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Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Poundlane Cottage,
Pound Lane,
Hurst,
Reading,
RG10 0RS

January 2026

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QUALITY CONTROL		
The information which we have prepared and provided is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.		
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This report remains valid for 2 years from date of issue. Survey data are valid for 12 months from the date the survey was undertaken.		

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It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to works.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report has been produced to provide the results of the Biodiversity Net Gain calculation at Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS in order to ensure compliance with the *National Planning Policy Framework (2024)* regarding no net-loss of biodiversity.
- 1.2. The site proposals are for the demolition of the shed on site, the construction of two outbuildings, the construction of a builders' contractor yard, and the creation of an area of grazing paddock. An area of grassland within the wider site boundary, comprising a grazing paddock, will be used to compensate for the loss of biodiversity resulting from the proposals.
- 1.3. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments calculate the change in ecological value at a site by comparing the number of 'biodiversity units' within the site pre- and post-construction, for both linear habitats and areas of habitat, and demonstrating measurable loss or gain. The ecological value of the site is expressed as a percentage change in total Biodiversity Units following implementation of the proposals. The *DEFRA: The Statutory Biodiversity Metric* has been used to complete this assessment.
- 1.4. This assessment has been informed by a habitat walkover survey and habitat condition assessment. Baseline habitats within the redline boundary include developed land; sealed surface, ruderal vegetation, bramble scrub, and species-rich native hedgerows with trees.
- 1.5. The proposals will result in the loss of the entirety of the ruderal vegetation, building footprint, and bramble scrub. The hardstanding track to the east of the site will be retained. Small sections of the species-rich hedgerow with trees and the line of trees will be lost as part of the works, however, large sections of these linear features will be retained.
- 1.6. Proposed habitats within the redline boundary include building footprint, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated unsealed surface, modified grassland, and individual trees. New species-rich native hedgerows and species-rich native hedgerows with trees will be planted as part of the proposals.
- 1.7. An area of grazing paddock within the blueline boundary will be used to compensate for the loss of biodiversity resulting from the proposals. The baseline habitats within the blueline boundary include building footprint (developed land; sealed surface), large native trees, and modified grassland. A line of trees bounds the southern aspect of this area.
- 1.8. The area of building footprint, the three native trees, and the line of trees will all be retained as part of the proposals. The area of modified grassland will be lost as part of the works, and will subsequently be replaced by a newly created area of other neutral grassland.
- 1.9. The results of the metric can be summarised as follows:
- 1.10. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric demonstrates a +11.56% change in habitats (+0.11 habitat units) and +19.92% change in hedgerows (+0.22 hedgerow units).

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	0.11
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.22
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	11.56%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	19.92%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

- 1.11. Provided the proposed habitats and hedgerows are managed competently, the proposed development at Poundlane Cottage will be in compliance with the NPPF.
- 1.12. It is recommended that a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) be written to ensure the retained, created, and enhanced habitats meet their target score.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1. This report has been produced to provide the results of the Biodiversity Net Gain calculation at Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS in order to ensure compliance with the *National Planning Policy Framework (2024)* regarding no net-loss of biodiversity.
- 2.2. The proposals are for the demolition of the shed on site, the construction of two outbuildings, the construction of a builders' contractor yard, and the creation of an area of grazing paddock. An area of grazing paddock within the wider site boundary will be used to compensate for the loss of biodiversity resulting from the proposals.
- 2.3. This assessment is based on the landscape proposals as shown in the **Appendices**.

Site Overview

- 2.4. The site is situated within a rural area, located 3.60km north of Wokingham town centre, 6.55km northwest of Bracknell town centre, and 10.00km east of Reading town centre.
- 2.5. The site comprises a derelict shed situated within an area of ruderal vegetation and bramble scrub. The site is bounded to the north by a line of trees, and to the west by a species-rich native hedgerow with trees (see **Figure 1**).
- 2.6. The wider landscape comprises a rural mosaic of arable and pastoral fields, interspersed with large parcels of woodland and scattered small urban developments. The M4, running southwest to northeast, divides the landscape 330m south of the site. Dinton Pastures Country Park, which consists of large waterbodies surrounded by areas of broadleaved woodland and open grassland, is situated 2.35km west of the site. Billingbear Park Golf Course is situated 1.25km east of the site.



Figure 1: Site location within the local landscape (Copyright Google Earth Pro, January 2026). The red line denotes the development boundary, and the blue line denotes the wider site area.

3. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY BACKGROUND

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

- 3.1. The NPPF aims to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity. Chapter 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' details what local planning policies should seek to consider with regard to planning applications:
- 3.2. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

187 a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

187 d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.

Habitats and Biodiversity

- 3.3. Specific policies regarding habitats and biodiversity comprise:

192. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

a) identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation and

b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

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

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

b) development on land within or outside of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually

or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the feature of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around development should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

4. METHODOLOGY

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

4.1. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments calculate the change in ecological value at a site by comparing the number of 'Biodiversity Units' within the site pre and post-construction for both linear habitats and areas of other habitats. The ecological value of the site is expressed as a percentage change in total Biodiversity Units following the completion of the proposed development. This is an indicator of what the proposed development's impact would be on the site's existing ecological value and will establish if a net loss of biodiversity has been avoided.

