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1. Submission details

1.1 Date

18.05.2026 (REV 2)

1.2 Planning application reference number

Not known

1.3 Local planning authority (LPA)

Rochdale Metropolitan
Borough Council

1.4 Development site Address

Waterfold Lane,
Heap Bridge,
Bury.

1.5 Brief description of the development

The site is situated off Waterfold Lane, within the settlement of Heap Bridge, Bury. It lies approximately 2.5 km east of Bury town centre and is bounded by the River Roch to the north-east, existing commercial premises to the east, Waterfold Lane to the south, and the M66 motorway and further commercial/industrial land to the west.

The proposed development comprises the construction of an L-shaped residential block with 6 flat units and 18 housing units, with car parking, hardstanding, and associated landscaping.

2. Consultancy Details

2.1 Name of Responsible Person

Cara J Evans
Surveyors: Christian S
Leigh & Christopher
Pickering

2.2 Company name

Leigh Ecology Ltd.

2.3 Address

8 Hall Drive
Marston
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 6DT

2.4 Contact number

01606 892032

3. Methodology

3.1 Biodiversity Net Gain was calculated using The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Auditing and Accounting for Biodiversity Calculation tool.

- The onsite habitat baseline calculations are measured on MapInfo GIS software using the Phase 1 Habitat map.
- The Phase 1 habitat classifications are translated to UK Habitat Regulations using the translation tool in the Biodiversity Metric.
- All habitat conditions are based on the condition assessments listed in the habitat condition sheets excel document.
- The strategic significance is determined by deciding if the habitat is desirable within the location and seeing if it is identified within a local strategy.
- The areas to be retained or enhanced habitats are calculated using the Proposed Landscaping Masterplan.
- The proposed off-setting site habitat baseline calculations are measured on MapInfo GIS software using a Phase 1 Habitat map.
- The site proposed habitats, and associated scores are calculated using measurements and habitat information provided by Equilibrium Architects, as well as over-laying site plans onto the MapInfo GIS software and taking area measurements.

3.2 The change in biodiversity is calculated by subtracting the baseline unit values from the post-development values of the broad habitat types. This is combined with any off-site gains or losses to give a final Biodiversity Unit Value for the scheme.

4. Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy

4.1 How will the proposal minimise impacts to habitats?

The proposed development has been designed to retain and safeguard existing features of ecological value identified in the baseline survey. The vast majority of individual trees recorded in the baseline metric, including the group of eight lime trees in the northern corner (part-coppiced), the medium and small willow trees, and the medium sycamore along the eastern riverbank, will be retained and protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012, with root protection zones maintained throughout construction.

The existing native hedgerow along the southern site boundary will be retained in its entirety, preserving its function as a linear wildlife corridor and supporting habitat connectivity. Removal of habitats in poor or moderate condition, including areas of modified grassland and other neutral grassland, is unavoidable to accommodate the layout; however, the design incorporates substantial new habitat creation within public open space to offset these losses. This includes:

- 1091 m² of wildflower grassland (other neutral grassland – moderate condition) along the northeast, north, and west of the site
- 1536 m² of low-ecological-value grassland
- Ornamental shrub planting
- 48 new trees planted across public open spaces
- 118 m, 53 m, and 62 m lengths of new hedgerow

All construction activities will follow best practice pollution prevention measures to protect the adjacent watercourse and any downstream habitats. Works will be timed to avoid the bird breeding season where possible, with ecological supervision where vegetation clearance cannot be delayed.

These measures ensure that the loss of baseline habitats is minimised and that the post-development landscape supports biodiversity through diverse, high-quality green infrastructure.

4.2 Is the net gain percentage being achieved On-site, Off-site or Both?

The 10% biodiversity net gain requirement will be achieved through a combination of on-site habitat creation and enhancement, alongside the purchase of off-site biodiversity units from a recognised habitat bank.

