

BIODIVERSITY ACCOUNTING ASSESSMENT REPORT

at
**Land at Birchinley Manor
Rochdale
Lancashire
OL16 3DG**

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CJ Partnership**

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**JCA Ref:
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Quality Assurance

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This report has been prepared and provided in accordance with the *British Standard 42020: Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development 2018* and the *CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct*.

This Assessment is only valid for the named client and the project described. JCA Limited. accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purpose for which it was commissioned. If the scope of works or timing of the project are altered the advice given in this report may not be valid. Information and data provided within this report is considered accurate at the time of writing.

Provided no significant changes are made to the proposals or on the site (e.g. significant changes to management practices or habitats present) subsequent to the report's issue; this report can be considered valid for 18 months from the date of issue.

As part of membership to our professional body (CIEEM) and EPS licence reporting we are required to provide our biological results to applicable biological record centres. As such, it is our intention to supply biological data collected as part of this assessment, where recorded, to the relevant BRC. If the project is sensitive in nature, we may be able to delay submitting the records until the project enters the public domain, however, this must be discussed with JCA Limited and agreed in writing.



Executive Summary

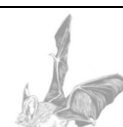
JCA Limited was instructed by **CJ Partnership** to carry out a Biodiversity Accounting Assessment (BAA) of **Land at Birchinley Manor, Rochdale** (hereafter referred to as the 'site') to inform a planning application for the construction of a single residential dwelling and associated landscaping ('the Proposed Development').

The purpose of the assessment is to determine the baseline biodiversity value of the site and to assess if there are sufficient biodiversity enhancement opportunities available within the site boundary to compensate for any residual biodiversity losses as a result of the Proposed Development.

To fulfil the brief, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (February 2024) was used to calculate the baseline biodiversity value of all existing habitats on-site. The metric was then used to provide a comparative measure of any habitat creation and enhancements associated with the Client's Proposed Development. The resulting balance determines the extent of Biodiversity Units (BU) generated through the proposed habitats post development.

The site has a baseline value of **2.48** habitat BU. On balance of impacts and habitat retention/enhancement/creation, the report concludes that the Proposed Development will result in a **net gain** of **+0.96** habitat BU, equivalent to a **net gain** of **38.63%**. In addition, the Proposed Development has **satisfied** the trading rules.

This executive summary is intended as a summary of the assessment of the site based on information received by the client at the time of production. This executive summary should be read in conjunction with the full Report.



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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Report

1.1.1 JCA Limited have been instructed by **CJ Partnership** to undertake a Biodiversity Accounting Assessment (BAA) of a site located at **Land at Birchinley Manor, Rochdale** (hereafter referred to as the 'site').

1.1.2 The purpose of this report is to:

- Assess the baseline biodiversity value of the site through the total sum of the habitats within the site, and their calculated biodiversity value.
- Assess if there are sufficient biodiversity enhancement and/or creation opportunities available within the site boundary to compensate for any residual biodiversity losses as a result of the Proposed Development.
- To determine the level of overall residual biodiversity gains or losses associated with the Proposed Development.

1.1.3 The site location and red line / survey area are shown in **Appendix 1**.

1.2 Terms of Reference

1.2.1 The principal source documents used to inform this BAA include:

- JCA Ltd. – Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Nov 2024 (22482/ADo).
- CJ Partnership – Site Plan as Proposed (3611 03 Rev B).
- CJ Partnership – Site Plan as Proposed Option 3 (3611 08 Rev C).

1.3 Site Description

1.3.1 The site is located at Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid Reference **SD 93105 13786**, with nearby postcode **OL16 3DG**. The site is located to the east of Rochdale and north of Milnrow. The surrounding area consists of agricultural fields, grassland, and pockets of woodland. Hollingworth Lake is located to the north of the site.

1.4 Details of Proposed Development

1.4.1 The development proposed at the site is the construction of a single residential dwelling and associated landscaping.



