2]. For further clarification please refer to the Hedgerow Survey Handbook.

Best practice would be to record the species, age, spacing and other key information about all trees present along a hedgerow within the 'Habitat Description' box, as well as other key features of the hedgerow.

Hedgerow favourable condition attributes

Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		**Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'**	**Criteria description**	**Habitat parcel reference**										**Notes (such as justification)**
				H1	H5	H6	H7							
				Grid reference										
				TQ 13106 16809	TQ 13243 16910	TQ 13139 16820	TQ 13147 16782							
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types				**Criterion passed (Yes or No)**										
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).	Y	Y	Y	Y							
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 *Prunus spinosa* 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).	Y	Y	Y	N							
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).	Y	Y	Y	Y							

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).	N/A	N	Y	Y							
C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>1 m 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 1 m 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.	Y	Y	N	Y							
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.	Y	Y	Y	Y							
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].	Y	Y	Y	N							
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).	Y	Y	N	Y							
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.	-	N	-	Y							
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.	-	Y	-	N							

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:	

Condition categories for hedgerows with 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 5 failures in total; **AND** 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; **OR** Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1
	Score achieved:	

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Appendix E

Outline Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared by CSA Environmental on behalf of Devine Homes PLC. It sets out an outline Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) for Land West of Billingshurst Road, Ashington (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). Up to 65 dwellings with associated private gardens, access infrastructure, Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features and 1.02ha of Public Open Space for which outline planning consent will be sought.

1.2 This outline HMMP sets out management objectives and prescriptions in relation to habitats likely to be considered by Horsham District Council (HDC) as providing significant biodiversity net gain within the Site, with the aim of securing long-term enhancement of habitats alongside the proposed development.

1.3 This outline HMMP specifically covers the on-Site management of 'medium' distinctiveness habitats and above, as these are likely to be viewed as 'significant biodiversity net gain' on Site. The habitats covered are:

- Other neutral grassland (medium distinctiveness)
- Mixed scrub (medium distinctiveness)
- Tree planting (medium distinctiveness)
- SuDS basins/swales (medium distinctiveness)
- New Native Hedgerows (medium distinctiveness)

1.4 This outline HMMP will be updated at the Biodiversity Gain Condition discharge stage using the Natural England template, and will be based upon detailed design and landscaping proposals. The prescriptions set out within this outline HMMP are based on the Proposed Habitats Plan (CSA/7799/115), which has been informed by the Illustrative Master Plan (Plan Ref: DEV1250921-IMP-01 P4) prepared by Thrive Architects and the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (Plan Ref: LLD3780-LAN-DWG-010) prepared by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology on behalf of Devine Homes PLC.

Management Responsibility & Funding

1.5 The Site Owner/Developer will retain overall responsibility for implementation of this HMMP and will secure appropriate funding for management and monitoring for the duration required by planning and any legal agreement (e.g. Section 106 / conservation covenant). Day-to-day works may be delivered by a Management Company and/or appointed Landscape Contractor. Ecological monitoring and periodic review will be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist (SQE). Any specialist operations (e.g. scrub control, aquatic planting, arboricultural

works) will be undertaken by competent contractors with demonstrable experience.

1.6 This HMMP covers an initial 10-year period following practical completion/hand-over (or habitat establishment, as applicable). The HMMP will be reviewed at least every 10 years thereafter (up to a minimum of 30 years) and updated where necessary using an adaptive management approach, informed by monitoring results and in consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g. Local Planning Authority, statutory consultees, management body).

2.0 GENERAL MANAGEMENT AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

2.1 Any tree surgery works shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified arboricultural contractor, registered with the Arboricultural Association and all tree surgery works shall be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of BS 3998:2010 'Tree work - Recommendations'.

2.2 All pruning/removal works to existing vegetation, including trees, should be undertaken outside of the bird-nesting season to ensure nesting birds are not disturbed. For clarification, the bird-nesting season is taken to be March to August inclusive. Where this is not possible, an ecologist will need to check for nesting birds prior to commencement of works.

2.3 All trees and dense scrub/shrub areas to be retained are to be protected throughout the duration of the construction works in accordance with the prescriptions set out in the arboricultural assessment to meet the criteria of BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to Construction.

