

HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

FOR

PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY DWELLING

TO

**LAND SOUTH OF HIGHER MOORGATE COTTAGE,
GRISTLEHURST LANE,
ROCHDALE, OL10 4BJ**

FOR

KATE TALBOT

PREPARED BY



HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN (HMMP)

Site: Land South of Higher Moorgate Cottage, Gristlehurst Lane, Heywood, OL10 4BJ

Plan Duration: Statutory 30-Year Period (2026–2056)

Responsible Body: Tottington Landscaping Co Ltd / Successive Site Freeholders

Introduction & Statutory Context

This Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) has been prepared to discharge the relevant ecological and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) planning conditions associated with planning consent 24/00911/FUL for the conversion of the former chicken shed into a single dwelling. This document operates in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment prepared by Arbtech Consulting Ltd (September 2024), the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, British Standard BS 8683:2021 and Policy G7 of the Rochdale Local Plan. The primary objective is to define the establishment, 30-year maintenance prescriptions, ecological monitoring schedules, and remedial mechanisms necessary to secure a minimum +10% biodiversity uplift across both area-based and linear-based habitats.

Baseline & Post-Development Unit Accounting

The baseline ecological assessment identified a total area-based biodiversity value of 0.08 units and a linear-based value of 0.04 units. The site baseline consists of 0.040 ha of sparsely vegetated urban land (ruderals/ephemerals, u1f) in Poor condition (0.08 units), 0.049 ha of artificial unvegetated unsealed surfaces (u1c, gravel track and slabbed area, 0.00 units), 0.015 ha of sealed surfaces (u1b5, footprints of existing buildings, 0.00 units), and 0.00988 km (9.88 m) of native hedgerow (h2a) along the southern flank of the large outbuilding assessed in Moderate condition (0.04 units).

To satisfy the statutory +10% BNG mandate, the post-development scheme requires a minimum of 0.090 area-based habitat units and 0.044 linear-based habitat units. The approved scheme delivers this through:

- **Linear Habitats:** Retention and selective pruning of the existing 0.00988 km native hedgerow, alongside the creation of 0.033 km (33 m) of new species-rich native hedgerow along Southern boundary. This generates 0.22 linear units, delivering a +450% net gain and resolving trading rules.
- **Area Habitats:** Retention and dedicated enhancement of a 0.0078 ha (78 m²) buffer strip of sparsely vegetated/ruderal open ground situated along the outer peripheral curtilage behind the proposed natural stone patio and garden boundary. Managing this 78 m² strip to achieve Moderate condition delivers 0.031 units, which, in combination with the 0.0322 ha of domestic vegetated garden area (0.060 units), yields 0.091 area habitat units (+13.75% net gain).

Roles, Responsibilities & Funding Safeguards

- **Responsible Person/Body:** Tottington Landscaping Co Ltd retains direct operational and financial responsibility for site implementation during initial groundworks, construction, and planting. Upon completion and domestic occupancy, ongoing obligations transfer to the property owner
- **Ecological Supervision:** A Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) with CIEEM accreditation will oversee baseline implementation, sign off planting compliance, and execute formal monitoring surveys.

Habitat Creation & Enhancement Specifications

Parcel 1: New Species-Rich Native Hedgerow (33 m)

- **UKHab Classification & Target:** Native Hedgerow (h2a) targeting Moderate condition.
- **Condition Criteria Requirements:** Average height >1.5" m" ; average width >1.5" m" ; canopy gap <0.5" m" from ground across >90% length; canopy gaps <10% overall with no single gap >5" m" ; undisturbed ground margin ≥1.0" m" wide along length; nutrient-enrichment indicators (nettles, cleavers, docks) <20% cover; non-native invasive species 0%.

- Planting Specification: Double staggered row (400 mm between rows, 450 mm plant centres, 5 whips per linear metre; 165 whips total). Bare-root stock (40–60 cm, 1 + 1 transplants) of British provenance (BS 8545): 50% Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), 20% Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), 10% Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), 10% Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), 5% Holly (*Ilex aquifolium* - 2L containerised), and 5% Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*). Pit planted into decompressed, unfertilized ground; dressed with 600 mm biodegradable spiral guards, 900 mm softwood canes, and 75 mm depth chipped bark mulch in a 600 mm band.

