

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN DESIGN STAGE ASSESSMENT

December 2023

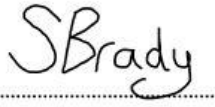
Former Walkers Site

Crabtree Lane
Clayton
Manchester
M11 4GU

**U R B A N
G R E E N**



QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Project No.:	UG2066			
Project:	Former Walkers Site			
Location:	Crabtree Lane, Manchester, M11 4GU			
Title:	Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Assessment			
Document Type:	BNG	Issue No.:	01	
Date:	12/12/2023			
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Revision Status:				
Rev:	Date:	Issue/Purpose/Comment:	Prepared:	Checked:
02	20/12/2023	Amendments to landscapes	SC	BIG

NON-TECHNICAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chancerygate Manchester Limited are proposing to develop the Former Walkers Site, Manchester (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The proposals include the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of nine new industrial units, with associated hard and soft landscaping.

Urban Green have been appointed to complete a Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Assessment in order to assess the change in value to the environment provided by the proposed development.

The Assessment was conducted using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 to calculate the pre- and post-development biodiversity habitat units of the site for the proposed development. The results of this calculation are summarised in the following table:

	Habitat Unit Change					On-site post development	Net change in Biodiversity	
	On-site baseline	Retained	Lost	Enhanced	Created		Habitat units	%
Area Habitat Units	2.60	0.05	2.35	0.36	0.29	0.71	-1.90	-73.01
Linear Hedgerow Units	0.25	0	0.25	0	-	0	-0.25	-100

Overall, this assessment produces a net loss of 1.90 area habitat units (-73.01%) and a net loss of 0.25 linear hedgerow units (-100%). Therefore, the development does not comply with local and national planning policy, and the trading rules have not been met. As the opportunities for biodiversity net gain have been maximised onsite, off-site mitigation will be necessary for both area and linear hedgerow units. Off-site mitigation will need to include individual trees and either lines of trees or medium distinctiveness hedgerow habitats (e.g., native hedgerows) to ensure that the trading rules are satisfied.

To ensure that the habitats proposed as part of the post-development design of this site reach the condition detailed within this report and the full gain in value to the environment is achieved by this site, a long-term management plan (usually 30 years) is required (Urban Green, 2023a).

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Background to the Scheme.....	5
1.2	Site Context.....	5
1.3	Purpose of this Report	6
1.4	Planning Context.....	6
1.5	Good Practice Principles	7
2	Methods	8
2.1	Sources of Information	8
2.2	Site Mapping	8
2.3	The Biodiversity Metric 4.0.....	9
2.4	Habitat Scoring	9
2.5	Constraints to the Survey	13
3	Baseline Habitat Assessment.....	14
3.1	Area Habitats	14
3.2	Linear Hedgerow Habitats	20
4	Retained Habitats	25
4.1	Area Habitats	25
4.2	Linear Hedgerow Habitats	25
5	Lost Habitats	26
5.1	Area Habitats	26
5.2	Linear Hedgerow Habitats	27
6	Pre-Development Unit Summary	28
7	Enhanced Habitats.....	29
7.1	Area Habitats	29
8	Created Habitats.....	30
8.1	Area Habitats	30
9	Post-Development Summary and Conclusion.....	33
10	References	34

Appendix 1 – Pre-Development Habitat Map

Appendix 2 – Secondary Codes

Appendix 3 – Proposed Landscapes

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Scheme

This Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been prepared by Urban Green on behalf of Chancerygate Manchester Limited to assess the change in value to biodiversity as a result of the proposed development of the Former Walkers Site, Manchester (hereafter referred to as ‘the site’). The proposals include the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of nine new industrial units, with associated hard and soft landscaping.

The author of the report is Biodiversity Net Gain Consultant, Sarah Child. Sarah has experience providing consulting services in Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments for a range of development schemes across the UK, including residential and commercial schemes.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 88738 98229 and comprises a total area of approximately 0.90ha (see Figure 1).

