



**Brindle
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Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Redwings Lodge, Baldock, Hertfordshire

Report Reference: BG25.250

REV3 July 2026



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Revision Details

Revision	Approved	Revision Details
REV1	Joe Allsop MSc BSc (Hons) – Consultant Ecologist	Revision to reflect updated proposed plans, habitat creation, and amended Red Line Boundary
REV2	ES	Amendments to project description and addition of landscape masterplan following layout changes

Revision	Approved	Revision Details
REV3	ES	Amendments to landscape plan and metric



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1 Summary

- 1.1.1 Where a development has an impact on biodiversity, Biodiversity Net Gain encourages developers to secure an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected. In order to determine whether there is no net loss or a net gain to biodiversity from a development project, a quantitative approach involving the use of a metric is required. In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). This statutory framework is referred to as 'Biodiversity Net Gain' in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains.
- 1.1.2 This Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) draws upon the baseline results of the BG25.250 Redwing Lodge, Baldock - PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL Report - FINAL (August 2025). This assessment includes the results of biodiversity value calculations, derived using the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator, based upon the design proposals for the application site found in Appendix 1.
- 1.1.3 Using the Statutory Biodiversity metric, the existing habitats within the application boundary were valued at 2.85 'Habitat Units' and 0.68 'Hedgerow Units'. No irreplaceable habitat is present on site. The proposed scheme was calculated to hold 3.01 'Habitat Units' and 0.76 'Hedgerow Units', resulting in an overall net-gain to biodiversity of +0.17 'Biodiversity Units' (+5.98%), and a biodiversity net gain of +0.08 'Hedgerow Units' (+11.62%). Trading rules have been satisfied under the current assessment. However, the calculations derived from this assessment do not meet the statutory 10% net gain requirement for habitats as set out within Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).
- 1.1.4 As the results derived from the calculation do not meet the mandatory 10% net gain requirement. The client seeks to offset the unit shortfall through purchase of offsite credits from a third-party provider. The unit shortfall can be found in the accompanying metric.
- 1.1.5 The report should be reviewed in conjunction with the BG25.250 Redwing Lodge, Baldock - PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL Report - FINAL (Brindle and Green, August 2025), and the accompanying Metric (BG25.250 Redwing Lodge, Baldock – Statutory Metric Calculation Tool – REV2 (July 2026)).

2 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Brindle and Green Ltd were commissioned by Redwings Lodge Limited to undertake a Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) at the site known as Redwings Lodge, Baldock in Hinxworth in the county of Hertfordshire. This report provides an appraisal of the biodiversity value associated with the existing habitats established during the baseline survey and assesses the impacts in terms of biodiversity loss against the proposed layout (Appendix 1) using the Statutory Metric (DEFRA, 2025), which is considered the most up to date method for assessing impact to biodiversity.
- 2.1.2 The purpose of this report is to assess the current biodiversity habitat and value of the site, so as to reduce net-loss and demonstrate a biodiversity net gain as a result of the development and guide requirements to meet the mandatory 10% net gain requirement.
- 2.1.3 The application site is approximately 1.02ha in extent and comprises mostly of hardstanding and two buildings, surrounded by areas of species-poor modified grassland. An area of short, intensively managed, 'Moderate' condition modified grassland is also present at the northeast of the site surrounded by tall forbs along the northern peripheries of the site.
- 2.1.4 The site is located just off the A1, 2.0km south from the within village and civil parish of Hinxworth, Baldock, North Hertfordshire. The majority of the wider environment consists of arable field from the north, east, south, and west of the site, with a small pocket of woodland 140m northeast of the site and a ditch (known as 'Cat Ditch'), over 15m south of the site boundary.
- 2.1.5 The site is the subject of a full planning application for the development of a new hotel building adjacent to the existing Redwings Lodge with associated parking extension and landscaping.
- 2.1.6 The proposals currently will see the loss 'Moderate' and 'Poor' condition modified grassland within the northwestern and central areas, respectively. The proposed development will also facilitate the full removal of a line of trees (H2), in 'moderate' condition, and non-native ornamental hedgerow (H3). Nevertheless, the scheme will see the retention of the majority of 'poor' condition modified grassland in the west of the site and tree lines (H1, H4, and H5) around the peripheries of the site. A small 'poor' condition woodland was also present at the south of the site, which is to be retained in its entirety and unaffected by the proposals.

- 2.1.7 Results and recommendations contained within this report have been prepared by an experienced ecologist and are therefore the view of Brindle & Green Limited. The results of the Biodiversity Impact Assessment are based on information provided by our client and the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (BG25.250, August 2025). This report pertains to this information only.
- 2.1.8 This report has been compiled in accordance with local policies including the Adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (November 2022), A Biodiversity Action Plan for Hertfordshire (March 2006), and national policies to guide the scheme on how to achieve the targets set out within Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).

