

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

December 2023

Former Walkers Site

Crabtree Lane

Clayton

Manchester

M11 4GU

U R B A N
G R E E N



QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background to the Scheme.....	1
1.2	Site Context.....	1
1.3	Purpose of this Management Plan.....	2
1.4	Aims of this Management Plan	2
2	Development Proposals	3
3	Management Considerations	4
3.1	Management Responsibilities	4
3.2	Controlling Authority	4
3.3	Health and Safety.....	4
3.4	Monitoring and Review	4
3.5	General Measures	5
4	Ecological Strategy.....	6
4.1	Retained Area Habitats	6
4.2	Enhanced Area Habitats.....	8
4.3	Created Area Habitats	9
5	Five Year Work Programme	12
6	References	15

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Scheme

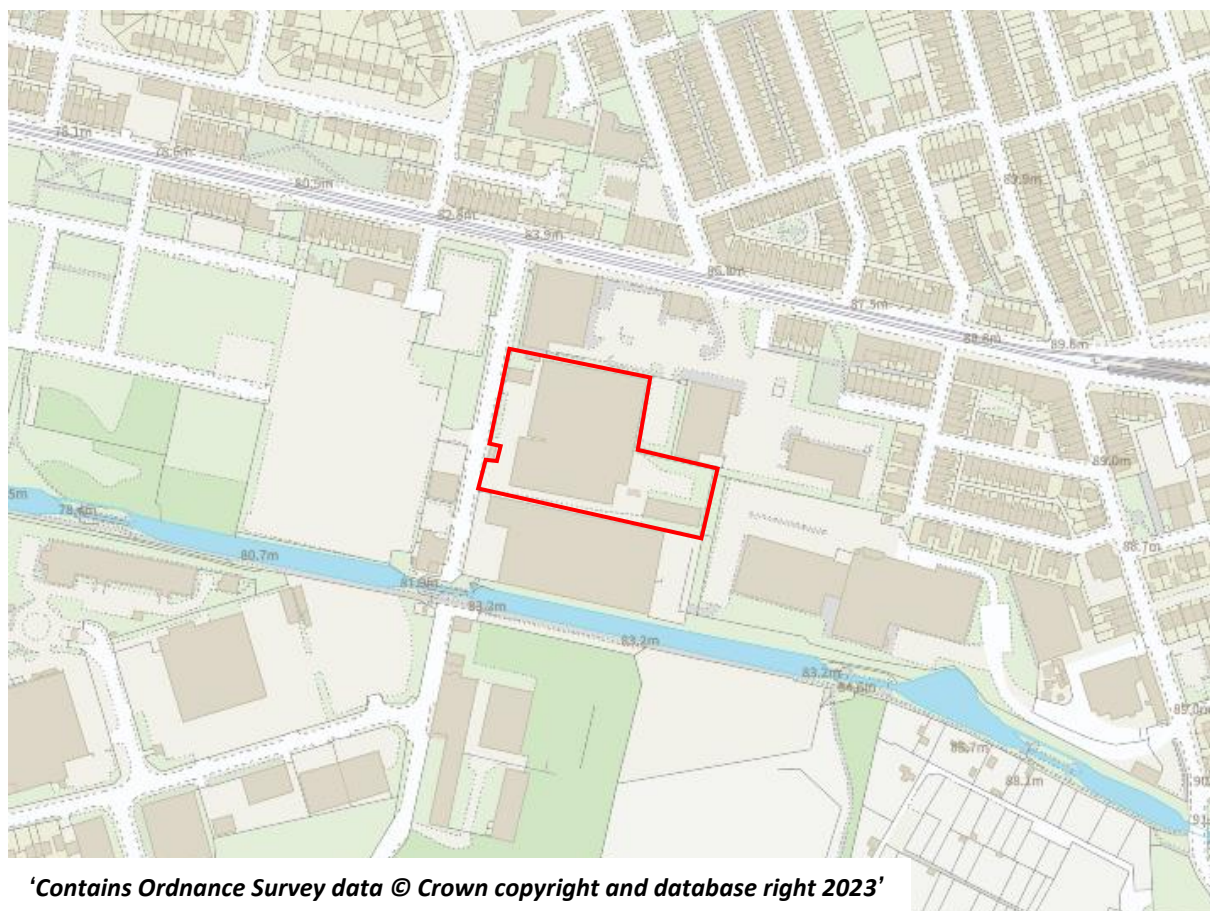
This Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been prepared by Urban Green on behalf of Chancerygate Manchester Limited to assess the change in value to biodiversity as a result of the proposed development of the Former Walkers Site, Manchester (hereafter referred to as ‘the site’). The proposals include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

Urban Green have been appointed to provide a Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan (BEMP) for the site which has been written to accompany the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of this site (Urban Green, 2023a).