2.4 Where tree surgery is planned as part of this management plan or in the situation where an approved tree surgeon has recommended remedial work for health and safety reasons, the potential for bats to be present must be considered before work is carried out.

2.5 All new/replacement planting will be conducted into well-prepared ground and follow good horticultural practice. All new native transplants should be protected with proprietary rabbit guards or shrub shelters.

2.6 Sufficient watering will be undertaken by the contractor to establish and maintain healthy plant growth.

2.7 New ornamental shrubs, hedges and herbaceous plants will be pruned in order to maintain attractive form as appropriate to their species.

2.8 Peat-based composts will be avoided wherever possible.

2.9 All plants will be maintained in a disease and pest free state. In most instances, 'natural' methods of pest control are to be undertaken prior to any chemical application. In the event that natural methods of eradication are unsuccessful, plants will be treated through the application of a suitable proprietary herbicide/pesticide.

2.10 All trees and shrubs will be monitored for any sign of defects or poor health annually or after severe weather. Any signs of ill health or damage will be noted and remedial action when required. Tree shelters, stakes, ties and guards will be checked annually for adjustment and/or replacement/removal as required.

2.11 Areas of shrub/tree planting with a bark mulch layer will be topped up annually in the spring to retain moisture and limit weed growth, to a nominal depth of 50-75mm.

2.12 All formal planting areas will be kept tidy and free from weeds, trimmings, debris and litter. Weeds should be removed by hand unless where it is unfeasible; whereby weeds can be treated by the application of a suitable proprietary herbicide, failing other manual/organic methods.

2.13 Any hard surfacing adjacent to management areas are to be protected from damage by machinery including mowers, with surface debris swept after each visit.

2.1 Maintenance visits shall be undertaken at minimum monthly intervals (i.e. 12 visits per year). Visits may need to be increased at certain times of the year to enable the operations set out within the report to be properly executed.

2.2 The Contractor shall ensure that any chemical application is only applied where necessary (e.g. weed wiping / spot weed control) and is undertaken by trained personal/operatives only, who have the appropriate NPTC certificates and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. The 'Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides for Non-Agricultural Purposes' will be observed where applicable. The use of any chemicals shall be noted on record sheets.

2.3 The Contractor should ensure that the Site is left in a tidy and safe state following the undertaking of works outlined in the enclosed schedules and this shall be at the end of the day of each visit.

2.4 The Contractor shall programme and vary their agreed time of visits to coincide with appropriate weather conditions for carrying out of operations, with particular regard for the use of chemicals and the mowing of grass. The cutting of grass (outside of the main meadow) during excessively wet weather or following periods of extended rain is strictly prohibited.

2.5 The Contractor/Management Company are to keep accurate and detailed records of all visits undertaken and the operations carried out on each visit. These should be collated on a six monthly basis and records are to be kept by the Management Company in one location and copies are to be made available for inspection by the Local Planning Authority on request.

3.0 OTHER NEUTRAL GRASSLAND

Management objectives

- Creation of other neutral grassland areas to achieve and thereafter sustain the target habitat condition stated in the BNG Metric (typically 'moderate' or 'good' as applicable).
- Increase sward species-richness and structural diversity, with an emphasis on native grasses and forbs appropriate to local soils/hydrology.
- Provide nectar/larval food resources for invertebrates and maintain cover/refuge for fauna within a varied sward.
- Prevent scrub encroachment where grassland is the intended primary habitat (except where scrub is purposely retained/created in designated compartments).
- Targeted to achieve 'moderate' condition by passing criteria A (good example of habitat type), B (varied sward height), D (scrub cover <5%) and E (absence of invasive non-native species & <5% cover of sub-optimal species) as per the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Management Prescriptions

3.1 The indicative area of grassland to be managed under this HMMP is shown within the Proposed Habitats Plan (CSA/7799/115) as 'other neutral grassland'. This will be updated at the detailed design stage.

3.2 A summary of the management and monitoring prescriptions presented in more detail below is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Grassland Management Prescriptions

Initial/establishment (Years 0–2)	Routine management (Years 2–10)	Monitoring
Frequent establishment cuts to 50–75mm (c. 4–6/year in Year 1), remove arisings; spot-control weeds; repair bare/eroded areas if required.	Hay cut Aug–Sep (plus optional spring cut in June/July); remove arisings; rotate refuge areas; spot-control pernicious weeds; prevent scrub encroachment.	SQE baseline and Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20, 30 condition checks + fixed-point photos.
Grassland should not be cut in excessive wet weather.		

