



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Premier Inn Manchester Airport (Heald Green), Finney Lane, Wythenshawe,
Stockport, SK8 3QA
Whitbread Group PLC

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Industry Guidelines and Standards

This report has been written with due consideration to:

- British Standard 42020 (2013). Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.
- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Construction Industry Research and Information Association & Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2019). Biodiversity Net Gain – Good Practice Principles for Development.

Proportionality

The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.

The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary.

(BS 42020, 2013)

Executive Summary

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Whitbread Group PLC to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Premier Inn Manchester Airport (Heald Green), Finney Lane, Wythenshawe, Stockport, SK8 3QA. (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The assessment was required to inform a planning application with the Manchester City Council. The proposal is described as: Demolition of the existing public house, erection of 2 Storey 33-bedroom extension with associated landscaping (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”).

Areas of Habitat

The baseline habitat value of the site is 3.47 units.
The post development habitat value of the site 3.83 units.

Hedgerows

The baseline hedgerow value of the site is 0.11 units.
The post development habitat value of the site is 0.15 units.

Watercourses

The baseline habitat value of the site is 0.3 units.
The post development habitat value of the site is 0.3 units.

	Area units	Linear units	Watercourse
% Change	+10.24%	+37.25%	0%
Units required for 10% net gain:	N/A	N/A	0.03 units.

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1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Whitbread Group PLC to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Premier Inn Manchester Airport (Heald Green), Finney Lane, Wythenshawe, Stockport, SK8 3QA. (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The assessment was required to inform a planning application with Manchester City Council. The proposal is described as: Demolition of the existing public house, erection of 2 Storey 33-bedroom extension with associated landscaping (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in **Appendix 1**.

This report should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Preliminary Roost Assessment (PEA & PRA): PEA-PRA - Premier inn Manchester Airport (Heald Green) Finney Lane, Wythenshawe, Stockport SK8 3QA - Final (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, May 2024).
- Metric Calculation: Statutory Metric Calculation - Premier inn Manchester Airport (Heald Green), SK8 3QA - v1 - 17-05-24 (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, March 2025).
- BS5837 - Premier Inn Heald Green (Arbtech Consulting Ltd July 2024)
- River Condition Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, February 2025)

1.2 Site Location, Geology and Landscape Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 84277 85938 and has an area of approximately 0.8ha. The site comprises two structures, comprising a hotel (B1) and a public house (B2), along with extensive areas of hardstanding and smaller sections of soft landscaping, including ornamental hedgerows, trees and modified grassland. It is situated within the village of Heald Green, Greater Manchester, within the northern section of Ashbrook business park. The site is surrounded by roads to the north, east and west, with businesses to the south. The Metrolink also lies to the east of the site. The wider landscape comprises extensive urban development, associated with Greater Manchester, with a number of major infrastructure networks within close proximity to the site. Some pockets of greenspace are also present comprising grassland. A site location plan is provided in Appendix 1.

1.3 BNG Informative

BNG is a specific, measurable outcome of project activities that deliver demonstrable and quantifiable benefits to biodiversity compared to the baseline situation. In order to achieve BNG, a project must be able to demonstrate that it has followed all 10 of the Principles of Biodiversity Net Gain (as outlined in the *British Standard 8683:2021 Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain*).

The legalised Environment Act (2021) requires developments in England to demonstrate a measurable net gain in biodiversity and sets a target of a minimum of 10% BNG for all developments. It also stipulates that a management plan with a minimum 30-year term, should be adopted to ensure biodiversity net gain can be delivered. The Environment Act (2021) is mandatory as of February 2024. The requirement for biodiversity net gain is also enshrined within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).

The Statutory Metric is the widely accepted tool used to calculate BNG. It enables the calculation of habitat value pre- and post-development to determine the overall change in biodiversity value because of the proposed development. The Statutory Metric has separate BNG assessments for areas of habitat, hedgerows, and watercourses.