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

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 88738 98229 and comprises a total area of approximately 0.9ha (see Figure 1).



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 Management Plan

The purpose of this management plan is to provide a schedule for the long-term management of habitats on site, ensure that existing and proposed habitats are suitably maintained and ensure good establishment and continued improvement of habitat condition. This allows those responsible for the management and maintenance of the site to understand the existing habitats, the development and ongoing management requirements of the site. Habitats should be maintained under a formal management regime for a minimum of 30 years, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, with regular assessments during this period to assess the development and condition of habitats.

1.4 Aims of this Management Plan

This management plan covers the habitat retention and creation on site, as detailed within the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment (Urban Green, 2023a). The report assessed the development as scoring net loss of 1.90 area habitat units (-73.01%) and a net loss of 0.25 linear hedgerow units (100%). The trading rules were also not satisfied, therefore off-site mitigation will be necessary.

Appropriate management practices are essential to ensuring that the proposed habitats reach the condition outlined within the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment and that the development achieves the predicted gain in value to the environment. The aim of this management plan is to provide a management regime that:

- Maintains and enhances site biodiversity, through the sustainable management of on-site habitats;
- Promotes the successful establishment and growth of newly created habitats;
- Ensures the health and safety of all site user's post development is protected;
- Outlines a process for the regular monitoring and review of management practices and site habitats; and
- Provide measurable and achievable targets appropriate to each habitat to ensure condition targets are met.

2 Development Proposals

The proposals include the demolition of the existing buildings on the Former Walkers Site, Manchester, and the construction of nine new industrial units, with associated hard and soft landscaping.

The assessment produced 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.

3 Management Considerations

3.1 Management Responsibilities

The implementation of this management plan will be the responsibility of the landowner for a minimum of 30 years, based on requirements within the Environment Act (2021). Any transference of responsibility of this plan should be undertaken with the appropriate appointment of a competent organisation capable of delivering the management detailed within the document.

The organisation implementing this plan will be a management company with the necessary certificates of competence to implement landscape management operation on site. The managing organisation will ensure that all site management complies with good practice standards and all relevant health and safety procedures. The managing organisation will also ensure that measures outlined to avoid pollution incidents, comply with protected species and habitats legislation, and ensure overall environmental protection are enforced.

A maintenance specification is provided in Section 4. This sets out the detailed maintenance requirements for the habitats onsite, which must be followed at all times. Any deviations from the management plan must be highlighted to the site owners or management company.

3.2 Controlling Authority

The controlling authority, Manchester City Council, should be consulted on any matters relating to the approved landscape proposals for the scheme.

3.3 Health and Safety

The site will be managed to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation, approved codes of practice (ACOP) and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance.

As the managing organisation will be the main company involved in on site works, the managing organisation will fulfil the landowner's role and the work manager's role. This places an obligation on the managing company to ensure that any contractor understands and fulfils their health and safety role and any work undertaken on the site will follow the guidelines of the HSE.

3.4 Monitoring and Review

Regular monitoring of the development against measurable targets (as detailed within Section 4) will be undertaken across all habitats detailed within this management plan during the 30-year period. The outcome of this monitoring will form part of a Monitoring and Audit Report to be submitted to the site owner annually to inform the forthcoming year's work. The report will include management operations undertaken, any unexpected changes or declines in habitat condition and any actions required that fall outside those detailed within this report.