3.3 Management prescriptions are designed to ensure that the management objectives can be delivered. However, it should be noted that the principles of 'adaptive management' will need to be observed to ensure that changes to prescriptions can be made as required, where necessary to ensure that the desired objectives can be achieved.

- **Establishment (Years 0–2):** Where neutral grassland is newly created (seeded), the sward will be cut to approximately 50–75mm whenever growth reaches c. 150mm during the first growing season (typically 4–6 cuts), to control annual weeds and encourage tillering. All arisings will be removed from Site.

- **Long-term management (from Year 2 onwards):** Manage as species-rich meadow via a hay-cut regime or with the aim of maintaining a varied sward structure. Unless otherwise required by the approved design, the default approach will be:
- One main cut in late summer (typically August–September), timed to allow flowering and seed set; cut height c. 75–100mm.
- Optional spring cut (March–April) where thatch builds up; cut height c. 75–100mm.
- Remove all arisings within 3–5 days of cutting to reduce soil fertility.
- Retain uncut refuge strips/patches (typically 10–20% of area) on rotation each year to benefit invertebrates and small vertebrates.
- Spot-control pernicious weeds (e.g. thistle/dock/nettle) by hand-pulling or targeted treatment; avoid blanket spraying.
- Prevent compaction and nutrient inputs (no fertiliser; no storage of materials; avoid frequent mowing except on access paths where agreed).

- **Monitoring:** An SQE will undertake habitat condition assessments in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition sheet(s) relevant to 'other neutral grassland', plus fixed-point photography. Monitoring will be undertaken at an agreed baseline (pre-works or at handover), and then in Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20 and 30 (or as otherwise required by planning/BNG legal agreement). The SQE will provide short written recommendations following each visit; where condition is not trending towards target, prescriptions will be adjusted (adaptive management).

4.0 MIXED SCRUB

Management objectives

- Create and/or maintain mixed scrub as a structurally diverse habitat supporting nesting birds, invertebrates and shelter/foraging opportunities for other fauna.
- Maintain a mosaic of scrub ages (including open glades/edge habitat) and prevent the scrub developing uniformly into closed-canopy woodland unless specifically intended.
- Prevent scrub encroachment into areas where grassland, SuDS features or access routes must remain open.
- Prevent scrub encroachment onto off-site hedgerows via maintenance strips.
- Targeted to achieve 'moderate' condition by passing criteria A (good example of habitat type, at least 80% native), C (absence of invasive non-native species & <5% cover of suboptimal species) and D (well-developed edge with tall grassland and forbs) as per the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Management prescriptions

4.1 The indicative area of mixed scrub to be managed under this HMMP is shown within the Proposed Habitats Plan (CSA/7799/115) as 'mixed scrub'. This will be updated at the detailed design stage.

4.2 A summary of the management and monitoring prescriptions presented in more detail below is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Mixed Scrub Management Prescriptions

Initial/establishment (Years 0–2)	Routine management (Years 2–10)	Monitoring
Water/weed newly planted scrub; replace failures in next planting season; define compartment edges/glades.	Rotational cut/coppice (c. 20–30% of each block per year on 3–7 year cycle); maintain scalloped edges and glades; remove/retain arisings as agreed. Maintain maintenance strips.	Annual contractor inspection; SQE review Years 1,2, 3, 5, 10 (and as required).

- **Establishment:** Newly planted scrub will be weeded and watered as necessary during the first 2–3 growing seasons. Failed plants will be replaced in the next planting season (Nov–Mar).
- **Structure:** Maintain scrub in discrete blocks and/or along edges, with scalloped margins and occasional glades to increase edge habitat and sunlit microclimates.

- **Rotation:** Undertake rotational scrub cutting/coppicing on approximately a 3–7 year cycle (tailored to growth rate), treating no more than c. 20–30% of any scrub block in a single year to retain continuity of cover.
- **Timing:** Carry out scrub management outside March–August inclusive unless an SQE confirms absence of nesting birds. Where scrub provides overwintering habitat, avoid whole-area clearance in winter; retain uncut sections each year.
- **Arisings:** Remove brash where it would smother grassland or obstruct SuDS function. Where appropriate, retain some arisings as habitat piles (log/brash piles) in agreed locations away from SuDS inlets/outlets and paths.
- **Invasive/non-native species:** Identify and control any invasive species promptly using the least harmful effective approach.