The biodiversity value of a site should be maximised. However, it may not always be possible to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain within a site and therefore the Statutory Metric can also account for offsite habitat creation, where land is available. Alternatively, developers can seek to provide an agreed financial contribution to an appropriate third party (such as the Local Authority, the UK Government, or another landowner) to deliver the required biodiversity net gain elsewhere on their behalf.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Baseline Biodiversity Value

The baseline BNG Calculation was informed by the PEA/PRA (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, 2024). A baseline habitat plan is provided in **Appendix 3**.

Habitat Classification

The PEA/PRA classified the habitats on site according to The UK Habitat Classification Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, July 2023).

Habitat Area/Length

The area or length of each habitat was calculated using qGIS software. In calculating the area or length of each habitat, habitats which occur as two or more isolated parcels across the site were combined, where they were deemed to be of a similar composition and condition. Distinctions were made between habitats to be retained (i.e. left as found in baseline), enhanced (i.e. improved condition) or lost (i.e. destroyed by proposed development).

Areas of scattered trees were calculated using the Tree Helper tool within the Statutory Metric.

Habitat Condition

Habitat condition was assessed using the relevant condition assessment sheets found in the Statutory Metric (Natural England, 2024).

Strategic Significance

Strategic significance was assigned for each habitat based upon a review of the following:

- Ecological value
- Function within the landscape
- Any site or habitat allocations under the Manchester City Council Local Policy

2.2 Post Development Biodiversity Value

The post development BNG Calculation was informed by the proposed plans which is included in **Appendix 1**. A post development habitat plan is provided in **Appendix 4**.

Habitat Classification

Proposed habitats were translated to their equivalents in the UK Habitat Classification using The UK Habitat Classification Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, July 2023) and the information provided within the proposed plans.

Habitat Area/Length

The area or length of each proposed habitat was calculated using qGIS software. In calculating the area or length of each habitat, habitats which occur as two or more isolated parcels across the site were combined, where they were deemed to be of similar composition and condition. Distinctions were made between habitats to be retained (i.e. left as found in baseline), enhanced (i.e. improved condition) or newly created.

Habitat Condition

Target habitat condition for each proposed habitat was determined assessed using the Temporal Multipliers Tool and the Enhancement Temporal Multipliers Tool included in the Statutory Metric spreadsheet as well as the relevant condition assessment sheets found in the Statutory Metric User Guide (Natural England, 2024). This is based on the assumption that a 30-year management plan will be adopted for the site.

Strategic Significance

Strategic significance was assigned for each proposed habitat based upon a review of the following:

- Likely ecological value
- Function within the landscape
- Any site or habitat allocations under the Manchester City Council Local Policy

2.3 Limitations

No known limitations.

3.0 Results

3.1 Baseline Habitats

Table 1 details the baseline habitats present within the site along with their area/length, condition, and strategic significance. An assessment of the anticipated condition for each habitat (where relevant) is provided in Appendix 6a (where necessary).

Table 1: Baseline Biodiversity Value

Habitat	Area / Length	Description	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance
u1b5 - Buildings	0.212ha	Existing building. 0.135ha is to be retained.	N/A	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.
u1b - Developed land; sealed surface	0.431ha	Hardstanding. 0.357ha is to be retained.	N/A	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.
g4 – Modified grassland	0.181ha	The perimeter of the site on the southwestern and southeastern boundary consists of managed modified grassland. 0.144ha is to be retained. 0.036ha will be enhanced to moderate condition other neutral grassland.	Poor	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.
32 – Individual trees	0.3379ha	A total of 25 trees are located onsite. These trees consist of 14 small, 9 medium and 2 large trees. G02 has been counted as 12 individual trees as per the Tree Constraints Plan within the BS5837:2012. G05 appears to contain T29 and T31 therefore has been counted as 3 additional small trees.	Moderate	High strategic significance Formally mentioned in LNRS

		0.3339ha of trees are to be retained, with one small tree due to be removed.		
h2b – Non-native ornamental hedgerow	0.011km	Various ornamental hedgerows are present onsite which consist of species such as privet, laurel and euonymus. 0.009km of hedgerow is to be retained.	Poor	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.