Work programmes have been provided for the first 5-years post-development only. This is because external factors, such as climate, extreme weather events and disease, prevent accurate forecasting of the management activities required beyond this stage. A more in-depth assessment of the habitats on site should therefore also be undertaken between April and September annually by an experienced ecologist. Results should be reported back and feed into a five-year management plan review, to enable assessment of the management prescriptions against the defined objectives for each habitat. Where objectives are not being adequately met, appropriate action will be put in place, with any refinements incorporated into the updated management plan and annual work programme. This review will enable

maintenance operations to evolve in accordance with habitat requirements as they establish, and mature and targeted conditions are met.

3.5 General Measures

Habitat creation on site will follow details set out in the Detailed Planting Plan (Urban Green, 2023b). The following general measures shall be met to ensure successful habitat creation and succession on site.

- All planting is to follow guidance set out in the relevant British Standard or Horticultural Trades Association documents and carried out by a competent person.
- Planting is to remain undamaged, with healthy and vigorous growth, and is to be planted upright and well balanced. Trees and shrubs are to be of good shape and without elongated shoots, grown in a suitable environment and hardened off before being delivered to the site.
- All planting is to be true to name and free from pests, diseases, discoloration, weeds, fungus, and physiological disorders upon planting.
- If plants/trees are unobtainable alternatives are to be agreed with the Ecologist/Landscape Architect in writing prior to ordering.
- After planting ensure that the full depth of topsoil is wetted. Apply water evenly and without damaging or displacing plants or soil. Continue to water as necessary to ensure the successful establishment and continued thriving of planting.
- All tree/shrub/hedgerow works shall be completed outside of nesting bird season (i.e. between October and February inclusive). If works are required within the nesting bird season, a check must be undertaken of all affected trees by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- All tree works shall be carried out by a skilled, qualified and approved Arboricultural Contractor in accordance with BS3998: 2010 'Tree Work – Recommendations'.

4 Ecological Strategy

This section summarises the management strategy for each habitat proposed to be introduced within the final design of the scheme and the recommended management practices for habitats to be retained within the development. Each objective includes a target time for positive assessment provided to enable identification of failing management and trigger early intervention. Management plans have been included detailing management objectives for an initial 5-year period. Regular monitoring of the site against the management objectives will be conducted during the first five years of the project, and a review of the management strategies will be undertaken, with any updates or changes to the program incorporated for the next five years of the management plan.

Management plans have been included detailing management objectives for an initial 5-year period (Section 5). The proposed landscape layout (Urban Green, 2023b) displays the final proposed habitats and their location on site.

4.1 Retained Area Habitats

4.1.1 Grassland – Modified Grassland

A section of the modified grassland to the south will be retained as this area forms an emergency exit route for the neighbouring building and will remain unimpacted by the development.

Detailed management techniques are described within Table 2 along with the corresponding condition criteria. The grassland is currently in **moderate** condition and, to maintain this, at least four of the condition criteria outlined in Table 1 must be achieved, including essential criterion 1. An annual schedule of works is detailed in Table 4 in Section 5.

Table 1 – Management Objectives for Retained Modified Grassland

Condition Assessment Criteria / objective	Management Activities	Benefit to environment	Target time for Positive Assessment
1. There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs	- No fertiliser to be used within the grassland habitat - Removal of arisings after mowing to reduce nutrient input into soil and prevent a handful of species dominating	Species rich grassland provides a rich source of nectar for pollinators	From year 1
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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	March – September is an important window for a multitude of meadow flowering species and is therefore significant to invertebrate, bird and small mammal populations. Observe periods where mowing is avoided during this summer period, for example, No Mow May.	Varied sward heights provide increased opportunities for commuting and foraging for birds, invertebrates and small mammals	From year 1

	Avoid cutting all areas of grass at once to provide structural diversity across the site		
3. Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area.	- Consistent monitoring of habitat for growth of shrub species - Hand removal of any growth of woody species This criterion is currently failed due to the presence of buddleia scrub.	Maintains the characteristic of the habitat and prevents overgrowth by shrub species	From year 2
4. Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area.	- Ensure areas of bare ground are kept to a minimum to reduce erosion by re-seeding bare ground - Only carry out necessary maintenance activities when specified and at the appropriate time of year - Management activities to be carried out by a suitably qualified person using the correct equipment This criterion is expected to fail due to the levels of disturbance the habitat will experience.	Preventing physical damage promotes healthy growth of vegetation and uniformity within the habitat	From year 1
5. Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	- Seed any bare areas of ground using a similar species mix This criterion is currently failed due to the presence of a gravel path functioning as the emergency exit route	Ensures widespread cover of desired species and reduces space for non-desirable species to colonise	From year 1
6. Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilium</i> less than 20%.	- Consistent monitoring of the habitat for bracken growth - Hand removal of bracken upon discovery	Removing bracken at an early stage prevents species from dominating the habitat and outcompeting other desired species	From year 2