4.2. The biodiversity calculations were undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, the User Guide, Technical Supplement and Condition Assessment Sheets.

Calculation Components

4.3. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric takes account of all the habitats on site prior to development and post-development using UK Habitat Classification System (UKHabs). Using this metric, area habitats are measured in hectares and inputted to three decimal places. Linear habitats are measured in kilometres to the nearest three decimal places.

4.4. The Biodiversity Metric further assesses all habitats using the following:

4.5. *Distinctiveness*- Habitats are automatically given a distinctiveness score based on habitat type. This ranges from 'High' to 'Low'. 'High' distinctiveness habitats include those listed as Habitats of Principal Importance under the NERC Act. Habitats of low wildlife value (such as ornamental planting) are given a 'low' distinctiveness score.

4.6. *Condition*- Habitat conditions are assessed for each individual habitat type using the technical supplement. Habitat condition uses criteria such as botanical diversity and invasive species cover.

4.7. *Strategic Significance*- This relates to the spatial location of a habitat type and if the location is 'ecologically desirable'. Habitats located in areas considered desirable are given a larger weighting within the metric.

4.8. Once the post-development Biodiversity Units have been calculated, the mitigation hierarchy is applied. Application of the mitigation hierarchy is one of the guiding principles for biodiversity no net loss / net gain proposals. Through its application, the hierarchy highlights actions to avoid, minimise or restore biodiversity losses on site, and account for unavoidable losses off-site.

4.9. The difference between the baseline Biodiversity Units and those calculated on the proposed development design indicates the number of units that would be needed to deliver no net loss or a net gain for biodiversity. Using this information, the habitat types and

the size of the area that would be needed off-site to deliver no net loss or net gain can be identified if required.

- 4.10. The area calculations of existing and proposed habitat areas are made using QGIS.
- 4.11. The proposed habitats were calculated from the site landscaping proposals.

Good Practice Principles

- 4.12. Good practice principles for biodiversity net gain are set out in Table 1.1 of the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (Baker *et al*, 2019). The key principles include:
 - Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy (CIEEM, 2018) and be additional by achieving outcomes that exceed existing obligations.
 - Avoid losing biodiversity which cannot be offset elsewhere, for example, irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland.
 - Address any risk (e.g. difficulty of achieving habitat creation or enhancement for net gain.
 - Make a measurable net gain contribution for the site and ensure it is achievable.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 4.13. The accuracy of the habitat area measurements is limited by the form of the baseline data collection and the resolution of development proposal plans. In this instance, the baseline habitats for the site have been calculated by cross-referencing illustrative habitat plans and aerial imagery. Post-development habitats have been measured using QGIS by geo-referencing the proposed layout to the baseline dataset.
- 4.14. The proposed habitat baseline is calculated using both the landscaping plans and professional opinion on the target conditions that can be attained for each habitat type with proficient management. Therefore, all proposed habitat types rely on the implementation of a long-term management plan and planting in line with the provided landscape proposals. Further information on this is provided in the conclusion.
- 4.15. The habitat walkover surveys were undertaken in November and December, which are sub-optimal periods for identifying many native plant species, as many plant species have not grown into recognisable growth forms. Considering the context of the site and the habitats to be impacted by the proposals, it is considered unlikely that this would have a significant impact on the reliability of the survey results or conclusions.

5. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

On-site Pre-development Habitats

- 5.1. Below is a summary of the habitats and condition assessments recorded on site during the habitat walkover survey undertaken by Licensed Ecologist Eleanor Kemp BSc (Hons) MSc and Assistant Ecologist Jordan Holman-Thatcher BSc (Hons) on 27th November 2025.

Area Habitats

Developed Land; Sealed Surface

- 5.2. A hardstanding track is present along the eastern edge of the site. This track is of tarmac construction and is in good condition, with no areas of significant damage recorded, and only low levels of encroaching vegetation noted.
- 5.3. A derelict shed, situated on a concrete foundation, is present within the southwestern corner of the site.
- 5.4. Developed land is not covered by the biodiversity net gain condition assessment and therefore has **not been assigned a condition**. This habitat measures 0.0779ha in size and does not provide any baseline habitat units.

