



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT:

Land North of Wishing Wells Farm
Old London Road
Hickstead
West Sussex
RH17 5LZ

For: **KLA Architects**

Issued by: **Wychwood Environmental Ltd**
www.wychwoodenvironmental.com

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.0 METHODOLOGY	6
Baseline Condition	6
Post-development Condition	7
Limitations	7
3.0 BASELINE	9
Baseline Habitats	9
Irreplaceable Habitat.....	11
Habitats.....	11
Summary of Baseline Units	11
Summary of Baseline Hedgerows	11
Baseline Watercourses	12
4.0 PROPOSED	13
Proposed Habitats.....	13
Proposed Habitat Condition Assessment	13
Summary of Post-development Units	13
Proposed Hedgerows	14
Proposed Watercourses	14
5.0 OUTCOME.....	15
Habitat Units	15
Hedgerow Units	15
Watercourse Units	15
Trading Rules	15
6.0 REFERENCES.....	16
Annex 1 – Predevelopment and Post Development Figures.....	17
Annex 2 – Baseline Condition Assessment Sheets.....	19

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposed development

- Development proposals involve a new building designed to accommodate luxury horse lorries, associated offices and a valeting facility for high-end vehicles. In addition, the proposal includes the creation of a new retail premises with dedicated customer parking. The scheme also addresses access improvements, including the removal of the existing gates and installation of a new set positioned 12.5 metres back from the highway to safely accommodate a 12-metre lorry. The access point from the highway will be widened to enhance manoeuvrability and improve overall site safety. The development will further incorporate renewable energy services, with proposed measures such as roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels, electric-vehicle charging infrastructure to support both commercial operations and customer use. These features are intended to reduce the site's carbon footprint, improve energy performance and contribute to long-term sustainability goals.

Baseline Units

- The site supports 2.22 habitat units currently within the baseline.
- The site supports 0.11 hedgerow units currently within the baseline.
- The site supports 0.19 watercourse units currently within the baseline.

Post Intervention Units

- Post development it is anticipated that the proposals will support 0.63 habitat units.
- **This is a net loss of 1.59 habitat units or a -71.65% change in units.**
- Post development it is anticipated that the proposals will support 0.19 hedgerow units.
- **This is a net gain of 0.08 hedgerow units or +68.74% change in units.**
- Post development it is anticipated that the proposals will support 0 watercourse units.
- **This is a net loss of 0.19 watercourse units or a -100% change in units.**

Trading Rules

- The proposals do not meet the trading rule requirement of like for like or like for better required by the Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric for habitats. This is due to loss of 1.94 Habitat Units of ruderal/ephemeral, and a gain of 0.06 Habitat Units of introduced shrub and gain of 0.29 Habitat Units of individual trees, resulting in a net loss of 1.59 Habitat Units of low distinctiveness habitats.
- The proposals meet the trading rules for hedgerow units. This is due to a net gain of 0.08 Hedgerow Units of native hedgerow and no loss of hedgerow units.
- The proposals meet the trading rules for watercourse units. This is due to a net loss of 0.19 Watercourse Units of a ditch and no net gain in watercourse units.
- Due to the small size of the site and nature of the proposed development, habitat creation or enhancement on site in order to meet the required 10% net gain is not considered possible on-site. As significant habitat enhancement or creation are included in the proposed development, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) is required.
- Alternatively, off-site unit credits may be purchased to offset the losses with agreement from the local planning authority.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Wychwood Environmental Ltd was instructed to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment to determine the biological impact of the proposed development site at: Land North of Wishing Wells Farm, Old London Road, Hickstead, West Sussex, RH17 5LZ
- 1.2 Best practice guidelines require that this report be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist as defined in BS42020:2013. The author of this report meets that definition.
- 1.3 Development proposals involve a new building designed to accommodate luxury horse lorries, associated offices and a valeting facility for high-end vehicles. In addition, the proposal includes the creation of a new retail premises with dedicated customer parking. The scheme also addresses access improvements, including the removal of the existing gates and installation of a new set positioned 12.5 metres back from the highway to safely accommodate a 12-metre lorry. The access point from the highway will be widened to enhance manoeuvrability and improve overall site safety. The development will further incorporate renewable energy services, with proposed measures such as roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels, electric-vehicle charging infrastructure to support both commercial operations and customer use. These features are intended to reduce the site's carbon footprint, improve energy performance and contribute to long-term sustainability goals.
- 1.4 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than it was before. The process relies on the mitigation hierarchy, which sets out that everything possible must be done to firstly avoid, secondly minimise and thirdly restore and rehabilitate losses of biodiversity on site.
- 1.5 This report was completed using Defra's Statutory Metric (www.gov.uk, and Natural England, 2023a)¹ to quantify the biodiversity baseline for the site and calculate the post-development biodiversity unit for the proposed scheme following the best practice guidelines as set down by CIRIA (2019).

