



The Old Squash Court, Rempstone Hall
Rempstone, Corfe Castle, Wareham
Dorset BH20 5JQ

t: +44 (0) 1929 477115
e: enquiries@ecological-services.co.uk
w: www.ecological-services.co.uk

Nick Couling,
Westcoast Developments,
153 Commercial Road,
Poole,
Dorset,
BH14 0JJ,

7th October 2026

RE: Supporting statement reference hedgerow on-site at The Prince Albert, Copthorne, Crawley, RH10 3QW.

Dear Nick,

LC Ecological Services Ltd were commissioned to write a statement to support an on-going dual planning application (DM/26/2053 & DM/26/2054) for a commercial and residential development respectively at The Prince Albert Copthorne, Copthorne, Crawley, RH10 3QW. This letter has been produced in respect to a native hedgerow identified on-site, and to make an assessment of its classification of a non-priority habitat. This letter provides a summary of the survey methodology, results of this survey, criteria for UKBAP priority hedgerows, and classification criteria. This supporting document should be viewed in conjunction with the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) submitted alongside the applications (both reports referenced LCES, 2026).

Methodology – UKHab habitat classification survey

The UK Habitat Classification System version 2.1 (UKHab Ltd, 2026) was adopted whereby habitats are mapped using codes, whilst also following CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2024). A detailed walkover survey of the site was undertaken in March 2026 by ecologist Rob McCalman and involved directly searching for legally protected and invasive species of plant and categorising any habitats of ecological value that were encountered. Photographs of the site have been provided in appendix II. A general description of the vegetation was also noted, listing species encountered and scoring their abundance using the DAFOR scale shown below, whilst recording plant species using nomenclature according to Stace (2019).

Other native hedgerow - h2a6

A single other native hedgerow formed the southern boundary of the site and ran parallel to areas of modified grassland in the sites centre. The hedgerow measured approximately two metres in height and one metre in width, with noted areas of wider bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) growth. Species included abundant bramble and

honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), an occasional distribution of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), and a rare distribution of holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and dog rose (*Rosa canina*). There were managed examples of leylandii (*Cupressus x leylandii*) distributed within the hedgerow. Despite comprising a mixture of native woodland species, large areas of the hedgerow were dominated by both honeysuckle, and bramble, with both species contributing a large percentage of the hedges overall structure.

The understory comprised perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), wall barley (*Hordium murinum*), with ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), and Occasional instances of cleavers (*Galium aparine*) were also present.

UKBAP Assessment criteria

The below text is taken from the UK biodiversity action plan priority habitat description for hedgerows (2008) and is used to assess whether individual hedgerow habitats can be classified as a priority habitat.

‘A hedgerow is defined as any boundary line of trees or shrubs over 20m long and less than 5m wide, and where any gaps between the trees or shrub species are less than 20m wide (Bickmore, 2002). Any bank, wall, ditch or tree within 2m of the centre of the hedgerow is considered to be part of the hedgerow habitat, as is the herbaceous vegetation within 2m of the centre of the hedgerow. All hedgerows consisting predominantly (i.e. 80% or more cover) of at least one woody UK native species are covered by this priority habitat, where each UK country can define the list of woody species native to their respective country. Climbers such as honeysuckle and bramble are recognised as integral to many hedgerows, however they require other woody plants to be present to form a distinct woody boundary feature, as such they are not included in the definition of woody species. The definition is limited to boundary lines of trees or shrubs and excludes banks or walls without woody shrubs on top of them.’

Assessment of Hedgerow

The other native hedgerow on site has a large percentage cover of both bramble and honeysuckle, which using the UKBAP assessment criteria, do not count towards the overall percentage cover of woody species required to classify a hedgerow system as a priority habitat. Other species present within the hedgerow constitute less than the 80% threshold needed to classify the feature as a priority habitat. The hedgerow is itself is functionally defunct, and isolated from other habitat within the wider locality.

Due to this assessment, the above applications would therefore qualify for exemption of biodiversity net gain (BNG) measures under the small site’s exemption ruling, as no

priority habitats will be impacted, and the sites themselves fall under the size threshold of 0.2 hectares.

The above survey results were informed by the initial PEA survey undertaken on-site. This letter report aims to reinforce the assessment that the featured hedgerow system on-site would not be classified as a priority habitat, due to a large proportion of non-applicable species coverage, and its nature as a defunct hedgerow system. If you have any questions on the contents, or require clarification on any of the above points, please let me know.

Kind regards,

Rob McCalman BSc (Hons), MSc
Senior Ecologist

APPENDIX I: BASELINE HABITATS MAP





- Red line boundary
- Commercial
- Residential
- Individual trees
- Built linear features
- Native hedgerow
- Developed land sealed surface
- Buildings
- Vegetated garden/ Ground level planter
- Modified grassland
- Ruderal/Ephemeral

Google Satellite
Map data ©2026 Google
Imagery ©2026
Maxar Technologies

0 5 10 m

PRINCECO
Baseline habitats
Draw date 15/04/2026
Drawn by JE
1:250 on A3



APPENDIX II: PHOTOGRAPHS – MARCH 2026



Photo 1: Image of section of other native hedgerow present within the residential boundary.



Photo 2: Further image of other native hedgerow on southern boundary, highlighting excessive bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) growth within and around the habitat.



Photo 3: Image of section of other native hedgerow present within the commercial boundary.