

ADVISORY

Wilson Bowden Developments Ltd
Plot Q, Kingsway Business Park
Rochdale
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment has been undertaken on behalf of Wilson Bowden Developments Ltd (the Client) in respect of the Site at Plot Q, Michael Faraday Avenue, Rochdale. It has been produced to provide the results and an overview of a biodiversity net gain assessment undertaken at the Site using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

The Site is located at land off Michael Faraday Avenue, Rochdale, in Greater Manchester. The Site itself comprises a series of modified grassland fields, with an area of scrub, woodland edge and a short section of defunct hedgerow in addition to a drainage ditch. The Site is 2.86 hectares (ha) in extent and is centred on grid reference SD 91859 12509.

The habitats within the Site include modified grassland, broadleaved woodland and mixed scrub with the total area of the Site measuring 2.86 ha. The Site habitat baseline score totalled 13.80 habitat units. The hedgerow at the Site had a length measuring 0.06 km. The Site hedgerow baseline score totalled 0.46 hedgerow units. The ditch present had a length of 0.20 km, and the baseline watercourse score totalled 0.70 units.

The Site creation provides a total of 3.90 habitat units (-9.98 units, -71.88%), in addition to 0.85 hedgerow units (+0.38, 82.19%) and 1.15 watercourse units (+0.45, 65.11%).

In order to achieve a gain over 10% and satisfy trading rules, 11.37 habitat units will be required. Furthermore, a surplus of hedgerow units have been generated as part of this scheme, which could be used for offsetting for nearby developments.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Instruction

- 1.1 This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment has been undertaken on behalf of Wilson Bowden Developments Ltd (the Client) in respect of the Site at Plot Q, Michael Faraday Avenue, Rochdale. It has been produced to provide the results and an overview of a biodiversity net gain assessment undertaken at the Site using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Site Description

- 1.2 The Site is located at land off Michael Faraday Avenue, Rochdale, in Greater Manchester. The Site itself comprises a series of modified grassland fields, with an area of scrub, woodland edge and a short section of defunct hedgerow. The Site is 2.86 hectares (ha) in extent and is centred on grid reference SD 91859 12509. The land is situated approximately between 149 and 144 metres above ordnance datum (m AOD). The location of the Site is shown in **Figure 1.1**.



Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan

The Project

- 1.3 The Proposed Development comprises a warehouse distribution/production unit with first floor office and core facilities.

Objectives

- 1.4 The primary purpose of the BNG Assessment is to provide an overview as to the existing habitats present at the Site and the value assigned to these habitats using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- 1.5 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric is the latest tool for measuring and assigning numerical values to the habitats present within a Site and the changes which will occur as a result of development or land management. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric provides the value of habitats as a 'baseline' score.
- 1.6 The three outputs of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric for terrestrial and aquatic habitats are:
- Area Habitat Biodiversity Units - Habitat area such as grassland, woodland or other areas of habitats which are measured in hectares (ha);
 - Hedgerow Biodiversity Units - Linear features such as hedgerows or lines of trees which are measured in kilometres (km); and,
 - Watercourse Biodiversity Units – Features containing water such as rivers, streams and ditches which are measured in kilometres (km).

Scope of Works

- 1.7 The biodiversity metric and assessment was informed by a desk-based study and a Site survey undertaken by BWB in October 2025.
- 1.8 A specific habitat condition assessment survey was undertaken on the 21st October 2025.

Legislation and Planning Policy

The Environment Act 2021

- 1.9 This legislation was revised in response to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy consultation on 19 December 2023 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The Act mandates the requirement of 10% net gains for biodiversity and as such should be the aim of all new developments.

The National Planning Policy Framework

1.10 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guides Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) when developing their planning policies and considering planning applications affecting protected habitats, sites and species.