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/biodiversity-30-metric-launched-in-new-sustainable-development-toolkit>

- 1.6 Section two of this report describes the methodologies used for determining Biodiversity Net Gain. Section three and four provides the results of the assessment, section five provides discussion and implications for development.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Baseline Condition

- 2.1 The baseline condition of the site was established from data collected from a walkover survey undertaken by Lia Hutchinson BA on 12th November 2025.
- **Habitat Units** - All habitats (excluding hedgerows and watercourses) within the footprint of the development, were assessed during the survey following the Habitat Condition Assessment (HCA) guidelines (Natural England, 2023b).
 - **Hedgerow Units** - Any hedgerow or line of trees on site was assessed during the PEA following HCA guidelines (Natural England, 2023b).
 - **Watercourse Units** – Any water course on site was assessed during the EA following the HCA guidelines (Natural England, 2023b).
- 2.2 Habitat area or length, condition and distinctiveness were used to calculate baseline Biodiversity Units, providing a measure of the biodiversity pre-development. This calculation is in accordance with Defra's technical paper, guidance for developers and guidance for offset providers (Defra 2012 a, b and c). This is the standard metric used for calculating BU and LU in the UK.
- 2.3 Trees were measured as individual trees in size classes of small, medium, large or very large. Existing and proposed plantings of trees are calculated by the tree area calculator within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. Proposed trees for planting as per the guidelines, are assumed to be in the small size class when they are planted. Where trees were present within a treeline or hedgerow rather than as individual trees these trees were not considered individually but rather included in the hedgerow baseline or treeline as a linear feature.
- 2.4 Habitat Area and Hedgerow Length – The size of each habitat or hedgerow is calculated using a georeferenced Google Earth image of the site within QGIS.
- 2.5 Habitat Distinctiveness – A pre-assigned value is given by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric when inputting the specific Habitat Type.

- 2.6 Habitat Condition Assessment (HCA) – Using “The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Auditing and Accounting for Biodiversity - Technical Supplement” (Natural England, 2023b & 2023c), the condition of each habitat was assessed. Where there were gaps in primary HCA data, for example from limited access to land, professional judgement was applied, to retrospectively, assess the habitat condition.

Post-development Condition

- 2.7 Post-development biodiversity units are calculated in a similar way to baseline biodiversity units. However, in addition to area, condition and distinctiveness of the proposed habitats, the key risks to delivery are taken into account through the incorporation of risk factors. The Defra metric sets out three risk factors: distance from the Scheme (Spatial Risk); time taken for created or enhanced habitats to reach target condition (Temporal Risk); and how difficult it is to create or enhance any given habitat (Delivery Risk).

Limitations

- 2.8 An initial site assessment such as this is only able to act like a ‘snapshot’ to record any flora or fauna that is present at the time of the survey. It is, therefore, possible that some species may not have been present during the survey but may be evident at other times of the year. For this reason, habitats were assessed for their potential to support some species, even where no direct evidence (such as droppings) has been found. The absence of biological records does not preclude the presence of a particular species, as record coverage is often patchy due to access restrictions placed on surveyors by private property and trespass laws.
- 2.9 It is important to note that a scheme-wide biodiversity net gain or no net loss cannot be achieved for the scheme as a whole, if there are negative impacts on irreplaceable habitats.
- 2.10 Defra guidance dictates that any compensation offered to address impacts on irreplaceable habitats should be agreed directly with Natural England (NE). The baseline habitat which is identified for such compensation and the biodiversity units resulting from this compensation should also be excluded from biodiversity unit calculations.
- 2.11 Following Defra guidance, impacts on irreplaceable habitats and their compensation have been excluded from this biodiversity unit calculation.

- 2.12 Biodiversity Impact Assessment only deals with habitat and as such this report does not cover any of the requirements of the proposed development arising from potential impacts on protected species and designated sites.

