

Rochdale Borough Council
Number One Riverside,
Smith Street,
Rochdale,
OL16 1XU

BG Reference: BG26.034

26th January 2026**RE: Specific Management and Monitoring Prescriptions – Rochdale BESS Ecological Mitigation Area**

Dear Mr Hiles,

This letter has been produced in order to provide additional details to the exiting Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan completed by FPCR Environment and Design in 2026 at the site known as Land Off Dig Gate Lane, Milnrow, Rochdale SD 9187 1117. The wider site is subject to an approved planning application (24/00043/FUL) for a battery energy storage facility, however habitat creation and management recommendations outlined below refer to the Ecological Mitigation Area (Appendix 2) which is to be created in advance of the wider development and used as a receptor area for the translocation of the known population of Pond Mud Snail (*Omphiscola glabra*) present on site in an existing pond to the south of the proposed Ecological Mitigation Area.

The purpose of this letter is to provide additional detailed creation and management prescriptions for habitats considered essential for the continued success of translocated Pond Mud Snail within the Ecological Mitigation Area pertaining to species rich hedgerows to be created at the southern extent, hedgerows with trees to the west and the receptor priority pond in the centre of the site. The wider Ecological Mitigation area seeks the creation of other neutral grassland, mixed scrub and individual trees; however, these are considered suboptimal to support any life stage of Pond Mud Snail and it is considered that recommendations in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan are sufficient to meet the targeted condition. Further to the monitoring recommendations outlined in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan this letter seeks to outline a specific monitoring schedule for translocated notable invertebrates.

The recommendations outlined below for the Pond and Hedgerows shown in the Ecology Implementation masterplan (Axis, December 2023) (Appendix 2) and Biodiversity Net Gain Report (FPCR, 2023) will support the continued success of the known population of Pond Mud Snail (*Omphiscola glabra*) at the site post-translocation. The hedgerows will provide refugia during drought, additional deadwood habitat favoured by juveniles and contribute to scattered shading slowing evaporation once under the below management regime. The pond and surrounding scrapes will provide optimal habitat to support a breeding population of Pond Mud Snail post translocation.

Further to the habitat monitoring prescriptions outlined in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (FPCR, January 2026), and further recommendations detailed in Table 1 and Table 2 (Appendix 1) the translocated mud snail population will require specific monitoring post translocation to assess the success of the scheme. Results of monitoring actions will assist in tailoring adaptive management to mitigate future risks to this priority species.

Monitoring Strategy: Pond Mud Snails

Population monitoring for Pond Mud Snail will take place annually in year 1- year 5 following translocation in conjunction with habitat condition assessment monitoring visits recommended in the Habitat Management and

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Monitoring Plan (FPCR, January 2026). Specific Pond Mud Snail population monitoring will involve a single visit between September and November by a suitably qualified ecologist.

- Hand netting will be undertaken for one minute at 2-3m intervals around the perimeter of the created pond and Pond Mud Snails will be counted before being released back into the pond.
- Refugia located at the margins of the pond, submerged vegetation and suitable marginal vegetation such as rushes will be fingertip searched and the results will be combined with the count from the pond to glean an approximate population.
- The count will be divided into adults and juveniles to determine breeding success.
- Should the pond be dry at the time of the visit; the fingertip search will be conducted, and a follow up visit should take place the following spring in April to avoid disturbance during the breeding season of Pond Mud Snail.

Results of these monitoring visits will support habitat monitoring requirements detailed below and within the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (FPCR, January 2026) in achieving the targeted Biodiversity Net Gain Conditions. Adaptive management and review of the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan may be required should recorded population trends show a notable decrease within five years.

I trust this report provides clarification on the management prescriptions required for the long-term success of the translocation and to meet the targeted Biodiversity Net Gain conditions. Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Brindle and Green using the details at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Daisy Fretwell
Consultant Ecologist
For and on behalf of Brindle & Green Ltd

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Appendix 1: Tables detailing additional management for hedgerows and pond

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Table 1: Creation and Management Approach for Pond