Ruderal or Ephemeral

- 5.5. The majority of the site comprises an area of ruderal vegetation. Patches of bare ground covered by rubble are scattered throughout the habitat, accounting for approximately 40% of the ground cover. The habitat is dominated by tall forb species and species commonly found on disturbed ground, with vegetation accounting for approximately 60% of the ground cover. Large pieces of plastic lining are present under the rubble and vegetation.
- 5.6. Three distinct piles are present within the centre of this habitat, comprising a rubble pile, a pile of heras fencing with concrete bases, and a pile of timber.
- 5.7. The vegetation is predominantly low lying, with an average height of 40cm-50cm. However, variation in height was recorded, with a range of 5cm and 1.5m noted. The vegetation is patchy throughout the habitat, comprising dense parcels of vegetation interspersed by patches of bare earth.
- 5.8. A high species diversity was noted throughout the habitat, with no single species dominating the species composition. Several ornamental species were also recorded within this habitat parcel. Recorded species include Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, annual meadow grass *Poa annua*, evening primrose *Oenothera biennis*, creeping buttercup *ranunculus repens*, rosebay willowherb *Chamaenerion augustifolium*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, bristly oxtongue *Helminthotheca echinoides*, round-leaved cranesbill *Geranium rotundifolium*, dandelion *Taraxacum sp*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, square stalked willow herb *Epilobium tetragonum*, common poppy

Papaver rhoeas, black medic *Medicago lupulina*, stone parsley *Sison amomum*, toadflax *Linaria vulgaris*, mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris*, scentless mayweed *Tripleurospermum inodorum*, forget-me-nots *Myosotis alperstris*, cleavers *Galium aparine*, buddleia *Buddleia* sp. (>5% cover), common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, hollyhock *Alcea* sp., teasel *Dipsacus fullonum*, broad leaved plantain *Plantago major*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, snapdragon *Antirrhinum majus*, small fleabane *Pulicaria vulgaris*, hedge mustard *Sisymbrium officinale*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, and red clover *Trifolium pratense*.

- 5.9. Several pieces of fallen deadwood are also present within this habitat. A concrete curb runs from east to west through the centre of this habitat.
- 5.10. This habitat passes 2 of 3 criteria, failing essential criteria C. Therefore, the area of ruderal vegetation on site was assessed as having a **moderate condition**. This habitat measures 0.2322ha and provides 0.93 baseline habitat units.

Bramble Scrub

- 5.11. A parcel of bramble scrub surrounds the building within the southwestern corner of the site. The scrub measures approximately 1.25m in height on average across the parcel, ranging between 0.5m and 2m in height. Bramble is the dominant species, comprising 80% of the species composition. Scattered stands of ruderal vegetation are also present within the bramble scrub, with the species matching those identified within the neighbouring parcel of ruderal vegetation. Recorded species include common knapweed, spear thistle, common nettle, mugwort, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, field rose *Rosa arvensis*, and rosebay willowherb.
- 5.12. Bramble scrub is not covered by the biodiversity net gain condition assessment and therefore has **not been assigned a condition**. This habitat measures 0.0035ha and provides 0.01 baseline habitat units.

Linear Habitats

Species-rich Native Hedgerow with Trees - Northern

- 5.13. The shrub storey of the hedgerow measures approximately 3m in height and 1.5m in width on average throughout its length. A number of emergent trees are present within the hedgerow, reaching up to 10m in height.
- 5.14. The hedgerow is of a moderate density, with numerous small gaps recorded throughout its length. However, no gaps larger than 1m in length were noted. The hedgerow shows signs of occasional management, holding a fairly uniform appearance at the time of the survey. The shrub storey is fairly young with no mature shrubs recorded. The emergent trees are of varying ages, with young, semi-mature, and mature trees noted.
- 5.15. The species recorded within the hedgerow include hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, field maple *Acer campestre*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, and dog rose *Rosa canina*. The trees within

the hedgerow include hybrid poplar *Populus x canadensis*, Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris*, cypress *Cupressus sp.*, and a pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*.

- 5.16. The hedgerow understory comprises a continuation of the neighbouring sparsely vegetated land habitat.
- 5.17. The northern species-rich native hedgerow with trees fails a total of four attributes, including B2, C1, C2, and D2. Therefore, this hedgerow was assessed as having a **moderate condition**.
- 5.18. This hedgerow measures 0.043km and provides 0.52 baseline hedgerow units.

Species-rich Native Hedgerow with Trees - Western

- 5.19. The hedgerow measures approximately 2m in height and 1.5m in width on average throughout its length. Several emergent trees are present within the hedgerow, ranging between 4m-6m in height.
- 5.20. The hedgerow is of a moderate density, with a couple of medium-sized gaps noted. However, none of the recorded gaps exceeded 1.5m in length. The hedgerow has been left unmanaged and is fairly young with no mature shrubs or trees recorded.
- 5.21. The species recorded within the hedgerow include smooth-leaved elm *Ulmus minor*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hawthorn, bramble, elder, dog rose, pedunculate oak, field maple, and wild cherry *Prunus avium*.
- 5.22. The hedgerow understory comprises a continuation of the neighbouring sparsely vegetated land habitat.
- 5.23. The western species-rich native hedgerow with trees fails a total of five attributes, including B2, C1, C2, D2, and E1. Therefore, this hedgerow was assessed as having a **moderate condition**.
- 5.24. This hedgerow measures 0.049km and provides 0.59 baseline hedgerow units.

Off-site Pre-development Habitats

- 5.25. Below is a summary of the habitats and condition assessments recorded within the wider site area (off-site) during the habitat walkover survey undertaken by Licensed Ecologist Eleanor Kemp BSc (Hons) MSc on 16th December.
- 5.26. The off-site area comprised an area of modified grassland which is grazed by three goats. Three individual trees are present within the habitat, and a line of trees bounds the southern aspect.

