



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN STATEMENT

**Chownes Mead, Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards
Heath**

On behalf of: RCM Partnership LLP

Client:	RCM Partnership LLP			
Project:	Chownes Mead, Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards Heath			
Reference:	LLD3233-ECO-REP-005-02-BNG			
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Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the final survey visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, to inform whether surveys should be updated.



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement for the proposed development at Chownes Mead, Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards Heath. This report has been written with due regard to best practice guidance for ecological report writing (CIEEM, 2017) and the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, 2019) and the Biodiversity Net Gain User Guide (DEFRA, 2023).

1.2 The development does not appear to qualify under any exemption and will therefore be subject to the standard Biodiversity Gain condition.

Site Overview

1.3 The red line covers an area of c. 1.72 hectares (ha) of land to the south of Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards Heath. The survey area is bound by large residential properties and their associated gardens to the east and west, Chownes Mead Lane to the north and an area of paddocks and woodland to the south.

Surrounding Landscape

1.4 The site is located c. 0.2km west of Haywards Heath and c.1.0km south-east of the village of Cuckfield. Land to the south and west is formed of areas of woodland, ponds and small field parcels; typical of the High Weald.

Development Proposals

1.5 Amendments to hotel layout approved under DM/18/2193 and DM/18/2201, new single storey extension to main building and erection of new detached two-storey spa building, provision of relocated secondary access to Chownes Mead Lane, new parking area and landscaping of the site.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study - Assigning Strategic Significance

- 2.1.1 The West Sussex Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) received cabinet approval on the 3rd of February 2026. Strategic significance has therefore been assessed using the LNRS for West Sussex as per table 7 of the User Guide (DEFRA, 2023). Where sites were found to be located within any designated area, such as Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) or an Area that Could become of Importance for Biodiversity (ACIB), policy statements and management plans for the relevant area were then examined. High strategic significance was then assigned to any habitat creation or enhancement measures identified as a priority within these documents.
- 2.1.2 All baseline habitats, and proposed habitat creation or enhancement measures not identified within these documents were assigned low strategic significance.

2.2 Desk Study – Statutory Designated Sites and Irreplaceable Habitat

- 2.2.1 To identify any designated sites for nature conservation, irreplaceable habitat and/or priority habitats (the presence of which may influence the feasibility of delivering BNG) within or adjacent to the Site, the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) and The Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory (2024) were reviewed.

2.3 Baseline Habitat Assessment

- 2.3.1 A baseline habitat assessment in accordance with the UK Habitats Classification Manual (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) was undertaken on the 20th of May 2024 by Catherine O'Reilly MCIEEM, with an update survey completed on the 1st of May 2025. No habitat degradation had taken place prior to the survey and the baseline data is considered to be an accurate reflection of the ecological value of the site. Full details of the habitats present are contained within the accompanying ecology reports and summarised herein.

2.3.2 All area based and linear habitats were mapped on site with the aid of aerial imagery and topographical survey where available. The condition of habitats was assessed in accordance with *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology* (DEFRA, 2023).

2.3.3 The habitats, their condition and strategic importance were input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool v1.04 (DEFRA, 2025). The area of habitats which would be retained or enhanced based upon the current proposals was also added to the calculator. This allowed the existing baseline value and loss of biodiversity units to be established.

2.4 Post-Development Habitats

2.4.1 The proposed landscape plan has been used to inform the post-development scenario. This plan was converted to a GIS environment where it was overlaid on the baseline habitat data. Areas of proposed post development intervention (habitat creation and/or habitat retention / enhancement), including the built development, were calculated using QGIS.

2.4.2 The proposed habitats and strategic importance were input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (DEFRA, 2025). Target condition scores were assigned based upon what could realistically be achieved on site. The area of habitats which would be retained or enhanced based upon the current proposals was also added to the calculator.

2.4.3 The Metric takes into account whether habitat creation or enhancement is delivered in advance of any impact, or whether there will be any significant delay in an intervention relative to the impact. Where delays in habitat creation are anticipated, or habitat creation is to be undertaken in advance, this has been included within the metric and fully explained within section 3 of this report. Where no delays or advance creation shall occur, a standard temporal multiplier has been applied to created habitats.