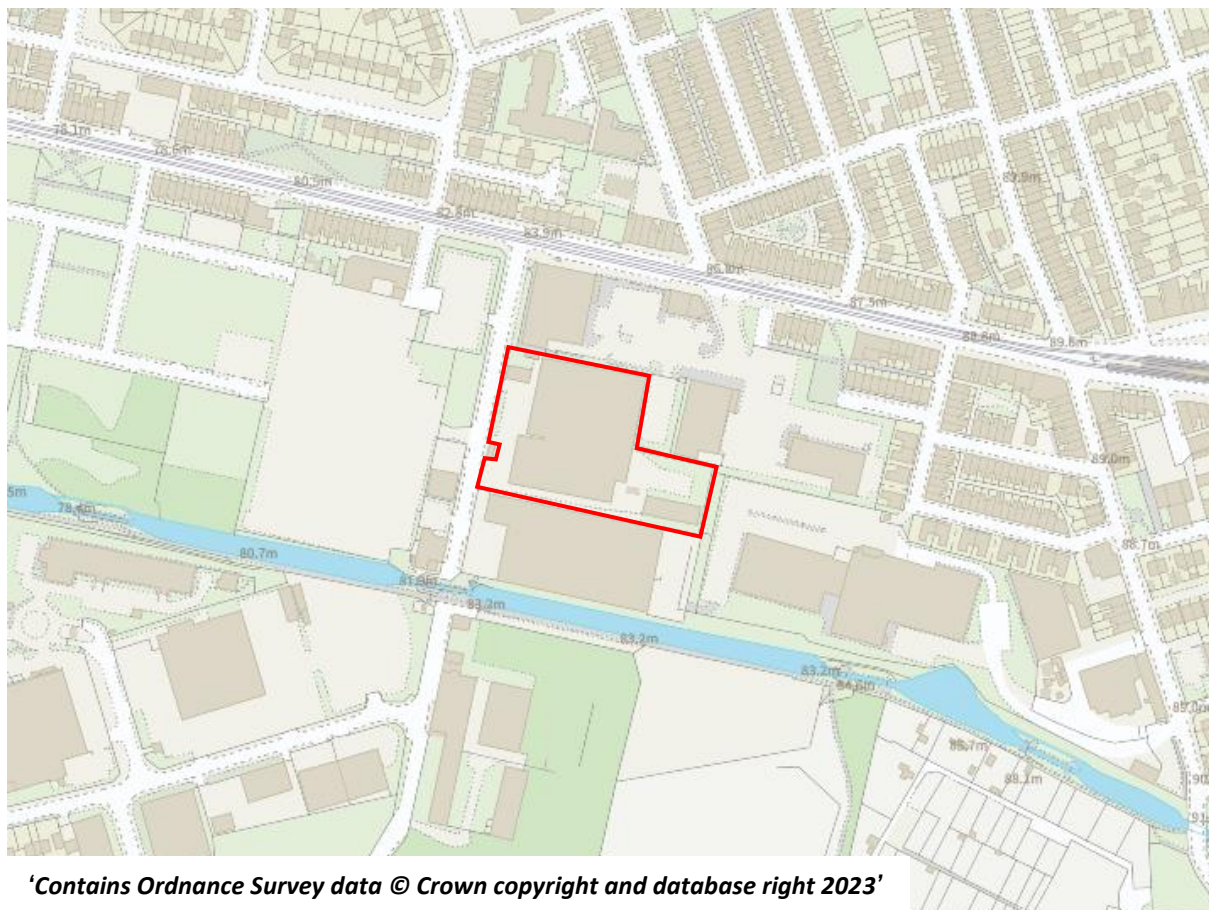


Figure 1 – Site Extent

The site is located in the urban area of Clayton, approximately 4.7km east of Manchester City Centre. It is immediately surrounded by industrial and commercial units, with Crabtree Lane forming the western site

boundary. Approximately 70m south of the site is the Ashton Canal, and approximately 80m to the north of the site is Ashton New Road (A662). The wider landscape is comprised predominantly of residential development and a number of public parks, including Hewlett Johnson Playing Fields and Copperas Field. The site is also around 1km south of Clayton Vale, a designated Local Nature Reserve containing deciduous woodland Priority Habitat and a stretch of the River Medlock.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

This report has been produced to document the methods, results, and conclusions of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Design Stage Assessment that was undertaken on site. The advice herein is based on both desk and field-based studies and intends to fulfil the following purposes:

- Ensure the core principles of Biodiversity Net Gain including the mitigation hierarchy are applied;
- Identify the baseline habitats present on site (pre-development), assess the condition and provide an indication of the ecological value of those habitats;
- Identify the post development habitats present on site, assess the possible target condition and provide an indication of the likely importance of those habitats;
- Calculate the overall change in biodiversity score from pre- to post-development habitats (measured as habitat units).

1.4 Planning Context

1.4.1 National Legislation

Biodiversity Net Gain means leaving biodiversity in a better state than it was before. As part of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan, this requirement is being introduced and mandated for all developments as of January 2024. Biodiversity Net Gain is underpinned by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act, 2021:

This Schedule makes provision for grants of planning permission in England to be subject to a condition to secure that the biodiversity gain objective is met.

This is supported by Paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by inter alia:

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

Upon Biodiversity Net Gain becoming mandatory, all new planning applications (with specific exemptions) must demonstrate a minimum 10% uplift in biodiversity value via development. The assessment method will be standardised using the most recent Natural England Biodiversity Metric (current version 4.0) which measures the biodiversity value of a site in habitat units, categorised into area, linear hedgerow, and watercourse habitats. A 10% net gain in all categories is required.

1.4.2 Local Policy

Manchester City Council adopted a local plan in 2012, which will remain in place until 2027. While this document does not directly reference Biodiversity Net Gain, Policy EN 15 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation) states:

Developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate.

Additionally, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) have produced guidance relating to Biodiversity Net Gain within the 10 GM boroughs and set out a 10% target (GMCA, 2021):

The minimum level of Biodiversity Net Gain is considered to be achieved when the biodiversity units for the habitats (for example, area based habitats, rivers and/or hedges) impacted by the development is increased by 10% or more after the development. If the calculations indicate that a net gain will not be delivered at this stage, either the design should be updated or additional areas for habitat compensation identified (either onsite or outside the development boundary).

1.5 Good Practice Principles

To encourage holistic development that makes a lasting positive change to the site's biodiversity, the Good Practice Principles must be followed (Baker *et al.*, 2019). Key principles include:

- Following the 'Mitigation Hierarchy':
 - Avoid impacts on biodiversity
 - Minimise impacts on biodiversity
 - Compensate for biodiversity losses on site
 - Compensate for biodiversity loss off site
- Avoid irreplaceable habitats and losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere;
- Address risks including difficulty and time of habitat creation and enhancement;
- Make a measurable net gain contribution calculated with a suitable metric with limitation and assumptions clearly identified;
- Achieve the best outcome for biodiversity creating lasting long-term benefits that exceed current expectations.

2 Methods

2.1 Sources of Information

Table 1 – Desk Study Sources of Information

Source	Date Consulted	Information Sought
MAGIC website (www.magic.gov.uk)	24/11/2023	Locations of statutory designated sites within 1km of the site boundary. Locations of the designated sites within the National Site Network (Ramsar, SAC and SPA) within 5km of the site boundary. Locations of European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) and Class Licences within 1km. Priority habitats on site and within 1km of the site boundary
Natural England (https://designatedsites/.naturalengland.org.uk/)	24/11/2023	Relevant statutory designated site citations.
JNCC (https://jncc.defra.gov.uk/)	24/11/2023	Information on European wildlife sites. Details of relevant Section 41 species and habitats.
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit	24/11/2023	Locally designated wildlife sites within 1km of site boundary. Records of protected and notable species within 1km of the site boundary.
Greater Manchester Local Biodiversity Action Plans	24/11/2023	Species and habitats which are given special conservation status at the local level.
The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Natural England Publications (http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720?cache=1679663880.16)	11/12/2023	The Biodiversity Metric 4.0, including the tool itself, user guides and reference documentation associated with the tool.