3.0 BASELINE

Baseline Habitats

- 3.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses the UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab, 2023). Table 1 below gives the habitats identified as being present on site during the Ecological Appraisal.

Table 1. UK Hab - Habitats on site.

UKHAB Category
u1b Developed Land; Sealed Surface
u1c Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface
u, 81 Ruderal/ephemeral
h2a Native hedgerow
r1e Canal or ditch

Ruderal/ephemeral (u,81)

- 3.2 The majority of the site is comprised of ruderal/ephemeral habitat, where previously urban land has been unmanaged and colonised by forbs and weedy species with some scattered grass. Species present within this habitat include, but are not limited to, common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), sow-thistle (*Sonchus spp.*), bittersweet nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), black nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*), herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*), greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), petty spurge (*Euphorbia peplus*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale agg.*), bristly oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echinoides*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), pineapple mayweed (*Matricaria discoidea*), thorn-apple (*Datura stramonium*), fleabane (*Erigeron canadensis*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), and common mallow (*Malva sylvestris*). The structure is varied, with the habitat to the west reaching up to 1 m in height, whereas the habitat surrounding the artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface was sparser and more had a shorter structure.

Urban habitats

3.3 There is an area of **artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)** in the eastern section of the site, which comprises mostly gravel and bare ground, with the edges beginning to be colonised by scattered forbs from the Ruderal Ephemeral habitat.

3.4 There is also a small area of hardstanding (**developed land; sealed surface – u1b**) at the site entrance, where the access road connects with the site.

Native hedgerow (h2a)

3.5 A native hedgerow is present along the eastern boundary, approximately 1 m in width and 4 m in height. It has been subject to heavy management and is dominated by hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with frequent blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*).

Ditch (r1e)

3.6 There is a wet ditch running parallel to the northern boundary on the western half of the site, which was full of water at the time of the survey and connects to a pond approximately 5 m west of the site boundary within adjacent land. This land is owned by the farm located to the south of the site.

Individual trees

3.7 Within the site boundary there are three individual trees: a small goat willow (*Salix caprea*) in the northwest corner; a medium willow (*Salix sp.*) in the centre adjacent to the northern boundary; and a small Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) in the northeast corner of the site.

3.8 The habitats on site were assessed against the criteria in relevant in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric as: developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, ruderal/ephemeral, individual trees, native hedgerow and a ditch. Developed land; sealed surface and artificial unvegetated unsealed surface habitat types do have need to be condition assessed; however, the three individual trees, ruderal/ephemeral, native hedgerow and ditch were subject to condition assessments, outlined in tables below. T1 and T2 trees were considered to have the good condition and T3 was considered to have moderate condition. The ruderal/ephemeral was considered to have 'good' condition. The native hedgerow was considered to have moderate condition. The ditch was considered to have poor condition.

Irreplaceable Habitat

- 3.9 The site does not contain any irreplaceable habitats.

Habitats

- 3.10 The hedgerow situated on the eastern boundary of the site is considered to meet the Priority Habitat criteria for hedges as it is predominantly native woody species, it is over 20m long, less than 5m wide and gaps are less than 20m wide.

Summary of Baseline Units

- 3.11 The Baseline Habitat Units for the site are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Baseline Habitat Units.

Statutory Metric category	Area (Ha)	Habitat Units Delivered
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0082	0.00
Artificial unvegetated unsealed surfaced	0.0548	0.00
Ruderal/ephemeral	0.3233	1.94
Individual rural tree (T1)	0.0041	0.05
Individual rural tree (T2)	0.0163	0.20
Individual rural tree (T3)	0.0041	0.03

- 3.12 Overall, the baseline habitats on site provide a **2.22 units pre-development**.

Summary of Baseline Hedgerows

- 3.13 The Baseline Hedgerow Units for the site are given in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Baseline Habitat Units.

Statutory Metric category	Length (km)	Hedgerow Units Delivered
Native hedgerow	0.028	0.11

- 3.14 Overall, the baseline hedgerows on site provide a **0.11 units pre-development**.

Baseline Watercourses

3.15 The Baseline Watercourses Units for the site are given in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Baseline Watercourses Units.