Area Habitats

Developed Land; Sealed Surface

- 5.27. A storage shed is present within the southeastern corner of the site. This shed is in good condition, with no areas of significant damage recorded. The shed is accessed regularly.

- 5.28. Developed land is not covered by the biodiversity net gain condition assessment and therefore has **not been assigned a condition**. This shed measures 0.0071ha in size, and provides no baseline habitat units.

Modified Grassland

- 5.29. The off-site area is dominated by an area of modified grassland, which is currently grazed by goats. The grazing has maintained this grassland at a fairly short sward height of approximately 15cm-20cm on average. Some slight variability in the sward height was recorded, with the sward ranging between 5cm and 30cm.
- 5.30. A low cover of moss was recorded throughout the grassland, with moss accounting for approximately 5-10% of the ground cover. Very low amounts of bare earth are present, with bare earth accounting for <5% of the ground cover.
- 5.31. The grassland is dominated by Yorkshire fog, creeping buttercup, and perennial ryegrass, with other recorded species including ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, common chickweed *Stellaria media*, broadleaved dock, ribwort plantain, ragwort, dove's foot cranesbill *Geranium molle*, common nettle, common sorrel, white clover, and dandelion.
- 5.32. Low levels of construction equipment and garden equipment are scattered across the grassland, resulting in patches of damage.
- 5.33. This area of grassland passed 6 of 7 criteria, failing criteria D. As such, this habitat was assessed as having a **good condition**. This habitat measures 0.1781ha and provides 1.07 baseline habitat units.

Individual Trees

- 5.34. Three individual trees are present along the eastern boundary of the off-site area, comprising three semi-mature oak trees. These trees are large in size and measure 0.1099ha in total.
- 5.35. These trees passed 5 of 6 criteria, failing criterion C. As such, these trees were assessed as having a **good condition**. The individual trees provide 1.52 baseline habitat units.

Linear Habitats

Line of Trees

- 5.36. A line of trees, measuring 0.039km in length, bounds the southern aspect of the site.
- 5.37. This line of trees is only a single tree deep, and comprises a combination of semi-mature silver birch *Betula pendula* and hybrid poplar. No shrub storey is present.
- 5.38. The line of trees ranges between 6m-10m in height. The canopy is continuous throughout, with no gaps recorded.

5.39. This line of trees passes 2 of 5 criteria, failing criteria A, C, and D. As such, this line of trees was assessed as having a poor condition. This habitat measures 0.039km in length, and provides 0.08 baseline hedgerow units.

OFF-SITE HABITAT WALKOVER PHOTOS



Image 1: Storage shed and individual trees, facing southeast



Image 2: Line of trees, facing south



Image 3: Area of modified grassland, facing west



Image 4: Area of modified grassland, facing east

Summary of Baseline Units

- 5.40. The total area of on-site pre-development habitat is 0.31ha with a total of **0.94 baseline Habitat Units**. The proposals will retain 0.0706ha of developed land; sealed surface. Therefore, the proposals will result in the loss of 0.24ha of habitats, which reduces the biodiversity value of the site by -0.94 habitat units.
- 5.41. The total area of off-site pre-development habitat is 0.19ha with a total of **2.59 baseline Habitat Units**. The proposals will retain 0.0071ha of developed land; sealed surface, and all three individual trees (totalling 0.1099ha). The proposals will result in the loss of 0.1781ha of modified grassland, which reduces the biodiversity value of the off-site area by -1.07 habitat units.
- 5.42. 0.092km of species-rich native hedgerows with trees are present bounding the site, which provide 1.10 **baseline Hedgerow Units**. The proposals will retain 0.078km of species-rich native hedgerow with trees. Therefore, the proposals will result in the loss of 0.014km of hedgerows, which reduces the biodiversity value of the site by 0.17 hedgerow units.
- 5.43. 0.019km of line of trees is present, bounding the southern aspect of the site, which provides 0.08 **baseline Hedgerow Units**. The proposals will retain the whole length of the line of trees. Therefore, the proposals will not result in the loss of any off-site hedgerows or tree lines.

On-site Post Development Habitats

- 5.44. The post-development proposals for the site comprise the demolition of the existing building on site, and the subsequent construction of two outbuildings, the construction of a builders contractor yard with an associated gravel track, and the creation of a grazing pasture.
- 5.45. The post-development habitats comprise buildings, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated unsealed surface, mixed scrub, and modified grassland. New species-rich native hedgerows with trees, species-rich native hedgerows, and individual native trees will be planted on site.

Developed Land; Sealed Surface

- 5.46. The proposals include the creation of 0.0461ha of developed land; sealed surface on site in the form of building footprint and a hardstanding contractor yard.
- 5.47. This will **not provide any additional habitat units**.

Artificial Unvegetated Unsealed Surface

- 5.48. The proposals include the creation of a gravel driveway on the eastern aspect of the site, which will measure 0.0229ha in size.
- 5.49. This will **not provide any additional habitat units**.