3 Methodology

3.1 Biodiversity Metric

3.1.1 The biodiversity accounting system is underpinned by a metric that calculates the ecological value of both development impact and habitat restoration/creation. The statutory Biodiversity Metric was built upon a series of previous versions developed in collaboration with Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission, including authors and contributors cited in previous versions. The Biodiversity Metric calculations must be undertaken following the below rules. If they are not followed, then a biodiversity net gain cannot be claimed.

- **Rule 1:** The trading rules of this biodiversity metric must be followed.
- **Rule 2:** Biodiversity Unit Outputs, for each type of unit, must not be summed traded, or converted between types. The requirement to deliver a 10% net gain applies to each type of unit.
- **Rule 3:** The calculations must be undertaken using the statutory metric calculation tool or small sites metric tool (for small sites).
- **Rule 4:** in exceptional ecological circumstances, deviation from this biodiversity metric methodology may be permitted by the relevant planning authority (refer to The Statutory Metric User Guide on applications of Rule 4).

3.1.2 The metric is based on an assessment of habitat type and condition. Habitat types are classified into five bands of 'distinctiveness' which are:

- **Very High:** Priority habitats that are rare and threatened and require conservation action
- **High:** Priority habitats
- **Medium:** Semi-natural habitats that are not priority habitats
- **Low:** Habitat of low biodiversity value
- **Very low:** Habitats with little or no biodiversity value

3.1.3 Compensation arrangements must be like-for-like or better, i.e. the loss of semi-natural habitats can only be compensated for through the creation of priority or other semi-natural habitats, not through creation of lesser quality habitat. 'Trading up' options allow for the loss of poor-quality habitat, such as farmland, to be compensated for with the creation of high-quality habitat.

- 3.1.4 The ecological value of the habitat lost to development is a function of its distinctiveness, its condition and the area lost – scores are assigned to all three variables and multiplied together to arrive at the number of units lost. To compensate for a loss; habitat creation in the scheme must be delivered to produce sufficient units to meet the mandatory 10% net gain. Where a 10% net gain cannot be achieved within the application site, habitat creation/enhancement will be used within wider ownership to meet the statutory requirement. Where this cannot be achieved then purchase of biodiversity credits through a third party provider is considered.
- 3.1.5 The number of credits delivered by the compensation receptor sites are also a function of the type, condition and area of the habitat being created or restored. But additionally, there are a further range of ‘multipliers’ applied to the creation of habitat because there are a number of risks to take account of – spatial, temporal and delivery.
- 3.1.6 Linear habitats (such as hedgerows) are measured separately to the rest of the site habitats and included within a separate section – hedge baseline and hedge creation. The aim is to achieve a 10% net-gain for hedgerow units as well as for biodiversity units.
- 3.1.7 The site does not include, or is not adjacent to, a watercourse to require river baseline and creation assessments. Therefore, this element of the metric assessment is not included within the report.
- 3.1.8 Where proposed creation/enhancement of habitat is of medium distinctiveness or above then a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) must be produced to detail how these areas are to be maintained to achieve their target criteria and secure their longevity.

3.2 Metric Publish Date

- 3.2.1 The version of Statutory Metric used for this assessment was published on 03/07/2025.

3.3 Desk Study

- 3.3.1 A desk study utilising Local Nature Recover Strategies or publications including Adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (November 2022), A Biodiversity Action Plan for Hertfordshire (March 2006), as well as open-source special data available from Multi Agency Geographic Information for the countryside (MAGIC) was searched to determine the strategic significance of the site.

3.4 Field Survey

Habitat Baseline Condition Assessment

- 3.4.1 A preliminary ecological appraisal was undertaken by Brindle and Green Ltd which included a habitat baseline condition assessment using the Statutory Condition Assessment Sheets.
- 3.4.2 The baseline condition assessment was undertaken on the 16/05/2025 by Joe Allsop MSc BSc (Hons), a current Qualifying Member of CIEEM, Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence (2023-11512-CL08-GCN), Level 3 FISC Accredited, Consultant Ecologist.

3.5 Mapping and Assessment

- 3.5.1 Habitats and hedges (where applicable) were mapped within QGIS software to allow area calculations. Geometry was extracted from the polygons and lines drawn on the baseline plan and entered into the metric with their respected condition assessment. Trees are mapped as points and their areas are either calculated using the tree helper in the Metric informed by their diameter at breast height or calculated root protection area informed by a BS5837 report.
- 3.5.2 The proposed scheme was georeferenced over the baseline map to determine extent of development and assess habitat retention/loss/potential enhancement areas. Where available; CAD drawings may be directly imported to QGIS to allow for calculations.
- 3.5.3 A series of points, polygons and lines were drawn over the proposed plans and classified by their target habitat type and condition with their geometries extracted and entered into the habitat creation or habitat enhancement tabs of the metric.

