Biodiversity Impact Assessment

Land at Athol Road, Manchester, M16 8QN
Ref: P.1984.24

Date: July 2024

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P.1984.24

Biodiversity Impact Assessment

of

Land at Athol Road, Manchester, M16 8QN

for

Hassan Giwa

July 2024

		Date
Field Work by	Kira Lovatt	24/06/2024
Document Author	Alex Rose and Jack Kay MSc CIEEM;	23/07/2024
Technical Review	Jack Kay	23/07/2024
QA Review & Approval	Ciaran Power – Operations Manager	23/07/2024

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Appendix 1 Drawing P.1984.24.E02 Baseline Condition Assessment

Appendix 2 Drawing P.02LD.P002 Proposed Landscape Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents an assessment study of effects on biodiversity in connection with the proposed development at Land at Athol Road, Manchester, M16 8QN.

This report calculates 'biodiversity units' using DEFRA's Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric, February 2024 and following the methods set out in the *The Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide 2024*. The units are calculated based on the area (or length), condition and distinctiveness of habitats found on the site. Pre-development and post-development biodiversity values are calculated and compared to identify any change in the biodiversity value of the site.

Mandatory biodiversity net gain is set out in the Environment Act 2021 and will apply in England and Wales as a requirement to demonstrate net gain as the result of a new development.

Based on the current proposals there will be a gain of **+0.0245 (+13.53%) in habitat units and a gain of +0.0120 (+12.19%) in hedgerow units** within the proposed development area, demonstrating that a net gain has been achieved within the site in line with National Planning Policy (NPPF) and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Local Plan.

Post development biodiversity units with the proposed development site were calculated based on the habitats displayed on the landscape planting plan Drawing P.02LD.P002 Proposed Landscape Plan at appendix 2.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

Ascerta has been instructed by Hassan Giwa to carry out a Biodiversity Impact Assessment of the Land at Athol Road, Manchester, M16 8QN. The site OS grid reference is SJ 83458 93791 and the What3Words reference is jukebox.harsh.mouse. This assessment has been prepared to support a planning application for the proposed redevelopment of the site.

1.2 Ecological background

The proposed development site was subject to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal conducted 24th June 2024 by Kira Lovatt.

The site comprises an area of improved grassland, intact species poor hedge, scattered scrub and a mixture of broadleaved and coniferous trees. To the north of the site presents residential housing, with a public foot path to the south. Between the footpath and the site boundary is a mixed woodland with a large amount of bramble and ivy ground flora, with larger trees are over hanging the southern site boundary. The wider landscape includes residential houses, parkland trees and amenity grassland.

To the north of the site presents residential housing, with a public footpath to the south. Between the footpath and the site boundary is a mixed woodland with a large amount of bramble and ivy scrub, some larger trees are over hanging the southern boundary. The wider landscape includes residential houses, parkland trees and amenity grassland.

2.0 Methods

2.1 Field Survey

A walkover survey of the site was conducted on 24th June 2024, when the habitat types and features of ecological interest were identified and mapped. An extended phase one habitat survey was undertaken along with a habitat condition assessment (*Natural England Farm Environment Plan (FEP) Manual, 3rd Edition, March 2010*).

2.2 Biodiversity Baseline Methods

To calculate a biodiversity baseline, this study used methods detailed within *The Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric*, February 2024 and following the methods set out in the *The Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide 2024.* Initially, habitats were digitised in GIS using field notes. Areas were measured in hectares and linear features in kilometres. The biodiversity unit value for each habitat was then calculated by multiplying the habitat area (or length) by its distinctiveness score and then by its condition score, both described below. The unit values for each habitat were then totalled to produce the biodiversity baseline. Linear habitats were assessed separately to areas.

2.2.1 Habitat distinctiveness

Habitats identified are entered into DEFRA's *Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric* which then assigns a pre-determined distinctiveness value. Habitat distinctiveness is a collective measure of biodiversity and includes parameters such as species-richness, diversity, rarity, and the degree to which a habitat supports species rarely found in other habitats.

2.2.2 Habitat Condition

The condition of the habitats present has been assessed during the site visits using *The Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide 2024.*

The post-development biodiversity units were calculated using information from the landscape planting plan drawing number P.02LD.P002 Proposed Landscape Plan in Appendix 2. To calculate the post-development biodiversity units the habitat areas are multiplied by the distinctiveness and condition values and then divided by a multiplier based on the difficulty of creating the proposed habitat and the time needed to achieve the proposed condition. The baseline biodiversity units were then subtracted from the post development units to determine any change in biodiversity value of the site as a result of the development. The target condition of the habitats is based on guidance set out within the *Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide (Draft) 2024* which may require ecological input and/or guidance to ensure the target conditions are achieved.