1.11 In respect of the natural environment, the NPPF states under Paragraph 187 that:

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

- a) Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- c) Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;*
- e) Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”*

1.12 The NPPF Paragraph 192 states that:

“To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*
- b) Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”*

1.13 The NPPF Paragraph 193 also states that:

“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁶⁷ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”*

1.14 Additionally, the current adopted Local Plan (Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy 2016) provides the following policies with respect to Strategic Opportunity 4 – To Promote a Greener Environment:

- i. G1 - Tackling and adapting to climate change;
- ii. G4 - Protecting Green Belt land;
- iii. G5 - Managing protected open land;
- iv. G6 - Enhancing green infrastructure; and
- v. G7 - Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity.

1.15 The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Greater Manchester was consulted to determine the Strategic Significance of habitats within the metric.

2. METHODS

Desk Based Study

- 2.1 A desk-based study of the Site was undertaken to establish the habitats recorded within the Site. This involved a review of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal also undertaken by BWB.

Habitat Condition Assessment

- 2.2 A Site survey was undertaken on the 21st October 2025 by Craig Dickson MSc BSc (Hons). Craig has extensive experience of BNG assessments and has attained FISC Level 3 Botany Accreditation. During the surveys, data was collected on the habitats' conditions using the habitat condition assessment criteria for the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The condition assessment criteria are dependent on the habitats present on-site, with each assessment containing sets of criteria which are either passed or failed. Criteria include things such as species composition, presence of undesirable species and percentage cover.
- 2.3 This approach is standard practice to calculate the biodiversity value of the Site.
- 2.4 In order to obtain a measure of the species diversity per metre² in line with the grassland condition criteria, a visual overview of the sward was undertaken to group areas of similar looking habitat. Between 3 - 5 random quadrats of 1m x 1m (depending on the size of the area of habitat) were then taken within each area of similar habitat/appearance to estimate the average species diversity.

Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles

- 2.5 CIRIA, CIEEM and IEMA developed The Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles in 2016 which has then been used to produce a more in-depth document (Baker, Hoskin & Butterworth, 2019) detailing the ten main good practice principles for achieving biodiversity net gain. In order for net gain to be achieved, these principles must be met.
- 2.6 The ten good practice principles are summarised in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: The Good Practice Principles

Principle	In Practice
1. Apply the mitigation hierarchy	Do everything possible to first avoid and then minimise impacts on biodiversity. Only as a last resort, and in agreement with external decision makers where possible, compensate for losses that cannot be avoided. If compensating for losses within the development footprint is not possible or does not generate the most benefits for nature conservation, then offset biodiversity losses by gains elsewhere.

Principle	In Practice
2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere	Avoid impacts on irreplaceable biodiversity i.e. statutory designated sites such as SSSI's – these impacts cannot be offset to achieve net gain.
3. Be inclusive and equitable	Engage stakeholders early and involve them in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the approach to net gain. Achieve net gain in partnership with stakeholders where possible.
4. Address risk	Mitigate difficulty, uncertainty and other risk to achieving net gain. Apply well accepted ways to add contingency when calculating biodiversity losses and gains in order to account for any remaining risk, as well as to compensate for the time between the losses occurring and the gains being fully realised.
5. Make a measurable net gain contribution	Achieve a measurable, overall gain for biodiversity and the services ecosystems provide while directly contributing towards nature conservation priorities.
6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity by using robust, credible evidence and local knowledge to make clearly justified choices when: • Delivering compensation that is ecologically equivalent in type, amount, and condition and that accounts for the location and timing of biodiversity losses. • Compensating for losses of one type of biodiversity by providing a different type that delivers greater benefits for nature conservation. • Achieving net gain locally to the development while also contributing towards nature conservation priorities at local, regional and national levels. • Enhancing existing or creating new habitat. • Enhancing ecological connectivity by creating more bigger, better and joined areas for biodiversity.
7. Be additional	Achieve nature conservation outcomes that demonstrably exceed existing obligations, i.e. do not deliver something that would occur anyway.
8. Create a net gain legacy	Ensure net gain generates long term benefits by: • Engaging stakeholders and jointly agreeing practical solutions that secure net gain in perpetuity. • Planning for adaptive management and securing dedicated funding for long term management. • Designing net gain for biodiversity to be resilient to external factors, especially climate change. • Mitigating risks for other land uses. • Avoiding displacing harmful activities from one location to another. • Supporting local level management of net gain activities.
9. Optimise sustainability	Prioritise BNG and where possible optimise the wider environmental benefits for a sustainable society and economy.
10. Be transparent	Communicate all net gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders.