Table 2: Baseline off site river value

Habitat	Area / Length	Description	Condition Assessment	Encroachment	Strategic Significance
r1 – river/stream	0.03736 km	There is a small stream within 10m of the site boundary along the northern boundary of the site. A full condition assessment can be seen with the RCA (Arbtech, 2025).	Fairly Poor	Minor/Minor	High strategic significance. Formally mentioned in LNRS

3.2 Post Development Habitats

Table 2 details the post development habitats present within the site along with their area/length, condition, and strategic significance. An assessment of the anticipated condition for each habitat (where relevant) is provided in Appendix 6b, which is based on the assumption that a 30-year management plan will be implemented for the site.

Table 3: Post Development Biodiversity Value

Habitat	Area / Length	Description	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance
u1b5 - Buildings	0.135ha - retained 0.078ha – created	Retained and created buildings	N/A	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.
u1b - Developed land; sealed surface	0.357ha - retained 0.019ha – created	Retained and created hardstanding.	N/A	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.

g4 – Modified grassland	0.144ha - retained 0.011ha – created	Retained and created managed grassland.	Poor	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.
g3c – Other neutral grassland	0.036ha – enhanced from modified grassland 0.019ha - created	An area of modified grassland within the eastern portion of the site will be enhanced to create a species-rich area of other neutral grassland. Similarly, a wildflower strip on the western boundary will be created.	Moderate	Medium strategic significance. Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy. Wildflower planting creates a suitable habitat for invertebrates and pollinating insects.
32 – Individual trees	0.3339ha - retained 0.0122haha – created	Retained trees. Three trees will be planted with landscaped areas.	Poor	Medium strategic significance. Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy. Trees provide a suitable habitat for protected species including bats and nesting birds.
847 – Introduced shrub	0.017ha - created	Planted areas consisting of a mixture of native and ornamental shrubs will be in around the retained and newly constructed building.	N/A	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.
h2b – Non-native ornamental hedgerow	0.09km - retained	Retained hedgerow.	Poor (Automatic poor condition)	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy
h2a – Native hedgerow	0.05km – created	A native hedgerow will be planted on the southern boundary of the carpark. This will include species such as blackthorn, hawthorn, holly, hazel, dog rose and traveller's joy.	Poor	High strategic significance. Formally mentioned in LNRS

Table 4: Post-development off site river value

Habitat	Area / Length	Description	Condition Assessment	Encroachment	Strategic Significance
r1 – river/stream	0.03736 km	The river is to be retained. The blue line within the site plan indicates an extended buffer for the stream. Precautions during works must be taken to avoid pollution run off.	Fairly Poor	Minor/Minor	Low strategic significance. Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.

3.3 Change in Biodiversity Value of the Site

Full details are provided in the Statutory Metric. The headline results are presented in **Appendix 6**.

Areas of Habitat

The baseline habitat value of the site is 3.47 units, comprising 0.36 units of modified grassland, 3.11 units of individual trees, buildings and developed land; sealed surface (no value).

The post development habitat value of the site 3.83 units, comprising 0.03 units of introduced shrub, 3.11 units of individual trees, 0.31 units of modified grassland, 0.38 units of other neutral grassland, buildings and developed land; sealed surface (no value).

This results in a net change in biodiversity of +10.24% (i.e. a net gain).

Hedgerows

The baseline hedgerow value of the site is 0.11 units, comprising of ornamental hedgerow.

The post development habitat value of the site is 0.15 units, comprising of 0.11 units of native hedgerow and 0.04 units of ornamental hedgerow.

This results in a net change in biodiversity of +37.25% (i.e. a net gain).

Watercourses

The baseline habitat value of the site is 0.3 units, comprising a stream in fairly poor condition on the western boundary.

The post development habitat value of the site is 0.3 units, comprising the retained stream.

This results in a net change in biodiversity of 0% (i.e. no change).

4.0 Recommendations to Deliver BNG

4.1 Discussion

The current proposed plan results in a 10.24% net gain in area habitat value and 37.25% net gain in hedgerow value. This is more than the 10% target of biodiversity net gain. However, **there is a 0% net gain** in watercourse value, with no scope for enhancement. There is currently a 0.02 unit-deficit in watercourse value.