4.3 How many biodiversity units are required to meet the 10% net gain requirement?

Habitat Units: 4.07

Hedgerow Units: 0.37

Watercourse Units: 0.94

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required
Habitat units	10.00%	3.70	4.07
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.34	0.37
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.85	0.94

4.4 Is there a habitat management and monitoring plan?

Yes, supplied upon planning approval.

4.5 Has the statutory biodiversity metric tool been used?

Yes

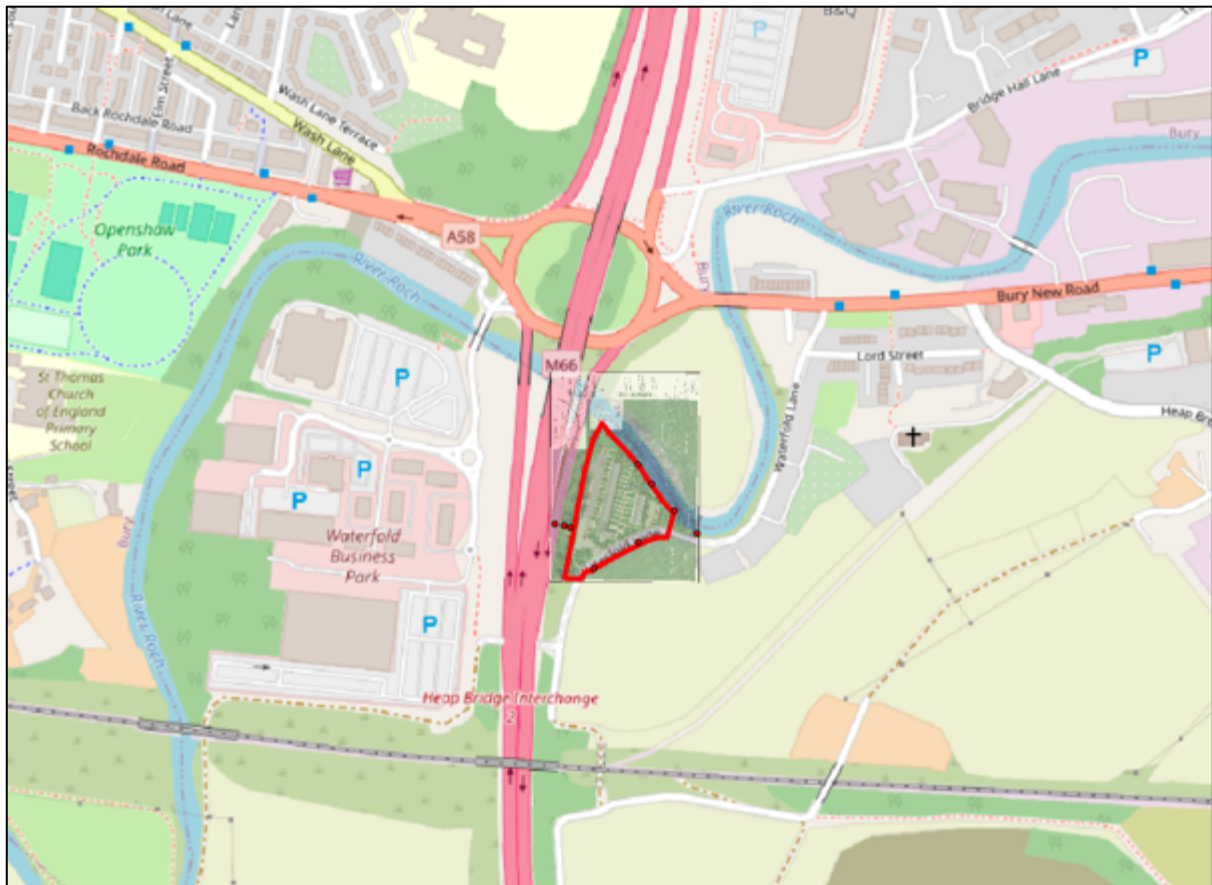
4.6 Reference Number of pre-development habitat survey report and map