2.4.4 Once all measures have been input into The Biodiversity Metric Calculation, the overall change in value of the site could then be determined.

2.5 Mitigation Hierarchy

2.5.1 Biodiversity net gain planning practice guidance and Articles 37A and 37D of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, sets out a list of priority actions to ensure adherence to the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy:

- First, in relation to onsite habitats which have a medium, high and very high distinctiveness (a score of four or more according to the statutory biodiversity metric), the avoidance of adverse effects from the development and, if they cannot be avoided, the mitigation of those effects; and
- Then, in relation to all onsite habitats which are adversely affected by the development, the adverse effect should be compensated by prioritising in order, where possible, the enhancement of existing onsite habitats, creation of new onsite habitats, allocation of registered offsite gains and finally the purchase of biodiversity credits.

2.6 Survey Constraints / Considerations

2.6.1 Areas lengths have been rounded to the nearest 10m² and measurements input to the metric using three decimal places. Due to the output of the Metric being displayed to two decimal places, slight imprecision in output may occur. This is however not a major constraint to the overall results of this assessment.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Strategic Significance, Irreplaceable Habitat and Designated Sites

- 3.1.1 A small area of ancient woodland is present on site. No other irreplaceable habitat exists within the site area.
- 3.1.2 The site is not located within any statutory designated site.
- 3.1.3 Part of the site is within an area mapped as an Area that Could Become of Importance for Biodiversity (ACIB). Mapped measures in this area include W1.2 – Enhance Ancient Woodland. The scheme shall provide measures which shall enhance the remnant ancient woodland on site, such as removing invasive species and planting of additional scrub to the margins to create a gradual ecotone. Although these measures shall provide a betterment to the ancient woodland, no change in target condition of this woodland is proposed. No other mapped measures exist within the site area and as such all habitat creation has been classed of low strategic significance.

3.2 Baseline Habitat Value

Habitat Degradation

- 3.2.1 No site clearance or post 2020 habitat degradation was evident, and the baseline information gathered is considered to be a true presentation of the on-site habitats at the time of the survey.

Existing On-Site Habitats

- 3.2.2 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment concluded that the existing baseline biodiversity value of the site was 10.76 Habitat Units, consisting of:
- 0.316ha of modified grassland in poor condition comprising the species-poor grassland within the dell area.
 - 0.157ha of other neutral grassland in moderate condition including diverse grassland to the south-facing slopes of the dell, and grassland to the west of site.
 - 0.03ha of other neutral grassland in poor condition comprising an area of nettle etc to the east of the ancient woodland.

- 0.131ha of introduced shrub, which includes areas of ornamental planting throughout the garden and surrounding the house.
- 0.445ha artificial unsealed surface which includes the gravel driveway and parking area.
- 0.263ha of sealed surface including the existing buildings and surrounding hardstanding.
- 0.012ha of tall forbs in poor condition comprising an area of pendulous sedge adjacent the barn.
- 0.118ha of ancient woodland in moderate condition to the northern boundary of the site.
- 0.004ha of non-priority pond located to the east of the ancient woodland, in poor condition.
- 0.086ha of mixed scrub to the woodland edge, in moderate condition.
- 0.2823ha of individual trees in good condition and 0.4718ha of individual trees in moderate condition.
- 0.072ha of modified grassland in moderate condition including the grassland to the north of the existing tennis courts.
- 0.012ha of ephemeral vegetation which has colonised areas of hoggin to the west of the barn.
- 0.073ha of other woodland; mixed in poor condition which includes an area of non-native woodland planting to the southern slopes of the dell area.

- 3.2.3 A full condition assessment for each existing habitat type is detailed in Appendix A.

Habitat Retention

- 3.2.4 A total of 8.09 habitat units are to be retained within the scheme, including all ancient woodland and other woodland, the majority of individual trees and areas of introduced shrub and other neutral grassland to the slopes of the dell area.

3.3 Baseline Hedgerow Value

- 3.3.1 0.175km of non-native hedgerow (in pre-assigned poor condition) is present on-site comprising areas of cherry laurel hedging. 0.056km of this is to be retained. Total hedgerow units are 0.18, of which 0.06 shall be retained.

3.4 Baseline Watercourse Value

- 3.4.1 No watercourses are present on site.

