

LFC Academy: Response to MEAS BNG Observations

Project Name:	The Liverpool Academy (Knowsley Planning App 25/00688/FUL)
Location:	Northwood, Kirkby, L33 7ED
Client:	Liverpool FC

Document Title:	Response to MEAS BNG Observations		
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1.0 MEAS Observations

1.1 MEAS letter dated 31 March 2026 seeks amendments and clarifications on three BNG matters:

- Re-classification of any proposed new non-native trees to be 'Poor' Condition in the metric.
- Provision of a native meadow seed mix to demonstrate Other Neutral Grassland is achievable.
- Amendment of Softworks General Arrangement Drawing to remove 'Biodiversity Planting' and replace with 'Native Meadow' where other neutral grassland is proposed; to ensure consistency with the BNG drawing showing Proposed Habitats.

1.2 In response, the following updates are provided, and the narrative in the following chapter provides more detail:

- Landscape Masterplan – Planit Drawing 3912-PLA-XX-DR-L-0001 P05.
- Softworks General Arrangement – Planit Drawing 3912-PLA-XX-DR-L-2000 P05.
- BNG Metric (TEP x11306.001 - version 5 – April 2026).

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2.0 Response

Newly-Planted Trees

- 2.1 Softworks General Arrangement Drawing is revised to increase the proportion of native trees. Specifically *Pinus sylvestris* is included and *Pinus nigra* removed.
- 2.2 All native trees in this scheme will oversail at least 20% of vegetation, so all can be classed as Moderate Condition meeting Condition Criteria A, B and F.
- 2.3 The smaller crowned native trees (*Acer campestre*, *Sorbus aucuparia*) will not require future formative crown pruning to significantly restrict their growth to less than 75% of expected dimension. The site is secure and not subject to vandalism. The trees will not experience herbicide application, other than basal weed control in early years, so these smaller-crowned trees can also meet condition criterion D.
- 2.4 The larger crowned *Pinus sylvestris* may possibly require some formative pruning in later years, so on a precautionary basis, these are not targeted to pass Criterion D.
- 2.5 Any tree that passes 3 or 4 criteria is classed as Moderate Condition, so all native trees will be Moderate Condition.
- 2.6 The new non-native trees (*Acer rubrum*, *Amelanchier spp*, *Liquidambar spp* and *Betula nigra*) meet criteria B and F. They are all of small crown dimension, so in this case, they will also meet Condition Criterion D, because as noted at paragraph 2.3 above, they will not be subject to vandalism, herbicide and significant formative crown pruning due to their small canopy dimension.
- 2.7 As they pass 3 criteria, they may also be classed as Moderate Condition.
- 2.8 The BNG Metric has been updated to provide further detail on this, specifically at Cell Z11 on Sheet A2 (Habitat Creation). This change does not affect the quantitative outcome of the BNG assessment, since all the trees were previously assessed as moderate condition in any case.

Native Meadow Mix

- 2.9 [Emorsgate Special General Purpose Meadow Mix](#) is specified as it contains a diverse mix of native species typical of neutral grassland.
- 2.10 The Softworks GA Drawing has been updated to confirm this mix, which will be applied in areas shown as SW7 – Native Meadow. In some areas it will be created

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on freshly-prepared ground and in others it will be used as an enrichment mixture to areas of existing grassland.

- 2.11 The BNG metric (now version 5) has been updated to reflect this specification, specifically at Cell Z16 of Sheet A2 and Cell AO12 of Sheet A3 (Habitat Enhancement).
- 2.12 This change does not affect the quantitative outcome of the BNG assessment. Note that whilst the Habitat Condition Drawing provided with the application (G11306.013B) suggests a target condition of Good for some areas of native meadow (other neutral grassland) the actual metric takes a more precautionary approach with almost areas targeting moderate condition.

Biodiversity Planting – discrepancy between Softworks and BNG drawings

- 2.13 The updated Softworks GA drawing has removed the category of 'SW6 - Biodiversity Planting' and SW7 Native Meadow has been extended into areas previously shown as SW6. Note that a new native hedge is proposed along a small part of the northern boundary to maintain the screening effect that would have been achieved by SW6.
- 2.14 The Softworks GA Drawing and the Proposed Habitats Drawing are now consistent in respect of other neutral grassland, as requested by MEAS. This does not affect the metric calculation.

3.0 Summary

- 3.1 The revised Softworks GA Drawing and BNG Metric address the comments of MEAS. The revisions do not result in any quantitative change to the BNG assessment, which remains at a unit deficit of 2.32 habitat area units in order to meet the 10% net gain mandate. These units will be procured off-site at a habitat bank.
- 3.2 Should the development be consented, the final landscape and BNG plans and metric will be provided as part of the submission to discharge the Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) condition. That will also include details of the proposed off-site habitat bank. The BGP condition will also allow for further updating of landscape details should these be required by the planning process.



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