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Baseline Habitat Condition Assessment (BHCA)

Survey site:

Livv Housing, Gaywood Green, Liverpool, L32 6RD

Client:

Livv Housing

Survey date:

3rd October 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council. The proposal is described as:

“Residential development of the site”

The BHCA survey is written to inform the baseline for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report, and is based on UKHabs habitat

The site survey was undertaken by Gareth Hey BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM, Ecological Consultant					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
03/10/2025	18	82	100	5	None

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, photos in appendix 3 and proposal plan in appendix 4).	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings (UKHab codes used)</i>	The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 41792 97672 and has an area of approximately 1.4ha comprising an area of derelict land, where four former apartment blocks previously stood, but have since been demolished. It is surrounded by residential properties in all directions, with some recreational green space present to the south and west and large industrial unties to the east. The wider landscape comprises urban sprawl of residential properties, commercial and industrial units with main roads and dual carriageways present. The M57 to the south has some tree lined embankments and there are scattered urban trees in the landscape.

	The underlying geology of the site is sandstone (Chester Formation) overlain by naturally wet very acid sandy and loamy soils. Typical habitats of this soil type include mixed dry and wet lowland heath communities. A Stage 1 Arboriculture report, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken at the site by Arbtech in 2023, to inform a planning application for the previous demolition of the former apartment blocks. Since this previous report has been produced, the site has altered significantly, with the removal of the apartment blocks, and construction vehicle activities resulting in significant disturbance of the site. The majority of the trees recorded during this survey are still present, as is the species that were present within the previously identified grassland areas, which still dominate the areas of grassland. Habitat Classification <u>u1c - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface</u> An artificial, unvegetated, and unsealed surface extends east to west through the central section of the site. This feature is likely the result of significant trampling and disturbance caused by vehicular activity associated with the recent construction of the former apartment blocks. The area predominantly consists of gravel, waste stone material, bare earth, and patches of concrete. There is some vegetation present, mainly comprising forb and ruderal species detailed in the grassland section below, however, these account for less than 10% of the overall area of the habitat and as such, is best classified as u1c. <u>u1b6 – Other developed land</u>
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	In the southern and northern sections of the site are areas of hardstanding that previously formed access roads and paths into the site. These comprise sections of paving, tarmac and concrete, that are still present, even after the development of the site. There is no vegetation associated with these areas, and they are of minimal ecological value. <u>g4 – Modified grassland</u> Located around the boundaries of the site are sections of grassland, that have been left unmanaged, but formerly formed part of an amenity grassland area associated with former apartment blocks. The sward is grass-dominated, with species such as perennial ryegrass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>), Yorkshire fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>), and fescue (<i>Festuca</i> spp.) frequent throughout. A range of forb and ruderal species are also present at frequent to occasional abundance, including ribwort plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>), white clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>), dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.), ragwort (<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>), hoary mustard (<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>), dock (<i>Rumex</i> spp.), horseweed (<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>), common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), common hogweed (<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>), Indian thistle (<i>Carduus pycnocephalus</i>), fleabane (<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>), and scattered buddleja (<i>Buddleja davidii</i>). The low botanical diversity, prevalence of nutrient-tolerant and disturbance-associated species, and origin from a formerly managed amenity grassland area are consistent with classification as modified grassland (UKHab g4), rather than any other, more species rich grassland. <u>u1 – Scattered trees [32]</u>
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	The are trees present within the site that have been numbered in accordance with the arboriculture report (Arbtech, 2023). Detailed can be found below of species, size and numbering. Overall, the site contains: • Small trees (DBH 7.5cm – 30cm) – 42 trees • Medium trees (DBH 30cm – 60cm) – 30 trees					
		Size	Species		Size	Species
G01		Small	Maple	G02	Medium	Oak
		Small	Ash		Medium	Oak
		Small	Maple		Medium	Maple
		Small	Ash		Medium	Ash
		Small	Maple		Medium	Maple
		Small	Ash		Medium	Ash
		Small	Ash		Small	Oak
		Small	Maple		Small	Maple
		Small	Ash		Small	Ash
		Small	Maple		Small	Maple
		Small	Maple		Small	Maple
	G03		Small		Maple	
		Small	Sorbus		Small	Oak
		Small	Maple		Small	Ash

		Small	Sorbus		Small	Maple
		Small	Maple		Small	Oak
		Small	Sorbus		Small	Oak
		Small	Sorbus		Small	Ash
		Small	Maple		Small	Ash
		Small	Maple			
		Small	Sorbus			
		Small	Sorbus			
		G04	Medium	Cherry	G05	Medium Ash
	Medium		Ash	Medium		Ash
	Medium		Cherry	Small		Ash
	Medium		Ash	Small		Ash
	Medium		Cherry	G06	Medium	Cherry
	Medium		Cherry		Medium	Cherry
	Medium		Ash		Medium	Ash
	Medium		Ash	G11	Small	Sycamore
	G09	Medium	Ash		Small	Ash
		Medium	Ash		Small	Ash
		Medium	Ash	T08	Medium	Wild cherry
	T01	Medium	Cherry	T09	Medium	Ash