Information and Data Used to Inform the Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

The following information was used to inform the Biodiversity Unit Calculations.
GIS layers of:

- The site;
- The habitats classified under Phase 1 and baseline habitat condition; and
- Drawing P.02LD.P002 Proposed Landscape Plan

3.0 Biodiversity Baseline

This section establishes the biodiversity baseline for the site based on the preliminary ecological appraisal of the proposed development site and the proposed compensatory site.

3.1 Biodiversity Baseline for habitats on site

The *Baseline Condition Assessment,* drawing P.1984.24.E02 Baseline Condition Assessment (Appendix 1) has been used to identify three habitat area types within the development site. The baseline habitats assessed below are all located within the development area and areas identified for BNG as shown on drawing P.1973.24.E01B Baseline Condition Assessment (Appendix 1) The phase 1 habitat categories have translated into UKHab habitat classification (*UK Habitat Classification User Manual* 2018) using the UKHab/Phase 1 translation tool within the *Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric* (February 2024) and following the methods set out in the the *Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide 2024* and biodiversity scores have been calculated and assessed, as displayed in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

Table 1: Baseline Habitat Areas Biodiversity Calculation for onsite habitats

Phase 1/UK Hab Habitat	Total Area (m^2)	Distinctiveness (score)	Condition	Biodiversity Score	Area retained
Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	188.14	V Low (0)	N/A Other	0	0
Grassland – Modified grassland	314.31	Low (2)	Moderate	0.13	0
Heathland and shrub – Mixed scrub	22.40	Medium (4)	Moderate	0.02	0
Individual trees	41	Medium (4)	Moderate	0.0374	0
Total Site Area (m^2)	**524.85**	Habitat Areas Biodiversity Units		**0.1811**	**0**

Table 1: Baseline Hedgerows Biodiversity Calculation for onsite habitats

Phase 1/UK Hab Habitat	Total Length (m)	Distinctiveness (score)	Condition	Biodiversity Score	Area retained
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	12.93	V Low (0)	N/A Other	0.0129	5
Line of trees	21.43	Low (2)	Moderate	0.0857	6
Total Site Length (m)	**34.36**	Habitat Areas Biodiversity Units		**0.0987**	**0**

4.0 Impacts on biodiversity

4.1 Post-development biodiversity value of the proposed development site

Drawing P.02LD.P002 Proposed Landscape Plan, Appendix 2, has been used to identify two new habitat area types. Habitat areas, distinctiveness and condition scores have been calculated and assessed and are displayed in Table 2 and Table 3 below.

Table 2: Post Development Habitat Areas Biodiversity Calculation for Onsite Habitats

Phase 1/ UKHab Habitat	Total Area (m^2)	Distinctiveness (score)	Condition (score)	Biodiversity Score
Urban – Developed land; sealed surface	330.85	V. Low (0)	N/A – Other	0
Urban – Vegetated garden	50	Low (2)	Condition Assessment N/A	0.0097
Heathland and shrub – Mixed scrub	63	Medium (4)	Moderate	0.0432
Grassland – Other neutral grassland	81	Medium (4)	Moderate	0.0542
Individual trees	326	Medium (4)	Moderate	0.0995
Habitat Areas Biodiversity Units				**0.2056**

Table 3: Post Development Hedgerow Areas Biodiversity Calculation for Onsite Habitats

Phase 1/ UKHab Habitat	Total length (m)	Distinctiveness (score)	Condition (score)	Biodiversity Score
Species-rich native hedgerow	12.2	Medium (4)	Moderate	0.0817
Habitat Areas Biodiversity Units				**0.0817**

4.2 Change in biodiversity value

Based on the current proposals there will be a gain of **+0.0245 (+13.53%) in habitat units and a gain of +0.0120 (+12.19%) in hedgerow units** within the proposed development area demonstrating that a net gain has been achieved within the site in line with National Planning Policy (NPPF) and The Manchester Local Plan 2012-2027, as well as the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022-2039.

5.0 References

JNCC (2010), Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey - a technique for environmental audit. JNCC, Peterborough

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2024). *Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity metric: User Guide (Draft)*. Natural England.