3.6 Limitations

- 3.6.1 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment.
- 3.6.2 Georeferencing does not provide an exact measurement of the elements of the proposed scheme. However, the metric rounds the area calculations to 2 decimals to be as accurate as possible.

4 Results

4.1 Baseline Condition Assessment

- 4.1.1 The application site comprises a hotel and restaurant buildings surrounded by short, intensively managed grassland. The distinctiveness recorded on site ranged from 'Very Low' to 'Medium' for habitats, and 'Very Low' to 'Low' for hedgerows. A summary of the baseline condition assessment can be found in Table 1, below with a map of the baseline habitats in Appendix 2. Full details of the baseline assessment can be found within the accompanying metric (BG25.250 Redwings Baldock - Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric – REV2 (July 2026)). No habitats within the application site met the criteria for irreplaceable habitat.

4.2 Scheme Design and Biodiversity Net Gain Principles

- 4.2.1 The progression of the layout has been informed by the baseline calculations and habitat creation/enhancement has been guided to maximise biodiversity potential on site.

Retained/Enhanced Habitat

- 4.2.2 Under the scheme outlined in Appendix 1, the entire small woodland area (w1g - Other woodland; broadleaved) south of the site, will be retained by the proposals. Additionally, 0.082ha of existing modified grassland ('Poor' condition) is proposed for retention as existing, with 0.094ha to be enhanced, through measures outlined within this chapter. The proposals will also see the retention of nine small and two medium sized trees. There will be a suitable buffer area around these trees to prevent future habitat degradation, as should be outlined within an appropriate Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

Habitat Loss

- 4.2.3 The proposals will see the collective loss of 0.37ha of 'Modified grassland' and 0.12ha of 'Tall Forbs. H2 (33) (A line of trees) and H3 (Non-native and ornamental hedgerow), will be removed in full to facilitate the development. Six small trees and one medium tree also require removal to facilitate the extended car park. Under the current layout it is not possible to retain these features as part of the proposals. However, extensive hedgerow creation will be undertaken along the northwest of the site.

Habitat Creation

- 4.2.4 The scheme will seek the creation of a new hotel two-storey extension, comprising of up to 51 new units with associated parking and landscaping.
- 4.2.5 The proposed hotel extension, access and parking have been classified as 'Developed land; sealed surface' and contains no biodiversity value within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- 4.2.6 Small areas of open space have been provided, mostly pertaining to the western parcel of the site. This area will include the creation (0.129ha) and enhancement (0.082ha) of Other neutral grassland, managed to a 'Moderate' condition. Further areas of poor condition Modified grassland will be created surrounding the hotel building and proposed car park. Three proposed moderate condition native hedgerows (totalling 108m) (H6, H7, and H8) will also be planted throughout the site.
- 4.2.7 A total of 46 individual 'small' urban trees will be planted throughout the entirety of the site. Proposed trees must be of native species and species relevant to the local surroundings and are not expected to reach a stem diameter of more than 30cm. Each tree will be planted a minimum of 5m apart.
- 4.2.8 The habitats proposed within this Biodiversity Impact Assessment and Metric Calculations will require management under a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) in order to achieve their target conditions outlined within the metric calculations.

Table 1: Summary of condition assessment for habitat and hedge baseline for Redwings, Baldock.