7. There is an absence of invasive, non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA)	• Identification and removal of invasive non-native species as soon as possible. • Where possible, do this by hand. If necessary, application of herbicide should be carried out by an experienced contractor.	Ensure native assemblage of species throughout mixed scrub habitat. Prevents competition from aggressive non-native species.	From year 1
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4.2 Enhanced Area Habitats

4.2.1 Heathland and Shrub – Mixed Scrub

A strip of existing mixed scrub around the northern and eastern boundaries of the site will be retained and enhanced from poor to moderate condition. This will be achieved through the removal of the buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*), thinning of the bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), and supplementary planting with native scrub species such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*).

The target condition for the enhanced scrub is **moderate**, with an expected time to target condition of 5 years. Detailed management techniques are described within Table 2, Section 4.1.1, along with the corresponding condition criteria. In order to reach the expected condition, at least 3 of the criteria must be met. An annual schedule of works is detailed in Table 5 in Section 5.

Table 2 – Management Objectives for Mixed Scrub

Condition Assessment Criteria / objective	Management Activities	Benefit to environment	Target time for Positive Assessment
1. Habitat is representative of UKHab description, 80% of the scrub is native and there are at least three woody species	• Beat up scrub habitat as required with whips of the same species, size and quality to ensure diversity is maintained and one species cannot dominate • Removal of non-native species (i.e., buddleia) to prevent them from dominating habitat	A wide range of species provides varied foraging, commuting nesting opportunities to birds, invertebrates and small mammals	From year 1
2. Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature shrubs are all present	• Allow natural seeding of new shrubs • Appropriate pruning of shrubs to promote health and reach full growth • Beat up scrub habitat as required with whips of the same species, size and quality to ensure diversity is maintained and one species cannot dominate	Different life stages provide different foraging and habitat opportunities	From year 4

	Thinning of very dense growth of shrubs or bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) to guarantee sufficient light levels within scrub for regeneration		
3. There is an absence of invasive non-native species	- Identification and removal of invasive non-native species as soon as possible - Where possible, do this by hand. If necessary, application of herbicide should be carried out by an experienced contractor	Ensure native assemblage of species throughout mixed scrub habitat. Prevents competition from aggressive non-native species.	From year 1
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).	- Maintain a buffer of at least 2m in the adjacent grassland where there is no mowing or management to allow succession of natural vegetation - No fertiliser used in the scrub or adjacent grassland habitat to prevent a small number of species dominating This criterion will always fail as the scrub is located directly adjacent to hardstanding	Creates a gentle habitat gradient to allow movement of fauna and increases diversity around the mixed scrub habitat.	From year 1
5. There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	- Hand removal of woody species in clearings/rides/glades which would close the open spaces within this habitat - Retain pruned wood on site as hibernacula	Creates edge habitat which provides additional foraging and commuting benefits for birds, invertebrates and small mammals	By year 5

4.3 Created Area Habitats

Areas which are classified as ‘developed land; sealed surface’ provide negligible ecological value and require no management.

4.3.1 Heathland and Shrub – Mixed Scrub

New areas of native scrub will be created around the boundaries of the site, using a mix of nine native species, including hazel (*Coryllus avellana*), hawthorn, blackthorn, and buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*).

The target condition for the enhanced scrub is **moderate**, with an expected time to target condition of 5 years. Detailed management techniques are described within Table 2, Section 4.2.1, along with the

corresponding condition criteria. In order to reach the expected condition, at least 3 of the criteria must be met. An annual schedule of works is detailed in Table 5 in Section 5.

4.3.2 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*).