2. Biodiversity Accounting in Context

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 Biodiversity is complex and so it is impossible to measure in its entirety. Therefore metrics, which incorporate measures of different biodiversity attributes, are used to provide surrogate measures of overall biodiversity. This report uses the 'Statutory Biodiversity Metric', which was designed by DEFRA (2024) to define the biodiversity impacts and compensation requirements associated with development proposals. The metric works by providing a comparative measure of each habitat on-site in biodiversity units (BU) by multiplying its area (hectares), distinctiveness (habitat type) and current condition (quality). The relative impacts (habitat loss) of the development, taking into account any additional on-site habitat creation or enhancement, can then be calculated to determine if a measurable biodiversity net gain will be achieved on-site. If a measurable net gain is unable to be achieved on-site, then the process of biodiversity offsetting must be undertaken.
- 2.1.2 Biodiversity offsets are conservation activities designed to deliver biodiversity benefits in compensation for residual losses, in a measurable way. Biodiversity offsetting is distinguished from other forms of compensation by the requirement for measurable outcomes. This is achieved by quantifying net biodiversity impacts caused by development; using the same metric to assess direct and indirect negative impacts to habitats and the value of any on-site compensation, to set the framework of off-site compensation (offset) requirements and the biodiversity net gain generated by these offsets. Biodiversity offsetting ensures that off-site compensation proposed is both proportionate to the development concerned and that a measurable net gain for biodiversity can be achieved.
- 2.1.3 Biodiversity offsetting, like other forms of compensation, is the last step of the mitigation hierarchy (first avoid, then reduce, and finally, compensate) and is applied as a last resort to otherwise policy-compliant development proposals. 'Offsetting' – i.e. creating or restoring new wildlife habitat in a measurable way and in a different place to where it was lost.
- 2.1.4 In addition to providing a mechanism for quantifiable compensation and net gain, biodiversity offsets provide reliable biodiversity outcomes as they are long-term (30 years), monitored and enforceable with adaptable management plans for optimised success.

2.2 Biodiversity Net Gain Principles

- 2.2.1 Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development published by CIEEM et. al (2016) states that delivering biodiversity net gain goes beyond balancing relative gains and losses. It also involves doing everything to avoid biodiversity losses in the



first instance. The application of the DEFRA metric detailed in this report supports developments to adopt this approach by:

- a) Providing a habitat balance sheet which can be used to identify those habitats with the greatest value and subsequently those with the greatest impacts if lost;
- b) Supporting and incentivising the mitigation hierarchy by quantifying the benefits of avoiding and mitigating impacts on high value features;
- c) Promoting the value of biodiversity enhancements and demonstrating the potential for additionality on retained habitats;
- d) Providing a balance of losses, enhancements or on-site compensation to determine if a measure net gain contribution can be achieved;
- e) Providing transparent, robust and credible evidence to help inform the best possible site options for biodiversity; and,
- f) Ensuring that any residual off-site compensation required (e.g. through biodiversity offsetting) is proportionate to the impacts and can secure a measurable net gain contribution for biodiversity overall.

2.3 Biodiversity Offsetting Standards

2.3.1 Good practice standards for biodiversity offsetting are set out by the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP, 2012). These standards inform the approach for selection and development of suitable Offset Sites and projects. Of these standards, the following provide the most relevant UK framework for the preliminary offset site search:

- The proposed offset site should be identified as suitable for the creation and/or enhancement of a target habitat within the vicinity of where the impact occurs;
- The site must be available and managed for a minimum specified term (typically 30 years).
- The landowner must agree to an enforceable delivery mechanism to secure the long-term management.
- The site must be available for monitoring to ensure appropriate management is being undertaken and to report biodiversity progress back to the local planning authority.

2.3.2 Further standards, with regards to offset site surveys and ensuring that appropriate target habitats and units can be achieved, will form part of the detailed site search that will precede the preliminary site search.



2.3.3 In addition to biodiversity net gains achieved on-site, off-site enhancements can also achieve positive outcomes for nature in the local area.



3. Policy and Legislation

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Planning guidelines, international commitments, legislation and planning policies relevant to the protection, conservation and enhancement of nature conservation interests are detailed below.

3.2 National Policy and Guidance

3.2.1 Specific habitats and species of relevance to the site receive legal protection in the United Kingdom under various pieces of policy and legislation, including:

- The **Environment Act 2021** mandates that all planning applications will be required to demonstrate how a development will enhance biodiversity and protect habitats from February 2024. This is to be achieved through a measurable 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), in association with development through the use of the most up to date DEFRA Metric (currently Statutory Biodiversity Metric);
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, as revised 2024) sets out how planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment through amongst other things, ensuring BNG through development and protect ecological important sites and networks;
- The **Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)** (retained in UK law by **CHSR (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019**) details the regulations for the protection of European Protected Habitat and Species. Such European Protected Species (EPS) of animals (**Schedule 2**) and plants (**Schedule 5**) include all species of bats, great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*, dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*, and European otter *Lutra lutra*, amongst others;
- The **Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)** covers the legislation for endangered species in England and the framework for the designation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);
- The **Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000** reinforces the wildlife legislation listed in the WCA and places a duty of government departments to consider biodiversity, and provides governmental department powers for the protection and maintenance of SSSIs;
- The **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006** places a duty upon local authorities to promote and enhance biodiversity in all their functions. Specifically, habitats and species of principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity in regards to the planning process;
- The **Hedgerow Regulations 1997** provides protection by prohibiting the



destruction or damage to important countryside hedges; and

- The **Protection of Badgers Act 1992** includes the protected of badgers under the act and that it is unlawful to wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat badgers or attempt to do so.