Habitat and Area/Length	Habitat Parcel Ref	Distinctiveness	Condition	Reason
Urban – developed land; sealed surface (0.281ha)	U1b5, u1b	V.Low	N/A - Other	Two existing buildings, the access road, car park and other areas of handstanding on the site. This habitat site does not require a condition assessment.
Urban – Introduced shrub (0.0113ha)	u - 847	Low	Condition Assessment N/A	Areas of mostly non-native introduced shrub consisting of leylandii (<i>Cupressus × leylandii</i>), cotoneaster (<i>Cotoneaster</i> sp.), elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), and garden privet (<i>Ligustrum ovalifolium</i>) along the front entrance of the existing hotel building (B2). This habitat site does not require a condition assessment.
Sparsely vegetated land – Tall Forbs (0.1242ha)	g - 16	Low	Poor	Large area to the south of the site dominated by nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), with occasional occurrences of willowherb (<i>Epilobium</i> sp.) and common hogweed (<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>). This habitat type fails condition criteria A and B.
Grassland - Modified grassland (0.1876ha)	g4 (A) -108	Low	Moderate	Grassland within the northeast of the site. Intensively managed, regularly mown, and managed for amenity purposes. Abundant in perennial rye grass and frequent in white clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>), dovesfoot cranesbill (<i>Geranium molle</i>), common mouse-ear (<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>), and black medic (<i>Medicago lupulina</i>), with occasional cocksfoot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>) and common daisy (<i>Bellis perennis</i>) and red fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>). With approximately 8 species per square metre, this habitat passes condition criteria A, C, F, and G, whilst failing, B, D, and E, resulting in 'Moderate' condition. Sections of this habitat is to be removed to facilitate the proposals.
Grassland - Modified grassland (0.3504ha)	g4 (B) -108, 612	Low	Poor	Modified grassland within the within the southwest of the site. Intensively managed, regularly mown, and managed for amenity purposes. Dominated by perennial rye grass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>), this habitat fails condition criteria A (essential for achieving 'Moderate' or 'Good' condition), B, D, and E. Sections of this habitat is to be removed to facilitate the proposals.

Habitat and Area/Length	Habitat Parcel Ref	Distinctiveness	Condition	Reason
Woodland and forest – Other woodland; broadleaved (0.061ha)	w1g	Medium	Poor	A small parcel of woodland, which forms a wider area of woodland within southeast of the red line boundary. With species including elder, leylandii, Scots pine (<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>), hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), plum (<i>Prunus domestica</i>), boxwood (<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>), and cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>). Ground flora is dominated by bare ground and common nettle. A condition score of 'Poor' was determined after scoring 23 points for the woodland condition assessment. To be retained by the proposals
Individual tree – urban tree (0.0611ha)	Individual tree	Medium	Moderate	15 small trees throughout the site. All 15, fail condition criteria C and E resulting in 'Moderate' condition. Six trees are to be removed by the development of the car park, with nine due for retention.
Individual tree – urban tree (0.0326ha)	Individual tree	Medium	Moderate	Two medium trees at the south of the site including Cherry, and Yew. Both trees pass at least four of the six condition criteria resulting in a 'Good' condition score.
Individual tree – urban tree (0.0163ha)	Individual tree	Medium	Moderate	One medium Horse chestnut tree along the western boundary, at 'Moderate' condition. Failing condition, criteria A, C, and E. This tree is to be removed by the development.
Hedge				
Line of trees (0.67km)	H1 (33)	Low	Moderate	A majority native line of trees dominated by hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), with occasional plum (<i>Prunus domestica</i>), and rare Norway maple (<i>Acer platanoides</i>). Passes condition criteria A, B, and E, while failing C and D, resulting in 'Moderate' condition. To be retained by the proposals.
Line of trees (0.068km)	H2 (33)	Low	Moderate	A native line of trees dominated by Hawthorn, with frequent plum, and occasional Elm. Passes condition criteria A, B, C, and E, while failing D, resulting in 'Moderate' condition. 35m will be removed to facilitate the new proposed building and new car park.

Habitat and Area/Length	Habitat Parcel Ref	Distinctiveness	Condition	Reason
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow (0.01km)	H3	V.Low	Poor	An ornamental hedgerow comprising of a non-native cherry (<i>Prunus</i>) species. Condition for this habitat auto-populates as 'Poor'. Four metres to be removed to facilitate the car park.
Line of trees (0.028km)	H4 (33)	Low	Moderate	A mostly native line of trees dominated by hazel, with frequent Hawthorn and plum, occasional elm, lilac, and rare elder. Passes condition criteria A, B, and E, while failing C and D, resulting in 'Moderate' condition. To be retained by the proposals.
Line of trees (0.011km)	H5 (33)	Low	Poor	A small line of Leylandii trees at the south of the site. Fails condition criteria A, C, and D, while passing B and E, resulting in 'Poor' condition. To be retained by the proposals.

Table 2: Summary Post Development Habitats for habitat and hedge for Redwings, Baldock.