Statutory Metric category	Length (Km)	Watercourse Units Delivered
Ditch	0.048	0.19

3.16 Overall, the baseline watercourses on site provide a **0.19 units pre-development**.

4.0 PROPOSED

- 4.1 Proposed Plans are based on the scheme are used to calculate the Biodiversity Units post-development. The post development habitats are provided in Figure 2, Annex 1.

Proposed Habitats

- 4.2 From the Proposed site plan (provided by KLA Architects), the following habitats have been identified as being created on site post-development:

- Developed land; sealed surfaces;
- Introduced shrub;
- Native hedgerow; and
- Individual trees.

Developed land; sealed surfaces

- 4.3 This involves the creation of a new commercial unit and retail unit, with associated access and staff and customer parking.

Landscaping

- 4.4 A detailed landscaping plan has not yet been produced, and the post-development habitat map has been produced based on the current provided proposed plan by KLA Architects which includes areas of 'Proposed landscaping'. These areas have been categorised as either 'introduced shrub' or 'native hedgerow' depending on if the landscaping is an area or linear. 'Proposed tree planting' has also been included within the plans which have been categorised as 'individual trees'. The post-development metric and habitat plan should be reviewed and updated following final landscaping plans.

Proposed Habitat Condition Assessment

- 4.5 The proposed developed land; sealed surface and introduced shrub habitat types do not require a condition assessment; however, the proposed native hedgerow and individual trees require a condition assessment, which are outlined in the tables in Appendix 3.

Summary of Post-development Units

- 4.6 The Habitat Units post-development for the site are given in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Post-development Habitat Units.

UKHAB Category	Area (Ha)	Habitat Units Delivered
Developed land; sealed surface	0.3501	0.00
Introduced shrub	0.0336	0.06
Individual trees	0.0936	0.29

4.6 Overall, the scheme is anticipated to provide **0.35 habitat units post-development.**

Proposed Hedgerows

4.7 The Hedgerow Units post-development for the site are given in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Post-development Hedgerow Units.

UKHAB Category	Area (Ha)	Habitat Units Delivered
Native hedgerow	0.023	0.08

4.8 Overall, the scheme is anticipated to provide **0.35 habitat units post-development.**

Proposed Watercourses

4.9 There are no proposed watercourses within the proposed development plan.

5.0 OUTCOME

Habitat Units

- 5.1 The proposed development will result in a loss of 1.59 habitat units or 71.65% net loss in Habitat Units. Therefore, the proposed development does not currently meet the required net gain in Habitat Units of at least 10% post development under the current proposals. There is a unit deficit of 1.81 habitat units that are required to attain 10% BNG.

Hedgerow Units

- 5.2 The proposed development (with the proposed hedgerows included within the 'proposed landscaping') will result in a net gain of 0.08 hedgerow units or 68.74% net gain in Hedgerow Units. Therefore, the proposed development currently meets the required net gain in Hedgerow Units of at least 10% post development under the current proposals.

Watercourse Units

- 5.3 The proposed development will result in a loss of 0.19 watercourse units or 100% net loss in Watercourse Units. Therefore, the proposed development does not currently meet the required net gain in Watercourse Units of at least 10% post development under the current proposals. There is a unit deficit of 0.21 watercourse units that are required to attain 10% BNG.

Trading Rules

- 5.3 The Defra Metric requires that losses in habitat are compensated for on a 'like for like' or 'like for better' basis with new or restored habitats aiming to achieve a higher distinctiveness or condition than those lost. The proposed development does not meet the Trading Rule as set out above for habitats and watercourses, although the Trading Rules are met for hedgerows.
- 5.4 Due to the small size of the site and nature of the proposed development, habitat creation or enhancement on site in order to meet the required 10% net gain in habitats is not considered possible on-site. As significant habitat enhancement or creation are included in the proposed development (individual trees and native hedgerow), a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) is required. Off-site unit credits may be purchased to offset the losses with agreement from the local planning authority.

6.0 REFERENCES

CIRIA (2019) Biodiversity Net Gain: good practice principles for development.

Defra (2012a) Biodiversity Offsetting Pilots: Technical Paper- the Metric for the Biodiversity Offsetting Pilots in England.

Defra (2012b) Biodiversity Offsetting Pilots: Guidance for Developers.

Defra (2012c) Biodiversity Offsetting Pilots: Guidance for Offset Providers.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2019) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

JNCC (2010) Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A technique for environmental audit. JNCC, Peterborough.