Biodiversity Metric

- 2.7 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used to calculate the ecological baseline of the Site using the methodology as described above.
- 2.8 The habitat types, conditions and areas were input into the metric to form the Site's habitat baseline.
- 2.9 In addition to the habitat types, areas and conditions, the biodiversity metric calculation tool also requires other information on distinctiveness and strategic significance. These categories are described in more detail below.
- 2.10 Habitats are also assigned distinctiveness bands. These are based on an assessment of the distinguishing features of a habitat or linear feature, including consideration of species richness, rarity (at local, regional, national and international scales), and the degree to which a habitat supports species rarely found in other habitats. The distinctiveness band of each habitat is preassigned in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and are based on the UK habitat classification system.

Strategic Significance

- 2.11 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric takes into consideration Strategic Significance. Strategic Significance can be defined as the spatial location of a habitat in relation to preferred locations for biodiversity. This is broken down into three categories as described below:
- Within area formally identified in local strategy – the Site or habitat type is within the local planning documents or frameworks;
 - Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy; and
 - Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy.
- 2.12 The following data sources and resources were searched to gather information on the strategic significance of the Site and its habitats:
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC);
 - Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy; and
 - Rochdale Local Plan (2016).

Survey Comments

- 2.13 In line with standard guidance, the results and recommendations within this report are valid for up to two years from the date of survey (October 2025), assuming there are no significant changes to the survey Site or its immediate surroundings. Updated survey work may be required to support any future biodiversity metrics and planning applications outside of this time period.
- 2.14 The survey was carried out in October 2025, in good weather conditions with overcast clouds.

- 2.15 Whilst a survey at this time of year is sub-optimal for botanical ID, it is sufficient for an experienced surveyor to categorise the habitats, in line with the aims of the BNG Assessment, with further surveys recommended to update this precautionary assessment if necessary.

3. RESULTS

Habitat Condition Assessment

3.1 The habitats recorded on-Site in October 2025 are described in detail below with the habitat condition assessment results.

3.2 **Appendix 1** provides a plan with the locations of the habitats.

Modified Grassland

3.3 The Site was defined by modified grassland, with four distinct parcels varying in composition and sward. The Site was inundated locally in the southern extent and within ruts across the Site, with varying sward heights and dryer raised sections noted.

3.4 G1 was the largest of the parcels, defining the southern and western boundaries of the Site, and was the most inundated (503) area on the Site, dominated by rushes (15), with tall forbs (16), and some scattered scrub (10). Species composition included dominant soft rush *Juncus effusus*, with abundant cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, and nettle *Urtica dioica*, whilst tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, marsh thistle *Cirsium pallustre*, and hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium* were recorded frequently, followed by occasional Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, male fern *Dryopteris filix-mas*, greater birds-foot-trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus*, and meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*. Meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, white clover *Trifolium repens* and hemp-agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum* were all recorded rarely. The sward height was tall and tussocky (128), averaging 50 – 100 cm, and was unmanaged (521). The southern and western boundaries of G1 were defined by an earth bund.

3.5 G2 was adjacent to G1 spanning the central extent of the Site, and was a lot less inundated than G1, with scattered rushes (14) and scattered scrub (10). Species included dominant Yorkshire fog, with abundant creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, cock's foot grass, and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, as well as frequent nettle, ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, and meadow buttercup. Soft rush and creeping thistle *Agrostis stolonifera* were recorded occasionally, whilst wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris* was noted rarely. The sward height was shorter, averaging 30 cm across the parcel with taller sections of nettle and was unmanaged (521). The north-west corner of G2 was defined by a steep slope, approximately 5 m into a small valley which continued off-Site.