3.2.2 Where relevant, this appraisal takes account of the legislative protection afforded to specific habitats and species.

3.3 Local Policy and Guidance

3.3.1 Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy, October 2016

3.3.2 Policy G7 – Increasing the value if biodiversity and geodiversity

3.3.3 The council will ensure that sites and features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are given full and appropriate recognition and protection. Opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity, creating new sites and features of interest and improving opportunities for public enjoyment will be supported. No development should result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity interest in the borough and overall development in the borough should result in a net gain.

Particular priorities for biodiversity and geodiversity are:

- The South Pennine Moors - our focus is to maintain and enhance the peatland habitats of the moorland and to support development, land and water management activities which provide an opportunity to conserve and enhance the value of moorland for upland breeding birds of conservation significance and the habitats on which they depend and which do not harm biodiversity value. Our focus is the designated Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation but also the wider moorland where such interest is present or could be supported through appropriate development or land management. We will also protect and support enhancement measures for areas of geodiversity value.
- The Rochdale Canal - our focus is to ensure that the Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation and the wider biodiversity interest of the canal is given full and appropriate protection and ensure that development which delivers the economic and recreational value of the Rochdale Canal and its wider corridor supports and does not harm its biodiversity value.
- Upland farmland - our focus is to ensure that the biodiversity interest of upland farmland including its value for birds, woodland and grassland is protected and opportunities for enhancement and the creation of new interest maximised through land management improvements and appropriate development activities.
- Countryside around towns - our focus is to protect and enhance the biodiversity interest of river valleys, woodland, water and farmland including the reclamation of



derelict and neglected land and flood risk management measures. We will also support actions which enhance public access and enjoyment of countryside close to urban areas including Local Nature Reserves and the wider countryside.

- Urban Areas - our priority is to protect and enhance existing urban biodiversity and to support opportunities for new urban biodiversity corridors, sites and features including sustainable urban drainage schemes, new public realm provision, street trees and urban woodlands, ponds and lodges, green roofs and natural play areas.
- Designated sites of ecological importance - will be given appropriate protection according to their European, national or local status and in accordance with policies in other development plan documents, supporting Supplementary Planning Documents and Biodiversity Action Plans.
- Protected Species: Development proposals which would affect a species protected by law or its habitat will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - there is no adverse impact on the species concerned;
 - damage to habitats is minimal and alternative habitat provision is effective in maintaining those species.

Opportunities to protect, enhance and create features of biodiversity or geodiversity interest should be informed by the detail of any formal designation of a site or area and supporting plans and guidance such as Local Biodiversity Action Plans, Green Infrastructure Strategies and Action Plans and the Council's Biodiversity and Development SPD.

The council will expect development proposals and improvements to:

- Protect and include existing biodiversity (including established biodiversity interest on brownfield land) within new developments, public realm and open spaces and meet the requirements of the Biodiversity and Development SPD, Greater Manchester and Local Biodiversity Action Plans;
- Protect and enhance existing features such as peatland, ponds, wetlands, reservoirs, mill lodges, trees, hedges, wooded areas, meadows, flora and fauna;
- Take opportunities to promote biodiversity and create new habitats through new development using landscaping and building and construction features wherever possible (e.g. ponds, species of vegetation, green roofs and walls, bat boxes, roof space, appropriate nest boxes and landscaping);
- Enhance strategic wildlife corridors and the most natural areas and ensure that habitats and corridors are not fragmented by development;
- Improve access where appropriate to new or existing biodiversity interest for public enjoyment; and
- Protect important geology and take opportunities to increase interest and accessibility.



4. Methodology

4.1 Background

4.1.1 Biodiversity accounting of existing and post-development habitats and linear features on-site was carried out using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator Tool, following guidance set out in the metric user guide (DEFRA 2024). The process for data collation and analysis associated with the assessment is detailed in Sections 4.2 – 4.3 below.

4.2 Baseline Data

4.2.1 A baseline analysis of the existing habitats on-site was carried out from the information gathered during the site's ecological assessment visit carried out by Alex Donovan (Assistant Ecologist, JCA Limited), Rick Westwood (Graduate Ecologist, JCA Limited), and Grace Bramley (Graduate Ecologist, JCA Limited) on 08/11/24.