As per the River Condition Assessment, it is not possible to incorporate watercourse enhancement therefore it is recommended that biodiversity offsetting be utilised either via offsite enhancements or through the purchase of credits. See Section 4.2 for details.

4.2 Biodiversity Offsetting

If the landscaping plans are not altered or if the above alterations still do not deliver a 10% net gain, the deficit will need to be delivered in a suitable offsite location i.e. biodiversity offsetting. According to the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric there is a unit deficit of 0.03 watercourse units, and this will need to be provided to offset the loss in biodiversity and achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain.

The mechanism for securing this off-setting will need to be proposed to, and confirmed by the LPA e.g., purchasing conservation credits through a registered provider, habitat creation directly through the client owned or LPA offered land or a financial contribution towards another provider such as a local nature reserve or park. As well as the creation of new habitats, this should also secure the management of the proposed habitats to help achieve the desired condition for at least 30 years. This would be linked to the application through a planning obligation Section 106 (S106) agreement. The proposed habitat compensation should be of an appropriate distinctiveness to meet the trading rules of BNG. An ecology survey of the baseline habitat of any off-site land will be required to inform the baseline conditions of any land subject to off-site compensation measures.

4.4 Post Development

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Management Plan must be produced for the site. This should include recommendations for the implementation, management and monitoring of the site for at least 30 years.