Modified Grassland

- 5.50. A grazing pasture, comprising modified grassland, will be created within the southern half of the site, measuring 0.1215ha in size.
- 5.51. This area of grazing pasture will be grazed by the goats, which are currently within the off-site paddock. It is anticipated that the character and condition of this grazing paddock will develop to match that of the existing grazing paddock within the off-site area. As such, this area of modified grassland has been assigned a **moderate target condition**.
- 5.52. The proposed creation of moderate condition modified grassland as part of this development will provide **+0.42 habitat units**.
- 5.53. Further areas of modified grassland will be created around the contractor's yard, totalling 0.0275ha. Due to their proximity to the contractor's yard, it is anticipated that these areas of grassland will suffer from moderate levels of anthropogenic disturbance. As such, these areas of modified grassland have been assigned a **poor target condition**.
- 5.54. The proposed creation of poor condition modified grassland as part of this development will provide **+0.05 habitat units**.

Mixed Scrub

- 5.55. Areas of mixed scrub planting will be located along the northern boundary of the site, measuring 0.0250ha in total.
- 5.56. The areas of scrub will be planted with a combination of at least three native woody species. Recommended species include blackthorn, hawthorn, dog rose, spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, and guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*. Other wildlife beneficial species will additionally be incorporated, such as honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, old man's beard *Clematis vitalba*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, and dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*. Once established, infill planting and the replacement of dead standards will be undertaken to ensure a combination of age classes is present within the scrub.
- 5.57. These areas of scrub, with appropriate management, are anticipated to achieve **moderate condition**.
- 5.58. The proposed creation of habitats as part of this development will provide **+0.17 habitat units**.

Individual Trees

- 5.59. The proposals include the planting of ten small trees, measuring 0.0407ha in total. These trees will be located within the grazing paddock.
- 5.60. These trees will be native species and grown in an optimal habitat, and have therefore been set a **moderate target condition**.
- 5.61. The proposed planting of these trees as part of this development will provide **+0.14 habitat units**.

Species-rich Native Hedgerows with Trees

- 5.62. 0.063km of new species-rich native hedgerows with trees will be planted within the site. This hedgerow will consist solely of native species, comprising at least five native woody species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, beech *Fagus sylvatica*, hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, and elder, alongside complementary native species such as white bryony *Bryonia dioica*, black bryony *Dioscorea communis*, honeysuckle, dog rose, and clematis.
- 5.63. Each 4-8m stretch of hedgerow will contain at least one small tree, with a diameter of at least 7.5cm at breast height at the time of planting. Small species such as crab apple *Malus sylvestris*, bird cherry *Prunus padus*, field maple *Acer campestre*, rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Plymouth pear *Pyrus cordata*, and native willow species *Salix sp* are recommended.
- 5.64. With appropriate management, it is anticipated that these hedgerows will be maintained at a **poor target condition**.
- 5.65. The proposed creation of hedgerows as part of this development will provide **+0.36 linear units**.

Species-Rich Native Hedgerow

- 5.66. Approximately 0.006km of native hedgerows will be planted within the site as part of the proposals.
- 5.67. These hedgerows will contain a mixture of at least five native woody shrub and scrub species, with recommended species matching those for the species-rich native hedgerows with trees above.
- 5.68. With appropriate management, it is anticipated that these hedgerows will be maintained at a **poor target condition**.
- 5.69. The proposed creation of habitats as part of this development will provide **+0.02 hedgerow units**.

Off-site Post Development Habitats

- 5.70. The off-site post-development proposals for the site comprise the loss of the areas of modified grassland and the subsequent creation of an area of other neutral grassland. The storage shed, individual trees, and line of trees will all be retained as part of the proposals.
- 5.71. New individual native trees will be planted on site.

Other Neutral Grassland

- 5.72. An area of other neutral grassland will be created on site, measuring 0.1781ha in total.
- 5.73. The grassland will be sown with an appropriate species-rich grassland mixture (such as EM2 - Standard General Purpose Meadow Mixture, EM3 - Special General Purpose Meadow Mixture, or EM10 - Tussock Meadow Mixture) in the autumn or spring, following appropriate ground preparation.

- 5.74. The area of neutral grassland will be managed to **moderate condition**. This will provide **+1.19 habitat units**.

Individual Urban Trees

- 5.75. The proposals include the planting of 10 new native trees within the area of neutral grassland. These will be planted at a 'small' size. These trees will be native species and grown in an optimal habitat, and have therefore been set a **moderate target condition**.
- 5.76. The proposed planting of these trees as part of this development will provide **+0.14 habitat units**.

6. RESULTS AND EVALUATION

- 6.1. Overall, the site will achieve a **+11.56% (+0.11 habitat units) net gain for habitats and +19.92% (+0.22 units)** for linear features within the site based on the current proposals as set out in the **Appendices**. A summary of these results within the metric can be found below:

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.11		
	Hedgerow units	0.22		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	11.56%		
	Hedgerow units	19.92%		
	Watercourse units	0.00%		
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓			
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.94	1.04	0.00
Hedgerow units	10.00%	1.10	1.21	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

- 6.2. The Metric in an Excel spreadsheet will also be provided, along with comments where deemed necessary.
- 6.3. Provided the habitats and hedgerows are sufficiently managed, the proposals for the site will achieve a 10% net gain in habitat units and hedgerow units, and as such, the development at Poundlane Cottage will be in line with the NPPF.