Monitoring

4.3 The scrub compartments will be inspected annually by the Management Company/Contractor, with SQE input at Years 1,2, 3, 5 and 10 (and thereafter as required) to confirm that the intended mosaic structure is being maintained and that scrub is not encroaching into other target habitats. Fixed-point photography will be used to record scrub extent and structure.

5.0 TREE PLANTING

Management objectives

- Establish healthy, resilient native trees in accordance with the approved landscape/planting plan, providing long-term structure, shading, connectivity and biodiversity benefits.
- Achieve high survival rates (target ≥90% at Year 5) through appropriate establishment maintenance and replacement of failures.
- Maintain trees so they do not compromise the function/safety of SuDS features, access routes or adjacent habitats (e.g. avoid excessive shading of species-rich grassland where not intended).
- Targeted to achieve 'poor' condition by passing either criteria A (native species, or at least 70% of block are native species) or F (more than 20% oversailing vegetation) as per the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Management prescriptions

5.1 The indicative areas of tree planting to be managed under this HMMP is shown within the Proposed Habitats Plan (CSA/7799/115). This will be updated at the detailed design stage.

5.2 A summary of the management and monitoring prescriptions presented in more detail below is provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Individual Tree Management Prescriptions

Initial/establishment (Years 0–2)	Routine management (Years 2–10)	Monitoring
Watering in dry periods; maintain mulch; check/adjust stakes, ties and guards; replace failures; formative pruning if required.	Annual inspections; remove stakes/guards once established; continued replacement planting where needed; manage shading/clearances and any safety issues.	Annual survival checks (Years 1–5); SQE/arboricultural review Years 2 and 5 (and Year 10 if required).

- **Planting season:** Plant trees during dormancy (typically November–March) and in accordance with the approved specification and good practice.
- **Ground preparation:** Prepare pits appropriately; avoid compaction; incorporate mulch as specified (avoid peat-based products).
- **Protection/support:** Use stakes, ties and guards/shelters appropriate to stock/rabbit/deer pressure; check and adjust at least annually.
- **Mulching:** Maintain a weed-free mulched circle at the base of each tree (typically 50–75mm depth), topping up annually for the first 3–5 years.

- **Watering:** Water during dry periods in the first 2–3 growing seasons (frequency dependent on weather and soil type).
- **Weed control:** Control competing vegetation within the mulched area by hand or targeted treatment only.
- **Formative pruning:** Undertake light formative pruning where necessary to establish good structure; all works to be completed by competent operatives and in accordance with BS 3998 where applicable.
- **Replacement:** Replace failures in the next planting season for the first 5 years (or longer where required to meet BNG targets), to maintain the intended stocking density.

Monitoring

5.3 Tree planting will be inspected at least annually for the first 5 years to confirm survival, stability, damage, pest/disease issues, and the effectiveness of guards/stakes/ties. An SQE (and/or arboricultural consultant where required) will review tree establishment at Years 2 and 5 (and at Year 10 if trees contribute to BNG units), providing recommendations for remedial works and replacement planting.

6.0 SUDS BASINS

6.1 The SuDS strategy is intended to include a mix of **dry basins** (normally dry, temporarily holding water following rainfall events) and **wet basins** (with more frequent and/or longer duration standing water and, in some cases, small areas of permanent water). Management will therefore be tailored to basin type and to the approved drainage design, whilst seeking to maximise biodiversity value.

Management objectives

- Maintain SuDS basins so that they function as designed for surface water storage, attenuation and water quality treatment.
- Maximise biodiversity value through appropriate native wetland/marginal planting and varied vegetation structure, while maintaining hydraulic performance and safe access for maintenance.
- Maintain the target habitat condition stated in the BNG Metric for SuDS features (often assessed under 'Urban – SuDS' or similar).
- Prevent excessive siltation, litter accumulation and dominance by invasive species.
- The basins are targeted to achieve 'good' condition by passing core criteria A (varied vegetation structure), B (range of species beneficial for wildlife at different times of year) and C (invasive non-nave plant species/detrimental species <5% cover), as well as additional criteria E1 (plant species mostly native) and E2 (wetland/riparian vegetation present) as per the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Management prescriptions

6.2 The indicative area of wet basins and dry basins/swales to be managed under this HMMP is shown within the Proposed Habitats Plan (CSA/7799/115). This will be updated at the detailed design stage.