Habitat and Area/Length	Habitat Parcel Ref	Distinctiveness	Condition	Reason
Modified Grassland to Other neutral grassland (0.094ha)	B	Low to Medium	Moderate	Existing 'poor' condition modified grassland at the northwest of the site is to be enhanced to Other neutral grassland, through an improved management regime and re-seeding with EM2 Standard Meadow mixture (or similar approved). Grassland should target condition criteria A, B, D, and E for Moderate Condition.
Other Neutral Grassland (0.129ha)	C	Medium	Moderate	Areas of tall forbs along the northeastern boundary and modified grassland east of the site will be removed to facilitate the establishment of Other neutral grassland with the planting of a EM2 Standard Meadow mixture (or similar approved). Areas subject to levels of shading due to the proposed tree planting, grassland should be sown with a shade tolerant seed mixture such as EH1 Hedgerow Mixture (or similar approved), targeting conditions A, B, D, and E to achieve 'Moderate' condition.
Modified Grassland (0.042ha)	D	Low	Poor	Proposed areas of modified grassland adjacent to the hotel buildings and car park. This habitat type will likely fail condition criterion A (required to achieve Moderate or Good Condition), resulting in a 'poor' condition.
Introduced shrub (0.04ha)	E	Low	N/A	Areas of introduced shrub proposed across the site. Condition assessment not applicable for this habitat type.
Individual trees	N/a	Medium	Moderate	57 small individual urban trees are proposed throughout the site. Trees will be planted within areas of modified grassland throughout the site. These trees will be oversailing vegetation and therefore likely to achieve condition criterion A, B, D, and F.
Developed land; sealed surface (0.324ha)	N/a	V.Low	N/A - Other	Proposed new hotel extension and new car park. This habitat type does not require a condition assessment.

Habitat and Area/Length	Habitat Parcel Ref	Distinctiveness	Condition	Reason
Hedge				
Native hedgerow (0.024km)	H6	Low	Moderate	Proposed native hedgerow planting within the south of the site. Hedgerow planting should include native woody species such as but not limited to hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, dogwood, field maple and beech. Targeting condition criterion B1, B2, C1, C2 and D1 and D2, ensuring that no more than one functional group fails the entire condition criteria to achieve 'Moderate' condition.
Native hedgerow (0.049km)	H7	Low	Moderate	Proposed native hedgerow planting within the northwestern boundary. Hedgerow planting should include native woody species such as but not limited to hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, dogwood, field maple and beech. Targeting condition criterion B1, B2, C1, C2 and D1 and D2, ensuring that no more than one functional group fails the entire condition criteria to achieve 'Moderate' condition.
Native hedgerow (0.035km)	H8	Low	Moderate	Proposed native hedgerow planting within the east of the site. Hedgerow planting should include native woody species such as but not limited to hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, dogwood, field maple and beech. Targeting condition criterion B1, B2, C1, C2 and D1 and D2, ensuring that no more than one functional group fails the entire condition criteria to achieve 'Moderate' condition.

4.3 Biodiversity Metric Calculator Results

4.3.1 Table 3 below provides a headline summary of the calculations derived from the statutory metric. Under the current proposals trading rules have been satisfied with Biodiversity Net Gain of +0.37 ‘Habitat’ Units and 0.08 ‘Hedgerow’ Units, as detailed in the habitat trading summary tab (BG25.250 Redwings Baldock - Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric – REV2 (July 2026)). However, the proposed scheme does not result in an overall 10% net gain, with a total unit shortfall of 0.12 units recorded for habitats.

Table 3: Biodiversity Impact Assessment Score, Scheme with Ecological Enhancements

On-site baseline	Area habitat units	2.85	On-site net gain is less than target set ▲	
	Hedgerow units	0.68		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	3.01		
	Hedgerow units	0.76		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.17		5.93%
	Hedgerow units	0.08		11.62%
	Watercourse units	0.00		0.00%
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.00	0.00%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.17	Total net gain achieved is less than target set ▲	
	Hedgerow units	0.08		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	5.93%		
	Hedgerow units	11.62%		
	Watercourse units	0.00%		
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓			

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓ No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓
Area habitat units	10.00%	2.85	3.13	0.12	
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.68	0.75	0.00	
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	

5 Evaluation

- 5.1.1 The site is the subject of a full planning application for the development of a new two-storey hotel building adjacent to the existing Redwings Lodge with associated parking and landscaping. Ground clearance will result in the removal of a tree line (H2) at the centre of the site, and moderate condition modified grassland along east. Design plans are included within Appendix 1 of this report.
- 5.1.2 Using the Statutory Biodiversity metric the proposed scheme results in an overall net gain to biodiversity of +0.17 'Habitat' Units (+5.98%) and 0.08 'Hedgerow' Units (+11.62%). Trading rules have been satisfied under the current assessment. However, the proposed scheme does not currently demonstrate the statutory 10% net gain requirement as set out within Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).
- 5.1.3 As the results derived from the calculation do not meet the mandatory 10% net gain requirement. The client seeks to offset the unit shortfall through purchase of offsite credits from a third-party provider. The unit shortfall can be found in the accompanying metric.
- 5.1.4 This report has considered all available area of open space with maximised potential for retention/enhancement on site in line with good practice principles. Habitat creation has been informed by the distinctiveness of habitat derived from the baseline calculations to reduce impacts on habitat value where possible.
- 5.1.5 In order to secure the habitat creation and target conditions a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) will be required to safeguard the habitats for 30 years post construction.