3.6 G3 was located on the northern boundary and was previously a distinct field from G1 and G2. It was the smallest of the parcels being defined by dominated red fescue *Festuca rubra*, with abundant creeping thistle, frequent nettle and occasional tufted hair grass. The sward height was uniform, approximately 30 cm high and the area was distinct from the rest of the Site and was unmanaged (521).

3.7 G4 was located to the north-east of the Site, adjacent to G2 and G3, and was dominated by tall forbs (16) with scattered rushes (14).

- 3.8 Species included dominant rosebay willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, with abundant soft rush, frequent tufted vetch *Vicia cracca* and cock's foot grass, in addition to occasional hogweed and hemp-agrimony, as well as rare red fescue. The sward height was tall and tussocky (128), averaging 50 – 100 cm, and was unmanaged (521). The eastern boundary of G4 had a small earth bund adjacent to a ditch.
- 3.9 All of the modified grassland parcels were assessed as being in either "Good" or "Poor" Condition as shown in **Table 3.1** with the results of the condition assessment.

Table 3.1: Habitat Condition Criteria (Low Grassland)

Criteria		Pass/Fail			
		G1	G2	G3	G4
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs.	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
C	Scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area.	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
D	Physical damage evident in less than 5% of total grassland area,	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
E	Cover of bare ground between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
F	Cover of bracken is <20%.	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail
Score		Good	Good	Poor	Poor

Mixed Scrub

- 3.10 A small stand of aspen *Populus tremula* scrub was noted atop a mound on the southern boundary of the Site, which may be related to a mature specimen located adjacent in the off-Site woodland. The scrub was assigned as "Poor" Condition, as shown in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2: Habitat Condition Assessment (Scrub)

Criteria		Pass/Fail
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range).	Fail
B	At least 80% of scrub is native.	Fail
C	There are at least three native woody species.	Pass
D	No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> , sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> (only in its restricted native range), or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , which can be up to 100% cover).	Fail
E	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran) shrubs are all present.	Fail
Score		Poor

Other Woodland; Broadleaved

- 3.11 An area of woodland edge fell within the western boundary of the Site, which continued off-Site, with species including oak *Quercus robur*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, goat willow *Salix caprea*, Hazel *Corylus avellana*, and aspen *Populus tremula*, recorded within the wider woodland. There was no recognisable understorey, with bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., abundant, though regeneration was evident, most notably stands of aspens growing out into the Site. The woodland was assigned as "Moderate" Condition, as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Habitat Condition Assessment (Woodland)

Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per Indicator
A	Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes present.	Two age-classes present.	One age-class present.	2
B	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland.	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland.	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland.	3
C	Invasive plant species	No invasive species present in woodland.	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, and other invasive species <10% cover.	<i>Rhododendron</i> or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ≥10% cover.	3
D	Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.	Three to four native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.	Two or less native tree or shrub species across woodland parcel.	3
E	Cover of native tree and shrub species	>80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native.	50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understory shrubs are native.	<50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native.	3
F	Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted.	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space.	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category.	3
G	Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland.	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland.	3

Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per Indicator
H	Tree health	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback.	11% to 25% tree mortality and or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present.	3
I	Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community at ground layer present.	1
J	Woodland vertical structure	Three or more stores across all survey plots, or a complex woodland.	Two storeys across all survey plots.	One or less storey across all survey plots.	2
K	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees per hectare.	One veteran tree per hectare.	No veteran trees present in woodland.	1
L	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	1
M	Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident.	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area, and or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground.	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground.	3
Score:					31

Hedgerows

- 3.12 A short section of defunct (519) native (522) hedgerow, associated with a dry-stone walled bank (113), bisected the Site. Species included dominant rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, with a single hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* specimen. The base of the hedgerow was defined by creeping bent grass. The dry-stone walled bank was loose in sections, and ran for approximately 80% of the hedgerow length, which continued to the north-west. The hedgerow was assessed as being in "Moderate" Condition, as shown in **Table 3.4**.

