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BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN - BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT

At

Huyton Cricket Club

Huyton Lane

Huyton

Liverpool

L36 7XD

NGR: SJ 44443 91320

Prepared for:	Andy Garnett, Breck Homes Ltd
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ycobella Cox'.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Lauren Hancox BSc MSc, UES Graduate Ecologist.

It has been verified by Ysobella Cox BSc MBiol, UES Senior Ecologist. Ysobella holds a level 4 Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland (BSBI) field identification skills certificate (FISC), which certifies her as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat surveys, UKHab and national vegetation classification (NVC) surveys.

1.2 Proposed development

The development proposals are for the construction of a residential development of 84 dwellings, with associated gardens and access roads.

1.3 Survey objectives

This biodiversity statement has been produced for the proposed development at Huyton Cricket Club, Huyton. UES was commissioned in November 2024 to prepare the biodiversity statement as part of a biodiversity net gain assessment of the proposed development. This was completed in order to:

- Establish the baseline value of the site by calculating the number of habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units at the site of the proposed development.
- If detailed or indicative plans are available, establish the post development value of the development by calculating the number of habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units which will be created, retained and / or enhanced as part of the proposals.
- Provide guidance on habitat retention, creation and enhancement measures to inform proposed site layout and landscaping proposals and to maximize potential gains in biodiversity.
- Provide details of how offsite compensation will be used when a 10% biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved on site.



2 PLANNING POLICY

Paragraphs 187(d), 192(b) and 193(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out requirements for the delivery of BNG. In England, BNG is mandatory under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

Under the statutory framework, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitats.

Mandatory BNG only applies for planning permission applications made on or after 12th February 2024. Permissions granted for applications made before this date are not subject to BNG. A temporary exclusion applies for non-major developments whereby mandatory BNG only applies for planning permission applications made on or after 2nd April 2024.

The Environment Act 2021 sets out the following key components to mandatory BNG:

- Minimum 10% gain required calculated using DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric & approval of net gain plan
- Habitat secured for at least 30 years via obligations / conservation covenant
- Habitat can be delivered on-site, off-site or via statutory biodiversity credits
- There is a national register for net gain delivery sites
- The mitigation hierarchy still applies of avoidance, mitigation and compensation for biodiversity loss
- Also applies to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)
- Does not apply to marine development
- Does not change existing legal environmental and wildlife protections

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Biodiversity net gain assessment

The BNG assessment has been undertaken using the DEFRA statutory biodiversity metric. The metric was used to calculate baseline habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units. A UK habitat classification survey was undertaken as part of a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) of the site, undertaken by UES on 10th December 2024. Surveyors present included:

- Ysobella Cox BSc MBiol, UES Ecologist. Ysobella held a level 3 Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland (BSBI) field identification skills certificate (FISC) at the time of the survey, which certified her as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat and UKHab surveys.

Habitats recorded within the proposed development site were mapped on a UK habitat classification plan provided at Appendix 1. Full details of each habitat recorded onsite are provided within the PEA report, which has been submitted as part of this planning application (reference UES04790/01).

The site was partially cleared prior to the biodiversity net gain assessment. As such, a detailed assessment of the habitats which would have been present onsite could not be undertaken. Therefore, a precautionary measure has been taken, and the pre-degradation value of the site has been based on aerial imagery, walkover survey data and, crucially for trees, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment produced in 2020 for the application site by Bowland Tree Consultancy Ltd (reference BTC1590). This AIA was particularly relevant for the assessment of trees that have been felled during the treatment of Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*. These trees include 12 medium- and 11 small-sized individual trees (Group 5), a native hedgerow (Group 6), and 6 medium size trees (Group 10). Where information could not be determined from the sources, a higher condition score was assigned as a precautionary measure.

Habitats which are suspected to have been present within the proposed development area prior to clearance have been mapped on a habitat plan provided at Appendix 2.