6 Habitat Prescriptions

6.1.1 The tables outlined within this section set out each of the enhanced/proposed habitats and target conditions and how they will achieve the targets. The specific seed types, establishment, management and monitoring requirements will be secured within a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP). A map detailing the areas of retention, enhancement and creation have been included within Appendix 3.

6.2 Enhanced Habitats

Table 4: Details of Habitat Enhancement of Modified Grassland to Other Neutral Grassland

Habitat	Distinctiveness	Condition	Parcel Reference
Modified Grassland to Other Neutral Grassland	Low to Medium	Poor - Good	B
Description			
The area of modified grassland located within the northwest parcel, which is proposed for retention, will be enhanced to Other neutral grassland, through an improved management regime and re-seeding with EM2 Standard Meadow mixture (or similar approved). The area will be fenced off from and have appropriate signage, to prevent public footfall and will be managed to reduce cover of less desirable species, such as bracken or scrub cover. Grassland should target condition criteria A, B, D, and E for 'Moderate' Condition.			
Target Condition 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 (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description)		
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.		
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.		
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.		
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.		
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only."		
Footnotes			
"Footnote 1 - Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description. Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover.			

Footnote 3 - Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, greater plantain *Plantago major*, white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.

Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement.

Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)."

6.3 Proposed Habitats

Table 5: Target conditions for Other Neutral Grassland

Habitat		Distinctiveness	Condition	Parcel Reference
Other Grassland	Neutral	Medium	Moderate	C
Description				
An area of green space along the northeastern and southeastern boundaries will be removed to facilitate the establishment of Other neutral grassland with the planting of a EM2 Standard Meadow mixture (or similar approved). Areas subject to levels of shading due to the proposed tree planting, grassland should be sown with a shade tolerant seed mixture such as EH1 Hedgerow Mixture (or similar approved), The area will be fenced off from and have appropriate signage, to prevent public footfall and will be managed to reduce cover of less desirable species, such as bracken or scrub cover, targeting conditions A, B, D, and E to achieve 'Moderate' condition. .				
Target Condition 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 (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description)			
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.			
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.			
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.			
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.			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only."			
Footnotes				
"Footnote 1 - Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description. Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover. Footnote 3 - Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> . There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site. Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement. Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)."				

Table 6: Target conditions for Modified grassland

Habitat	Distinctiveness	Condition	Parcel Reference
Modified Grassland	Low	Poor	D
Description			
Areas within the site adjacent to the hotel building and car will result in the creation of modified grassland. It is recommended that these areas should be seeded with flowering lawn mixture (such as Emorsgate EL1 or similar approved), however will likely have an increased management regime, managed for amenity rather than ecological purposes. Therefore, a condition score of 'Poor' will likely be achieved with four of the condition criteria being met.			
Target Condition Criteria			
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.		
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.		
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.		
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.		
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .		
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.		
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).		
Footnotes			
Footnote 1 – Creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> . Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover. Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement. Footnote 4 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).			

Green highlighted rows indicate target criteria

Table 7: Target conditions for Individual trees

Habitat	Distinctiveness	Condition	Parcel Reference
Individual Trees – Urban Trees	Medium	Moderate	N/a
Description			
57 small individual trees will be planted in open spaces across the scheme particularly along the west of the site. These species will comprise native specimens, such as but not limited to English oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>), hornbeam (<i>Carpinus betulus</i>), field maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>) and silver birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>). The trees will be positioned in a way that allows for 20% of canopy cover to over sail vegetation. Management and monitoring will be targeted to address any failures to establish.			
Target Condition Criteria			
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).		
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).		
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .		
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.		
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.		
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.		
Footnotes			
Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and: Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.			