Target Habitat:		Pond (Priority Habitat)		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted	Creation Approach	Management Approach
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	Yes	Marginal planting including species with extensive root networks such as soft-rush (<i>Juncus effusus</i>) and hard-rush (<i>Juncus inflexus</i>) seeks to mitigate the risk of pollution from overland flow from compacted agricultural fields and nearby road infrastructure	Water monitoring assessing a broad spectrum of abiotic factors including dissolved oxygen, phosphates and nitrates will be undertaken annually from year 1- year 5 and every 5 years thereafter to assess the water quality of the created pond. Should a deterioration in water quality be recorded between monitoring visits; proposed scrapes surrounding the pond will be stocked with Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) to intercept suspended pollutants present in runoff before overland flow reaches the pond basin, however monitoring will be required to maintain this species within the scrapes and any individual common reed observed colonising the pond in monitoring visits will be removed in the next management visit. Arisings from cutting surrounding grassland will be raked off and removed from site to prevent eutrophication and maintain optimal nutrient poor environment for the long-term success of translocated Pond Mud Snail Management operations will seek to avoid works on site immediately following periods of heavy rainfall to prevent poaching and soil compaction

Target Habitat:		Pond (Priority Habitat)		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted	Creation Approach	Management Approach
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	Yes	As per the design proposal in the Ecological Mitigation Strategy the pond will be created in a central location within the Ecological Mitigation Area to ensure a minimum 10m buffer of grassland, scrub and hedgerows around the perimeter.	Surrounding semi natural habitat to be maintained following prescriptions outlined in Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (FPCR, January 2026) and Table 2
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed Lemna spp. or filamentous algae.	Yes	Planting of annual vegetation will be largely restricted to margins with few floating or deep-water species to limit organic material accumulation and maintain nutrient poor water for Pond Mud Snail Created pond will be lined with bentonite clay rather than a butyl lining as the latter absorbs and transfers heat from direct sunlight to the water; whereby creating optimal conditions for the growth of duckweed and algae. Clay lined ponds are less prone to heat transfer from direct sunlight and maintain consistent temperatures optimal for Pond Mud Snail Rushes (Juncus spp) from the existing pond on site will be translocated to cover >50% of the created basin following establishment	Water monitoring assessing abiotic factors including dissolved oxygen, phosphates and nitrates will be undertaken annually from year 1- year 5 and every 5 years thereafter to assess the water quality of the created pond. A substantial increase in nitrate and phosphate levels between visits will require remedial action under guidance of a suitably qualified ecologist. Arisings from cutting surrounding grassland will be raked off and removed from site or to a designated area at a lower elevation than the pond immediately to prevent eutrophication from runoff. Management operations will seek to avoid cutting grassland or marginal planting between May and September to further prevent eutrophication
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Yes	Pond basin will be allowed to naturally fill with rainwater following creation. If water is present during translocation works	

Target Habitat:		Pond (Priority Habitat)		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted	Creation Approach	Management Approach
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams, pumps or pipework.	Yes	Pond location as per Ecological mitigation strategy plan, the created pond will be situated at the base of a natural slope on the site to facilitate the capture of surface runoff Hard rush (<i>Juncus inflexus</i>) in the existing pond on site will be translocated to the created pond to maintain refugia and slow evaporation in periods of drought.	Significant fluctuation in water level including seasonal drying is considered acceptable. Refugia including hibernacula and log piles at the pond margins and logs and stones in the basin will be provided at creation and maintained and replaced where necessary for the long term success of Pond Mud Snail during seasonal dry periods
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species.	Yes	Botanical walkover survey will be conducted no more than 4 weeks before the creation of the pond to assess the site for presence of Schedule 9 listed Invasive Non-Native plant species Should any be recorded during this visit removal will take place prior to commencement of habitat creation works	Annual monitoring of created habitats will take place in years 1-5 and subsequently every 5 years; if invasive plant species are recorded remedial action will be taken within the same year to remove.
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Yes	Pond will not be stocked with fish	Monitoring of Pond Mud Snail population to take place annually in years 1-5 and every 5 years thereafter. If native fish are recorded in monitoring visits and appear to have negative impact on the success of Pond Mud Snail remedial measures will be taken to reduce fish densities
H	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed) cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3 m deep.	Yes	Pond basin to be dug to 1.2m at the northern end as detailed in the Replacement Pond Strategy (Weddle Landscape Design, 2022) and stocked with plants of native provenance. Rush (<i>Juncus spp</i>) from the existing pond are to be translocated to the created pond to provide an established emergent plant community	Management of emergent and submerged vegetation will only be undertaken when cover of the pond basin by vegetation exceeds 85-90%, whereby dominant vegetation will be reduced by no more than 25% via hand pulling with limited use of hand tools if necessary.