2.2 Site Mapping

2.2.1 Existing Habitat (Baseline)

The site was subject to a field survey on the 12th May 2023 by Assistant Ecologist, Barney Gardner, and Biodiversity Net Gain Consultant, Sarah Child. The weather conditions were 14°C, partly sunny (5/8 oktas), and a wind speed of 2 on the Beaufort scale.

Plant species were identified and recorded, and species listed as protected in the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and those which are indicators of important and/or uncommon habitats, were searched for during the survey. Any invasive species, including those listed on the revised (April 2010) Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* were also searched for during the field survey.

Habitat types were identified and recorded using the Coreo habitat mapping application (version V1.1) which utilises UKHab classifications (Butcher *et al.* 2020). Habitat types were based on the UKHab guidance provided and the assessor's best judgment while using these guidelines. These habitats were subsequently mapped using ESRI ArcGIS Pro software, and habitat areas and lengths were calculated to demonstrate habitats within the proposed development and the surrounding area. The baseline habitat map is displayed in Appendix 1. Secondary codes were also used to provide additional information which is not covered by the primary code allocated to the habitat; a full list of primary and secondary codes used within this assessment can be found in Appendix 2.

2.2.2 Post-Development Habitats

The planning layout, as provided by Urban Green (2023c) (Appendix 3), was provided in DWG and PDF format and used to categorise the proposed habitats. Calculations for areas relating to each habitat were also provided.

2.3 The Biodiversity Metric 4.0

The BNG calculation was undertaken utilising The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 from Natural England using data obtained from the field surveys. While the site is below 1ha in size, the total footprint for proposed buildings is over 1000m², therefore it does not qualify for assessment with the Small Sites Metric.

The calculation was performed by a technically competent and experienced person as detailed in British Standard BS8683 - Suitably qualified person – definition in BS8683:2020.

The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 uses habitat features as a proxy measure for capturing the value and importance of nature. The metric considers the size, ecological condition, location and proximity to nearby 'connecting' features. The metric enables assessments to be made of the present and forecast future biodiversity value of a site.

2.4 Habitat Scoring

2.4.1 Baseline Units

To assess the quality of a habitat, and therefore calculate the units scored, the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 utilises three scoring factors detailed as follows:

Condition

The condition of a habitat is assessed utilising the Condition Sheets provided for each habitat type. These list positive indicators for each habitat and indicate how many of these indicators need to be present to

meet certain thresholds of condition. These condition sheets can be found in Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Technical Annex 1 (Natural England, 2023b).

For this assessment, the **Grassland (Low)**, **Grassland (Medium, High & Very High)**, **Individual Trees**, **Scrub**, **Urban** and **Line of Trees** assessment sheets were used to assess the various habitats on site (see Table 2).

Table 2 – Conditions sheets used for habitat assessment

Condition Sheet	Habitats Assessed
Area Habitats	
Grassland (Low)	Modified Grassland
Grassland (Medium, High & Very High)	Other Neutral Grassland
Individual Trees	Urban Trees
Scrub	Mixed Scrub
Urban	Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral
Linear Hedgerow Habitats	
Line of Trees	Line of Trees

Distinctiveness

The distinctiveness of each habitat is automatically assigned by the tool, based upon national records of the occurrence and rarity of each habitat. Table 3 provides the basis of the distinctiveness assessment for area habitats, and how their loss should be mitigated in order to meet the trading rules.

Table 3 – Distinctiveness Assessment for Habitats

Distinctiveness Categories			
Category	Score	Description	Suggested action to address habitat losses (ensuring trading rules are met)
Very High	8	Priority habitats as defined in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act that are highly threatened, internationally scarce and require conservation action e.g. blanket bog.	Bespoke compensation likely to be required
High	6	Priority habitats as defined in Section 41 of the NERC Act requiring conservation action e.g. lowland fens.	Same habitat type (like for like)
Medium	4	Semi-natural habitats not classed as a Priority Habitat.	Same broad habitat category or higher distinctiveness
Low	2	Habitat of low biodiversity value. Temporary grass and clover ley; intensive orchard; rhododendron scrub.	Same distinctiveness or better

Distinctiveness Categories			
Category	Score	Description	Suggested action to address habitat losses (ensuring trading rules are met)
Very Low (hedgerow)	1	Lowest biodiversity value possible e.g. non-native and ornamental hedgerow	No compensation required
Very Low (area habitats)	0	Little or no biodiversity value e.g. hard standing or sealed surface.	No compensation required

Strategic Significance

The idea of strategic significance works at a landscape scale. It gives additional unit value to habitats that are in preferred locations for biodiversity and other environmental objectives. Strategic significance utilises published local plans and objectives to identify local priorities for targeting biodiversity and nature improvement, such as Nature Recovery Areas, local biodiversity plans, National Character Area 14 objectives and green infrastructure strategies (see Table 4).

Table 4 – Strategic Significance Assessment

Strategic Significance Categories	
Category	Score
High strategic significance High potential & within area formally identified in local policy	1.15
Medium strategic significance Good potential but not in area defined in local policy	1.1
Low Strategic Significance Low potential and not in area defined in local policy	1

A desk-based study using MAGIC was performed to identify any priority habitats, and statutory or non-statutory sites in the area using a 1km radius.

Table 5 – Priority Habitats within 1km of the site

Priority Habitat	Distance from site	Details
UK Priority Habitat - Deciduous Woodland	0.61km north-west	Within Clayton Park
UK Priority Habitat - Deciduous Woodland	0.87km north	Multiple areas of woodland within Clayton Vale

There were no statutory or non-statutory designated sites within a 1km radius of the site. However, the site does fall within the Impact Risk Zone for three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), summarised in Table 6.