Table 3.4: Habitat Condition Assessment (Hedgerows)

Criteria		Pass/Fail
		H1
A1	Is width >1.5m along length?	Pass
A2	Is ground to canopy base gap <0.5m for >90% of length?	Pass
B1	Is ground to canopy base gap <0.5m for >90% of length?	Fail
B2	Are canopy gaps <10% total length AND no canopy gaps >5m?	Fail
C1	Is there >1m width undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation >90% length?	Pass
C2	Do plants indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of undisturbed ground?	Pass
D1	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native and neophyte species?	Pass
D2	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities?	Pass
Score:		Moderate

Ditch

- 3.13 The northern and eastern boundaries of the Site were an arc running parallel to Michael Faraday Avenue, and were defined by a ditch, which was predominantly dry, but held water periodically, predominantly in the eastern extent. There was no one dominant species, with soft rush noted abundantly, and species from the corresponding adjacent grassland parcels, however, species of note included common bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, black medick *Medicago lupulina*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, least bur-reed *Sparganium natans* and zigzag clover *Trifolium medium*, which were not recorded elsewhere on-Site. The ditch was assessed as being in "Poor" Condition, as shown in **Table 3.5**.

Table 3.5: Habitat Condition Assessment (Ditch)

Criteria		Pass/Fail
		H1
A	The ditch is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution.	Fail
B	A range of emergent, submerged and floating-leaved plants are present. As a guide >10 species of emergent, floating or submerged plants present in a 20 m ditch length.	Fail
C	There is less than 10% cover of filamentous algae and or duckweed <i>Lemna spp.</i> (these are signs of eutrophication).	Pass
D	A fringe of aquatic marginal vegetation is present along more than 75% of the ditch.	Fail
E	Physical damage is evident along less than 5% of the ditch, with examples of damage including: excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, or any other damaging management activities.	Pass
F	Sufficient water levels are maintained - as a guide a minimum summer depth of approximately 50 cm in minor ditches and 1 m in main drains.	Fail
G	Less than 10% of the ditch is heavily shaded.	Pass
H	There is an absence of non-native plant and animal species.	Pass
Score:		Poor

Summary

3.14 **Table 3.6, Table 3.7, and Table 3.8** provide a summary of the habitats, the condition assessment and the measurements of habitats which was used in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric to calculate the Site's baseline score.

Table 3.6: Habitat Condition Assessment Summary (Habitats)

Parcel Reference	UK Hab Habitat Type	Condition Assessment Result	Area (ha)
G1	Modified grassland	Good	1.18
G2	Modified grassland	Good	0.84
G3	Modified grassland	Poor	0.27
G4	Modified grassland	Poor	0.47
W1	Other woodland; broadleaved	Poor	0.026
S1	Mixed scrub	Poor	0.04
-	Developed land; sealed surface	N/A - Other	0.02

Parcel Reference	UK Hab Habitat Type	Condition Assessment Result	Area (ha)
-	Modified grassland	Poor	0.01
Total Habitats Area:			2.86

Table 3.7: Habitat Condition Assessment Summary (Hedgerows)

Hedge Ref	UK Hab Habitat Type	Condition Assessment Result	Length (km)
H1	Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch	Moderate	0.058
Total Hedgerow Length:			0.058

Table 3.8: Habitat Condition Assessment Summary (Watercourse)

Ref	UK Hab Habitat Type	Condition Assessment Result	Length (km)
D1	Ditches	Poor	0.2
Total Watercourse Length:			0.2

Biodiversity Metric

- 3.15 The following sections provide an overview of the baseline Site results including the strategic significance and baseline Site scores.

Strategic Significance

- 3.16 As there is a published Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Greater Manchester, which covers the area the Site falls within, all baseline habitats have been assigned "Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy", in line with current guidance.

Baseline Habitat Score

- 3.17 The Site baseline provides a total of 13.88 habitat units, 0.46 hedgerow units, and 0.7 watercourse units.

Post Development

- 3.18 A review of the Landscape Plan, provided by DLA in May 2026 identified proposals for different types of other neutral grassland, mixed scrub, ornamental shrub, and new tree planting at the Site, in addition to the retention of the woodland edge.
- 3.19 Furthermore, new species-rich hedgerows are proposed, in addition to a new lengths of ditch along the eastern boundary and southern extent Site.