Target Habitat:		Pond (Priority Habitat)		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted	Creation Approach	Management Approach
				Any marginal, submerged or floating vegetation removed during management works will be left at the edge of the pond no more than 0.5m from the water level to allow notable invertebrates to return to the pond prior to vegetation removal to a designated area or offsite.
I	The pond surface of ponds is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	Yes	Pond will be situated as per the Ecological Mitigation Area Masterplan with marginal planting spaced at least 4m from the closest hedgerows, trees or scrub	Surrounding semi natural habitat to be maintained following prescriptions outlined in Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (FPCR, January 2026) and Table 2

Table 2: Creation and Management Approach for Hedgerows

Target Habitat:		Hedgerows			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted	Relevant Features	Creation Approach	Management Approach
A1	Height >1.5m average along length.	Yes	H1 – H3	While created hedges will be planted with whips <50cm in height on average, species with complementary growth rates have been selected to ensure the newly established hedges reach a height of 150cm within 5-7 years of planting	Retained hedges with trees H1 and H2 to be left to grow vertically for 3 years after start date before laying. Laid hedges will exceed 135cm in height upon completion of laying, and will reach 150cm within the first 6 months. Laid hedges will have lateral growth trimmed during winter, leaving vertical growth for relaying.
A2	Width >1.5m average along length.	Yes	H1 – H3	New hedges to be planted up with approximately 6-10 whips per meter of length in an alternating/ zig-zag pattern Whips will be spaced approximately 33cm apart and 33cm offset Species to include hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>), field maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>), spindle (<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>), holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>), crab apple (<i>Malus sylvestris</i>), Bird cherry (<i>Prunus avium</i>), dog rose (<i>Rosa canina</i>) and Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>).	Hedgerows on site are to be laid using traditional methods which stimulates new growth from the base of cut stems

Target Habitat:		Hedgerows			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted	Relevant Features	Creation Approach	Management Approach
B1	Gap – hedge base Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5m for >90% of length.	Yes	H1 – H3	New hedges to be planted up with approximately 6-10 species per meter of length in an alternating/ zig-zag pattern. Species with complementary growth rates and propensity for regeneration from the roots are chosen for a robust structure.	Traditional laying of hedges as per Table 3 involves the vertical stems being laid at a 45 degree angle and encourages regeneration from the cut base which promotes density of woody growth throughout the vertical structure of the hedge. Hedges correctly managed through laying should be densest at the base offering cover to terrestrial mammals and sparser at the top to facilitate access for nesting birds.
B2	Gap – hedgerow canopy continuity Gaps make up <10% of total length; and no canopy gaps >5m.	Yes	H1 – H3	Gaps in retained hedgerow exceeding 5m to be planted up with approximately 6 species per meter of length in an alternating/ zig-zag pattern	Existing hedges with trees (H1 & H2)- layed in
C1	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation >1m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: • measured from outer edge of hedgerow, and • is present on one side of the hedge (at least)	Yes	H1 – H3	Semi natural habitats including grassland created bordering created and retained hedgerows	1m Buffer strip on either side of the hedges will be left to vegetate naturally.
C2	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	Yes	H1 – H3	Fertilisers will not be used on site at establishment	Fertilisers will not be used during management operations, damage and disturbance to the soil during management works will be minimised by timing works to avoid periods of heavy rainfall. Arisings from

Target Habitat:		Hedgerows			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted	Relevant Features	Creation Approach	Management Approach
					adjacent grassland cutting and hedge, scrub and tree maintenance works will be removed to a designated area of site or removed from site entirely to prevent nutrient enrichment of the soil.
D1	Invasive and neophyte species >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and recently introduced species.	Yes	H1 – H3	Only native species to be planted in hedgerow creation.	Annual monitoring walkover to assess for presence of invasive or neophyte species and action their removal if any are found.
D2	Current damage >90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	Yes	H1 – H3	Whips are to be planted with biodegradable tree guards protecting the root ball and trunk	Management by traditional laying prevents damage to new growth that flailing and cutting using power tools causes. Laying with traditional hand tools splits the fibres of the trunk rather than cutting through horizontally, leaving an area of the cambium intact to support future growth.
E1	Tree class (applicable to hedgerows with trees only) There is more than one age-class (or morphology) of tree present (for example: young, mature, veteran and or ancient), and there is on average at least one mature, ancient or veteran tree present per 20 - 50m of hedgerow.	Yes	H1 & H2	-	Retained hedgerow with trees- existing suitable standard trees spaced at a minimum of 25m apart will be identified and protected during trimming and laying works and allowed to develop naturally.

Target Habitat:		Hedgerows			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted	Relevant Features	Creation Approach	Management Approach
E2	Tree health (applicable to hedgerows with trees only) At least 95% of hedgerow trees are in a healthy condition (excluding veteran features valuable for wildlife). 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.		H1 & H2	-	Retained trees will be inspected by a LANTRA Basic Tree Inspection qualified operative on an annual basis to assess tree health and signs of disease.