4.2.2 To undertake the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculations, the following information was recorded for each habitat parcel and/or linear feature:

- Habitat type;
- Area/Length (ha/km) (using the Minimum Mappable Unit of 25m² and 5m);
- Habitat condition;
- Strategic significance; and
- Whether that habitat will be lost, retained, enhanced, succeeded and/or created, and at what scale.

4.2.3 The habitat map for the site was digitised and interpreted using QGIS Version 3.38.0-Grenoble to calculate habitat area.

4.3 Impact Assessment

4.3.1 The existing baseline habitat plan for the site was overlain with the Site Plan as Proposed (3611 03 Rev B) of the Proposed Development using GIS software to provide an area (Ha) of temporary and permanent habitat loss.

4.3.2 The area of any retained/enhanced or created habitats proposed as part of the development was also mapped to provide an area (Ha) (or length (Km) for linear features) of the on-site compensation proposals being provided. An estimate of future condition, time until establishment and the likelihood of success was then calculated using landscaping data provided by the client and professional judgement.



4.4 Habitat Creation and Enhancement

- 4.4.1 The area of any retained/enhanced or created habitats proposed on-site as part of the Proposed Development was mapped using the Site Plan as Proposed (3611 03 Rev B) of the final development, to provide an area (Ha) (or length (Km) for linear features) estimate of on-site compensation provided. This includes areas of developed land, which are assigned a very low (or null) value, notably, areas of buildings and/or roads.
- 4.4.2 Condition and strategic significance for each habitat or linear feature were projected using available ecological data or professional opinion about the likely value.

4.5 Residual Effects

- 4.5.1 The residual effects of the Proposed Development scheme were calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator Tool. This subtracts the pre-development baseline values from that of the post-development values to determine the change in overall habitat value for the site, taking into account any habitat trading.
- 4.5.2 Habitat trading is where the loss of a habitat must be compensated for through the creation or restoration of areas of equivalent or greater distinctiveness value. Guidance by Defra is that the loss of high distinctiveness areas, such as Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI, NERC Act, S41), require compensation in a like-for like manner (creation or restoration of habitat of the same habitat classification as that impacted). Within the Biodiversity Metric 'trading up' (where compensation through creation of a higher distinctiveness habitat) can occur, however, 'trading down' (compensation through creation of lower distinctiveness habitats) is not permitted. Therefore, if present, despite gains in lower distinctiveness habitats, these will not reduce the net gain requirement for the development. This also applies to the different habitat features i.e. habitats, hedgerows and rivers and streams. Hedgerow creation gains will not reduce net gain requirements for either rivers and streams or habitats.
- 4.5.3 Where the resulting biodiversity balance is negative, a residual net loss of biodiversity is recorded. Where the balance is positive a residual net gain of biodiversity is recorded.



5. Statutory Biodiversity Metric

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The assessment was carried out by JCA Limited using the ecological data gathered during the site's ecological assessment survey carried out on 08/11/24.

5.2 Existing Site Value

5.2.1 The existing biodiversity value for each habitat, together with the cumulative value of all habitats is provided in **Table 1**. Existing on-site habitats can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Table 1: Baseline habitats on-site and their ecological value as categorised by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator.

Biodiversity Metric Reference Number	Statutory Biodiversity Metric Habitat Type	Total Area on-site (Ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic Significance	Ecological Baseline Habitat Unit
1	Other neutral grassland	0.4403	Medium	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	1.76
2	Other neutral grassland	0.1085	Medium	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.43
3	Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.0108	V.Low	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.00
4	Other woodland, broadleaved	0.0542	Medium	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.22
5	Rural trees	0.0081	Medium	Moderate	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.06
	Total (area excl. trees)	0.61	–	–	–	2.48

5.2.2 The other neutral grassland was classified as **poor** as it passed **2 out of 6** criteria, including essential criteria **A** and **F**. The follow criteria were failed:

- Criteria 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. **This criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**
- Criteria C – Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.



- Criteria 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 (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.**
- Criteria F – There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type. **This criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**

5.2.3 The other broadleaved woodland was classified as **poor** as it scored **25 out of 39**. The habitat achieved a score of poor (1) or moderate (2) score for the following condition assessment criteria:

- Criteria A – Age distribution of trees
- Criteria D – Number of native tree species
- Criteria E – Cover of native tree and shrub species
- Criteria G – Woodland regeneration
- Criteria I – Vegetation and ground flora
- Criteria J – Woodland vertical structure
- Criteria K – Veteran trees
- Criteria L – Amount of deadwood

5.2.4 The two individual trees were classified as **moderate** as they passed **4 out of 6** criteria. The following criteria were failed:

- Criteria C – The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).
- Criteria E – Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy, or loose bark.