Natural England (2023a) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool(JP039) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

Natural England (2023b) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Draft User Guide

Natural England (2023c) Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets with Instructions.

UKHab (2020) UK Habitat Classification.

Annex 1 – Predevelopment and Post Development Figures



Figure 1 – Baseline Habitats on Site.



Figure 2 – Proposed Habitat Post Development.

Annex 2 – Baseline Condition Assessment Sheets

Table 3. Individual tree condition assessment results.

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)			Notes (such as justification)
		T1	T2	T3	
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	Yes	No	T3 was Norway spruce, T1 and T2 were willow species
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Individual trees automatically pass
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	No	No	No	All trees were considered semi-mature
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.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No damage evident
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Loose bark
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Oversailing ruderal
Number of criteria passed		5	5	4	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved $\times \sqrt{7}$			
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)	✓	✓		
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.					
Footnotes					
Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and: Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)					
Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.					

Table 4. Ruderal/ephemeral condition assessment results.

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - must be assessed for all urban habitat types :			
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Yes	
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Yes	
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Yes	
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)			Yes
Number of criteria passed			3
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓	
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only (all listed urban habitats except Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, Bioswale, SuDS and Green roofs) :			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Good (3)	✓	
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Moderate (2)		
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.	Poor (1)		
Footnotes			
Footnote 1 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).			
Footnote 2 – Sources of information about detrimental non-native species can be found on the GB Non-native Species Secretariat (GBNNSS) website:			
Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org)			
and Natural England Access to Evidence page should also be checked for up-to-date information:			
Horizon-scanning for invasive non-native plants in Great Britain - NECR053 (naturalengland.org.uk)			

For criterion C – For green roof habitat types only – buddleia *Buddleja davidii* should be assessed alongside Schedule 9 species. This species impairs the health of the local ecosystem and reduces the biodiversity potential of the roof. It is also a sign that a roof has not been planted and seeded correctly in subsequent years.

Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.

Footnote 4 – Use professional judgement. Sources of information about non-native species that are not detrimental to native wildlife can be found on the GBNNSS website:

[Alternative plants » NNSS \(nonnativespecies.org\)](https://www.gbnnss.org/)

Table 5. Hedgerow condition assessment results.

Hedgerow favourable condition attributes					
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types					
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height).	Yes	Greater than 4m in height
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).	No	Approx 1m in width
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).	No	Some gaps at base

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).	Yes	No gaps in canopy
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.	Yes	Ruderal/ephemeral on eastern side of hedgerow
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	No	>20% comprised of nettles
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ³) and recently introduced species.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website ⁵ where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website ⁷ .	Yes	No invasives present
D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	No	Heavy management of hedgerow

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 <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> 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 <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1	
Score achieved:		Moderate	

Footnotes

Footnote 1 – DEFRA (2007) *Hedgerow Survey Handbook. A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK.* [online] Available on: [layout \(hedgelink.org.uk\)](https://hedgelink.org.uk) -

Footnote 2 – STALEY, J.T. ET AL. (2020) *Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows.* [online] Available on: [Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows - RP2943 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://naturalengland.org.uk/Definition-of-Favourable-Conservation-Status-for-Hedgerows-RP2943) -

Footnote 3 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Footnote 4 – CHEFFINGS, C. M. et al. (2005) *The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain.* Species Status 7: 1-116. [online] Available on: [The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain \(Species Status No. 7\) | JNCC Resource Hub](https://jncc.gov.uk/The-Vascular-Plant-Red-Data-List-for-Great-Britain-Species-Status-No.-7-JNCC-Resource-Hub) -

Footnote 5 – BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND (BSBI). *Definitions: wild, native or alien?* [online] Available on: [Definitions: wild, native or alien? – Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland \(bsbi.org\)](https://bsbi.org/Definitions-wild-native-or-alien?) -

Footnote 6 – BSBI and Biological Records Centre (BRC) (2022) *Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora.* [online] Available on: [Acknowledgements | Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora \(brc.ac.uk\)](https://brc.ac.uk/Acknowledgements-Online-Atlas-of-the-British-and-Irish-Flora) -

Footnote 7 – GB NON-NATIVE SPECIES SECRETARIAT (GBNNS) (2022) Available on: [Home » NNSS \(nonnativespecies.org\)](https://nonnativespecies.org/Home-GB-NNSS) -

Footnote 8 – See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: [Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/standards/ancient-and-native-woodland-and-trees-policy-in-england) -

and [Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/standards/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions) -

Table 6. Ditch condition assessment results.