Table 3: Detailed Management Prescriptions; Hedgerows

Action	Relevant Features	Timing	Prescription
Hedge laying preparatory management (retained hedgerows)	H1-H3	Establishment – Year 3	Pruning on retained hedgerows will be completed bi-annually and limited to the horizontal branches, vertical growth will not be pruned to facilitate a long-term hedge laying regimen
New hedgerow planting	H3	Establishment	Bare root whips ~50cm in height are to be planted in a zig-zag formation at a density of approximately 6 plants per metre comprising native species including hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>), field maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>), spindle (<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>), holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>), crab apple (<i>Malus sylvestris</i>), Bird cherry (<i>Prunus avium</i>), dog rose (<i>Rosa canina</i>) and elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>). Planting should be completed between November and February, during planting works the roots must be covered until the tree is in the ground by either pots, temporary slot planting or black plastic sheeting. Root desiccation during planting is a barrier to successful establishment and a main cause of mortality in newly planted trees. Planting works should ideally be scheduled during mild weather conditions with no heavy frost or snow forecast within 72 hours after planting. Newly planted trees are to be supported by a timber tree stake and biodegradable tree guard. A 30cm buffer from the stake is to be covered with a layer of mulch to insulate the base of the tree and form a barrier for weeds.
Watering	H1-H3	Establishment – Year 3	In the first three years after planting, young trees planted as bare root whips lack the water storage and uptake capabilities that develop as they mature and take on size, therefore they are at risk of dehydration and mortality in summer months. Between May and September in year 1 and 2 all newly planted trees will require watering weekly. Ground within a 30cm buffer of the main stem should be saturated to 15cm soil depth, accounting for soil conditions and type. In extended periods of dry weather (10 days or more without rainfall) or in particularly hot weather (25 degrees or higher) the watering regimen should be increased to twice weekly
Spot treat competitive weeds	H1-H3	Establishment – Year 3	The mulch laid around the main stem during establishment will have degraded by the end of year 2 and weeds may begin to grow around the base of the trees. Large forbs such as lesser burdock (<i>Arctium minus</i>) have long taproots and

			grow rapidly to exceed 150cm in height, meaning such species may out-compete young trees and shrubs for soil nutrition and light. Each sapling should be spot checked every 60 days in spring and every 30 days in summer for pernicious weeds and general condition. Pernicious weeds will be removed by hand pulling or an organic acetic acid based herbicide
Short term management (Retained hedgerows)	H1 & H2	Establishment – Year 3	Pruning should be limited to the sides of the retained hedgerows to encourage upward growth, vertical height should not be removed to facilitate hedge laying in the long term.
Short term management (New hedgerows)	H3	Year 5-7	Short term management should include the replacement of any trees that fail to establish with larger standard trees to match the growth rate of the rest of the planting – ideally pot >5l pot grown standards to reduce mortality. Blackthorn suckers and lateral growth should be cut annually to encourage vertical growth
Long term management (New hedgerows)	H3	Year 10 +	Once newly established trees have reached a base stem diameter of <10cm new hedgerows will be laid in a 'Midland Bullock' style using traditional methods to stimulate growth from the base with the brashy growth stripped from the southern side of H3 to facilitate laying. The prepared pleachers will be laid with the canopy facing uphill. The brashy growth will be laid to the north and pleachers supported by natural hazel or sawn timber stakes placed in a single line at 50cm intervals. Hazel binders will be woven along the top of the stakes to support the structure. The finished laid hedge should exceed 135cm in height. Laying will be repeated as above every 10-15 years or when vertical growths from laid pleachers exceeds 10cm in diameter.
Long term management (Retained hedgerows)	H1 & H2	Year 10 +	Retained hedgerows will be laid in a 'Midland Bullock' style using traditional methods to stimulate growth from the base with the bushy growth stripped from the southern side of H1 and H2 to facilitate laying. The prepared pleachers will be laid with the canopy facing uphill. The brashy growth will be laid to the north and pleachers supported by natural hazel or sawn timber stakes placed in a single line at 50cm intervals. Hazel binders will be woven along the top of the stakes to support the structure. The finished laid hedge should exceed 135cm in height. Laying will be repeated as above every 10-15 years or when vertical growths from laid pleachers exceeds 10cm in diameter. Retained trees should be risk assessed by a LANTRA basic tree assessment qualified operative annually and

			condition assessed for a Quantitative Tree Risk Assessment on a 5-year rotation by a suitably qualified contractor as part of ongoing monitoring
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Figure 1: Ecological Mitigation Area Masterplan