LAWL/24-001

4.7 Additional Data Sources

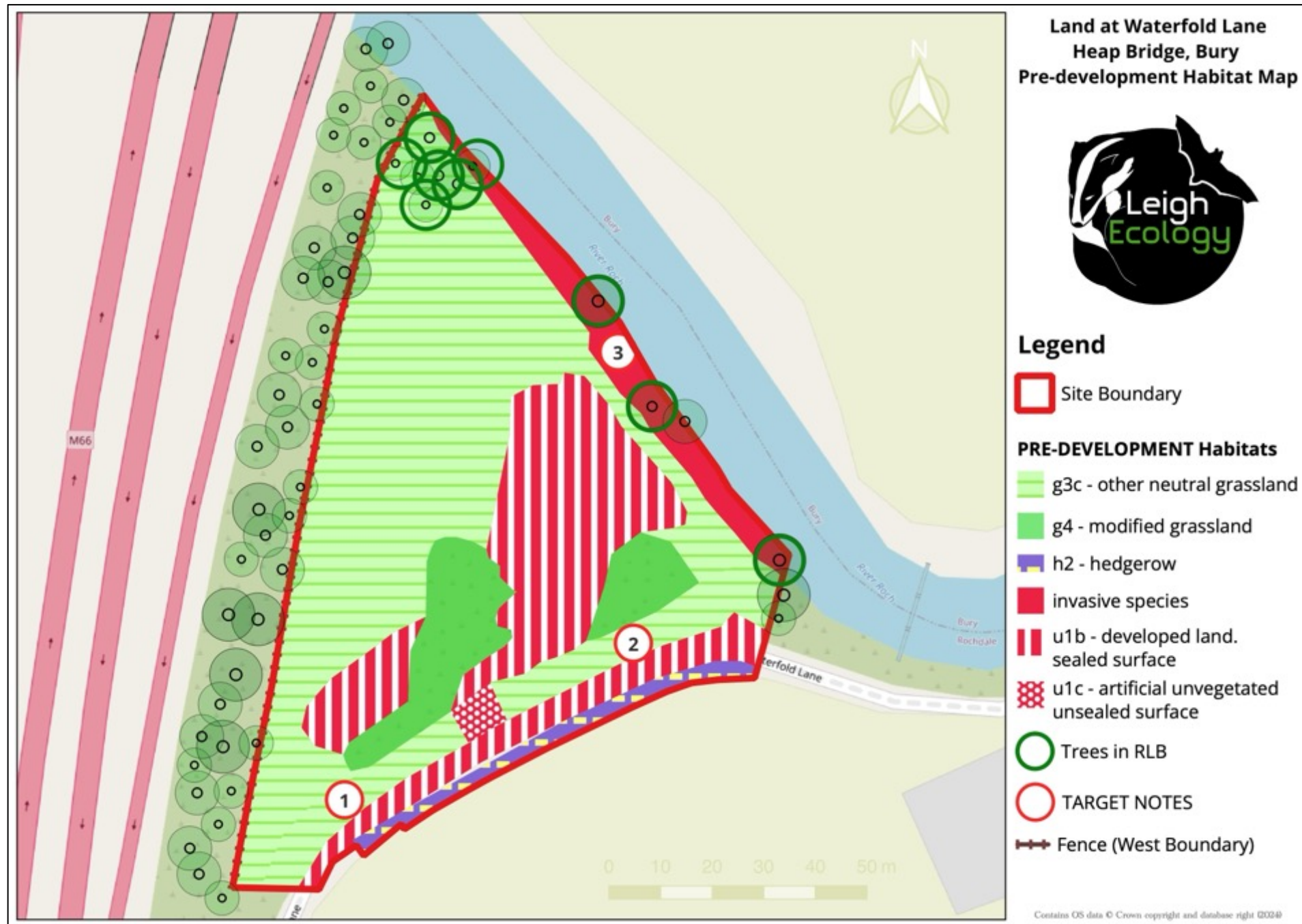
Baseline habitat and mapping data produced in QGIS using UKHab classification, post-development habitat areas provided by the project landscape architect.