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The ditch is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution.	Yes	Clear water
B	A range of emergent, submerged and floating-leaved plants are present. As a guide >10 species of emergent, floating or submerged plants present in a 20 m ditch length.	No	Less than 10 species
C	There is less than 10% cover of filamentous algae and or duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. (these are signs of eutrophication).	Yes	None present
D	A fringe of aquatic marginal vegetation is present along more than 75% of the ditch.	Yes	1m undisturbed ground either side with unmanaged vegetation

E	Physical damage is evident along less than 5% of the ditch, with examples of damage including: excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, or any other damaging management activities.	Yes	No damage evident
F	Sufficient water levels are maintained - as a guide a minimum summer depth of approximately 50 cm in minor ditches and 1 m in main drains.	No	Less than 50cm depth along length
G	Less than 10% of the ditch is heavily shaded.	No	Shaded by adjacent building, individual trees and overgrown vegetation
H	There is an absence of non-native plant and animal species ¹ .	Yes	
Number of criteria passed		5	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 8 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 8 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 6 or 7 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	✓	
Footnotes			
Footnote 1 – This includes any species listed on the Water Framework Directive UKTAG GB High Impact Species List: Water Framework Directive (WFD) UKTAG (2021) <i>Classification of aquatic alien species according to their level of impact</i> [online]. Available from: UKTAG classification of alien species working paper v8.pdf (wfd.uk.org)			
- Frequently occurring non-native plant species include water fern <i>Azolla filiculoides</i>, Australian swamp stonecrop <i>Crassula helmsii</i>, parrot's feather <i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>, floating pennywort <i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i>, Japanese knotweed <i>Reynoutria japonica</i> and giant hogweed <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i> (on the bank). - Frequently occurring non-native animals include signal crayfish <i>Pacifastacus leniusculus</i>, zebra mussel <i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>, killer shrimp <i>Dikerogammarus villosus</i>, demon shrimp <i>Dikerogammarus haemobaphes</i>, and carp <i>Cyprinus carpio</i>.			

Annex 2 – Proposed Condition Assessment Sheets

Table 10. Proposed Hedgerow condition assessment results.

Hedgerow favourable condition attributes					
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types					
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height).	Yes	Greater than 4m in height
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).	No	Approx 1m in width
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).	No	Some gaps at base
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).	Yes	No gaps in canopy

C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. >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).	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.	Yes	Ruderal/ephemeral on eastern side of hedgerow
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	No	>20% comprised of nettles
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ³) and recently introduced species.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website ⁵ where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website ⁷ .	Yes	No invasives present
D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	No	Heavy management of hedgerow

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 <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> 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 <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1

Score achieved:	Moderate
Footnotes	
Footnote 1 – DEFRA (2007) <i>Hedgerow Survey Handbook. A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK.</i> [online] Available on: layout (hedgelink.org.uk)	
Footnote 2 – STALEY, J.T. ET AL. (2020) <i>Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows.</i> [online] Available on: Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows - RP2943 (naturalengland.org.uk)	
Footnote 3 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).	
Footnote 4 – CHEFFINGS, C. M. et al. (2005) <i>The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain.</i> Species Status 7: 1-116. [online] Available on: The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain (Species Status No. 7) JNCC Resource Hub	
Footnote 5 – BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND (BSBI). <i>Definitions: wild, native or alien?</i> [online] Available on: Definitions: wild, native or alien? – Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (bsbi.org)	
Footnote 6 – BSBI and Biological Records Centre (BRC) (2022) <i>Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora.</i> [online] Available on: Acknowledgements Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora (brc.ac.uk)	
Footnote 7 – GB NON-NATIVE SPECIES SECRETARIAT (GBNNS) (2022) Available on: Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org)	
Footnote 8 – See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)	
and Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	

Table 11. Proposed individual trees condition assessment results.

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	Native species will be planted
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Individual trees automatically pass
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)1.	No	Newly planted trees therefore not mature
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.	Yes	Pass – management under HMMP
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	Newly planted trees therefore likely no ecological niches
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Yes all trees oversailing 100% vegetated garden
Number of criteria passed		4	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved 1/4	

Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)		
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.			