5.2.5 To ensure a 10% net gain in biodiversity is achieved as part of the Proposed Development the following measures can be employed:

- Habitat retention; and/or
- Habitat enhancement; and/or
- Habitat creation.



5.2.6 Detailed assessments of the condition of each habitat can be found within the accompanying habitat condition spreadsheet.



6. Proposed Development Impact Assessment

6.1 Description of the Proposed Development

- 6.1.1 The Proposed Development involves the construction of a single residential dwelling and associated landscaping.
- 6.1.2 The Proposed Development will see the partial removal of other neutral grassland to facilitate the development. This will see the loss of poor condition, medium distinctiveness habitat.
- 6.1.3 The results of the metric calculation indicates that a total of **0.50** habitat units lost as a result of the development, with **1.80** habitat units retained and **0.50** units enhanced (**Table 2**).

Table 2: Summary of baseline habitat biodiversity value through retention and enhancement.

Biodiversity Metric Reference Number	Statutory Biodiversity Metric Habitat Type	Retained		Enhanced		Lost	
		Area (ha)	Unit	Area (ha)	Unit	Area (ha)	Unit
1	Other neutral grassland	0.3308	1.32	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.44
2	Other neutral grassland	0.00	0.00	0.1085	0.43	0.00	0.00
3	Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00
4	Other woodland, broadleaved	0.0542	0.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	Rural trees	0.0081	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total (area excl. trees)	0.39	1.60	0.11	0.43	0.12	0.44

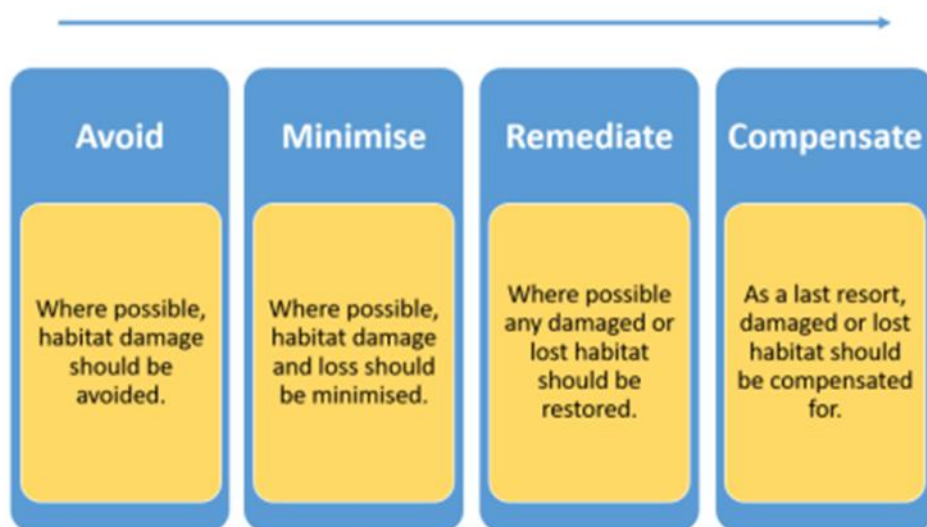
6.2 Habitats to be Retained

- 6.2.1 Any development should apply the Mitigation Hierarchy (British Standards Institution (BSI), 2013; shown below in Figure 1).



6.2.2 Development proposals should first seek to **avoid** impacts by retaining habitats. Second, development proposals should look to **minimise** the impact by producing plans that are designed to limit habitat disturbance, damage, and loss, thereby mitigating against any unavoidable impacts. Third, proposals should look to **restore** any damaged or degraded habitats. Then, only as a last resort should proposals **compensate** for unavoidable residual impacts to damaged or lost habitats that remain after avoidance and mitigation measures.

Figure 1: The mitigation hierarchy (BSI, 2013)



6.2.3 The Proposed Development will see the retention of woodland, rural trees, and a large proportion of grassland habitats on-site to facilitate the development. The retention of these habitats will avoid any direct impacts of loss of habitat.