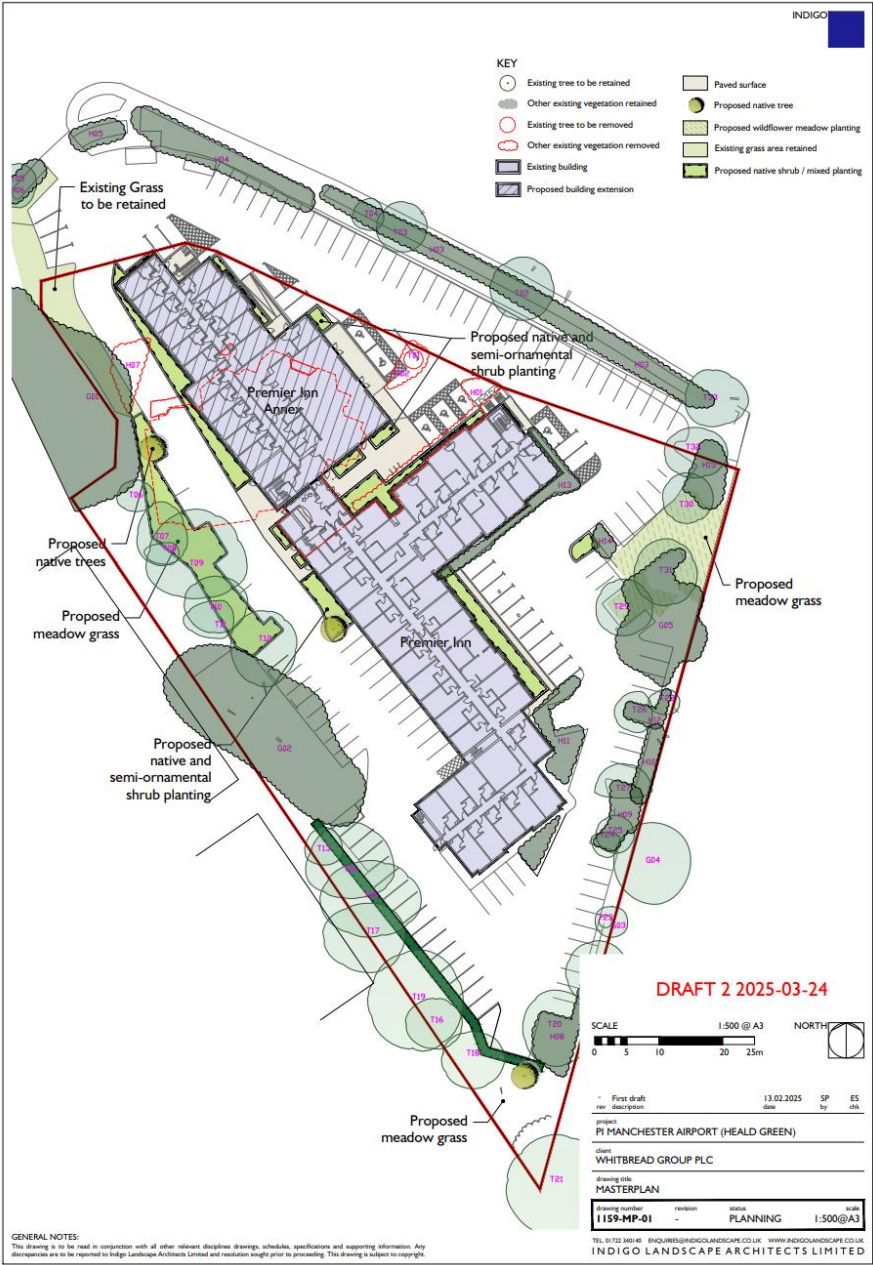
4.5 Design Statement

This report contains recommendations on measures for achieving BNG. These recommendations do not constitute a design for BNG. In submitting these recommendations, Arbtech Consulting has no Design Liability associated with these recommendations for BNG. The strategy sets out the criteria which the landscape team can use to design the creation and management of the site.

5.0 Bibliography

- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.
- BS5837 - Premier Inn Heald Green (Arbtech Consulting Ltd July 2024)
- CIEEM-CIRIA-IEMA (2019) Biodiversity Net Gain – Good Practice Principles for Development.
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http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/PDF/pub10_handbookforphase1habitatsurvey.pdf
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- Natural England (2023). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Technical Annex 1 - Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology (JP039).
- Natural England (2023). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Technical Annex 2 – Technical Information (JP039).
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Preliminary Roost Assessment (PEA & PRA): PEA-PRA - Premier inn Manchester Airport (Heald Green) Finney Lane, Wythenshawe, Stockport SK8 3QA - Final (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, May 2024).
- River Condition Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, February 2025)
- The UK Habitat Classification Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, July 2023) Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan

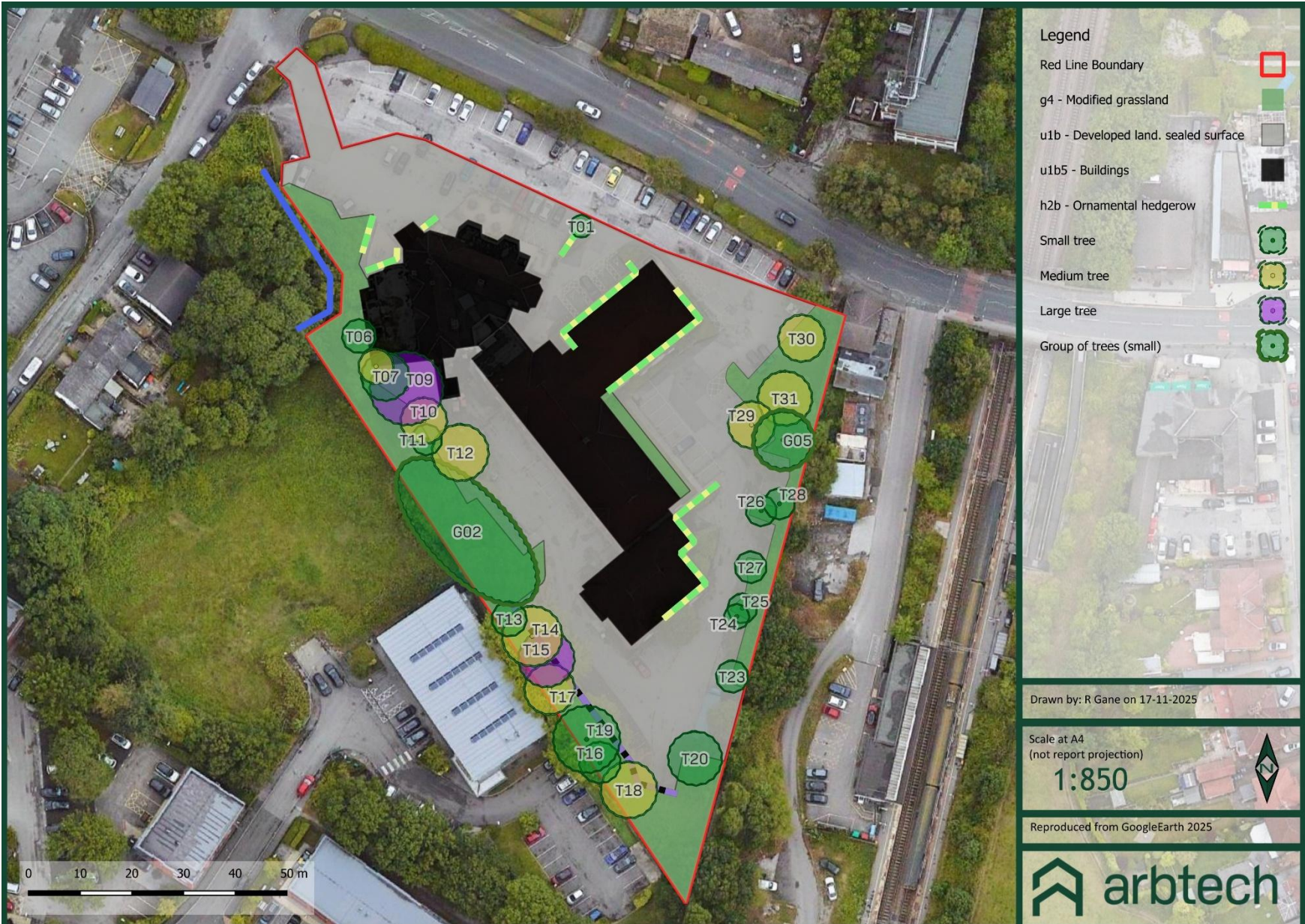
Appendix 1: Proposed Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: Baseline Habitat Plan