Further Recommendations

- 6.4. It is recommended that a CEMP and HMMP be produced for the proposals, which will detail habitat implementation and management. The CEMP should describe how retained habitats will be protected during the construction phase, to ensure their condition is not negatively impacted. The HMMP should be prepared over a 30-year period, with more detail provided for the 1-3 year implementation and 3-5 year maintenance period. The HMMP should also contain proposals for monitoring visits, including the frequency of visits, and the scope for remedial works/changes to management prescriptions. All drawings and maps will be produced using QGIS to allow accurate monitoring.
- 6.5. Implementation of the recommendations within the CEMP and HMMP should be managed by the site Biodiversity Champion, who will be the lead to ensure compliance with all ecological strategies for the site.

7. REFERENCES

CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*.

Darwin Ecology (2025) *Ecological Impact Assessment - Poundlane Cottage, Dec'25*.

Darwin Ecology Ltd, Farnham.

CIRIA, CIEEM, IEMA (2016) Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development [Available <https://cieem.net/wpcontent/uploads/2019/02/Biodiversity-Net-Gain-Principles.pdf>] [January 2026].

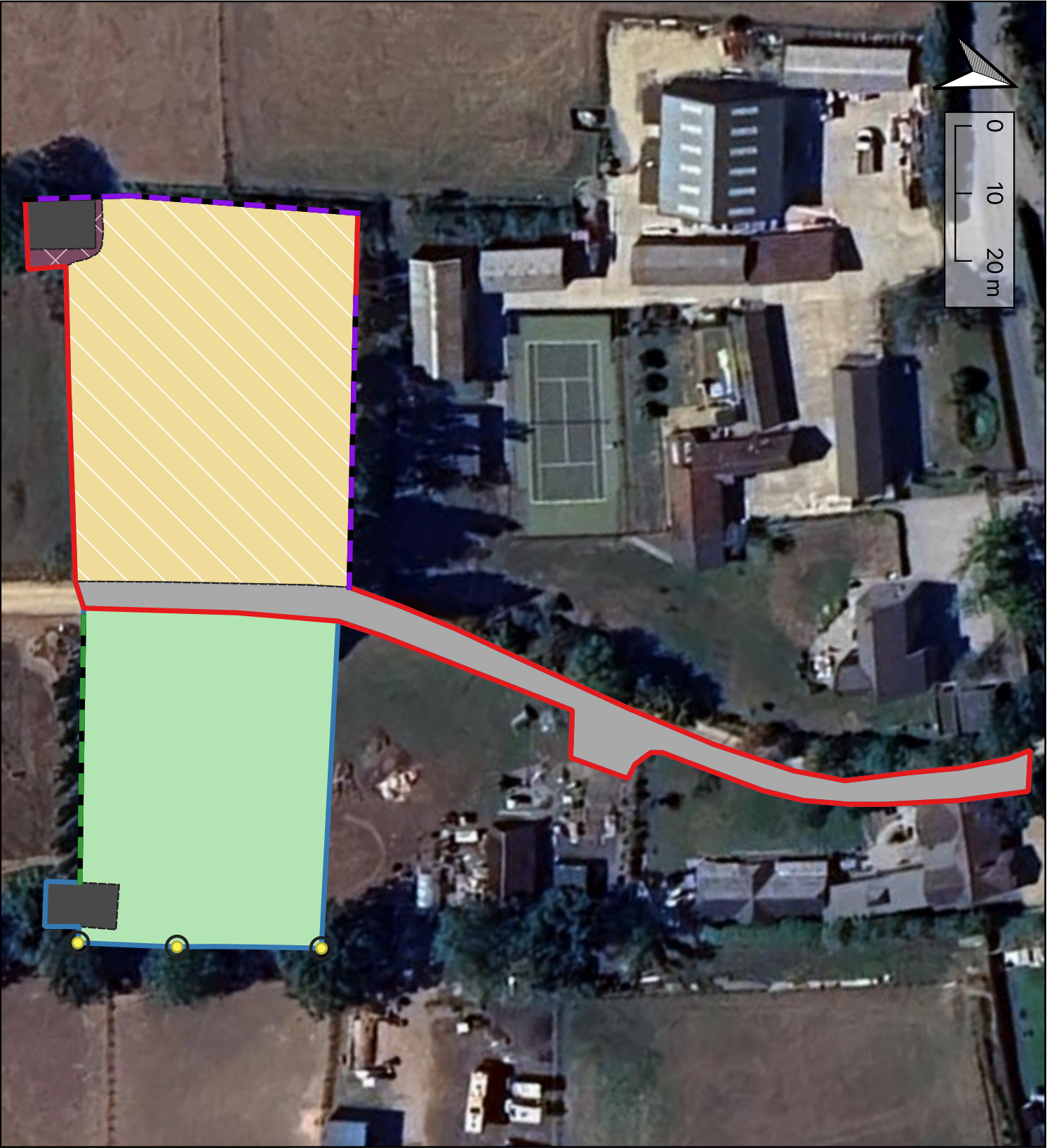
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Statutory biodiversity metric condition assessments [Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>] [January 2026].