6.3 Habitats to be Enhanced

6.3.1 The Proposed Development will see the enhancement of a portion of the other neutral grassland habitat on-site to facilitate the development. The enhancement of this habitats will restore any indirect impacts as a result of the Proposed Development. This will see the enhancement from **poor** condition to **good** condition to deliver **0.94**. This can be achieved by meeting **5 or 6 out of 6** of the following criteria (including essential criteria **A** and **F**):

- Criteria 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. **This criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**
- Criteria B – Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7cm and at least 20% is more than 7cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.



- Criteria C – Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.
- Criteria D – Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20% and cover of shrubs (including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is less than 5%.
- Criteria 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 (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.**
- Criteria F – There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type. **This criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**

6.4 Habitats to be Lost

6.4.1 The Proposed Development will see the loss of other neutral grassland habitat on-site to facilitate the development. This will see the loss of poor condition, medium distinctiveness habitat.

6.5 Proposed Habitat Creation

6.5.1 It is proposed that the following habitats be created as part of the Proposed Development:

- Ponds (non priority habitat) – Poor condition
- Developed land, sealed surface
- Vegetated garden
- Rural trees – 67x small-sized trees, moderate condition

6.5.2 The proposed habitats on-site can be found within **Appendix 2**.

6.5.3 **Table 3** below summarises the value of all habitats that are to be created as part of the Proposed Development.

6.5.4 In total, **+0.89** BU for habitats are to be created within the Proposed Development.



Table 3: Summary value of on-site habitat proposals.

Biodiversity Metric Reference Number	Statutory Biodiversity Metric Target Habitat Type	Total Area on-site (Ha)	Distinctiveness	Target Condition	Strategic Significance	Biodiversity Unit Value
1	Ponds (non-priority habitat)	0.0072	Medium	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.03
2	Developed land, sealed surface	0.1005	V.Low	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.00
3	Vegetated garden	0.0126	Low	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.02
4	Rural trees	0.2728	Medium	Moderate	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0.83
	Total (area excl. trees)	0.12	–	–	–	0.89

6.5.5 The pond has a target condition of **poor**; therefore, no specific management is required.

6.5.6 The individual rural trees have a target condition of **moderate**; this can be achieved by meeting **3 or 4 out of 6** of the following criteria:

- Criteria A – The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).
- Criteria B – The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5m wide.
- Criteria C – The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).
- Criteria 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.
- Criteria E – Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy, or loose bark.
- Criteria F – More than 20% of the tree canopy area is overhanging vegetation beneath.

6.5.7 No other proposed habitat has a condition assessment score; therefore, no specific management is required.



6.5.8 No created habitats are listed in the GMBAP, therefore, are all listed as 'Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy' in the Strategic Significance section.

6.6 Proposed Development Summary of Net Impacts

6.6.1 **Table 4** below summarises the BU value of the Proposed Development together with the unit value of any biodiversity impacts or on-site habitat creation/enhancement proposals.

6.6.2 This shows that on balance, the Proposed Development would result in a **net gain** of **+0.97** habitat BU, equivalent to a **net gain** of **+34.47%**.

6.6.3 The Proposed Development satisfies the Trading Rules as **no** unit deficits have been generated across distinctive units.

Table 4: Summary of Biodiversity Metric results for habitats.

On-site baseline	Habitat units	2.48
On-site post intervention	Habitat units	3.43
Total net change (%)	Habitat units	+0.96 (+38.63%)
Trading rules satisfied	Yes/No	Yes



7. Conclusion

- 7.1.1 In accordance with the NPPF, where a biodiversity impact cannot be avoided or mitigated then compensation measures must be provided. If this cannot be achieved on-site through further avoidance, mitigation or compensatory habitat creation or enhancement measures, then off-site compensation measures will be required.
- 7.1.2 The BAA identified that the Proposed Development would have a **net gain** of **+0.96** habitat BU, equivalent to a **net gain** of **+38.63%**. The Proposed Development **satisfies** Trading Rules.
- 7.1.3 The Proposed Development has achieved a biodiversity net gain in habitat and a net gain in hedgerow BU. Therefore, no off-site compensatory habitat creation and/or enhancement measures are required.
- 7.1.4 Further details of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculations and associated condition assessments can be found within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator Tool excel spreadsheet and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets accompanying this report.
- 7.1.5 Should the Proposed Development be subject to future change, the conclusions and recommendations in this report will need to be revised. This is to be undertaken via the recalculation of the impact assessment element through the most up-to-date biodiversity metric.



8. References

Biodiversity Metric Guidance:

Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP). (2012). *Standard on Biodiversity Offsets*. https://www.forest-trends.org/wp-content/uploads/bbop/bbop_standard_on_biodiversity_offsets_1_feb_2013-pdf.pdf.