3.5 Proposed Habitat Creation

- 3.5.1 Proposals are to result in the creation of new habitats on site. The proposed habitats would result in the provision of would deliver 3.80 habitat units and include:
- 0.243ha of developed land, sealed surface which includes the proposed pool building and parking bays.
 - 0.377ha of artificial unsealed surface to include access pathways and gravel surfacing within the car park.
 - 0.21ha of introduced shrub, to include ornamental planting to the margins of the pond and within terrace areas.
 - 0.037ha of mixed scrub in moderate condition to the margins of the woodland, and 0.071ha of scrub in poor condition which includes scrub to the south of the new pond area.
 - 0.102ha of new pond which includes the large new pond created within the existing dell area.
 - 0.3583ha comprised of 88no. proposed trees.
 - 0.134ha and 0.033ha of other neutral grassland proposed within the southern section of the site and west of the new footpath link.
 - 0.006ha of modified grassland in poor condition to the rear of the proposed pool building.
- 3.5.2 The majority of proposed habitats are assigned a target condition of 'moderate' which is considered to be achievable within the context of the site. The area of mixed scrub and modified grassland in the vicinity of the buildings have been assigned a target condition of 'poor' which is considered to be most realistic given the proposed planting mix and location of the habitat parcels.
- 3.5.3 A full target condition assessment for each proposed habitat creation type is detailed in Appendix B.

3.6 Proposed Hedgerows

- 3.6.1 0.067km of native hedgerow is proposed between the new footpath link and the hotel driveway. This hedgerow is targeted to achieve moderate condition and shall deliver 0.22 habitat units.
- 3.6.2 A target condition assessment for this hedgerow is detailed in Appendix B.

3.7 Adherence to the Mitigation Hierarchy

Avoidance and Mitigation

- 3.7.1 The scheme has been designed to avoid impacts to the majority of individual trees (a medium distinctiveness habitat) through the retention of the existing hotel access point, location of the secondary access route outside the RPA of the ancient woodland, and the use of no-dig construction through root protection areas of trees. Full details of protection measures are included within the arboricultural package which accompanies this application.

Compensation

- 3.7.2 New habitat creation has focused on medium distinctiveness habitats which are appropriate to the location and size of habitat parcels as well as the intended land use. This has included the creation of areas of mixed scrub adjacent to retained woodland areas, creation of new areas of wildflower grassland to the margins of the site, and planting of 71no. native trees throughout the site. Due to the requirements for more formal public space within the hotel grounds, areas of low distinctiveness introduced shrub and hardstanding areas were necessary within the scheme, however all other areas of the site have seen the creation of semi-natural habitats.

3.8 Trading Summary

- 3.8.1 All trading rules have been satisfied.

3.9 Overall Results

- 3.9.1 Once all retention, enhancement and habitat creation measures are taken into the account, the scheme currently results in the delivery of 11.65 Habitat Units, resulting in a net increase of 1.08 units and a **+10.24%** change in Habitat Units.
- 3.9.2 The scheme shall result in 0.28 Hedgerow Units, resulting in a net increase of 0.11 units and a **+60.15%** Biodiversity Net Gain in Hedgerow Units.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Metric calculations have identified that the proposed scheme would result in over +10% Biodiversity Net Gain, complying with the current Local Planning policy, subsequent to the provision of legal agreement / conservation covenant, to ensure that the proposed habitats are delivered for at least 30 years.
- 4.2 To ensure the above habitats are managed into the future, a suitable Habitat Creation Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) should be produced. This should include management prescriptions for new habitat areas including aspects such as mowing regimes, which shall ensure the target conditions are achieved. The HMMP should include details of monitoring intervals and methods for the 30-year period to ensure that the target conditions are achieved. These measures shall ensure that the scheme accords with The Environment Act 2021 and can be secured by the standard Biodiversity Gain pre-commencement planning condition.

5.0 REFERENCES

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

CIEEM. (2019). *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

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Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. (2023). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology*.

Woodland Trust. (2024). *Ancient Tree Inventory (ATI)*. Woodland Trust, in partnership with the Ancient Tree Forum and the Tree Register. Available at: <https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk>.

UKHab Ltd. (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.01*.