Table 6 – Impact Risk Zones of Statutory Sites

Designated Site	Approx. Distance from Site	Details
Hollinwood Branch Canal SSSI	2.5km east	A 3.3ha site that is considered the best example of mesotrophic standing water system in Greater Manchester and Merseyside. The main habitats present are open water, swamp and tall fen, which support several regionally and nationally rare aquatic species.
Rochdale Canal SSSI	2.7km north	A 22.6ha site that contains important habitats for submerged aquatic plants and emergent vegetation, including extensive colonies of the nationally scarce SAC species floating water plantain (<i>Luronium natans</i>). The site also supports a diverse assemblage of aquatic flora, notably its assemblage of pondweeds (<i>Potamogeton</i> spp.) the nine species of which found in the canal represent a balanced community which reflects the quality of water.
Huddersfield Narrow Canal SSSI	4.5km east	An 18.4ha site that supports an exceptional range of pondweeds. The canal is the best example of a flowing eutrophic water system in Greater Manchester. The aquatic fauna is also diverse with, for example, fourteen species of mollusc having been recorded and there is an exceptionally strong population of the fresh-water sponge (<i>Spongilla lacustris</i>).

None of the habitats on site are identified within the Greater Manchester Local Biodiversity Action Plan, therefore they have all been allocated **low strategic significance**.

Areas of the site were identified as opportunities for tree-planting and grassland creation within the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (GM LNRS) (Figure 2). Trees or grassland that have been created within areas identified within GM LNRS as part of this development have been allocated a **medium strategic significance**. All other post-development habitats have been allocated a **low strategic significance**.



Figure 2. Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy Opportunities (2023)

2.5 Constraints to the Survey

Whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment.

The conclusions and recommendations detailed in this report are based upon the site redline boundary and the development proposals as outlined by the client at the time of writing. Should there be any changes to the site redline boundary or development proposals at a later stage, this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether any amendments or additional survey work is required.

Best possible effort was made during the mapping process to ensure that the habitat map accurately represents the area of habitats present on site. Some margin of error is possible due to the continuous and difficult to define nature of habitat boundaries, however this margin of error has been minimised using professional opinion of two experienced ecologists and up to date aerial imagery. As such this is not expected to be a significant constraint and affect the overall Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation provided within this report.

3 Baseline Habitat Assessment

Baseline habitat condition was assessed following the methodology outlined in Section 2.4. Habitat descriptions and the results of this assessment are provided below. The habitats have been given reference numbers for clarity regarding in-text and the metric calculation (Urban Green, 2023) illustrates the numerical data.

3.1 Area Habitats

3.1.1 1-6) Urban – Buildings (u1b5)

There are six buildings present on the site. Building B1 is present to the east of the site, and is a corrugated metal tunnel, and building B2 is slightly west of B1, and is an abandoned brick storage building. Buildings B3 – B5 are a series of abandoned warehouses that are connected and were previously used as a specialist print operation, and which cover the majority of the site. Building B6 is a smaller building near the site entrance to the north-west, which has been overgrown with buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*), both inside the building and on the roof.

Buildings are classified as developed land; sealed surface, which is automatically allocated a condition score of **N/A** within the biodiversity metric.



Photograph 1 – Building B1



Photograph 2 – Building B2



Photograph 3 – Buildings B3 and B4



Photograph 4 – Building B6

3.1.2 7) Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface (u1b 10)

The majority of the outdoor space is hardstanding, used as access routes and parking around the buildings. It is unmanaged and has buddleia growing up through it, particularly to the west of the site. As the areas of scrub are below the minimum mapping unit value (25m²) they have been categorised within the habitat map using a secondary code (10 - scattered scrub – see Appendices 1 and 2).

Hardstanding classified as developed land; sealed surface, which is automatically allocated a condition score of **N/A** within the biodiversity metric.



Photograph 5 – Hardstanding to the west of building B5



Photograph 6 – Hardstanding with buddleia growing through

3.1.3 8) Heathland and Scrub – Mixed Scrub (h3h 11 70 80)

A continuous strip of mixed scrub is present around the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. This habitat appears unmanaged and has begun to grow over B5 and over the site boundary wall (Photograph 8). This scrub habitat is predominantly comprised of dense mature buddleia, with some semi-mature elder (*Sambucus nigra*), bryony (*Bryonia dioica*), willow (*Salix* spp.), and cherry laurel (*Prunus lauroceracus*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), lime (*Tilia* spp.), firethorn (*Pyracantha* spp.), huckleberry (*Vaccinium arboretum*), willow (*Salix* spp.), field maple (*Acer campestre*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). Ivy (*Hedera helix*) is also present on both tree trunks and climbing the walls of B1 and B3.



Photograph 7 – Mixed scrub growing over boundary wall



Photograph 8 – Mixed scrub growing over B6 and ivy growing up B5



Photograph 9 – Mixed scrub to east of site



Photograph 10 – Mixed scrub to east of site

Table 7 – Condition Assessment for Mixed Scrub

UK Hab Classification	Mixed Scrub				
Condition Sheet	Scrub				
Condition Criteria 1.	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, 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).	Fail	Condition Criteria 4.	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and/or herbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat(s).	Fail
Condition Criteria 2.	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran) shrubs are all present.	Pass	Condition criteria 5.	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	Fail
Condition Criteria 3.	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on	Fail			

		Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition make up less than 5% of ground cover.				
Condition	Poor	Passes 1 of 5 criteria				
Distinctiveness		Medium				

3.1.4 9) Grassland – Modified Grassland (g4 10 16 78)

A strip of grassland runs along the southern site boundary, that appears to have largely colonised the land between the site and the neighbouring development. This area functions as an emergency escape route for the adjacent building, but has become overgrown through a lack of management.

This habitat contains grass species such as perennial ryegrass, sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), and crested dog's tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), as well as herb species including common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), yellow avens (*Geum aleppicum*), and willowherb, and flowering plants such as ivy-leaved toadflax (*Cymbalaria muralis*), herb robert, clover (*Trifolium* spp.), dandelion and buttercup (*Ranunculus* spp.). There is also some scattered buddleia and bramble scrub along the edges of the grassland that have been categorised using a secondary code (10 - scattered scrub – see Appendices 1 and 2).