Appendix 4: Post Development Habitat Plan



Appendix 5: Watercourse Buffer Zones



Appendix 6a: Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets – Baseline

MODIFIED GRASSLAND					
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Condition Assessment Result	Metric Score	Score Achieved ×/√
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	N	Good Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	3	
B	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.	N	Moderate Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	2	
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present).	Y	Poor Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	1	✓
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.	Y	Score achieved:		POOR
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Y			
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y			
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Y			

INDIVIDUAL TREES					
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed	Condition Assessment Result	Metric Score	Score Achieved ×/√
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y	Good Passes 5 or 6 criteria	3	
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).	Y	Moderate Passes 3 or 4 criteria	2	√
			Poor Passes 2 or fewer criteria	1	
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	N	Score achieved:	MODERATE	
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.	Y			
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N			
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y			

Appendix 6b: Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets – Proposed

INDIVIDUAL TREES					
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed	Condition Assessment Result	Metric Score	Score Achieved ×/√
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y	Good Passes 5 or 6 criteria	3	
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).	Y	Moderate Passes 3 or 4 criteria	2	√
			Poor Passes 2 or fewer criteria	1	
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	N	Score achieved:	MODERATE	
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.	Y			
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N			
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y			

OTHER NEUTRAL GRASSLAND					
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed	Condition Assessment Result	Metric Score	Score Achieved ×/√
A	"The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only."	N	Good Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	3	
B	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.	N	Moderate Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	2	
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.	Y	Poor Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F."	1	√
D	Cover of bracken Pteridium aquilinum is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble Rubus fruticosus agg.) is less than 5%.	Y	Score achieved:		
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA5) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m2 present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only."	N			
Number of criteria passed		4			

Appendix 6: Headline BNG Results

The Statutory Metric is provided as a separate excel spreadsheet.

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>		Habitat units	0.36	
		Hedgerow units	0.04	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>		Habitat units	10.24%	
		Hedgerow units	37.25%	
		Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?		Yes ✓		
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	10.00%	3.47	3.82	0.00
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.11	0.12	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.29	0.32	0.03
Input errors/rule breaks present in metric ▲				