3.2 River condition assessment

A river condition assessment (RCA) was undertaken using the Modular River Physical (MoRPH) Field Survey technique and methodology as detailed within The MoRPH Survey Technical Reference Manual (2022) and The MoRPH Survey: A Modular River Physical Survey for Citizen Scientists Field Guide (2019).

The river condition assessment was undertaken by UES on 10th December 2024. Surveyors present included:

- Ysobella Cox BSc MBiol, UES Ecologist. Ysobella has undertaken RCA training and is accredited by the Cartographer RCA Team and Royal Geological Society to undertake river condition assessments.



4 RESULTS

4.1 Baseline assessment

4.1.1 Biodiversity net gain

The proposed development site has an area of approximately 2.16ha. The proposed development site has recently been partially cleared and as such only pockets of the original habitats are visible. The central section of the site comprises a large area of other neutral grassland with a pavilion building and two outbuildings. The northern and western sections of the site have been cleared but remnants of bramble *Rubus fruticosus agg.* scrub and felled trees are present. The boundaries of the site are demarcated by a combination of hedgerows and trees, with the River Alt adjacent to the northeastern boundary. As the site has recently been cleared, the pre-degradation habitats onsite have been determined by the walkover data, aerial imagery and previous survey information for the site.

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 15.34 habitat units, 1.42 hedgerow units and 1.47 watercourse units using DEFRA's statutory biodiversity metric.

The DEFRA statutory biodiversity metric used to calculate the baseline value of the site has been submitted with this report and provides full details of the calculations.

Baseline habitats:

4.1.2 g3c Other neutral grassland

Secondary codes: N/A

There is a large area of other neutral grassland located within the centre of the site. Due to the nature of the proposed development site, it is likely that the grassland was previously used for recreational purposes associated with the cricket club.

The grassland is managed and has recently been mown to a short sward height. In addition, the site has recently been cleared as part of the development and management works, resulting in vehicular damage along the edges of the grassland.

Grass species present include creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, red fescue *Festuca rubra* and perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*. There were very few forbs within the grassland at the time of the walkover survey, but additional species present include dove's-foot cranesbill *Geranium molle*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, dandelion *Taraxacum officinale agg.*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, common mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum*, willowherb *Epilobium sp.*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, stinging nettle *Urtica dioica*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus agg.*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, ivy *Hedera helix* and spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*. Species indicative of higher quality neutral grassland are sparse throughout the sward, and the grassland is typical of a rank and unmanaged grassland that has recently been subject to mowing.



4.1.3 h2a Native hedgerow

Secondary codes: 521

Hedge 1 is an unmanaged, species-rich native hedgerow with trees located along the southern boundary of the site. It measures approximately 6m high and 2m wide, and comprises sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, willow *Salix sp.*, birch *Betula sp.*, bramble and ivy.

Hedge 2 is a species-poor hedgerow located along the northern boundary of the site. The hedgerow is managed and contains numerous tree stumps from recently felled trees / shrubs. It measures approximately 3m high and 1.5m wide, and comprises sycamore, hazel *Corylus avellana*, cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* and elder.

4.1.4 h3d Bramble scrub

Secondary codes: N/A

The majority of the northern and western sections of the proposed development site have recently been cleared as part of the ongoing management of the site. However, several stands of bramble scrub are present with further remnants of cleared scrub across the ground at the time of the walkover survey. A small stand of bramble scrub is also present within the northeastern corner of the site. The areas of bramble scrub have been encroached by species such as, ivy, yellow flag iris *Iris pseudacorus* and a *Carex sp.*

4.1.5 h3h Mixed scrub

Secondary codes: N/A

The eastern section of the site has been cleared as part of the ongoing management works. However, cleared vegetation is still present across the ground and there is a small stand of scrub at the eastern edge of the site, which has assisted with classifying the habitat that would have been present within this area.

Species present include immature aspen *Populus tremula*, poplar *Populus sp.* buddleia *Buddleja davidii*, cherry laurel and a mixture of native species particularly at the southeastern edge where the scrub connects to the adjacent hedgerow. Understorey species are generally indicative of nutrient enrichment such as stinging nettle and cleavers *Galium aparine*.