Photograph 11 – Modified grassland along eastern boundary



Photograph 12 – Modified grassland with buddleia scrub present

Table 8 – Condition Assessment for Grassland (Low)

UK Hab Classification	Modified Grassland				
Condition Sheet	Grassland (Low)				
Condition Criteria 1.	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	Pass	Condition Criteria 5.	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Fail

Condition Criteria 2.	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 vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Pass	Condition Criteria 6.	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Pass
Condition Criteria 3.	Some scattered scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area.	Fail	Condition Criteria 7.	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Pass
Condition Criteria 4.	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.	Fail			
Condition	Moderate	Passes 4 of 7 criteria, including essential criterion 1.			
Distinctiveness	Low				

3.1.5 10) Sparsely vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral (u 10 189)

An area of sparsely vegetated land is present to the north of building B1, comprised of an unsealed gravel surface with ruderal grassland and scrub vegetation growing through. Species present include young birch (*Betula* spp.), buddleia, willow, firethorn and poplar (*Populus* spp.) saplings, as well as perennial ryegrass, ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), willowherb, ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), chickweed (*Stellaria media*), herb robert and dandelion. There is a wet area to the east of this habitat, and a concreted area to the west towards building B2 which is being colonised by grasses, buddleia and moss (*Bryophyta* spp.).



Photograph 13 – Sparsely vegetated land



Photograph 14 – Sparsely vegetated land over concreted area

Table 9 – Condition Assessment for Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral

UK Hab Classification		Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral			
Condition Sheet		Urban			
Condition Criteria 1.	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Fail	Condition Criteria 3.	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area. Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Fail
Condition Criteria 2.	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Pass			
Condition	Poor	Passes 1 of 3 criteria.			
Distinctiveness		Low			

3.1.6 11) Individual Trees – Urban Trees

Nine mature trees are present within the mixed scrub to the east of the site. Four of the trees, to the south of building B1, are positioned in a line; however, their combined canopy cover is below the minimum length (20m) to be considered a line of trees. Three trees are small and six are medium in size, and the group is comprised of goat willow (*Salix caprea*) and sycamore.



Photograph 15 – Urban trees within scrub, to the south of B1

Table 10 – Condition Assessment for Individual Trees

UK Hab Classification		Urban Trees			
Condition Sheet		Individual Trees			
Condition Criteria 1.	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Fail	Condition Criteria 4.	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.	Pass
Condition Criteria 2.	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	Pass	Condition Criteria 5.	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark	Fail
Condition Criteria 3.	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)	Pass	Condition Criteria 6.	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath	Pass
Condition	Moderate	Passes 4 of 6 criteria			
Distinctiveness		Medium			

3.2 Linear Hedgerow Habitats

3.2.1 L1) Line of Trees (w1g6 16 56 78)

A line of trees is present along the western edge of building B5 and is approximately 38m in length. Trees appear to have been planted within concrete planters for ornamental purposes, but have been

unmanaged and matured, forming a continuous line of trees. Species present include hazel, holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), buddleia, dog rose (*Rosa canina*), Amelanchier (*Amelanchier* spp.), weigela (*Weigela* spp.), and Japanese laurel (*Aucuba japonica*). There is an understory of plants that have colonised the concrete beneath, including bramble, nettle, meadowsweet (*Spirea* spp.), and herb robert.



Photograph 16 – Line of trees L1 along western aspect of B5

Table 11 – Condition Assessment for Line of Trees

UK Hab Classification	Line of Trees				
Condition Sheet	Line of Trees				
Condition Criteria 1.	More than 70% of trees are native species.	Fail	Condition Criteria 4.	There is an undisturbed naturally-vegetated strip of at least 6 m on both sides to protect the line of trees from farming and other human activities (excluding grazing). Where veteran trees are present, root protection areas should follow standing advice.	Fail
Condition Criteria 2.	Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide.	Pass	Condition Criteria 5.	At least 95% of the trees are in a healthy condition (deadwood or veteran features valuable for wildlife are excluded from this). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	Pass
Condition Criteria 3.	One or more trees has veteran features and or natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates, such as presence of standing and attached deadwood,	Fail			

		cavities, ivy or loose bark.			
Condition	Poor	Passes 2 of 5 criteria.			
Distinctiveness		Low			

3.2.2 L2) Line of Trees (w1g6 16 78 80)

A second line of trees runs along the boundary wall to the west of the site and is approximately 28m in length. These trees have also been planted within concrete planters and have developed into a line of trees as a result of being unmanaged. Species present include buddleia, hazel, mature Japanese cherry (*Prunus serrulata*), dog rose, hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), wild cherry (*Prunus avium*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), and elder. This line of trees also had an understory of plants that had colonised the concrete below, including ivy, nettles, herb robert and groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*).



Photograph 17 – Line of trees L2 along western site boundary

Table 12 – Condition Assessment for Line of Trees

UK Hab Classification	Line of Trees				
Condition Sheet	Line of Trees				
Condition Criteria 1.	More than 70% of trees are native species.	Fail	Condition Criteria 4.	There is an undisturbed naturally-vegetated strip of at least 6 m on both sides to protect the line of trees from farming and other human activities (excluding grazing). Where veteran trees are present, root protection areas should follow standing advice.	Fail
Condition Criteria 2.	Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide.	Pass	Condition Criteria 5.	At least 95% of the trees are in a healthy condition (deadwood or veteran features valuable for wildlife are excluded from this). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals,	Pass

				pests or diseases, or human activity.	
Condition Criteria 3.	One or more trees has veteran features and or natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates, such as presence of standing and attached deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Pass			
Condition	Moderate	Passes 3 of 5 criteria.			
Distinctiveness	Low				

3.2.3 L3) Line of Trees (w1g6 78 80)

A third line of trees is present to the north of building B1, to the east of the site, and is approximately 33m in length. This line of trees is unmanaged and is comprised of mature scrub species and young trees, such as willow, silver birch, hazel, buddleia, and dog rose, with an under canopy of snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) and bramble. The ground layer contains willowherb and a similar species composition to the adjacent sparsely vegetated land.



