

Full Assessment of Biodiversity

Version 2
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Prepared for: FAS

Site: Baileys Lane.

Prepared by Simon Brain.
Managing Director. PGCE (Bio. Rec.)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the project

Amenity Tree was commissioned by FAS developments to undertake a site visit and compilation of UK habitats plan and DEFRA habitat condition sheet in consideration of planning permission under The Environment Act 2021 'nature and biodiversity', which allows for biodiversity gain in the planning system.

1.2 Site location and context

The area surveyed comprised of modified grassland, scrub, scattered trees, hard standing and building, species-poor ornamental hedge, native hedge.

1.3 Report purpose and legislative background

The scope of the Assessment is therefore:

- Assessment of the habitats within the site in accordance with the UK Habitats Classification (UK Habitats Classification Working Group, 2018).
- Completion of Condition Assessments of each habitat in accordance with those presented in The Biodiversity Metric 4.1 23rd July 2024.

2. Survey Methods

2.1 Vegetation and Habitats

2.1.1 A habitat survey walkover was conducted in August 2024 (in accordance with JNCC, 2010) which confirmed the habitats present. Appendix 1 is the habitat mapping based on the UK Habitat Classification system (UK Habitats Classification Working Group, 2018) which details those habitats listed below.

2.1.2 Table 1 details the UK Habitat classifications / BNG metric habitat descriptors, area coverage and condition assessment result. Whilst on the site the habitat survey searched for all plants including those that are considered rare,

uncommon or are statutorily protected such as those listed in schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended).

UK Habitat Classification	Total Area Coverage (Ha.)	Condition Assessment
Hawthorn Scrub	0.055	Poor
Modified Grassland	0.0185	Poor
Introduced shrub	0.012	n/a
Urban Sealed Surfacing and Buildings	0.2245	n/a
Total Area Coverage	0.31Ha	
Urban trees (22 trees)	0.1873	Poor
Hedgerows	154 Linear M	Poor

Table 1 UK Habitat classifications, area coverage and condition assessment

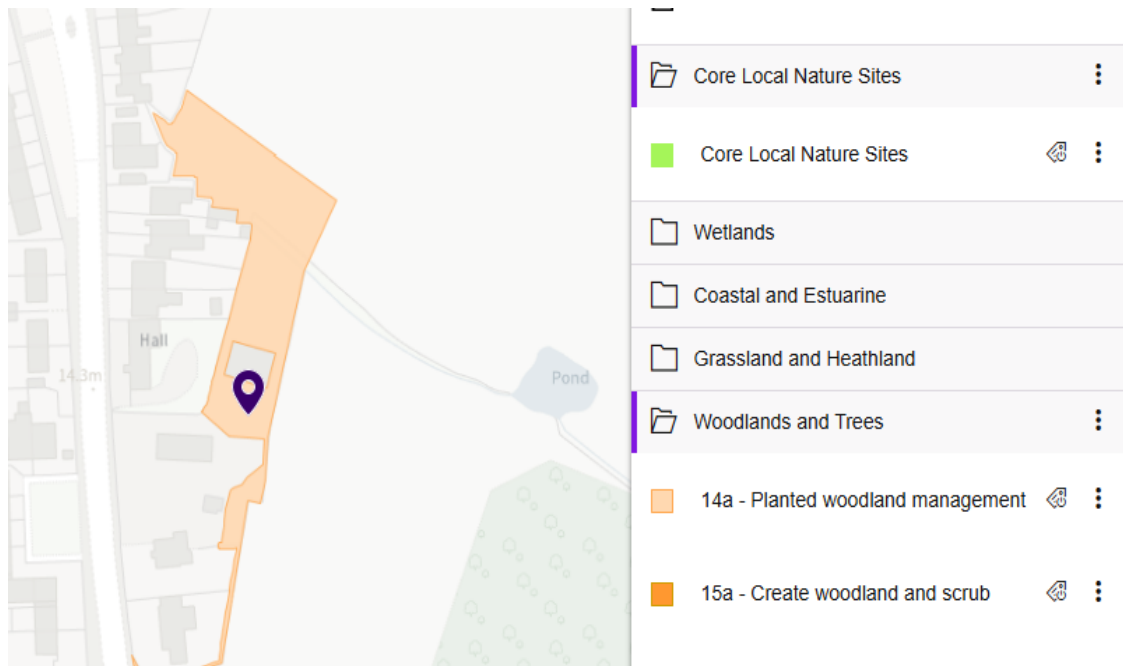
Urban trees. There are a total of 22 urban trees as measured by the existing tree report which are detailed below according to BNG size guides for tree sizes as follows. There are 14 small trees and 8 medium trees totalling 0.1873.

G3	SM	50	Small	14	0.0570
T19	Y	100	Medium	8	0.1303
T2	Y	150	Large		0.0000
T15	SM	150	Very large		0.0000
G2	SM	150			
T17	EM	160			
T13	EM	190			
T11	EM	200			
T12	EM	200			
T1	Y	220			
T4	EM	250			
T8	EM	250			
T10	EM	280			
T14	EM	280			
T9	SM	310			
T7	SM	320			
T16	EM	320			
T5	SM	340			
T6	EM	350			
T18	EM	380			
T3	EM	450			
G1	EM	600	Total	22	0.1873

2.1.3 Site strategic significance

The strategic significance of a site will be determined by areas included within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) produced for a region. The LNRS for Liverpool region is design and draft are available at [https://lcrca.mapchestercloud.co.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=%2FAnalyst%2FNamedProjects%2FLNRS StakeholderMap](https://lcrca.mapchestercloud.co.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=%2FAnalyst%2FNamedProjects%2FLNRS%2FStakeholderMap) There are no core local nature sites on site. There are opportunity areas that the LNRS has identified of which planted woodland management do apply to parts of the

application.