4.1.6 u1b5 Buildings

Secondary codes: 825

There are three buildings located within the central section of the site.

Building 1 is the main pavilion building. It has a pitched roof constructed from concrete roof and ridge tiles, with dormer structures present on both the northwestern and southeastern aspects. The external walls are constructed from a combination of breezeblock and timber.

Building 2 is an outbuilding with a curved roof constructed from corrugated metal. The external walls are constructed from metal which is lined with wooden boarding.

Building 3 is an outbuilding with a flat roof. The roof of the building is no longer present and as such, the timbers rafters are exposed. The external walls are constructed from rendered breezeblock.

4.1.7 u1c Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

Secondary codes: N/A

The access road along the north and northeastern boundary of the proposed development site comprises bare ground which has been encroached by ephemeral vegetation. As the majority of the northern and western sections of the site have been cleared of vegetation, there are also large areas of bare ground within these sections

Ephemeral species include smooth sow thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, strawberry *Fagaria vesca*, willowherb, spear thistle, butterfly bush *Buddleja sp.*, broad-leaved dock, herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*, perennial rye grass, creeping thistle, dove's-foot cranesbill, common daisy *Bellis perennis*, narrow-leaved ragwort *Senecio inaequidens*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, dandelion, red fescue, bramble and cleavers.

4.1.8 32 Scattered trees

Evidence of recent tree felling was identified onsite due to the presence of numerous tree stumps. A small number of scattered trees remain within the northern and eastern sections of the site including cypress *Cupressus sp.*, elder and sycamore. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment was produced in 2020 for the application site by Bowland Tree Consultancy Ltd (reference BTC1590). This document in combination with the remaining tree stumps and aerial imagery has been reviewed to determine the baseline value of the trees that have been felled. It is understood that the trees were felled with permission of the local council for the treatment of Japanese knotweed, which appears to have been effective as no Japanese knotweed was noted on site.

4.2 River condition assessment

The River Alt has an average width of 2.35m at the surveyed reach. As such, 5x10m MoRPH surveys were undertaken and used to calculate the MoRPH5 results.

The river had a low flow at the time of survey and no limitations were encountered: bankside vegetation was not compromising, and the riverbed was fully visible throughout.

The river reach is located within a suburban area and the river type is assessed as unconfined as there is no evidence of river approaching adjacent hillslopes. The right bank features a narrow strip of short grasses, with smaller quantities of tall herbs and scattered scrub on the bank top. The riparian area is predominantly urban with residential dwellings and a permanent pedestrian footpath. In comparison, the left bank features a tree line with associated scrub and tall herb ground flora. The riparian area is dominated by the proposed development site, consisting of other neutral grassland and an access track.

The watercourse is culverted at the southern-most point, beneath a road towards Huyton Wetlands LWS, and the northern-most point, beneath a residential estate. However, the



northern section is beyond the scope of this MoRPH5 survey as only 50m of the watercourse was surveyed.

Due to the presence of residential dwellings and a pedestrian footpath along the right bank, and an access track and managed grassland along the left bank, the level of riparian encroachment for this section of the river is assessed as 'Major/Major'. The level of watercourse encroachment is considered to be 'no encroachment' due to the absence of engineered banks.

The presence of artificial habitats within the riparian zone significantly reduces the condition of the river, as does the presence of a culvert and level of channel bed siltation.

The river type has been assessed as 'F' - straight/sinuuous: the coarsest pebble size is cobble, but the average size is gravel/pebble. It has a sinuosity value of 1.073 and reach valley gradient of 0.00108 m/m. The river received a preliminary score of 0.603 and a final condition assessment of 'moderate'.

4.3 Post-development assessment

Detailed landscaping plans have been produced by Trevor Bridge Associates Ltd in May 2026 (Drawing number 7691.01 and 7691.02; Rev D), upon which the post development value of the site has been calculated.

The habitat units onsite will decrease to 6.53 units (a net loss of 57.44%), whilst hedgerow units will increase to 1.49 units (a net gain of 5.35%) and watercourse units remain unchanged at 1.47 units.

The DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric used to calculate the post-development value of the site has been submitted with this report and provides full details of the calculations.

5 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Biodiversity net gain requirements

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 15.34 habitat units, 1.42 hedgerow units and 1.47 watercourse units. Based on the plans provided, the proposed development will result in a net loss of 8.81 habitat units (-57.44%), with a net gain of 0.08 hedgerow units (+5.35%) and watercourse units remain unchanged at 1.47. As such, a further 10.35 habitat units, 0.07 hedgerow units and 0.15 watercourse units are required to achieve a 10% net gain onsite.

In addition to providing the 10% net gain in habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units required to adhere to national planning policy, the metric's trading rules must also be met to provide an acceptable net gain. This is a function of the metric that has been designed to ensure habitats are compensated for sufficiently.

To adhere to the metric's trading rules, losses must be replaced by habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units of the same broad habitat type and distinctiveness, or by units from any habitat with a higher distinctiveness regardless of the broad habitat type. Based on the details provided to UES, additional units required to meet the metric's trading rules include:

- 3.69 habitat units of medium distinctiveness grassland, or any habitat from a higher distinctiveness band (from any broad habitat type).
- 3.29 habitat units of medium distinctiveness heathland and shrub, or any habitat from a higher distinctiveness band (from any broad habitat type).
- 4.17 habitat units of medium distinctiveness individual trees, or any habitat from a higher distinctiveness band (from any broad habitat type).
- 0.12 hedgerow units of medium distinctiveness, or any hedgerow from a higher distinctiveness band.
- 0.15 watercourse units of high distinctiveness, or any watercourse units of a higher distinctiveness band.

5.2 Recommendations

Where possible, onsite habitat creation and enhancement will be prioritised to maximise net gain within the proposed development site. However, it is considered unlikely that sufficient onsite habitat retention, creation and / or enhancement will be feasible whilst facilitating the proposed development. As such, any deficit in units will be provided through offsite compensation. This will either be secured on land within the developer ownership, or through a payment to a third-party landowner acting as a habitat bank.

A 10% net gain in watercourse units can be obtained onsite by reducing the level of riparian encroachment from 'Major/Major' to 'Major/Minor'. This would depend on the incorporation of any encroachment 8-10m from the bank top (up to 100%), or a maximum of 0-10% encroachment within 4-10m of the bank top.

All compensatory offsite habitat units secured will need to be registered on the biodiversity gain site register.



As a last resort and where offsite compensation cannot be secured in the local area, statutory credits will be purchased as compensation.

The information contained within this biodiversity statement is considered to be sufficient to allow the local planning authority to grant planning permission, with regards to statutory biodiversity net gain requirements. Following approval of planning permission, the biodiversity gain condition will be applied to the permission, which must be discharged prior to the commencement of works.

A biodiversity gain plan (BGP) must be prepared to discharge this condition. The BGP must include baseline and post-development statutory metric calculations based on the finalised site layout and landscaping proposals. It must also contain full details of secured offsite compensation (where necessary) and a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP), detailing the proposed establishment, management and monitoring of all offsite compensation and any significant enhancements onsite.

All retained, created or enhanced habitats that constitute offsite compensation or onsite significant enhancements will need to be managed and monitored for a period of at least 30 years. This can be secured through a planning condition, or a legal agreement such as a section 106 or a conservation covenant.

Following submission of the biodiversity gain plan, the local planning authority will have up to eight weeks to discharge the biodiversity gain condition.



6 CONCLUSION

The proposed development site has an area of approximately 2.16ha and has recently been partially cleared. As such, only pockets of the original habitats are visible. The central section of the site comprises a large area of other neutral grassland with a pavilion building and two outbuildings. The northern and western sections of the site have been cleared but remnants of bramble scrub and felled trees are present. The boundaries of the site are demarcated by a combination of hedgerows and trees, with the River Alt adjacent to the northeastern boundary. As the site has recently been cleared, the pre-degradation habitats onsite have been determined by the walkover data, aerial imagery and previous survey information for the site.