The targeted condition for the new urban trees is **moderate**, with an expected target condition time of 27 years. In order to reach the expected targeted condition, at least 3 of the condition criteria in Table 3 must be achieved. An annual schedule of works for the first 5 years post-development is detailed in Table 6 in Section 5.

Table 3 – Management Objectives for Urban Trees

Condition Assessment Criteria	Management Activities	Benefit to environment	Target time for Positive Assessment
1. The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within a block)	Replace failed trees like for like, in accordance with the planting proposals	Native trees provide greater ecological value to native fauna	From year 1
2. The tree canopy is predominantly continuous	This criterion is automatically passed by individual trees	N/A	N/A
3. The tree is mature or veteran	- Limit the use of damaging management practices e.g., herbicide use, unnecessary pruning - After 10-20 years, trees will reach semi-maturity and appropriate corrective surgery may be necessary - Undertake annual arboricultural assessments for the first 3 years post-planting to visually assess tree health and establishment	Mature and veteran trees are more effective than young trees at providing air filtration services and sequester carbon. Veteran trees provide additional niches for wildlife.	>30 years
4. There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by anthropogenic activities and no current regular pruning regime so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy	- Only undertake management activities where necessary - No use of herbicides around trees - Tree works/pruning should be undertaken by a qualified professional - Avoid cutting all specimens across the plot in a single period, particularly where this is likely to remove all flower/fruit resources for wildlife.	Promotes healthy growth and supports growth to maturity.	From year 1

	• Ensure tree canopy is balanced and consistent with the natural structure for the species		
5. Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark	• Leave any micro-habitat features, such as ivy and loose bark, in place • Where it is safe and appropriate, retain areas of dead wood • No management activities to take place during nesting season (February to August inclusive) • Avoid undertaking management activities on all trees in a single month period to retain important resources for wildlife.	Ensures diversity is maintained throughout by allowing the creation of additional habitat niches which can be exploited by wildlife.	By year 5
6. More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath	• This criterion will automatically pass based on the location of trees • Maintain the surrounding habitats according to relevant management recommendations • No use of herbicides within this zone • Removal of any growth of non-native invasive species	Creates a buffer habitat around trees to allow movement of wildlife and increases diversity of flora	From year 1

Appropriate for management
 Not appropriate for management

5 Five Year Work Programme

Table 4 – Five Year Work Programme for Modified Grassland

Habitat	Action	Frequency Notes	Indicative timing of operation											
			J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Modified Grassland	Mowing to 3-5cm and removal of arisings. Observation of a period of no mowing	Once a month, years 1 to 5												
	Removal of shrub growth within grassland	As required years 1 to 5												
	Seeding areas of bare ground with Strong Lawn Grass Mixture EG22 (Emorsgate Seeds)	As required years 1 to 5												
	Removal of bracken growth within grassland	As required years 1 to 5												
	Monitoring for, and removal of, invasive, non-native species	As required years 1 to 5												

Table 5 – Five Year Work Programme for Enhanced/Proposed Mixed Scrub

Habitat	Action	Frequency Notes	Indicative timing of operation											
			J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Mixed scrub	Beating up with native whips (species according to planting proposals)	Year 1 then as required to year 5												
	Control and removal of invasive non-native species	As required year 1 to 5												
	Pruning of damaged or diseased plants using appropriate methods and retention of dead wood as hibernacula	As required year 1 to 5												
	Thinning of very dense shrub growth and bramble to ensure sufficient light levels within scrub	Bi-annually												
	Thinning of dense scrub regeneration within clearings/glades/rides	Bi-annually												

Table 6 – Five Year Work Programme for Proposed Urban Trees

Habitat	Action	Frequency Notes	Indicative timing of operation											
			J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Urban trees	Replacement planting – Bare root and root ball	Year 1 then as required to year 5												
	Control and removal of non-native species surrounding trees	As required year 1 to 5												
	Visual inspection of tree health	Annually years 1 to 3 and then every 3 years after this												
	Mulching using organic mulch, forming 1m radius around tree	Annually years 1 to 3												
	Required pruning to damaged or diseased trees	As required year 1 to 5												
	Water twice a month during warmer months	Annually during warmer months or as needed in periods of hot weather												

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