The British Standards Institution (BSI). (2013). *Biodiversity — Code of practice for planning and development*. <https://www.omegawestdocuments.com/media/documents/43/43.35%20BSI%20Biodiveristy%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf>.

CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA. (2016). *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development*. <https://cieem.net/resource/biodiversity-net-gain-good-practice-principles-for-development/>.

DEFRA (2023). *Statutory biodiversity metric tools and guides*. Includes User Guides, Metric Calculation tools, and Condition Assessment sheets. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities & Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2019). *Guidance: Natural environment*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment>.

Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government. (2021). *National Planning Policy Framework*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>.

UKHab. (2023). *The UKHab Classification System Version 2.01*. Available at: <https://ukhab.org/>.

Relevant Legislation:

Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)

- <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-3614>
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents>

The Conservation of Habitats and Regulations (CHSR) 2017.

- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made>

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/579/contents/made>

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

Environment Act 2011

- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/30/contents/enacted>

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents>

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

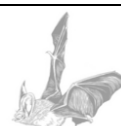
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>



Appendices



Appendix 1: Baseline Habitat Map





Site name & address
Land at Birchinley Manor
Rochdale
OL16 3DG

Key

-  Red Line Boundary
- HABITATS**
- Habitats - Baseline
-  Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
-  Other neutral grassland
-  Other woodland; broadleaved
- INDIVIDUAL TREES**
- Individual trees - Baseline
-  Existing Small Rural Tree



Site Land at Birchinley Manor	Client CJ Partnership
Project 22482 BAA	Author ADo
Plan ref 22482a/ADo	Revision 001

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Appendix 2: Proposed Habitat Map





Site name & address

Land at Birchinley Manor
Rochdale
OL16 3DG

Key

- Red Line Boundary
- Grassland Enhancement Area

HABITATS

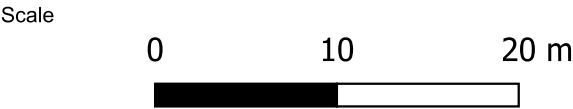
Habitats - Proposed

- Developed land; sealed surface
- Other neutral grassland
- Other woodland; broadleaved
- Ponds (non-priority habitat)
- Vegetated garden

INDIVIDUAL TREES

Individual trees - Proposed

- Proposed Small Rural Tree
- Retained Small Rural Tree



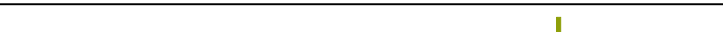
Site Land at Birchinley Manor	Client CJ Partnership
Project 22482 BAA	Author ADo
Plan ref 22482a/ADo	Revision 002

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Appendix 3: Proposed Development Plan





Paul Keighley and Sarah Mcdowell Land at Birchlnley Manor Wildhouse Lane Milnrow Rochdale	Site Plan as Proposed SK01	contract no	drawing no	revision	Revisions: A. Layout and position amended, PDC, July 2025 B. House sited closer to Birchlnley Manor grouping, August 2025	Blue Pit Mill Queensway Castleton Rochdale OL11 2PG +44 (0)1706 631347 info@cjpartnership.com www.cjpartnership.com	
	work to figured dimensions	3611	03	B			
	© CJ Partnership owns the copyright of this design / drawing which must not be reproduced in whole or in part without the written permission of CJ Partnership	drawn by	date	scale @ A3			
			June 2024	1:1000			

Appendix 4: Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan

The BAP for Greater Manchester is available at https://gmlrc.org/projects/gm_bap/

Habitats included within the BAP for Greater Manchester:

- Grasslands
 - Unimproved neutral grassland
 - Acid grassland
 - Marshy grassland
- Hedgerows
- Lowland mosslands (lowland raised bogs)
- Reedbeds
- Ponds and lodges
- Canals
- Native woodlands
 - Lowland broadleaved woodland
 - Upland oak woodland
- Urban managed greenspace

Species included within the BAP for Greater Manchester:

- Bats
 - Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*
 - Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
 - Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*
 - Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii*
 - Whiskered *Myotis mystacinus*
 - Natterer's *Myotis nattereri*
 - Leisler's *Nyctalus leisleri*
 - Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*
 - Brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*
- Birds
 - Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*
 - Black redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*
 - Twite *Linaria flavirostris*
 - Willow tit *Poecile montanus*
- Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*
- Hares
 - Brown hare *Lepus europaeus*
 - Mountain hare *Lepus timidus*
- Water vole *Arvicola amphibius*
- Black poplar *Populus nigra* subsp. *betulifolia*



Appendix 5: Good Practice Principles for Development

Taken from CIEEM (2016) Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development.