4.8 Proposal Site Location



*Using georeference tool on QGIS Software

4.9 Pre-development habitat map (On-site)



4.10 Pre-development habitat map (On-site)

TN		Notes
1	1	ONG Bund
2	2	Bund ONG
3	3	Invasive - Himalayan Balsam

4.11 Landscaping Proposals Provided by Equilibrium Architects, May 2026.

[illegible]

5. Irreplaceable Habitats

5.1 Does the development impact any irreplaceable habitats?

No

6. On-Site Baseline Habitats

6.1 Survey Date

30.07.2024

6.2 Survey Constraints (access issues, weather etc.)

None

6.3 Total pre-development biodiversity value

Number of area habitat biodiversity units

3.70

Number of hedgerow biodiversity units

0.34

Number of watercourse biodiversity units

0.85

On-site baseline	Habitat units	3.70
	Hedgerow units	0.34
	Watercourse units	0.85

6.4 On-site habitat images and descriptions

Modified Grassland



Small parcels of modified grassland are present within the site, occurring predominantly in areas not occupied by rubble or hardstanding. These grassland areas are dominated by coarse and competitive species, including common nettle *Urtica dioica*, dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., and common butterweed *Senecio jacobaea*. The sward is largely homogeneous, with low botanical diversity and an absence of sensitive or indicator species. Evidence of nutrient enrichment and limited structural diversity is apparent, with minimal variation in sward height and a lack of features such as tussocks or bare ground mosaics. On this basis, and in accordance with the Biodiversity Metric condition assessment criteria, the modified grassland is assessed to be in **poor condition**.

6.5 Habitat Condition Assessment

Habitat

Modified grassland

Score

4 (excluding criterion A)

Condition

Poor

*Please see condition assessment in separate document

Other Neutral Grassland Bunds



Other neutral grassland occurs across a large proportion of the site, including extensive coverage of two prominent earth bunds. The sward is dominated by fireweed (*Chamerion angustifolium*) and creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), with scattered ruderal species and occasional minor stands of Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), particularly toward the northern sections of the bunds. Structural diversity is moderate, with variations in sward height and areas of bare ground associated with the bund slopes. Species diversity is limited by the dominance of a small number of tall competitive plants, although some heterogeneity in vegetation structure provides habitat for invertebrates. Taking these factors into account and applying Biodiversity Metric criteria, the grassland is assessed as **moderate condition**.

6.6 Habitat Condition Assessment

Habitat

Other neutral grassland

Score

3

Condition

Moderate

*Please see condition assessment in separate document

Other Neutral Grassland
Site



6.7 Habitat Condition Assessment

Habitat

Other neutral grassland

Score

2

Condition

Poor

*Please see condition assessment in separate document

Developed Land



Scattered sections of the site comprise disused areas of concrete and hardstanding, interspersed with pockets of colonising vegetation. Plant cover is very sparse, with species adapted to nutrient-poor and disturbed substrates, including small patches of mosses, ruderals, and opportunistic grasses. The habitat provides very limited botanical diversity.

Individual Trees



The site supports several scattered trees of varying species, size, and condition. In the northern corner, a group of eight lime (*Tilia* sp.) trees, some of which have been coppiced, are present and will be retained. Towards the central area along the riverbank, a medium-sized willow (*Salix* sp.) in good condition is also to be retained, along with a smaller willow of moderate condition. On the far eastern boundary, along the riverbank, a medium-sized sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) in good condition is present. These trees contribute to local structural diversity, provide shade and shelter, and offer potential foraging and nesting opportunities for birds and invertebrates.

6.8 Habitat Condition Assessment

Habitat

Individual trees

8x Lime

1 small Willow

Score

4

Condition

Moderate

6.9 Habitat Condition Assessment

Habitat

Individual trees

1 medium Willow

1 medium Sycamore

Score

5

Condition

Good

*Please see condition assessment in separate document

Watercourse

A separate river assessment has been undertaken by Dominic Rigby MCIEEM; the results of the assessment should be read in conjunction with this biodiversity net gain assessment.