The proposed development, as set out in the landscape proposals, will result in a net loss of 8.81 habitat units (-57.44%), a net gain of 0.08 hedgerow units (+5.35%) and watercourse units will remain unchanged at 1.47 units. As such, a further 10.35 habitat units, 0.07 hedgerow units and 0.15 watercourse units are required to achieve a 10% net gain onsite.

To satisfy the trading rules within the metric, any habitats that are to be lost as part of the proposed development must be compensated for with habitats of the same distinctiveness and same broad habitat type, or any habitat of higher distinctiveness.

Where possible, onsite habitat creation and enhancement will be prioritised to maximise net gain within the proposed development site. It is considered unlikely that sufficient onsite habitat retention, creation and / or enhancement will be feasible whilst facilitating the proposed development. As such, any deficit in units will be provided through offsite compensation.



REFERENCES

Dilworth, M. 2020. *Arboricultural Impact Assessment Land Off Huyton Lane, Huyton*, BTC1590.

Gurnell, A., Shuker, L., England, J., and Wharton, G. 2022. The MoRPH Survey Technical Reference Manual.

Gurnell, A., England, J., Shuker, L., and Wharton, G. 2019. The MoRPH Survey: A Modular River Physical Survey for Citizen Scientists Field Guide.

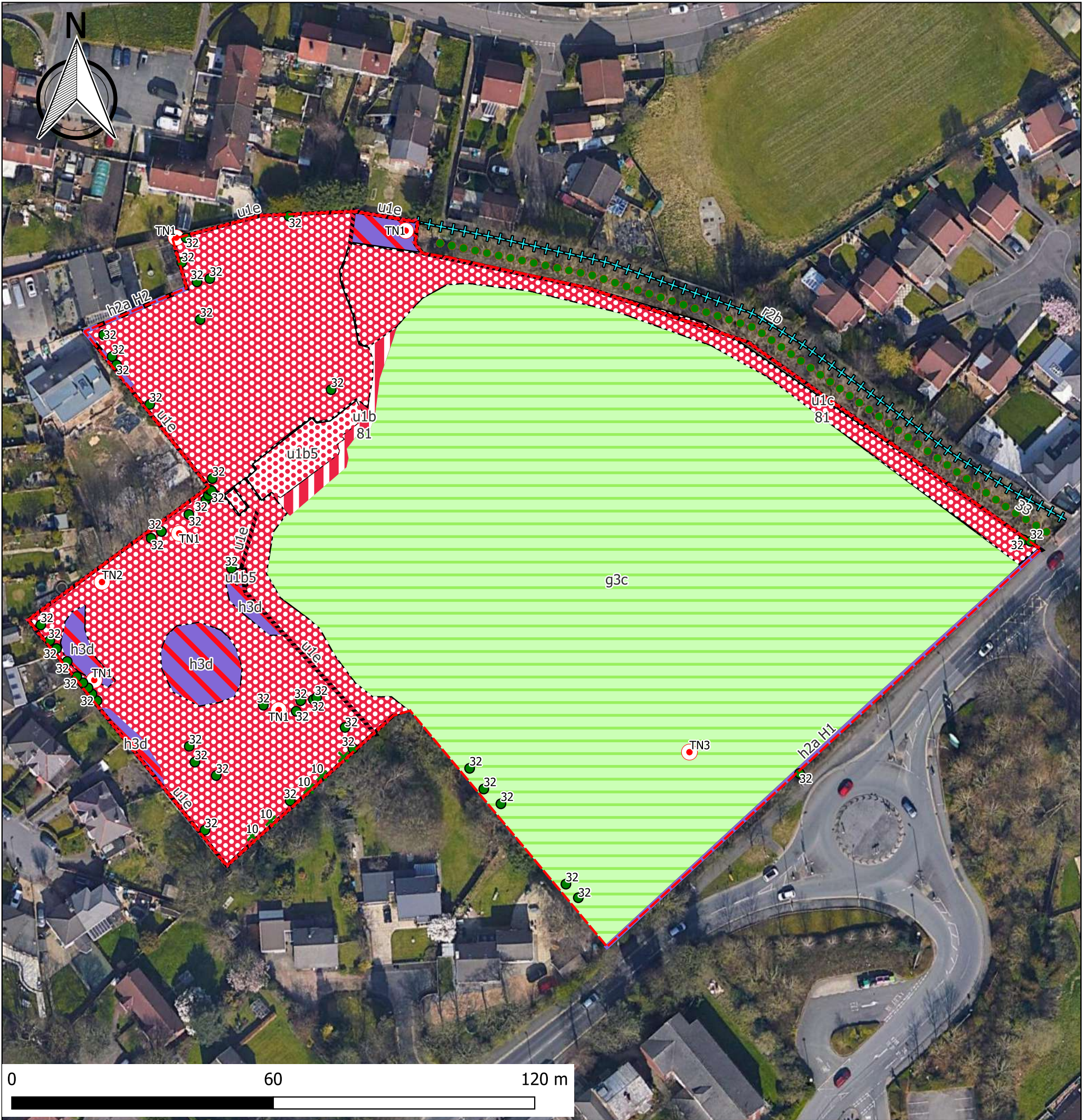
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*.

UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0*. Available at: <https://www.ukhab.org.uk>.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – UKHab plan



UK Habitat Classification Plan

**Site: Huyton Cricket Club,
Huyton**
NGR: SJ 44456 91306
Author: Bethany Dineley
Date: 14/03/2025



Key

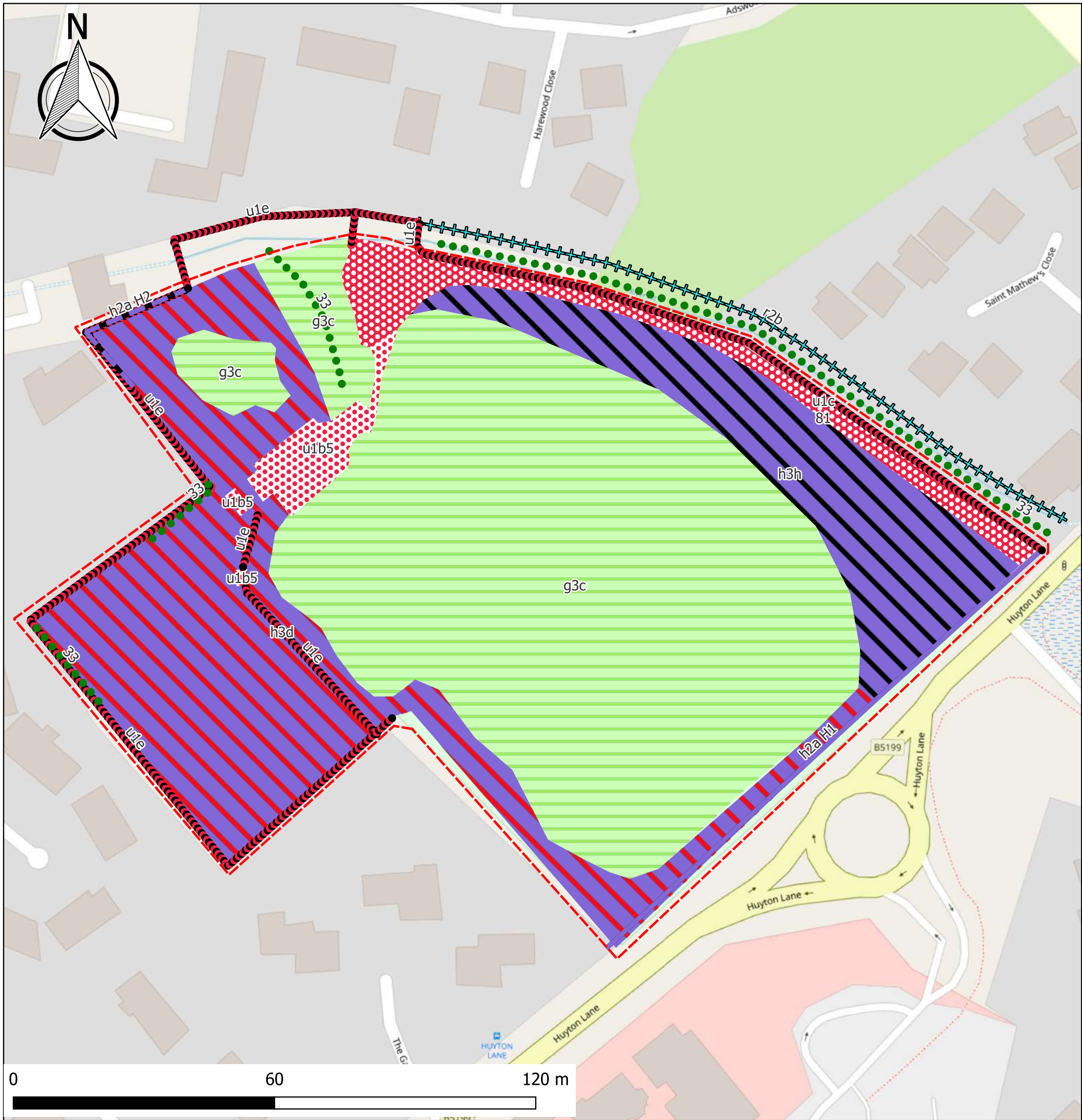
- g3c - other neutral grassland
- h2a - native hedgerow
- h3d - bramble scrub
- u1b5 - buildings
- u1c - artificial unvegetated unsealed surface
- u1e - built linear features
- r2b - other rivers and streams
- Survey boundary
- 10 - scattered scrub
- 32 - scattered trees
- 33 - line of trees
- Target Notes
- 81 - ephemeral