Principal 1. Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy.

Principal 2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere.

Principal 3. Be inclusive and equitable.

Principal 4. Address risks.

Principal 5. Make a measurable Net Gain contribution.

Principal 6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity.

Principal 7. Be additional.

Principal 8. Create a Net Gain legacy.

Principal 9. Optimise sustainability.

Principal 10. Be transparent.



Appendix 6: Author Qualifications

Adam West, Principal Ecologist

BSc (Hons) Animal and Wildlife Management.

Adam joined JCA to lead the expanding ecology department. Having returned to education as a mature student, Adam studied Countryside Management for two years before undertaking a Bachelor's degree in Animal and Wildlife Management, for which he was awarded First Class Honours. Adam has many years' experience in ecological consultancy, working on projects ranging from individual planning applications to national infrastructure projects. Adam holds a Natural England Level 1 great crested newt survey class licence and a Natural England Level 2 bat survey class licence.

Alex Donovan, Assistant Ecologist

MBiol, BSc Biology (Industrial).

Alex joined JCA in 2023 after graduating from the University of Leeds with a First Class Honours Integrated Master's degree in Biology, including an industrial placement year working in the Uplands Research Department of the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust. Alex is a CIEEM Qualifying Member, and a member of the BTO's Bird Ringing Scheme and Nest Record Scheme. Alex holds Natural England licences for barn owls (CL29) and great crested newts (level 1, CL08), and is working towards additional survey licences for bats and white-clawed crayfish.

Richard Westwood, Graduate Ecologist

BA (Hons) History and Politics

Rick gained his undergraduate degree in History and Politics in 2001 from Leeds Metropolitan University before going on to complete a PGCE in History at the University of Leeds in 2003. After 18 years in secondary education and the NHS, Rick began assisting on bat emergence surveys in 2023, after which, he gained employment as a Graduate Ecologist at JCA Ltd.

Grace Bramley, Graduate Ecologist

BSc (Hons) Design and Innovation with Environmental Science

Grace joined JCA in 2024 after completing her degree from The Open University with a first-class honour's degree in design and environmental science. Prior to this she spent six years working in the automotive industry followed by three years in the chemical industry. She is conducting Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments and working towards her protected species licenses.

James Foster, Assistant Ecologist

BSc (Hons) Biology.

James gained his undergraduate degree in biology in 2012 from University of Leeds. James has plenty of experience in ecology, having worked countless projects of different scales all over the north and midlands. James has 11 years of experience surveying anything from reptiles to hedgerows and holds a Great crested newt licence level 1 and is working towards his bat licence and barn owl licence.



The Information and advice which we have prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and bona fide opinions.

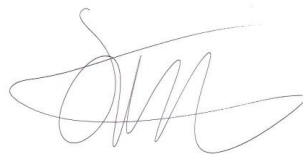
Signed



.....
Alex Donovan *MBiol BSc (Hons)*

17/10/2025

Reviewed by



.....
James Foster *BSc (Hons)*

17/10/2025



For and on behalf of **JCA Ltd**

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ECOLOGICAL SERVICES

Ecological Pre-Planning Services

- Phase 1 Habitat Surveys
- Great Crested Newt eDNA Sampling
- Protected species: Bat, Wintering and Nesting Bird, Badger, Amphibian, Otter, Water Vole, White-Clawed Crayfish, Dormice and Reptile Surveys.
- Preparation for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- Invasive Species Surveys
- Code for Sustainable Homes
- Butterfly & Insect Surveys

Ecological Post-Planning Services

- Biodiversity Enhancement Plans
- Protected Species Mitigation
- Ecological Management (Bat and Bird box installation and inspection)
- Planting Schemes
- Monitoring of bird or bat boxes.

ARBORICULTURAL SERVICES

Guidance for Architects & Developers

- British Standard 5837 Surveys
- Arboricultural Implications Assessments (AIA)
- Arboricultural Method Statements (AMS)

Advice for Engineers, Loss Adjusters and Insurers

- Tree Surveys for Subsidence
- Heave Assessment
- Tree Root Identification

Advice for Local Authorities and Social Housing

- Tree Safety Surveys
- Specialist Decay Detection
- Landscape and Orchard Design

Tree Advice for the Legal Profession

- Subsidence Litigation
- Personal Injury and Accident Investigation
- Expert Witness, Planning Inquiries and Appeals

Veteran Tree Management

- Ancient Woodland Management
- Veteran Tree Management

Tree Health and Pest and Disease Management

- Pest and Disease Surveys
- Tree Health Checks
- Disease Mitigation and Control



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