Encroachment

Section One had no encroachment. Section Two featured a 5m walled section (bank revetment) along its left bank side, resulting in major watercourse encroachment; as well permanent agricultural grassland at the edge of the right bank top: minor encroachment.

*Please see condition assessment in separate river assessment document

6.10 Description of proposed habitat creation/enhancements

The post-development landscape scheme will deliver a variety of new and enhanced habitats designed to increase biodiversity value in accordance with the Biodiversity Metric.

Grassland creation will comprise approximately 1,091 m² of *other neutral grassland* (moderate condition), established through wildflower meadow seeding to maximise species diversity. The seed mix will include a variety of native grasses and wildflowers suitable for the local area, providing nectar and pollen sources for invertebrates and visual interest throughout the growing season. Some suggested species include Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Sweet Vernal Grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), Crested Dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*), White Clover (*Trifolium repens*).

Low-ecological-value grassland (891 m²) will be established in areas of formal public open space where recreational use is anticipated. This grassland will still contribute to site biodiversity by providing green cover and foraging opportunities for birds and invertebrates but will be of lower botanical diversity due to regular mowing.

Ornamental shrub planting will be incorporated into the landscaping, with a focus on species beneficial to pollinators (e.g., lavender, rosemary, and flowering currant). Where feasible, native species will be prioritised to improve foraging opportunities and seasonal cover.

Tree planting will total 48 individuals (8 medium at size of planting, 40 small), comprising a mixture of native and wildlife-friendly ornamental species to ensure year-round habitat provision. Trees will be located across public open space, along boundaries, and within streetscapes to maximise habitat connectivity and microclimate benefits. Some suggested species include Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Apple (*Malus domestica*), Cherry (*Prunus avium*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Common Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*).

Hedgerow creation will include three new lengths of native hedgerow: 118 m of native hedgerow, 53 m of species-rich hedgerow and 62 m of ornamental hedgerow. These will be planted with a native mix to meet 'poor' condition targets under the Metric, providing valuable foraging and nesting habitat as well as improving site connectivity for wildlife. Some suggested species include Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*).

Management of all newly created habitats will be carried out in accordance with a Habitat Monitoring & Management Plan (HMMP) to ensure they reach and maintain their target condition within the required timescales.

6.11 Total post-development biodiversity value

Number of area habitat biodiversity units

3.25

Number of hedgerow biodiversity units

0.83

Number of watercourse biodiversity units

0.85

On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	3.25
	Hedgerow units	0.83
	Watercourse units	0.85

6.12 Total net change in biodiversity units

Number of area habitat biodiversity units

-0.46

-12.30%

Number of hedgerow biodiversity units

0.49

+146.47%

Number of watercourse biodiversity units

0.00

0.00%

On-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	-0.46	-12.30%
	Hedgerow units	0.49	146.47%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%

FINAL RESULTS			
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-0.46	
	Hedgerow units	0.49	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-12.30%	
	Hedgerow units	146.47%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?		No - Check Trading Summaries ▲	

7. Trading Summary

7.1 Have the trading rules been satisfied?

Habitat – **NO**

Hedgerow – **YES**

Watercourse – **YES**

Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲
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Habitat Trading Summary

Trading Summary		
Distinctiveness Group	Trading Rule	Trading Satisfied?
Very High	Same habitat required - bespoke compensation option B	Yes ✓
High	Same habitat required =	Yes ✓
Medium	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (A)	No ▲
Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required =	Yes ✓