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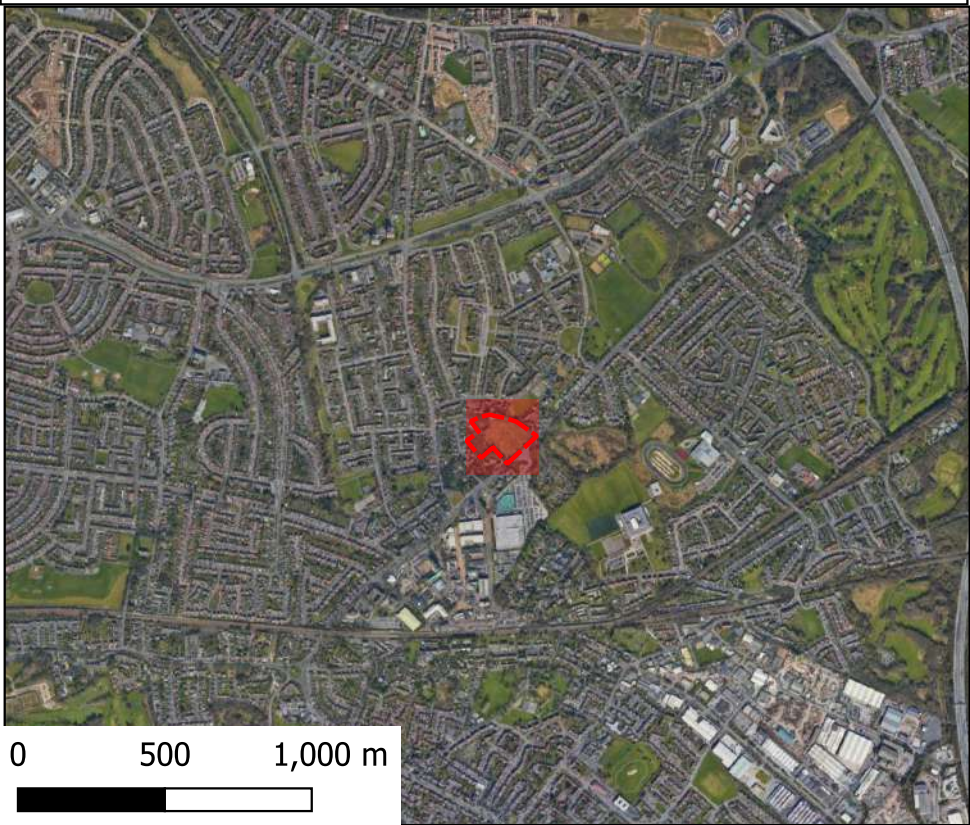