Legend

-  Existing Extra Large Tree
-  Existing Large Tree
-  Existing Medium Tree
-  Existing Small Tree
-  Non-native and ornamental hedgerow
-  Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
-  Developed land; sealed surface
-  Introduced shrub
-  Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
-  Mixed scrub
-  Modified grassland
-  Other neutral grassland
-  Other woodland; mixed
-  Ponds (non-priority habitat)
-  Ruderal/Ephemeral
-  Tall forbs



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Client

RCM Partnership LLP

Project Title & Location

Chownes Mead, Haywards Heath

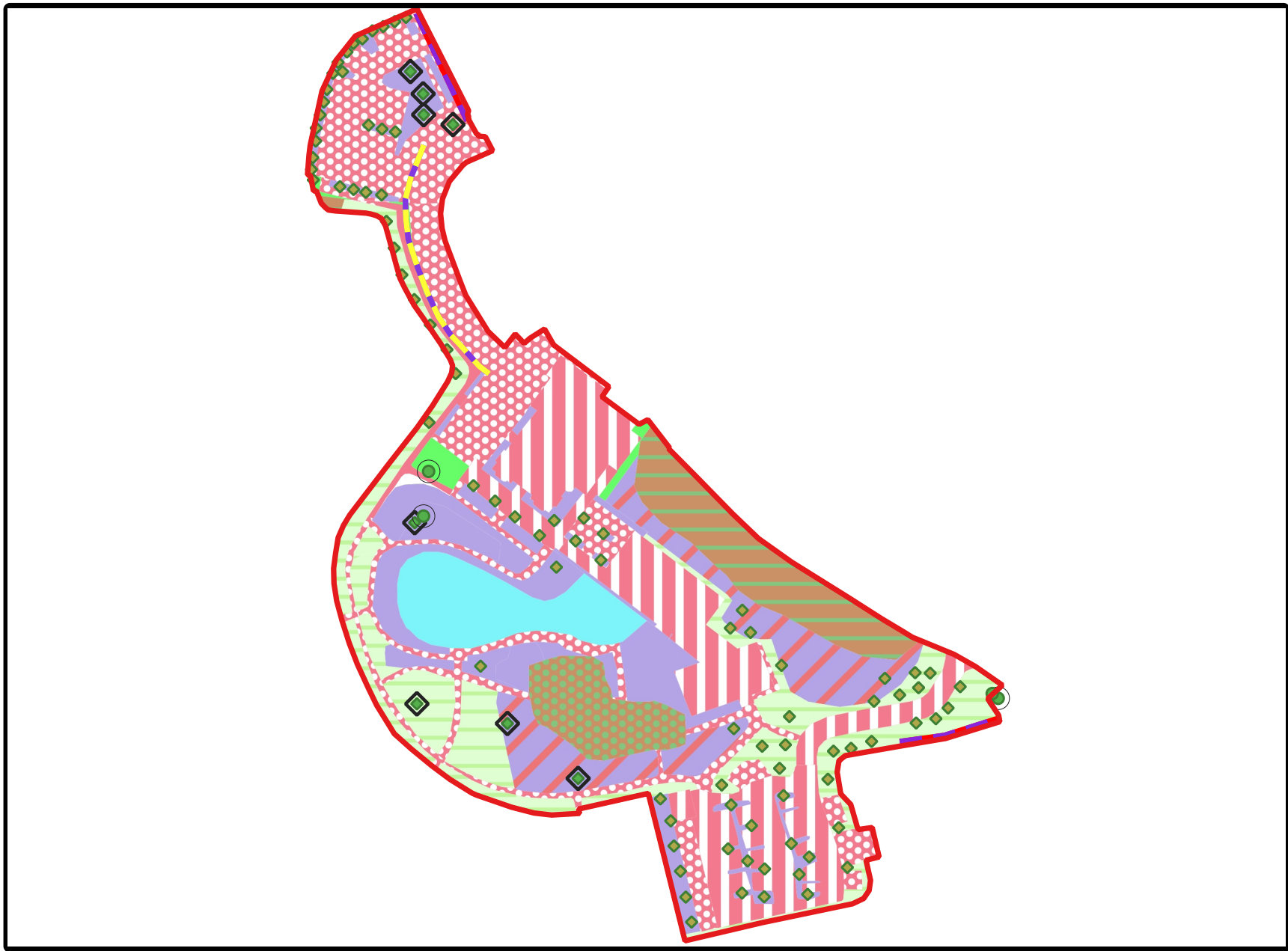
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CO	HS	03	15/09/26