	T02	Small	Ash	T10	Small	Ash
	T03	Medium	Cherry	T11	Medium	Ash
	T04	Medium	Cherry	T12	Medium	Ash
	T06	Medium	Cherry	T13	Small	Silver birch
Condition Assessments						
<u>u1c</u> - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface and <u>u1b6</u> – Other developed land						
Condition N/A – Pre-determined by the metric.						
<u>g4</u> – Modified grassland						

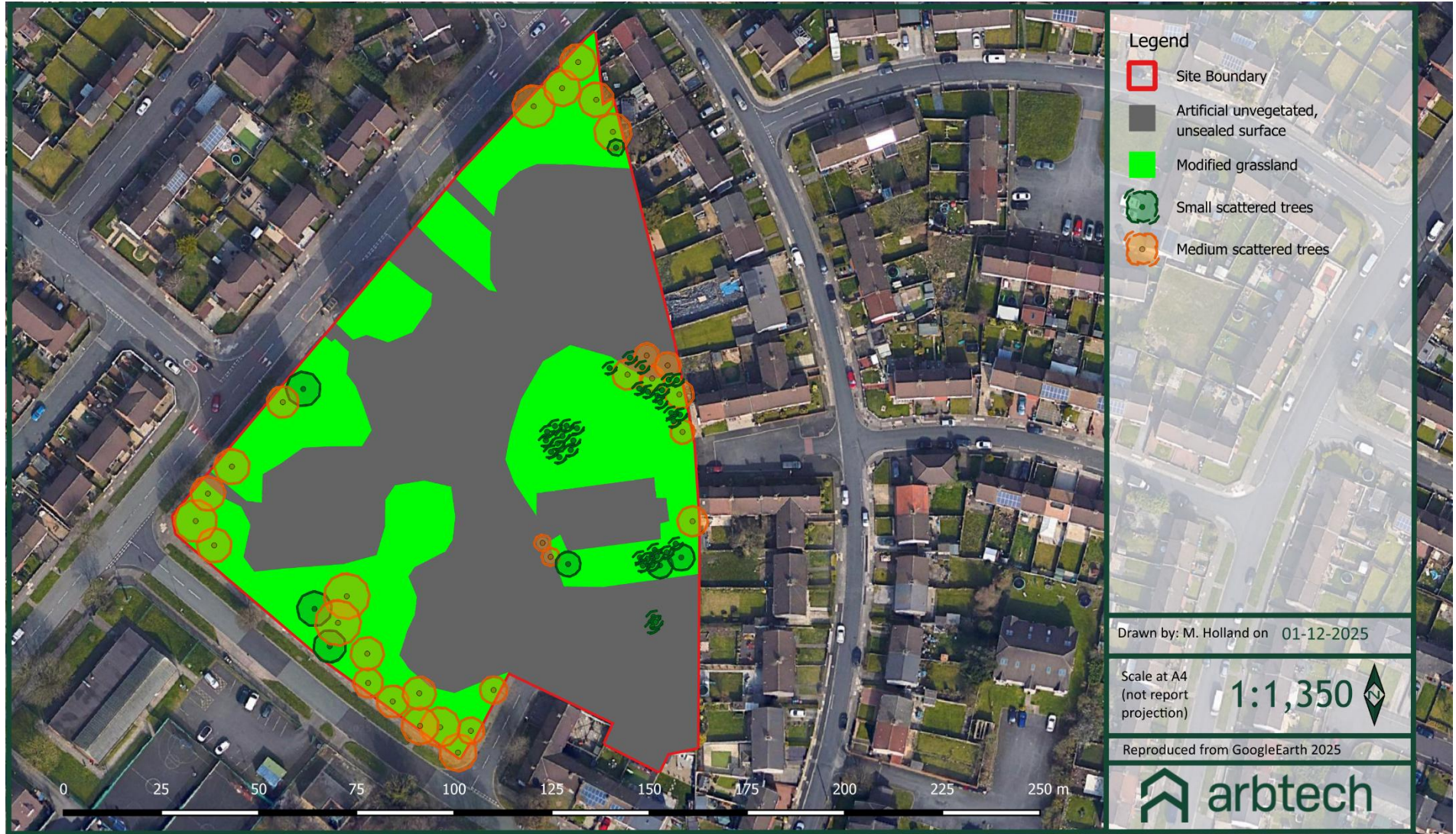
	D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	No	
	E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	No	
	F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes	
	G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Yes	
	Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			No
	Number of criteria passed			Three
	Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved	
	Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
	Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)		
	Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	Yes	
	u1 – Scattered trees [32]			
	Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed	Notes (such as justification)

	A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	
	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).	Yes	
	C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	Yes	
	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.	Yes	
	E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	
	F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	
	Number of criteria passed		Five	
	Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓	
	Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)	Yes	
	Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)		
	Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
	Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.			