Green highlighted rows indicate target criteria

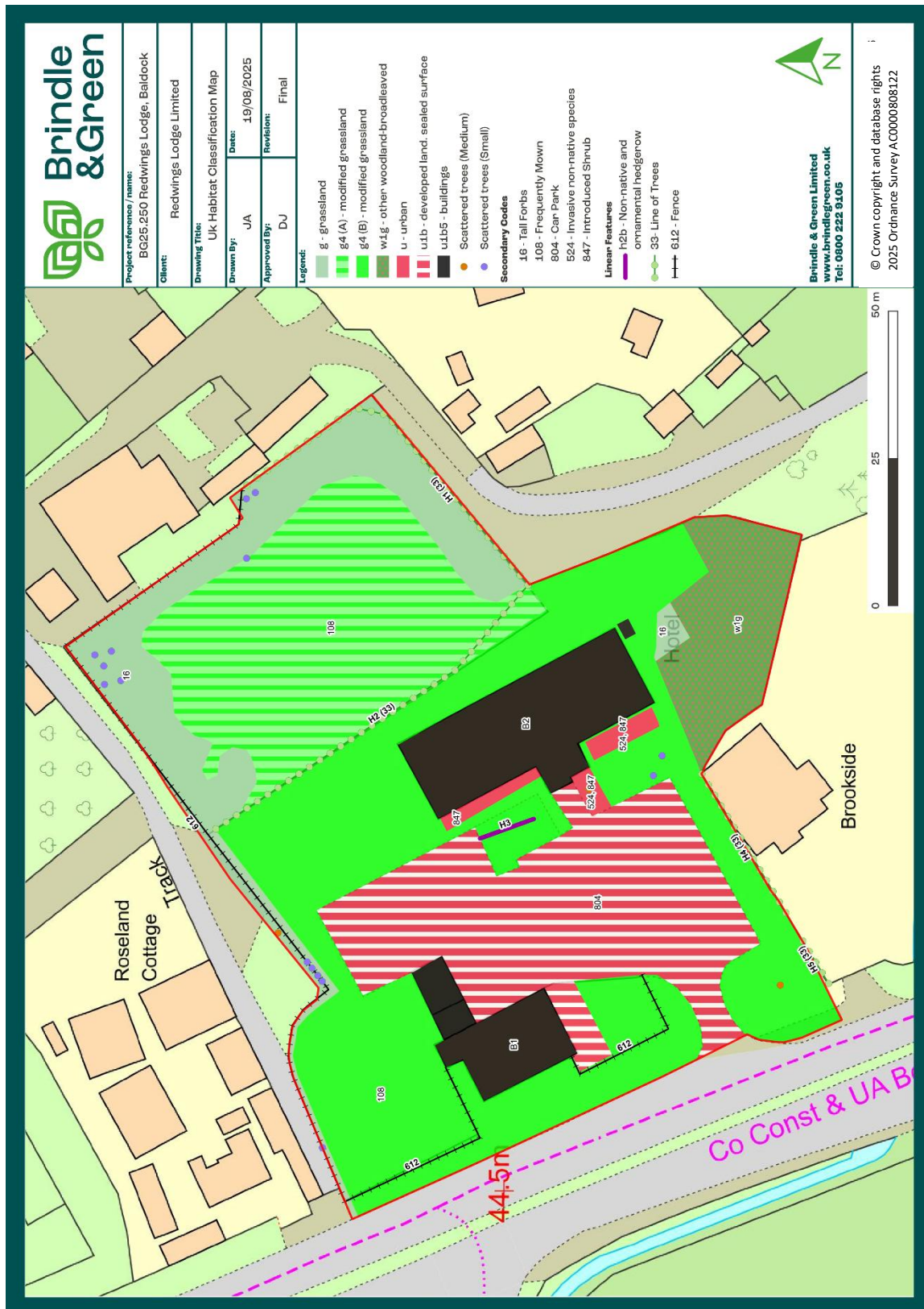
Table 8: Target conditions for Hedgerow habitat type.

Habitat	Distinctiveness	Condition	Parcel Reference
Native Hedgerow	Low	Moderate	H6, H7, H8
Description			
Three native species hedgerow will be created along the northwestern boundary of the site. The hedgerow will total a length of 108m total and will be established with native species such as, but not limited to, blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>), hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), field maple, dogwood, hazel and beech. The understorey will be seeded with a shade tolerant seed mix such as Emorsgate EH1 (or similar approved). Management will be targeted to maintain an undisturbed margin, removal of undesirable species at the hedge base and to be free of invasive species. Targeting condition criteria B1, B2, C1, C2, D1, and D2 for 'Moderate' condition.			
Target Condition Criteria			
A1	Height - >1.5 m average along length		
A2	Width - >1.5 m average along length		
B1	Gap-Hedge Base - Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length		
B2	Gap – Hedge canopy continuity - Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m		
C1	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation - >1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and · Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least).		
C2	Nutrient enriched perennial vegetation - Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.		
D1	Invasive and neophyte species - >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ³) and recently introduced species.		
D2	Current damage - >90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.		
Footnotes			
Footnote 1 – DEFRA (2007) Hedgerow Survey Handbook. A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK. [online] Available on: layout (hedgeline.org.uk) Footnote 2 – STALEY, J.T. ET AL. (2020) Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows. [online] Available on: Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows - RP2943 (naturalengland.org.uk) Footnote 3 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Footnote 4 – CHEFFINGS, C. M. et al. (2005) The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain. Species Status 7: 1-116. [online] Available on: The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain (Species Status No. 7) JNCC Resource Hub Footnote 5 – BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND (BSBI). Definitions: wild, native or alien? [online] Available on: Definitions: wild, native or alien? – Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (bsbi.org) Footnote 6 – BSBI and Biological Records Centre (BRC) (2022) Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora. [online] Available on: Acknowledgements Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora (brc.ac.uk) Footnote 7 – GB NON-NATIVE SPECIES SECRETARIAT (GBNNSS) (2022) Available on: Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org) Footnote 8 – See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) And Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)			