6.3 A summary of the management and monitoring prescriptions presented in more detail below is provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Individual Tree Management Prescriptions

Initial/establishment (Years 0–2)	Routine management (Years 2–10)	Monitoring
Quarterly inspections; establish vegetation and infill gaps; remove litter/debris; check inlets/outlets; address erosion promptly.	Quarterly inspections + post-storm checks; 1–2 vegetation cuts/year with arisings removed (where specified); control scrub/trees in basin footprint; desilt as required.	SQE condition checks Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20, 30; retain inspection records of hydraulic performance.

Basin prescriptions

- Manage vegetation by **zones** (e.g. permanent water, drawdown zone, upper banks) using a mosaic approach to retain open water/flow capacity and diverse marginal habitat.
- Maintain open water (where designed) by preventing complete colonisation by emergent vegetation; undertake selective removal/thinning on rotation (e.g. 25–50% of emergent stands in any one year) to retain habitat continuity.
- Retain and maintain native marginal/emergent planting in shallow shelves; infill gaps during establishment years and remove inappropriate species that could dominate or impede hydraulic function.
- Inspect for algal blooms and nutrient enrichment indicators (e.g. excessive duckweed dominance); if persistent, review upstream inputs, mowing/arisings removal and consider remedial planting/management to improve water quality.
- Plan de-silting/vegetation works to avoid sensitive periods for wildlife where practicable (e.g. main amphibian breeding period) and retain some undisturbed refuge areas at all times.
- Maintain any safety features (e.g. shallow side slopes, fencing/signage) and manage vegetation to preserve visibility where required by the approved design.
- **Routine inspections:** Inspect basins at least quarterly and after significant storm events for litter, debris, erosion, standing water outside design expectations, and blockages at inlets/outlets.
- **Litter/debris:** Remove litter and deposited debris by hand and dispose off-site.
- **Inlets/outlets:** Keep headwalls, pipes, flow controls and trash screens clear and in good repair; remove obstructions promptly.
- **Vegetation management:** Manage basin floor and side slopes to maintain a varied sward. Where wet grassland/wildflower mixes are used, cut 1–2 times annually depending on growth, typically late summer with an optional spring cut; remove arisings to reduce nutrient build-up.
- **Marginal/wetland planting:** Maintain native marginal planting in shallow zones where included; infill gaps in the first 2–3 years. Avoid planting that could obstruct inlets/outlets or impede storage volume.
- **Woody growth:** Prevent establishment of trees/scrub on embankments and within basin footprints where roots could damage structures or reduce capacity, unless expressly designed.
- **Silt management:** Monitor sediment accumulation; desilt forebays/traps as required and dispose of material appropriately. Any desilting should be planned to avoid sensitive periods for wildlife where practicable.
- **Health and safety:** Maintain safe access routes for maintenance; manage vegetation to retain sight lines and avoid trip hazards; maintain any safety signage/fencing as required by the design.

Monitoring

6.4 An SQE will review SuDS basin vegetation and condition at Years 1,2, 3, 5, 10, 20 and 30 in line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition criteria applicable to SuDS/urban wet features, alongside the routine engineering inspections undertaken by the management body. Monitoring will record vegetation structure, native species composition, invasive species cover, evidence of erosion/siltation, and whether the basins continue to function as designed (including expected water levels, extent/duration of standing water, and drawdown performance for dry basins, and maintenance of open water/marginal zones for wet basins where designed).