Photograph 18 – Line of trees L3 along north of B1

Table 13 – Condition Assessment for Line of Trees

UK Hab Classification		Line of Trees			
Condition Sheet		Line of Trees			
Condition Criteria 1.	More than 70% of trees are native species.	Fail	Condition Criteria 4.	There is an undisturbed naturally-vegetated strip of at least 6 m on both sides to protect the line of trees from farming and other human activities (excluding grazing). Where veteran trees are present, root protection areas should follow standing advice.	Fail
Condition Criteria 2.	Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide.	Pass	Condition Criteria 5.	At least 95% of the trees are in a healthy condition (deadwood or veteran features valuable for wildlife are excluded from this). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	Pass
Condition Criteria 3.	One or more trees has veteran features and or natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates, such as presence of standing and attached deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Fail			
Condition	Poor	Passes 2 of 5 criteria.			
Distinctiveness	Low				

4 Retained Habitats

Using Biodiversity Metric 4.0, the habitat units of the pre-development habitats to be retained were calculated.

4.1 Area Habitats

A section of the grassland along the southern boundary of the site will be retained and unimpacted by the development as this area functions as an emergency escape route for the neighbouring building. The associated areas and units are detailed in Table 14.

Sections of scrub around the northern and eastern boundaries of the site will be retained and enhanced (see Section 7).

Table 14 – Retained Area Habitats

Habitat Parcel Reference	Total Area (ha)	Total Units	Area Retained (ha)	Units Retained
9) Modified Grassland	0.04	0.15	0.014	0.05

4.2 Linear Hedgerow Habitats

No existing linear hedgerow habitats will be retained onsite.

5 Lost Habitats

Using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0, the habitat units of the pre-development habitats to be retained were calculated.

5.1 Area Habitats

The majority of the existing habitats will be lost to accommodate for the development. The associated areas and units are detailed in Table 15.

Table 15 – Retained Area Habitats

Habitat Parcel Reference	Total Area (ha)	Total Units	Area Lost (ha)	Units Lost
1) Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.036	0	0.036	0
2) Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.002	0	0.002	0
3) Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.085	0	0.085	0
4) Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.092	0	0.092	0
5) Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.031	0	0.031	0
6) Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.011	0	0.011	0
7) Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.14	0	0.14	0
8) Mixed Scrub	0.097	0.39	0.048	0.19
9) Modified Grassland	0.04	0.15	0.02	0.09
10) Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral	0.10	0.21	0.10	0.21
11) Urban Tree	0.23	1.86	0.23	1.86
Total	1.17	2.60	1.10	2.35

5.2 Linear Hedgerow Habitats

The three lines of trees present onsite will be lost. The associated length and units are detailed in Table 16.

Table 16 – Lost Linear Hedgerow Habitats

Habitat Parcel Reference	Total Length (km)	Total Units	Length Lost (km)	Units Lost
1) Line of Trees	0.038	0.08	0.038	0.08
2) Line of Trees	0.028	0.11	0.028	0.11
3) Line of Trees	0.033	0.07	0.033	0.07
Total	0.10	0.25	0.10	0.25

6 Pre-Development Unit Summary

Using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0, the habitat units of the existing site habitats were calculated; the habitat units to be retained within site development were calculated; and the habitat units that are anticipated to be lost in site development were calculated.

The results of these calculations are presented in Table 17.

Table 17 - Pre-Development Unit Summary

	On-site baseline	Retained	Lost	Enhanced
Area Habitat Units	2.60	0.05	2.35	0.20
Linear Hedgerow Units	0.25	0	0.25	0

7 Enhanced Habitats

7.1 Area Habitats

7.1.1 8) Mixed Scrub (Poor) – Mixed Scrub (Moderate)

A section of existing scrub to the north-east of the site will be retained and enhanced from poor to moderate condition.

In addition, a strip of scrub that runs around the northern and eastern boundaries of the site will be temporarily lost during development. However, the scrub will be replanted and should be restored to its original condition after one year (from which enhancement is possible). Therefore, it has been classified as retained in accordance with the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 User Guide. It will also be enhanced to moderate condition, with a delay in starting habitat enhancement of one year applied in the metric.

The enhancement will be achieved through the removal of the buddleia, thinning of the bramble, and supplementary planting with native scrub species such as hawthorn, elder, and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*). Once these enhancement measures have been implemented, this habitat is expected to pass Condition Criteria 1 and 3 (Table 18), achieving an overall condition score of **moderate** and providing an additional 0.16 habitat units.

Table 18 - Condition Assessment for Mixed Scrub

Classification within Landscape Proposals	Existing Scrub and Proposed Native Shrub Planting				
UK Hab Classification	Mixed Scrub				
Condition Sheet	Scrub				
Condition Criteria 1.	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, 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).	Pass	Condition Criteria 4.	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and/or herbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat(s).	Pass
Condition Criteria 2.	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran) shrubs are all present.	Fail	Condition Criteria 5.	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	Fail
Condition Criteria 3.	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981) and species indicative of sub-optimal	Pass			

		condition make up less than 5% of ground cover.				
Condition	Moderate	Passes 3 of 5 criteria				
Distinctiveness		Medium				
Time to Target Condition		5 years				
Habitat Units Delivered		0.16				

8 Created Habitats

Using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0, the habitat units of the post development created habitats were calculated.

8.1 Area Habitats

8.1.1 C1) Heathland and Shrub – Mixed Scrub

New areas of native scrub will be created around the northern and eastern boundaries of the site, and a block in the south-west. Mixed scrub habitats will be created using a mix of native species, including hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, elder and dog rose.