Appendix 2 – Pre-degradation habitat plan



Biodiversity Net Gain - Baseline Habitats

Site: Huyton Cricket Club,
Huyton
NGR: SJ 44456 91306
Author: Mark Halliwell
Date: 28/07/2025



- Key
- g3c - other neutral grassland
 - h2a - native hedgerow
 - h3d - bramble scrub
 - h3h - mixed scrub
 - u1b5 - buildings
 - u1c - artificial unvegetated unsealed surface
 - u1e - built linear features
 - r2b - other rivers and streams
 - Survey boundary
 - 32 - scattered trees
 - 33 - line of trees
 - Target Notes

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Appendix 3 – Post-development site plan

River Condition Assessment (RCA) + Encroachment results for: Priority rivers, Other rivers and streams, Canals			
Site name/location:	Huyton Cricket Club, Huyton	Unique river section reference:	River Alt
GPS of MoRPh5 midpoint	SJ 44499 91364	River section length:	50m

THE RESULTS OF THE 32 RCA INDICATORS FOR EACH RIVER SECTION:		
Condition Assessment Criteria		RCA Index values
RCA INDEX ID	RCA INDEX NAME	Insert values -4 to 0 OR 0 to 4; Highlight those >2 OR <-2
BANK TOP		
B1	Bank top vegetation structure	2
B2	Bank top tree feature richness	0
B3	Bank top water-related features	0
B4	<i>Bank top NNIPS cover</i>	0
B5	<i>Bank top managed ground cover</i>	-4
BANK FACE		
C1	Bank face riparian vegetation structure	2
C2	Bank face tree feature richness	3
C3	Bank face natural bank profile extent	3
C4	Bank face natural bank profile richness	2
C5	Bank face natural bank material richness	1
C6	Bank face bare sediment extent	4
C7	<i>Bank face artificial bank profile extent</i>	0
C8	<i>Bank face reinforcement extent</i>	0
C9	<i>Bank face reinforcement material severity</i>	0
C10	<i>Bank face NNIPS cover</i>	0
CHANNEL		
D1	Channel margin aquatic vegetation extent	0
D2	Channel margin aquatic morphotype richness	0
D3	Channel margin physical feature extent	3
D4	Channel margin physical feature richness	2

D5	Channel margin artificial features	0
CHANNEL		
E1	Channel aquatic morphotype richness	0
E2	Channel bed tree features richness	2
E3	Channel bed hydraulic features richness	2
E4	Channel bed natural features extent	0
E5	Channel bed natural features richness	0
E6	Channel bed material richness	3
E7	Channel bed siltation	-4
E8	Channel bed reinforcement extent	0
E9	Channel bed reinforcement severity	0
E10	Channel bed artificial features severity	-4
E11	Channel bed NNIPS extent	0
E12	Channel bed filamentous algae extent	0

Overview of RCA and river section assessment			
River Condition Assessment PRELIMINARY SCORE:	0.603; Moderate	River Type and class bands:	F - Staight/sinous, Coarsest CO, average GP
River Shape index:	2.866	Is the river channel OVERDEEP? <i>If yes, what supporting evidence is provided?</i>	No
River Condition Assessment FINAL CLASS:	Moderate	IS THE RCA FINAL CLASS MODIFIED ? <i>If yes, why and what supporting evidence is provided?</i>	No



Appendix 4 – River condition assessment results



Nesting boxes shall be oriented north and east and sited in height, within the fabric of new dwellings or secure

Nesting boxes shall be oriented north and east and sited in height, within the fabric of new dwellings or secure