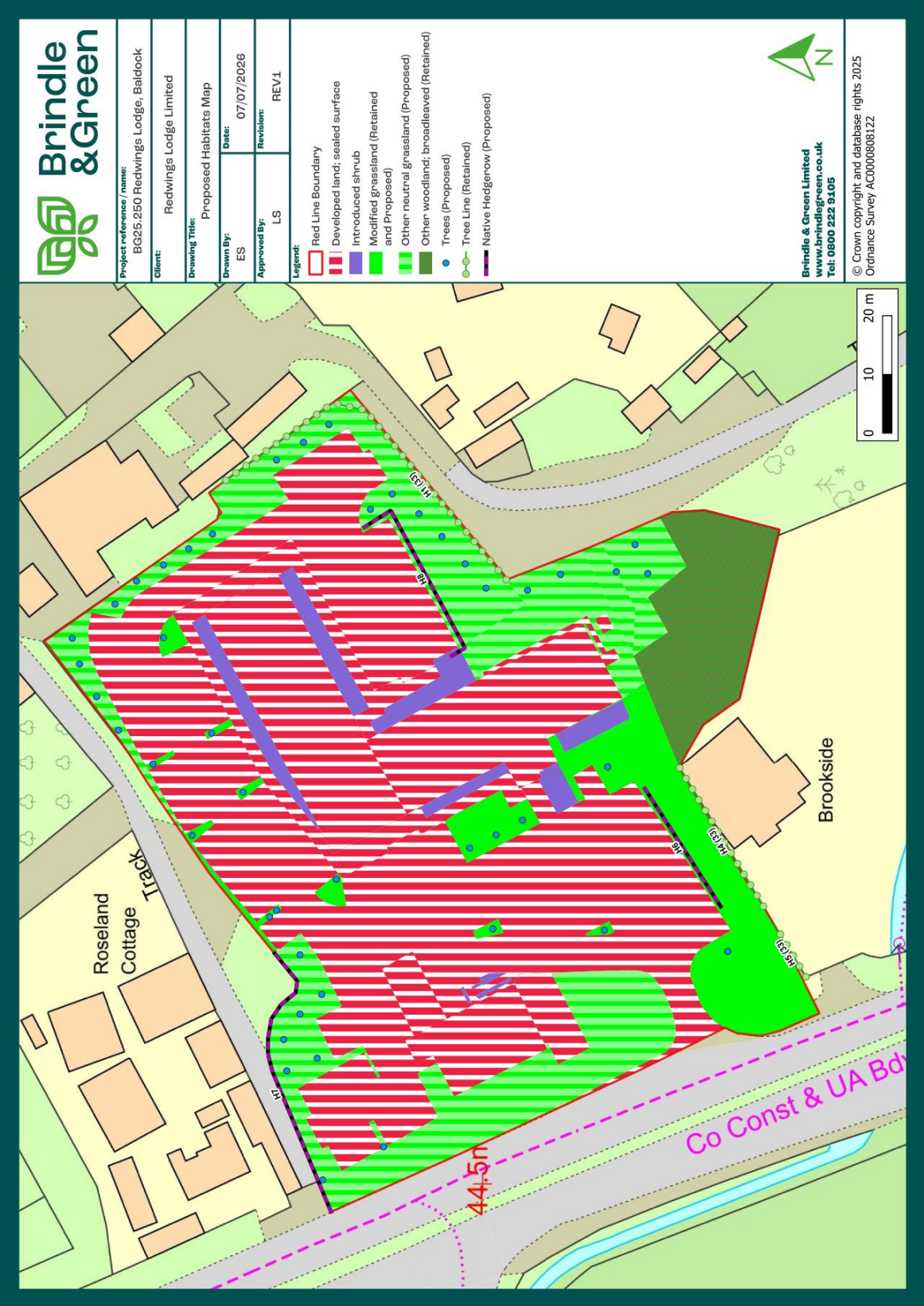
Green highlighted rows indicate target criteria

Appendix 1. Proposed Plans/Landscape Masterplan





Appendix 3. Post Development Habitats



Appendix 4. References

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