7.0 NEW NATIVE HEDGEROWS

Management objectives

- Create and maintain structurally diverse, predominantly native hedgerows that provide foraging, nesting and commuting habitat for birds, bats and other wildlife.
- Achieve a dense, stock-proof (where required) and species-rich hedge with minimal gaps, meeting the target BNG condition (typically 'good') within the required timeframe.
- Maintain a buffer of tussocky / herb-rich grassland along at least one side of hedgerows where feasible, and avoid nutrient enrichment and physical damage.
- The new native hedgerows are targeted to achieve 'moderate' condition by passing B1 (gap between canopy and ground <0.5m), B2 (gaps <10% of total length), C1 (undisturbed perennial ground >90% on at least one side), D1 (lack of invasive/neophyte species) and D2 (<10% hedgerow with damage) as per the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. Those will trees will also achieve E2 (at least 95% of trees in health condition).

Management prescriptions

7.1 The new and enhanced hedgerows to be managed under this HMMP is shown within the Proposed Habitats Plan (CSA/7799/115). This will be updated at the detailed design stage.

7.2 A summary of the management and monitoring prescriptions presented in more detail below is provided in Table 5.

Table 5: Hedgerow Management Prescriptions

Initial/establishment (Years 0–2)	Routine management (Years 2–10)	Monitoring
Planting in staggered rows with guards/shelters; maintain 1m weed-free strip; water in dry periods; replace failures in next planting season; light formative trimming where required.	Cut on 2–3 year rotation (or annually only where necessary for safety); gap-up where breaks >5m; maintain buffer strip; inspect for damage and invasive species.	Annual establishment checks (Years 1–5); SQE baseline and Years 1,2, 3, 5, 10, 20, 30 condition checks + fixed-point photos.

- **Planting:** Plant as per the approved landscape/planting specification using locally appropriate species-rich native species (and locally sourced stock where possible). Plant during dormancy (Nov–Mar) into well-prepared ground. Protect plants with spiral guards/shelters and canes as required.
    - The new hedgerows will be species-rich by achieving at least five native woody species per 30m section.

    - New hedgerows H9 and H12 will be planted with individual standard trees every 30m.
    - Hedgerow H6 will be enhanced by the inclusion of additional native woody and fruit baring species.
- **Establishment (Years 1–3):** Keep a 1m wide strip centred on the hedge line weed-free (mulch and/or hand weeding/targeted spot treatment). Water in prolonged dry periods. Replace failures in the next planting season.
- **Formative trimming:** Lightly trim lateral growth in late summer/early autumn in the first 2–3 years (where necessary) to encourage dense/bushy structure. Avoid heavy cutting until plants are well-established.
- **Long-term cutting regime:** Once established, cut on a 2–3 year rotation (rather than annually) where feasible, to maximise flowering/berrying and invertebrate value. Where annual cutting is required for visibility/safety, undertake in January–February and avoid March–August inclusive.
- **Gaps and standards:** Gap-up any sections where failures create breaks >5m. Where hedgerow trees/standards are included, allow selected individuals to grow on (no trimming) and protect from damage; check annually for health and stability.
- **Buffer** and **protection:** Maintain a buffer of rough grassland along hedgerows where practicable; prevent encroachment by garden waste, fly-tipping, and nutrient inputs. Repair any damage caused by vehicles or vandalism promptly.

Monitoring

7.3 Hedgerows will be checked at least annually for the first 5 years to confirm establishment, staking/guards condition (where used), weed burden, browsing damage and the need for replacements. An SQE will undertake BNG condition assessment of hedgerows at baseline (pre-works or handover) and in Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20 and 30 (or as required), with fixed-point photographs. Monitoring will consider height/width, continuity (gap frequency), evidence of damage, presence of a vegetated buffer strip and the absence of invasive non-native species; remedial measures will be implemented where condition is not trending toward the target.

CSA environmental

Dixies Barns, High Street,
Ashwell, Hertfordshire
SG7 5NT

t 01462 743647
e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

Office 20, Citibase,
95 Ditchling Road,
Brighton BN1 4ST

t 01273 573871
e brighton@csaenvironmental.co.uk
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

3 Ripple Court,
Brockeridge Park, Twyning,
Tewkesbury GL20 6FG

t 01386 751100
e tewkesbury@csaenvironmental.co.uk
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

Wizu Workspace, 32 Eyre
St, Sheffield City Centre,
Sheffield S1 4QZ

t 07838 290741
e sheffield@csaenvironmental.co.uk
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

Worting House,
Church Lane, Basingstoke,
RG23 8PY

t 01256 632340
e basingstoke@csaenvironmental.co.uk
w csaenvironmental.co.uk