Parcel 2: Retained & Enhanced Ruderal Wildlife Buffer (78 m²)

- UKHab Classification & Target: Sparsely Vegetated Land / Ruderal (u1f) targeting Moderate condition.
- Condition Criteria Requirements: Structural variation with mosaic components where no single species exceeds 80% total cover; verified seasonal nectar/pollen sources beneficial to wildlife; invasive non-native plant species <5% cover.
- Establishment Specification: No imported topsoil or compost will be spread over this 78 m² strip to preserve nutrient-poor, gravel-rich substrate conditions. The bare substrate will be lightly scarified and overseeded at 2.0 g/m² using Emorsgate EH1 (or equivalent native open-ground flora mix containing *Lotus corniculatus*, *Linaria vulgaris*, *Daucus carota*, *Plantago lanceolata*, and *Medicago lupulina*), followed by light rolling.

Parcel 3: Retained Boundary Shrubs (9.88 m)

- Prescription: Clear all domestic debris, scrap metal, and discarded material from the hedge base. Retain woody Hawthorn and Elder stems; prune out broken branches while retaining mature Ivy (*Hedera helix*) cover on structural stems.

Years 1–5: Establishment Phase

- Hedgerow Weed Control & Mulch: Maintain a 500 mm weed-free collar along both hedge faces via hand-weeding three times annually (May, July, September). Maintain 75 mm chipped bark layer.
- Irrigation: Apply 5 litres per linear metre once weekly during dry intervals exceeding 14 consecutive rain-free days from May to August during Years 1 and 2.
- Firming & Pruning: Inspect stakes and spirals each autumn; re-firm frost-heaved roots. Trim hawthorn and blackthorn leading shoots by 30% in late winter of Year 2 to promote dense basal branching.
- Beat-up Surveys: Inspect hedgerow stock each September. Replace dead, diseased, or missing whips on a like-for-like basis between November and February to maintain >90% stocking density.
- Ruderal Strip Formative Management: Undertake a single annual cut in mid-September to a height of 100 mm using a hand-held brushcutter. Retain cut material on site for 48 hours to shed seed, then rake off and remove arisings off-site to deplete soil nutrients. Hand-pull agricultural weeds (*Cirsium arvense*, *Rumex obtusifolius*) prior to flowering.

Years 6–30: Long-Term Management

- Hedgerow Trimming Regime: Prune on a 2- to 3-year rotational cycle, trimming only one face per intervention. All trimming must be conducted strictly between 1 November and 28 February to avoid the main wild bird nesting season. Maintain an A-line profile allowing hedgerows to achieve 2.0–2.5 m in height and >1.5" m" in width.
- Rejuvenation: If the hedge base exhibits vertical gapping after Year 15, lay the hedge in accordance with traditional regional style (Lancashire/Midland style) to re-establish dense basal growth.
- Ruderal Strip Maintenance: Maintain rotational mowing, cutting 50% of the 78 m² strip in Year A and the alternating 50% in Year B (late September) to preserve overwintering invertebrate stems, seed heads, and leaf litter. Strictly prohibit lawnmower encroachment, turf establishment, domestic compost dumping, or vehicle tracking within the parcel.

Built-in Ecological Enhancement Features

To fulfill Policy G7 of the Rochdale Local Plan:

- **Bat Roosting Box (1 No.):** Install 1 No. Schwegler 1FF (or Habibat integrated bat box) onto a suitable tree within the applicants ownership boundary. Mount with a clear, unobstructed flight path away from artificial external luminaires and windows.
- **Bird Nesting Box (1 No.):** Install 1 No. Vivara Pro WoodStone 32 mm hole nest box (or integrated sparrow brick) onto a suitable tree within the applicants ownership boundary, sheltered from direct midday sun and wet westerly winds. Clean out old nests annually between October and January.

Monitoring Framework, Reporting & Adaptive Remediation

- **Monitoring Intervals:** Site audits will be conducted by an SQE in Years 1, 3, 5, 10, 20, and 30 between June and August.
- **Field Protocol:** Establish 4 permanent GPS-located photographic points. Complete Defra metric condition assessment sheets for hedgerow and urban parcels. Record DAFOR floral composition across the 78 m² ruderal strip.
- **Contingency Plan:** If whip mortality exceeds 10%, notch plant replacement whips during the next dormant planting window. If the ruderal parcel becomes dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) or nettles (>20% cover), introduce a secondary spring cut (May) with arising removal and light surface scarification. If boundaries are encroached upon by domestic garden features, the freeholder must reinstate physical boundary markers and re-sow the affected area within 60 days.