<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the majority of the modified grassland and some scattered trees. This could result in a net loss in biodiversity at the site.
<i>Recommendations</i>	A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG): The Environment Act (2021) requires all developments (excluding exemptions) to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity. Therefore, the planning application must be

	accompanied by a landscaping/habitat creation and enhancement strategy, biodiversity net gain calculations, and a habitat management and monitoring plan to ensure the proposed development delivers a 10% net gain. The BNG metric will use this report to inform the baseline.
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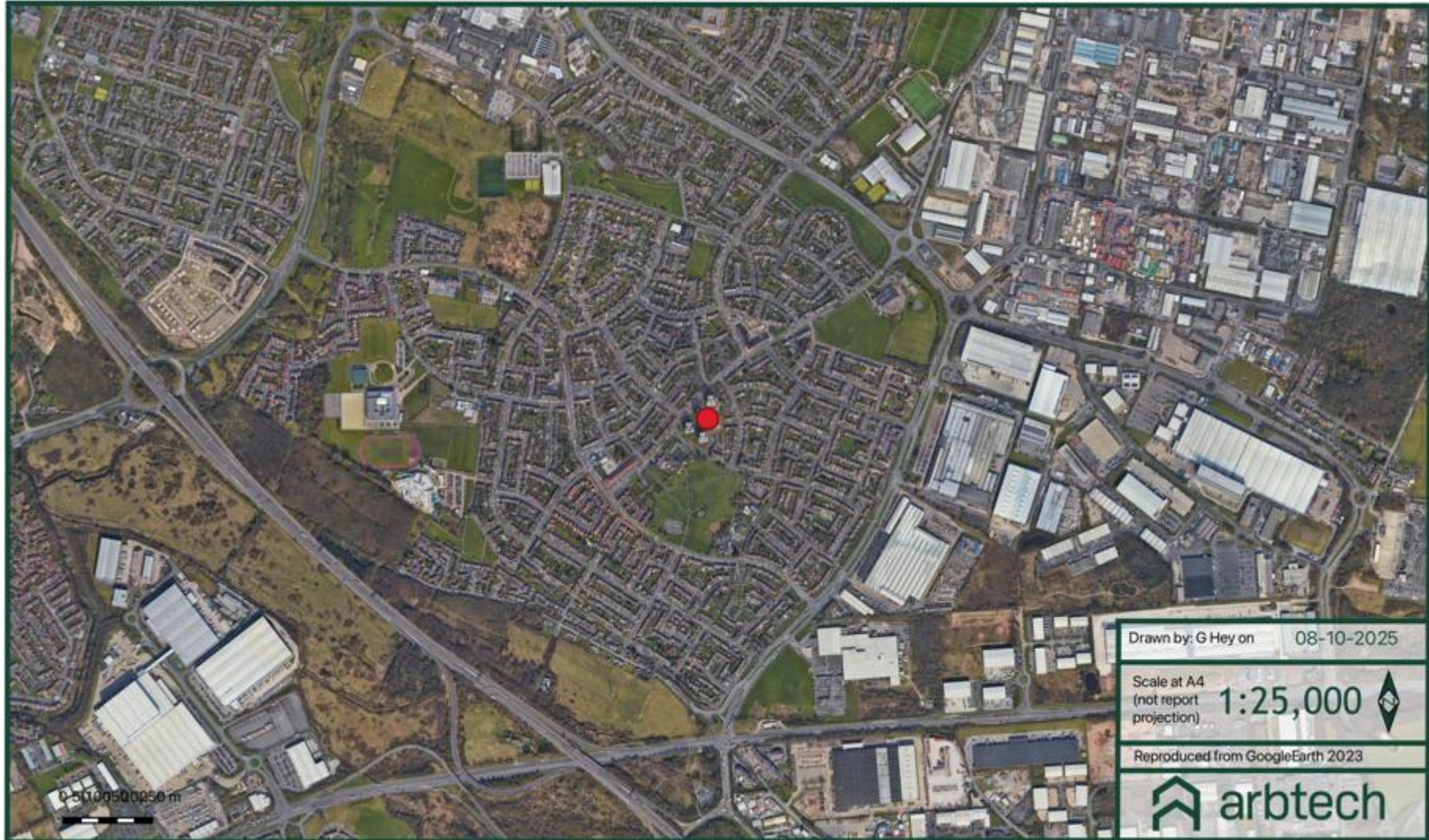
Appendix 1a: Survey/Habitat map



Appendix 1b: tree numbers



Appendix 2: Location map





Appendix 4: Photos



Photo 1: Other developed land in the central section of the site.



Photo 2: Modified grassland, in the south-western section of the site.



Photo 3: Scattered trees (in eastern section of the site).



Photo 4: Unvegetated surface present in the northern section of the site.

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Version control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Gareth Hey BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM, Ecological Consultant	08/10/2025
Review	0.2	Mel Reid BSc (Hons) MRes AMRSB, Principal Ecologist	13/10/2025
Final	1.0	Gareth Hey BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM, Ecological Consultant	13/10/2025
Updated	2.0	Millie Holland BSc (Hons), MSc, Consultant Ecologist	01/12/2025
Review	2.1	Mel Reid BSc (Hons) MRes AMRSB, Principal Ecologist	02/12/2025
Final	3.0	Millie Holland BSc (Hons), MSc, Consultant Ecologist	03/12/2025