- 3.20 These habitats have been designed in conjunction with recommendations made by BWB, in order to maximise the on-Site gains, and the potential to provide offsetting for adjacent developments.
- 3.21 The Site creation provides a total of 3.90 habitat units (-19.98 units, -72.88%), in addition to 0.85 hedgerow units (+0.38, 82.19%) and 1.15 watercourse units (+0.45, 65.11%).
- 3.22 Finally, the trading rules for low distinctiveness habitats have not been met, however, trading rules for hedgerows and watercourses are satisfied.
- 3.23 The Site sits within an opportunity area within the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), however, none of the proposed habitats would trigger a change of strategic significance as the opportunity is for Lowland mosslands and wetlands; Rivers, canals and waterbodies; and Upland moorlands.
- 3.24 The closest habitat proposed is the wet grass mix in the ditches, however, BWB does not consider that it meets the threshold to be classed as "Formally identified" and has therefore been assigned "Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy".

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Biodiversity Metric

- 4.1 The habitats within the Site include modified grassland, and mixed scrub with the total area of the Site measuring 2.86 ha. The Site habitat baseline score totalled 13.88 habitat units.
- 4.2 The hedgerow at the Site had a length measuring 0.06 km. The Site hedgerow baseline score totalled 0.46 hedgerow units. The ditch present had a length of 0.20 km, and the baseline watercourse score totalled 0.7 units.
- 4.3 The Site creation provides a total of 3.90 habitat units (-9.98 units, -72.88%), in addition to 0.85 hedgerow units (+0.38, 82.19%) and 1.15 watercourse units (+0.45, 65.11%).

Trading Rules Requirements

- 4.4 **Table 4.1** summarises the trading rules requirements.

Table 4.1: Trading Rules Requirements

Distinctiveness	Habitats Present On-Site	Trading Rules Requirements
Low	Modified grassland	Same distinctiveness habitats or better.
Medium	Mixed scrub; Broadleaved woodland; Native hedgerow – associated with bank or ditch; Ditches	Same broad habitat or higher distinctiveness habitat.
High	N/A	Same habitat required.
Very High	N/A	Same habitat required. Bespoke compensation likely.

Recommendations

- 4.5 The habitats on-Site have been maximised as much as possible, within realistic target conditions given the usage of the Site and the wider surroundings, in addition to the relatively small size of the habitat parcels.
- 4.6 It is understood that the remaining credits will be purchased from a third-party credit provider.

Conclusions

- 4.7 In order to achieve a gain over 10% and satisfy trading rules, 11.37 habitat units will be required. Furthermore, a surplus of hedgerow units have been generated as part of this scheme, which could be used for offsetting for nearby developments.

5. REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: UK Hab Habitat Plan



Notes	
1	Do not scale this drawing. All dimensions must be checked/ verified on site. If in doubt ask.
2	This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant architects, engineers and specialists drawings and specifications.
3	All dimensions in millimetres unless noted otherwise. All levels in metres unless noted otherwise.
4	Any discrepancies noted on site are to be reported to the engineer immediately.

Key	
	Developed land; sealed surface
	Mixed scrub
	Modified grassland
	Other woodland; broadleaved
	Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch
	Ditch

P03	26/05/2026	Combined RLB	CD	CG
P02	20/01/26	Revised RLB	CD	CG
P01	09/01/26	PRELIMINARY ISSUE	CD	SS
Rev	Date	Details of issues/ revision	Drw	Rev

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Client

Wilson Bowden Developments Ltd

Project Title

Plot Q, Kingsway (WBD)

Drawing Title

Baseline Habitat Plan

Drawn:	CD	Reviewed:	CG
BWB Ref:	244498	Date:	26/05/2026
		Scale@A3:	1:1200

Drawing Status

Final

Project - Originator - Zone - Level - Type - Role - Number

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S2

P03