A review of local plans and policies did not highlight the Site as an area designated for nature recovery and therefore cannot achieve ‘high strategic significance’. As a LNRS is yet to be produced the Site can be assessed for ‘low strategic significance’ based on the urban setting of the site’s location. MEAS consultation note dated 13th August 2025 states individual trees and other neutral grassland are required to be input as ‘formally identified in local strategy’.

2.2 Surveys results

2.1 The biodiversity baseline value of the site is calculated by the Statutory Metric and reproduced below for the site in habitat units. The metric has provided the final on site baseline habitat and hedgerow units

On-site baseline	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.89
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.45
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00

2.3 Limitations

The survey was conducted in the optimal survey period for vascular plants as determined by JNCC, 2010 and broad species and habitats were identifiable. Habitats have been assessed to determine whether they meet those described in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan – Priority Habitat descriptions which are used to form Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

3. History of site

The recent history of the site can be examined using historic aerial imagery. The site does not appear to have changed since 2000, and no degradation has occurred.

4. Evaluation and Assessment

4.1 Proposed habitat creation and assessment

The proposed landscape plan contained in the appendix details the following.

REF	LSCP DESCRIPTION	BNG DESCRIPTION	HECTARE / NO.	NO.	LM.
1	TREES	PROPOSED NATIVE TREE PLANTING		25	
2	AMENITY GRASSLANDS	VEGETATED GARDEN	0.0441		
3	SCRUB	NATIVE SCRUB	0.0213		
4	SHRUB PLANTING	URBN INTRODUCED PLANTING	0.0201		
5	WILDFLOWER		0.0081		
6	BUILT ENVIRONMENT	URBAN SEALED SURFACES	0.2164		
6	HEDGES				91
7	AREA WITHIN RED LINE BOUNDARY	TOTAL HA:	0.3100		

The AIA tree report states the installation of proposed development access requires the removal of the following tree references

Small	Medium	Large
T1, T2, T4, T8, T12, T13, T14, T15, G3	T3, T5, T6, T7, T16, T18	

There are 14 small trees and medium trees totalling 0.1873 in total. The total coverage of trees removed is 0.1506 so retained total is 0.0367.

4.2 Habitat creation and enhancement

22 Urban trees are proposed to be in a moderate condition covering 0.0896 hectares. The habitat shall achieve the following criteria within the proposed Condition Assessment Sheets to achieve the target moderate condition.

A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	n	Current mix not 70% native
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	predominantly continuous
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	y	This will be achieved over the 30 year HMMP
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	Management of these areas shall be by separate management company hence trees can retain range and height
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	n	this will not be achieved
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is overhanging vegetation beneath.	y	There are proposals for vegetation beneath
Number of criteria passed		4	

Other neutral grassland will be created to a poor condition covering 0.0081Ha. The habitat shall achieve the following criteria within the proposed Condition Assessment Sheets to achieve the target poor condition.

A	The grassland is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific grassland habitat type. Indicator species listed by UKHab for the specific grassland habitat type are consistently present. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	No	
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.	Yes	This can be prescribed in HMMP
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ¹ .	Yes	This can be prescribed in HMMP
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%.	Yes	This can be prescribed in HMMP
E	Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition ² 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 ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	No	It is anticipated that damage will exceed 5% due to nature of residential development

An area of previously retained scrub covering 0.0163ha shall be added to the created mixed scrub shall be created to a moderate condition covering 0.0203Ha. The habitat shall achieve the following criteria within the proposed Condition Assessment Sheets to achieve the target poor condition.

A	The scrub is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description (where in its natural range). The appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific scrub type. At least 80% of scrub is native, and there are at least three native woody species ¹ , with no single species comprising 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).	No	Proposals don't afford for this
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ²) shrubs are all present.	No	No ancient shrubs
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition ⁵ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Yes	Can be managed by HMMP
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and/or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	No	Not wide enough to create well developed edge
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	Yes	Can be managed by HMMP
Number of criteria passed		2	

The proposals contain 91 linear M of single species native hedge that will target a poor condition as stated in the proposed CAS.

5. Summary conclusion

The final results of the assessment are as follows.

On-site baseline	Habitat units	0.89		
	Hedgerow units	0.45		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.72		
	Hedgerow units	0.33		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	-0.17		
	Hedgerow units	-0.12		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-0.17		
	Hedgerow units	-0.12		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-0.17		
	Hedgerow units	-0.12		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-19.43%		
	Hedgerow units	-26.91%		
	Watercourse units	0.00%		
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲			
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	10.00%	0.89	0.98	0.26
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.45	0.50	0.17

The proposals demonstrate a unit deficit to the mandatory 10% of 0.26 of a single biodiversity unit and 20.17 BU of hedgerow. It has not been possible to attain the 10% on site and as a result off site unit purchase is needed from a registered habitat bank to secure the 10% for the application and to satisfy trading rules. A Biodiversity Gain Plan and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan are needed.

Appendix 1 Habitat mapping based the UK Habitat Classification system

Appendix 2 Statutory Metric and Habitat Condition Assessments (existing and proposed)