Figure No. 01 - Site Habitat Plan

25 50 m



N
 1:1,500



Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Existing Extra Large Tree
- Existing Medium Tree
- Proposed Tree
- Existing Small Tree
- Non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- Native hedgerow
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Introduced shrub
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- Mixed scrub
- Modified grassland
- Other neutral grassland
- Other woodland; mixed
- Ponds (non-priority habitat)



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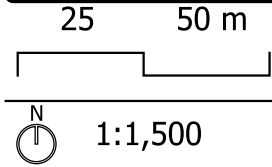
RCM Partnership LLP

Project Title & Location

Chownes Mead, Haywards Heath

Drawn by	Approved by	Rev	Date
CO	HS	04	15/09/26

Figure No. 02 - Proposed Habitat Plan



Appendix A – Condition Assessment for Existing Habitats

Other Neutral Grassland in Moderate and Poor Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		2	3												
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)												Notes (such as justification)	
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). ¹ Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Y	N												Area 3 dominated by tall rudral such as nettle. Area 2 more diverse.
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	N	Y												Uniform cut in area 2, area 3 is structurally diverse.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ² .	Y	N												>5% in area 3
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Y	N												>5% scrub in area 3
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition ³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y	N												Japanese knotweed present in area 3
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types															
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	N	N												
Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		No	No												
Number of criteria passed		4	1												
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved *1/√													
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)															
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)														
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)														
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)														
Non-acid grassland types (Result out of 6 criteria)															
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	Good (3)														
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	Moderate (2)		X												
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F.	Poor (1)			X											

Individual Trees in Moderate and Good Condition:

Limitations (if applicable)		Habitat parcel reference										
		L	M	M	M	XL	XL	XL	S	M	XL	
		Grid reference										
Condition Assessment Criteria		T24	T23	T25	T26	T14	T15	T36	T90	T91	T47	
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)										
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	
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	Y	Y	
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	
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	N	Y	Y	
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Number of criteria passed		4	4	5	5	5	5	5	3	6	4	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√										
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)			X	X	X	X	X		X		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	X	X						X		X	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)											

Limitations (if applicable)		Habitat parcel reference											
		M	M	S	4x XL								
		Grid reference											
Condition Assessment Criteria		T49	T46	T42	Car park pines								Notes (such as justification)
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)											
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	N	Y	Y	N								
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								
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	Y	N	Y	Y								
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								
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N	N	N	N								
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Y	Y	N								
Number of criteria passed		4	4	5	3								
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓											
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)			X									
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	X	X			X							
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)												

Pond in Poor Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - applicable to all ponds (woodland¹ and non-woodland):			
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	N	High turbidity present
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	N	Concrete to south
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. or filamentous algae.	N	surface covered in duckweed
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Y	None noted
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams ² , pumps or pipework.	Y	None noted
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species ³ .	Y	None noted
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Y	None noted
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:			
H	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed) ⁴ cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3 m deep.	N	Macrophyte coverage very limited.
I	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	N	80% shaded by surrounding willow
Number of criteria passed		4	
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√
Results for woodland ponds which require assessment of 7 core criteria			
Passes 7 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 4 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Results for non-woodland ponds which require assessment of 9 criteria			
Passes 9 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 6 to 8 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	X	

Tall Forbs and Ephemeral / Ruderal in Poor Condition:

Limitations (if applicable)		Habitat parcel reference											
		Grid reference											
Condition Assessment Criteria		7	14										Notes (such as justification)
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)											
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.	N	N										Area 7 is solely sedge, area 14 is short ephemeral
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.	N	N										Limited range of species
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).	Y	Y										None noted

Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)		Y	Y									
Number of criteria passed		1	1									
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√										
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)	X	X									

Woodland Assessment:

Limitations (if applicable)			Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	Grid reference			
				ASNW	Other		
Condition Assessment Criteria							
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator		
A	Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes ¹ present.	Two age-classes ¹ present.	One age-class ¹ present.	2	2	
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	3	
C	Invasive plant species	No invasive species ³ present in woodland.	Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, and other invasive species ³ <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ³ ≥10% cover.	1	1	
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	1	
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 .	2	1	
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 .	3	3	
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 .	1	1	
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 .	2	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.	2	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	1	
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	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 .	3	1	
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	3	
Total Score (out of a possible 39)					26	22	
Condition Assessment Result			Condition Assessment Score		Result Achieved		
Total score >32 (33 to 39)			Good (3)				
Total score 26 to 32			Moderate (2)		X		
Total score <26 (13 to 25)			Poor (1)			X	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score							

Mixed Scrub in Moderate Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range). ¹ - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species ² , - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> , sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , which can be up to 100% cover).	Y	Species include hazel, willow and hawthorn
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ³) shrubs are all present.	Y	Mixed ages present
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) and species indicative of suboptimal condition ⁶ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	N	Japanese knotweed present
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	Y	Tall forbs adjacent.
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	N	Single dense block
Number of criteria passed			3
Condition Assessment Result (out of 5 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√	
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	X	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		

Appendix B – Target Condition Assessment for Proposed Habitats

Proposed Mixed Scrub in Moderate and Poor Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		4	5																	
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)																		
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range). ¹ - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species ² , - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> , sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , which can be up to 100% cover).	Y	N																	Area 5 to include non-native, with limited native mix.
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ³) shrubs are all present.	N	N																	Single age at planting
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) and species indicative of suboptimal condition ⁶ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Y	Y																	To be monitored and managed
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	Y	N																	5 is edged by pathways
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	N	N																	Single blocks proposed
Number of criteria passed		3	1																	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 5 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score		Score Achieved *//																
Passes 5 criteria		Good (3)																		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria		Moderate (2)		X																
Passes 2 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)			X															

Proposed Individual Trees in Moderate Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)		Notes (such as justification)																
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y / N		Mix of native and non-native trees proposed																
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Y		All individual trees																
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	N		Will not be achieved in BNG period																
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Y		Trees planted in open positions to avoid need for crown reduction in future.																
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N		Not expected within BNG period																
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y		Trees within grassland or planting beds.																
Number of criteria passed		3 or 4																		
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score		Score Achieved *//																
Passes 5 or 6 criteria		Good (3)																		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria		Moderate (2)		X																
Passes 2 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)																		

Proposed pond in Moderate Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - applicable to all ponds (woodland¹ and non-woodland):			
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	Y	Surrounding land-use unlikely to generate pollution
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	N	Hardstanding to north with 10m
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. or filamentous algae.	Y	To be monitored and controlled
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Y	Pond is isolated from others
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams ² , pumps or pipework.	N	Pond to maintain water levels throughout year as visual feature.
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species ³ .	Y	To be monitored and controlled
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Y	None proposed.
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:			
H	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed) ⁴ cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3 m deep.	Y	Planting to margins is proposed and pond is expected to meet this criteria once established.
I	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	Y	Limited tree cover surrounding
Number of criteria passed		7	
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√
Results for woodland ponds which require assessment of 7 core criteria			
Passes 7 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 4 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Results for non-woodland ponds which require assessment of 9 criteria			
Passes 9 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 6 to 8 criteria	Moderate (2)	X	
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		

Proposed Other Neutral Grassland in Moderate Condition

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description).¹ Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Y	UKHab category very broad for this habitat.
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	N	Sward to be managed by 1-2 yearly cut. Unable to guarantee >20% shall be less than 7cm.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens².	Y	Area to be monitored and bare ground re-seeded.
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Y	Scrub encroachment shall be managed by mowing.
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y	Area managed to avoid damage and monitored for presence of invasive species.
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	N	This cannot be guaranteed.
Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		N	
Number of criteria passed		4	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√	
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)			
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	x	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		

Proposed Native Hedgerow in Moderate Condition:

Hedgerow favourable condition attributes					
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types					
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height).	N	<1.5m at planting
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).	N	<1.5m width proposed
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	Managed to create dense growth
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).	Y	Managed to create dense growth
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.	N	Access road and footpath either 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.	Y	To be managed and monitored.
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 ⁴) 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	To be managed and monitored.
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	To be managed and monitored.
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 ⁷), 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.		
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.		
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:			Moderate		