Table 19 - Condition Assessment for Mixed Scrub

Classification within Landscape Proposals	Proposed Native Shrub Mix				
UK Hab Classification	Mixed Scrub				
Condition Sheet	Scrub				
Condition Criteria 1.	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, 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).	Pass	Condition Criteria 4.	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and/or herbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat(s).	Fail
Condition Criteria 2.	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran) shrubs are all present.	Pass	Condition Criteria 5.	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	Fail
Condition Criteria 3.	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981) and	Pass			

		species indicative of sub-optimal condition make up less than 5% of ground cover.				
Condition	Moderate	Passes 3 of 5 criteria				
Distinctiveness	Medium					
Time to Target Condition	5 years					
Difficulty of Creation	Low					

8.1.2 C2) Individual Trees – Urban Trees

A total of 9 trees will be planted across the site, and will comprise alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), aspen (*Populus tremula*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), and silver birch (*Betula pendula*). All trees have been classified as small as per guidance from Natural England User Guidance (Natural England, 2023).

As the site is identified as an area with opportunities for tree-planting and grassland creation within the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the new urban trees have been allocated a **medium strategic significance** within the metric.

Table 20 – Condition Assessment for Individual Trees

Table 20 – Condition Assessment for Individual Trees						
Classification within Landscape Proposals		Proposed Tree				
UK Hab Classification		Urban Trees				
Condition Sheet		Individual Trees				
Condition Criteria 1.		The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Pass	Condition Criteria 4.	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.	Pass
Condition Criteria 2.		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	Pass	Condition Criteria 5.	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark	Fail
Condition Criteria 3.		The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)	Fail	Condition Criteria 6.	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath	Pass
Condition	Moderate	Passes 4 of 6 criteria				
Distinctiveness		Medium				
Time to Target Condition		27 years				
Difficulty of Creation		Low				

8.1.3 C3) Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface

New areas of hardstanding will be created across the site, forming roads and access routes, parking and footpaths. Hardstanding is classified as developed land; sealed surface within the metric, which is automatically allocated a condition score of **N/A**.

8.1.4 C4) Urban – Developed Land; Sealed Surface

Nine new warehouse units will be created on the site. Buildings are classified as developed land; sealed surface within the metric, which is automatically allocated a condition score of **N/A**.

9 Post-Development Summary and Conclusion

Using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0, the habitat units to be retained within site development were calculated; and the habitat units that are anticipated to be lost in site development were calculated and the habitat units of the planned created habitats were calculated.

The results of these calculations are presented in Table 21.

Table 21 - Post Development Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

	On-site baseline	Habitat Unit Change				On-site post development	Net change in Biodiversity	
		Retained	Lost	Enhanced	Created		Habitat units	%
Area Habitat Units	2.60	0.05	2.35	0.36	0.29	0.70	-1.90	-73.01
Linear Hedgerow Units	0.25	0	0.25	0	-	0	-0.25	-100

As illustrated in Table 21, this assessment produces a net loss of 1.90 area habitat units (-73.01%) and a net loss of 0.25 linear hedgerow units (100%). Therefore, the development does not comply with local and national planning policy, and the trading rules have not been met. As the opportunities for biodiversity net gain have been maximised onsite, off-site mitigation will be necessary for both area and linear hedgerow units. Off-site mitigation will need to include individual trees and either lines of trees or medium distinctiveness hedgerow habitats (e.g., native hedgerows) to ensure that the trading rules are satisfied.

To ensure that the habitats proposed as part of the post-development design of this site reach the condition detailed within this report and the full gain in value to the environment is achieved by this site, a long-term management plan (usually 30 years) is required. This length of management plan is required due to the complex nature of the habitats to be enhanced/created on site and the high value they will provide to the environment. This management plan is provided by Urban Green (2023a) as a separate document and covers the recommended management practices for the proposed habitats discussed in this report.

10 References

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APPENDIX 1 – BASELINE HABITAT MAP