Medium Distinctiveness					
Habitat group	Group	On-site unit change	Off-site unit change	Project wide unit change	Cumulative broad habitat change
Cropland - Arable field margins cultivated annually	Cropland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cropland - Arable field margins game bird mix	Cropland	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Cropland - Arable field margins pollen and nectar	Cropland	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Cropland - Arable field margins tussocky	Cropland	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Grassland - Other lowland acid grassland	Grassland	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1.19
Grassland - Other neutral grassland	Grassland	-1.19	0.00	-1.19	
Grassland - Upland acid grassland	Grassland	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Heathland and shrub - Blackthorn scrub	Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.46
Heathland and shrub - Bramble scrub	Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Heathland and shrub - Gorse scrub	Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Heathland and shrub - Hawthorn scrub	Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Heathland and shrub - Willow scrub	Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Heathland and shrub - Hazel scrub	Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Heathland and shrub - Mixed scrub	Heathland and shrub	0.46	0.00	0.46	
Lakes - Ponds (non-priority habitat)	Lakes	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lakes - Reservoirs	Lakes	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Sparsely vegetated land - Other inland rock and scree	Sparsely vegetated land	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Urban - Cemeteries and churchyards	Urban	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Urban - Biodiverse green roof	Urban	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Individual trees - Urban tree	Individual trees	0.80	0.00	0.80	0.25
Individual trees - Rural tree	Individual trees	-0.65	0.00	-0.65	
Woodland and forest - Other Scot's pine woodland	Woodland and forest	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved	Woodland and forest	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; mixed	Woodland and forest	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Intertidal sediment - Littoral coarse sediment	Intertidal sediment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Intertidal sediment - Littoral sand	Intertidal sediment	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Intertidal hard structures - Artificial hard structures with integrated greening of grey infrastructure (IGGI)	Intertidal hard structures	0.00	0.00	0.00	
		-0.49	0.00	-0.49	

Hedgerow Trading Summary

Trading Summary		
Distinctiveness Group	Trading Rule	Trading Satisfied?
Very High	Same habitat required =	Yes ✓
High	Like for like or better	Yes ✓
Medium	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓
Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓
Very Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓

Watercourse Trading Summary

Trading Summary		
Distinctiveness Group	Trading Rule	Trading Satisfied?
Very High	Same habitat required - bespoke compensation option B	Yes ✓
High	Same habitat required =	Yes ✓
Medium	Same habitat required =	Yes ✓
Low	Better distinctiveness habitat required	Yes ✓

8. Unit Deficit

8.1 Does the development require the purchase of biodiversity credits?

Yes

To achieve the required 10% biodiversity net gain, the development will require the purchase of biodiversity habitat credits to offset the residual shortfall in habitat units. Based on the BNG Metric results, the following biodiversity units will need to be secured from an off-site habitat provider:

Local Delivery:

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	10.00%	3.70	4.07	0.83
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.34	0.37	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.85	0.94	0.09

- 0.83 area-based habitat units (Tier A1)
- 0.09 watercourse units (Tier W)

These units will be sourced from a recognised habitat bank or broker operating within the local or regional area, with preference given to offset sites located within Bury or the wider Greater Manchester Nature Recovery Strategy area, in accordance with the Defra biodiversity gain hierarchy and trading rules.

The securing, purchase, agreement, and delivery of any biodiversity units/credits required as part of the development proposals are matters to be progressed by the client and/or relevant third parties. These matters fall outside the scope of works undertaken by Leigh Ecology Ltd, and no responsibility or liability is accepted in relation to them.

9. References

JNCC. Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental audit. JNCC, Updated 2010.

The UK Habitat Classification Working Group 2014-2018 were: W.G. Butcher, P.D. Carey, R.A.C. Edmonds, L.R. Norton & J.R. Treweek.

MAGIC mapping: Defra, London

QGIS- Google Satellite, OS Maps. Contains OS Data © Crown copyright and database right (2024)

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019). Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: Auditing and accounting for biodiversity value: technical supplement (December 2023). Natural England.

‘What exactly is ‘Other Neutral Grassland and how should we make the best of it’ – Richard Gowing <https://cieem.net/what-exactly-is-other-neutral-grassland-and-how-should-we-make-the-best-of-it-by-richard-gowing/>.