A – Natural England, B – Environment Agency, C – Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, D – Treework Environmental Consultants Ltd, E – eCountability Ltd

UK Habitat Classification Working Group (2018). *UK Habitat Classification User Manual* at http://ecountability.co.uk/ukhabworkinggroup-ukhab

UK Habitat Classification Working Group (2018). *UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions V1.0 at* http://ecountability.co.uk/ukhabworkinggroup-ukhab

Appendix 1

Key

- Survey Area
- h3h - Mixed scrub
- g4 - Modified grassland
- u1b - Developed land; sealed surface
- h2a - Native hedgerow
- 33 - Line of trees

DO NOT SCALE.
ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID.
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PROJECT:
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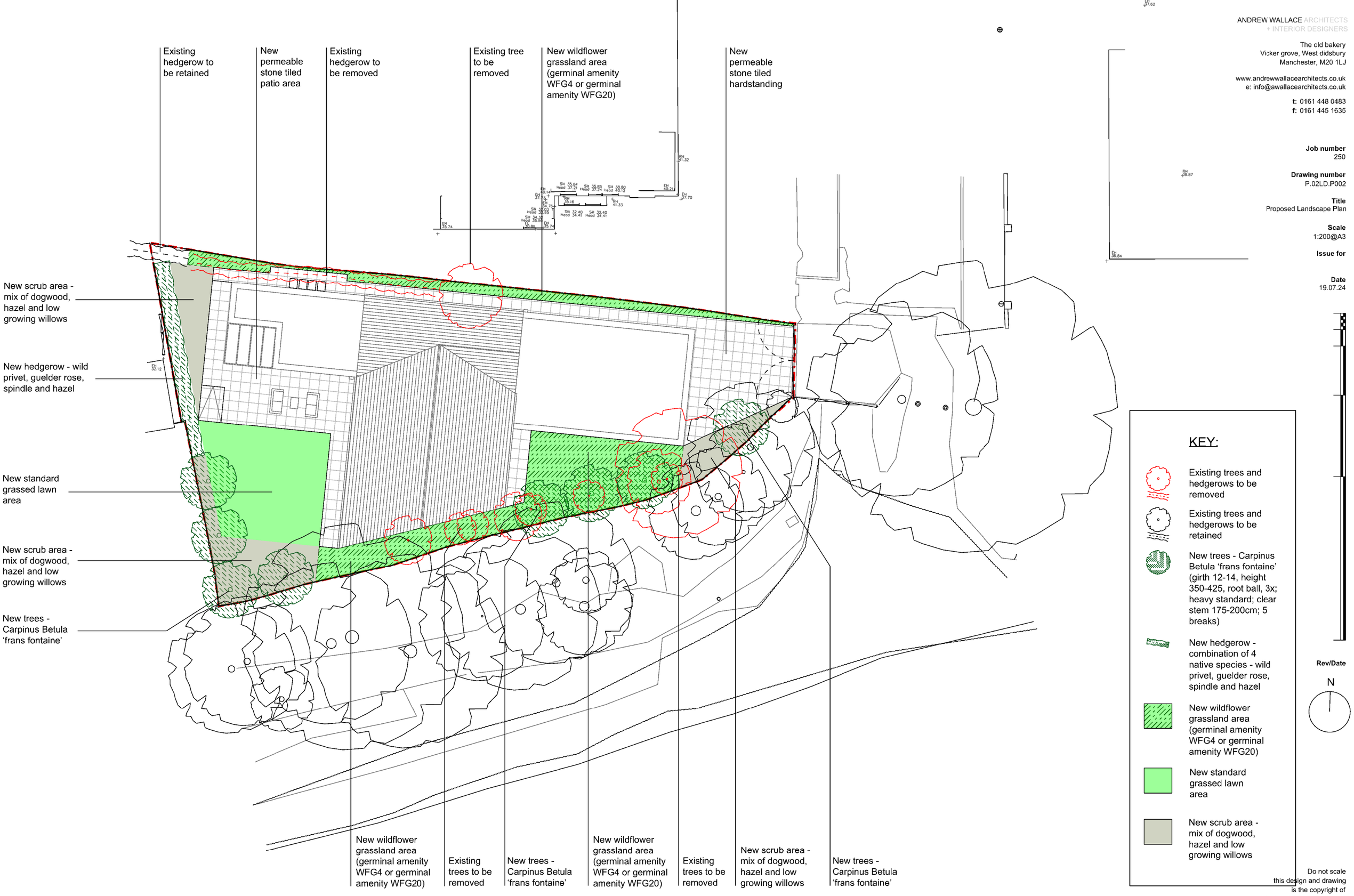
DRAWING TITLE:
Baseline Condition Assessment

SCALE:	DRAWN BY:	DRAWING No:
NTS@A3	AR	P.1984.24.E02
DATE:	CHKD BY:	REV:
18/07/24	JK	-

Appendix 2



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Drawing number
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Title
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