U R B A N
G R E E N

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Legend

Red Line Boundary

Line of trees

Developed land; sealed surface

Mixed scrub

Modified grassland

Sparsley Vegetateed

Building

Urban Tree

N



U R B A N
G R E E N

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Client:
Chancery Gate

Project:
**Former Walkers Site,
Crabtree Lane**

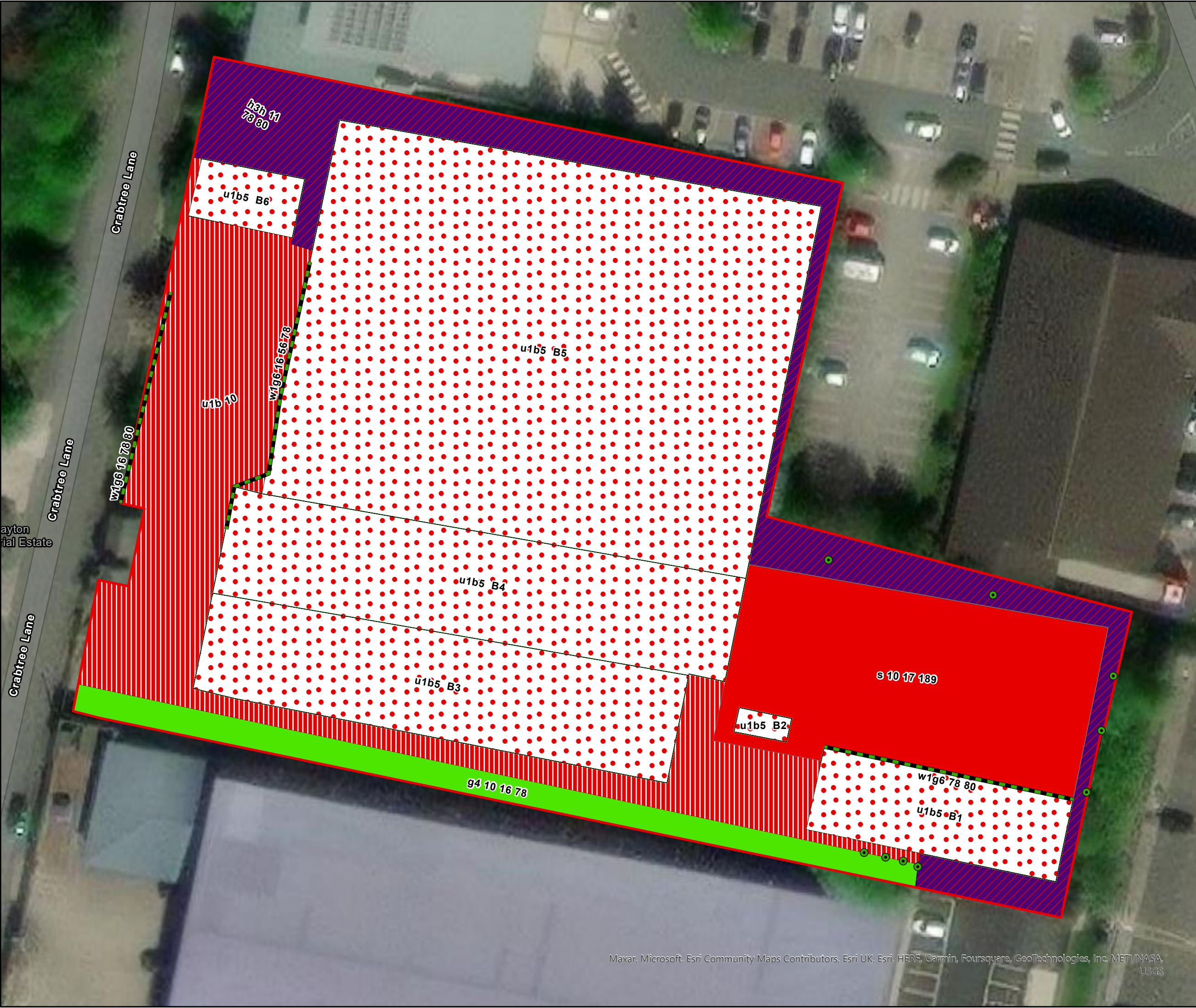
Title:
UKHAB Habitat Map

Issue:
04

Drawn: CL	Checked: SB	Approved: SC
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Project: UG2066	Scale @ A3: 1:450	Date: 19/12/2023
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Dwg No: UG_2066_ECO_HM_04	Revision: 01
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Appendix 2 - Primary and Secondary Codes

Primary Code	Definition
g4	Modified grassland
h3h	Mixed scrub
s	Sparsely vegetated land
u1b	Developed land; sealed surface
u1b5	Buildings
w1g6	Line of trees
Secondary code	Definition
10	Scattered scrub
11	Scattered trees
16	Tall herb
17	Ruderal/ephemeral
78	Abandoned
80	Unmanaged
189	Scattered grass

APPENDIX 3 - PROPOSED LANDSCAPE PLAN

U R B A N
G R E E N



Plant Schedule

QTY	UNIT	CODE	PLANT NAME	STOCK	FORM	GIRTH/HEIGHT
Trees						
2 No.	ALN	GLU hs	Alnus glutinosa	RB	STD	12-14cm
3 No.	BET	PEN hs12	Betula pendula	RB	STD	12-14cm
2 No.	Pop	Tre hs	Populus tremula	B	STD	12-14cm
2 No.	SOR	AUC hs	Sorbus aucuparia	RB	STD	12-14cm

PERCENT	QTY	UNIT	PLANT NAME	STOCK	SIZE
---------	-----	------	------------	-------	------

Plant Mixes

595m2 NATIVE SCRUB MIX 2 planted @ 2/m2					
15%	179	No.	Corylus avellana	B Trans	60-80cm
15%	179	No.	Crataegus monogyna	B Trans	60-80cm
15%	179	No.	Prunus spinosa	B Trans	60-80cm
15%	179	No.	Sambucus nigra	B Trans	60-80cm
10%	119	No.	Rhamnus cathartica	B Trans	60-80cm
10%	119	No.	Rosa canina	B Trans	60-80cm
10%	119	No.	Salix lantana	C 2L	20-30cm
5%	60	No.	Lonicera periclymenum	C 2L	20-30cm
5%	60	No.	Rubus fruticosus	C 2L	20-30cm

Individual varieties to be planted in groups of approximately 3-5.

Notes and Abbreviations

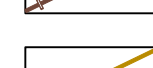
- B = Bare root (bagged).
- C = Container (or pot) grown, followed by size of the container (or pot).
- FORM = Shape of tree as supplied by the nursery.
- QTY = Quantity
- RB = Rootballed (balled and wrapped).
- Std = (clear stem) Standard.
- STOCK = Root condition/protection method eg Bare root.
- Trans = Transplant (or undercut seedling).
- Refer to specification for further information.
- All plants to be completely hardened off
- Substitutions to be agreed with Landscape Architect.

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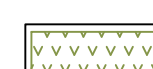
Notes:-

KEY

Hard Works

-  **Vehicular Asphalt Surface**
Black colour. To engineer specification & recommendation
-  **Pedestrian Asphalt Surface**
Black colour. To engineer specification & recommendation
-  **Propose 2.4m Paladin Fence**
Including matching gates as required
-  **Retaining Wall**
To engineer specification & recommendation
-  **Existing 2.4m Palisade Fence**
Including matching gates as required

Soft Works

-  **Proposed Tree**
Refer to planting schedule.
-  **Existing Native Shrub Mix**
To be retained and improve.
-  **Proposed Native Shrub Planting**

P05	19/12/23	UPDATED	TH	SA
P04	14/12/23	UPDATED	TH	SA
P03	11/12/23	UPDATED	TH	SA
P02	08/12/23	COMMENT UPDATED	TH	SA
P01	29/11/23	FIRST ISSUED	TH	SA
REV.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHK'D



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Project:	Former Walkers Site,Crabtree Lane		
Title:	GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN		
Issue:	PLANNING		
Drawn:	TH	Checked:	SA
Approved:	MT		
Project:	UG2066	Scale @ A1:	1:250
Date:	29/11/23		
Dwg No:	UG_2066_LAN_GA_DRW_01		Revision:
		P05	