UKHab Ltd 2023. UK Habitat Classification V2.01 July 2023.

APPENDICES

- 1. PROPOSED PLANS**
- 2. PRE-DEVELOPMENT MAP**
- 3. POST-DEVELOPMENT MAP**
- 4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS**



Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Blue Line Boundary

INDIVIDUAL TREES

- Existing Large Rural Tree

HEDGEROWS

- Line of trees
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees

HABITATS

- Bramble scrub
- Buildings
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Modified grassland
- Ruderal/Ephemeral

Google Satellite



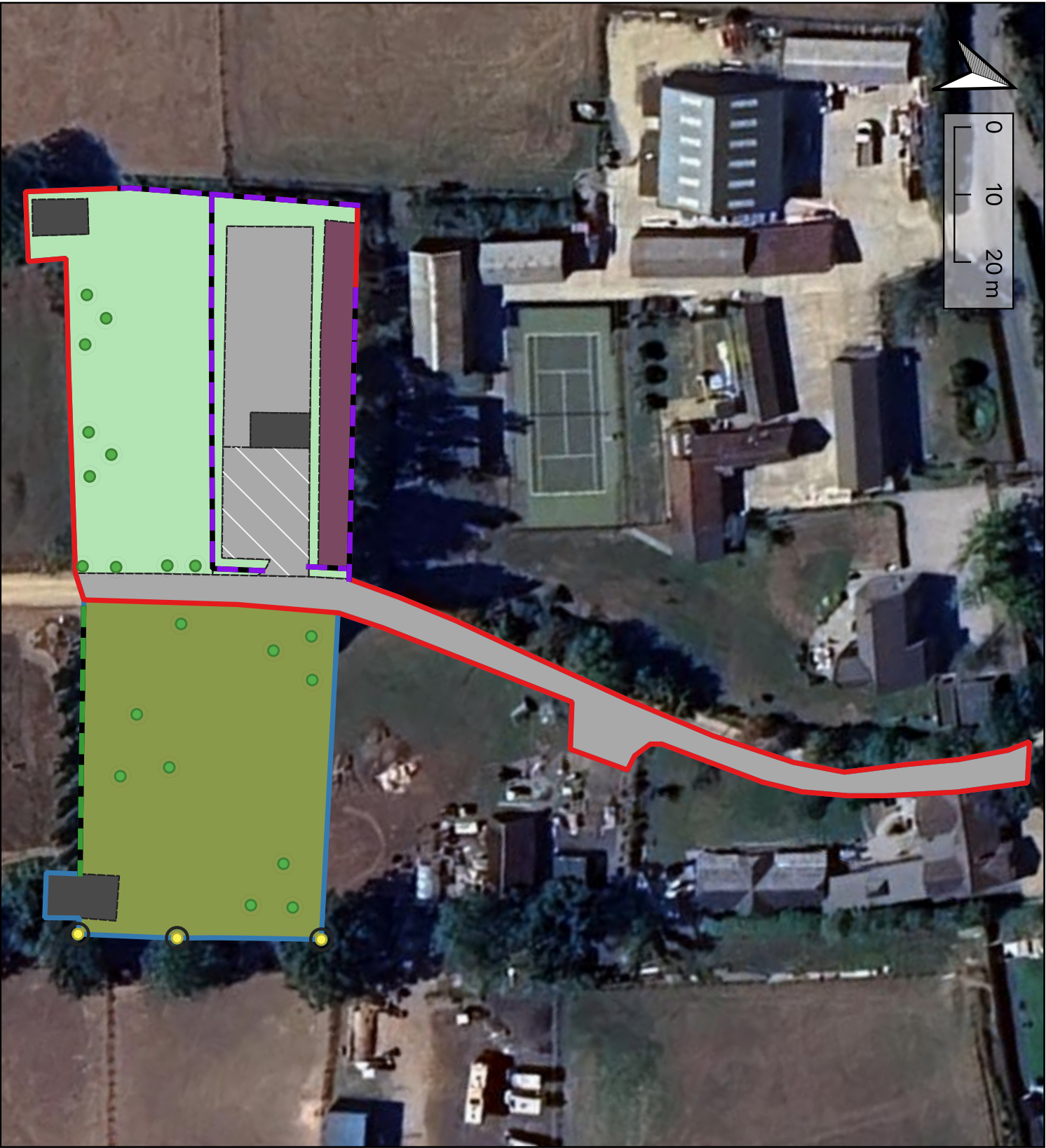
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Project: Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS

Appendix: Pre-development Habitat Map

Date: January 2026



Contains OS data © Crown copyright (2026) **NOTE:** Areas are indicative and are not shown to exact scale.

Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Blue Line Boundary

INDIVIDUAL TREES

- Proposed Small Rural Tree
- Retained Large Rural Tree

HEDGEROWS

- Line of trees
- Species-rich native hedgerow
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees

HABITATS

- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Buildings
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Mixed scrub
- Modified grassland
- Other neutral grassland

Google Satellite



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Appendix: Post-development Habitat Map

Date: January 2026

Condition sheet: HEDGEROW Habitat Types					
Habitat Type					
Native hedgerow					
Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch					
Native hedgerow with trees					
Native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch					
Species-rich native hedgerow					
Species-rich native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch					
Species-rich native hedgerow with trees					
Species-rich native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch					
Habitat Description					
Species Rich Native Hedgerow with Trees on Nothern Boundary					
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Technical Annex 2 and UK Habitat Classification: ukhab – UK Habitat Classification					
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS		Survey date and Surveyor name	27th November 2025 - Licensed Ecologist Eleanor Kemp BSc (Hons) MSc and Assistant Ecologist Jordan Holman Thatcher BSc (Hons)	
Limitations (if applicable)	NA		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	NA	
Grid reference	NA		Habitat parcel reference	NA	
Condition Assessment Details					
A series of ten attributes, representing key physical characteristics are used for this assessment. Each attribute is assigned to one of five functional groups (A – E) and the condition of a hedgerow is assessed according to the number of attributes from these functional groups which pass or fail the ‘favourable condition’ criteria.					
This assessment is based on the Hedgerow Survey Handbook ¹ and Favourable Conservation Status document ² . For further clarification please refer to the Hedgerow Survey Handbook.					
Best practice would be to record the species, age, spacing and other key information about all trees present along a hedgerow within the 'Habitat Description' box, as well as other key features of the hedgerow.					
Hedgerow favourable condition attributes					
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types					
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height).	Yes	
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).	Yes	
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).	Yes	
B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m	This is the horizontal 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).	No	Gaps make up >10% of the length
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).	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow. This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.	No	Hedgerow is backed by a fence. The ground on either side of the hedgerow faces moderate levels of disturbance.

C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	No	Species indicative of nutrient enrichment dominate >20% cover of the ground around the hedgerow.
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.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website ⁵ where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website ⁷ .	Yes	
D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	No	>10% of the ground around the hedgerow shows signs of being damaged through human activities
Additional group - applicable to hedgerows with trees only					
E1.	Tree class	There is more than one age-class (or morphology) of tree present (for example: young, mature, veteran and or ancient ⁸), and there is on average at least one mature, ancient or veteran tree present per 20 - 50m of hedgerow.	This criterion addresses if there are a range of age-classes or morphologies which allow for replacement of trees and provide opportunities for different species.	Yes	
E2.	Tree health	At least 95% of hedgerow trees are in a healthy condition (excluding veteran features valuable for wildlife). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	This criterion identifies if the trees are subject to damage which compromises the survival and health of the individual specimens.	Yes	

The hedgerow condition assessment generates a weighting (score) ranging from 1 - 3, which is used within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The scores for each are set out in the tables below.

Condition categories for hedgerows without trees

Category	Category Requirements	Metric Score
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	3
Moderate	No more than 4 failures in total; AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and C2 = Moderate condition).	2
Poor	Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; OR <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1
Score achieved:		

Condition categories for hedgerows with trees

Category	Category Requirements	Metric score
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	3
Moderate	No more than 5 failures in total; AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition).	2
Poor	Fails a total of more than 5 attributes; OR <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1
Score achieved:		2

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

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Condition sheet: HEDGEROW Habitat Types					
Habitat Type					
Native hedgerow					
Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch					
Native hedgerow with trees					
Native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch					
Species-rich native hedgerow					
Species-rich native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch					
Species-rich native hedgerow with trees					
Species-rich native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch					
Habitat Description					
Species Rich Native Hedgerow with Trees on Western Boundary					
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Technical Annex 2 and UK Habitat Classification: ukhab – UK Habitat Classification					
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS		Survey date and Surveyor name	27th November 2025 - Licensed Ecologist Eleanor Kemp BSc (Hons) MSc and Assistant Ecologist Jordan Holman Thatcher BSc (Hons)	
Limitations (if applicable)	NA		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	NA	
Grid reference	NA		Habitat parcel reference	NA	
Condition Assessment Details					
A series of ten attributes, representing key physical characteristics are used for this assessment. Each attribute is assigned to one of five functional groups (A – E) and the condition of a hedgerow is assessed according to the number of attributes from these functional groups which pass or fail the ‘favourable condition’ criteria.					
This assessment is based on the Hedgerow Survey Handbook ¹ and Favourable Conservation Status document ² . For further clarification please refer to the Hedgerow Survey Handbook.					
Best practice would be to record the species, age, spacing and other key information about all trees present along a hedgerow within the 'Habitat Description' box, as well as other key features of the hedgerow.					
Hedgerow favourable condition attributes					
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)	Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)	
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types					
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height).	Yes	
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).	Yes	
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).	Yes	
B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m	This is the horizontal 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).	No	Gaps make up >10% of the length
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).	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow. This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.	No	Hedgerow is backed by a fence. The ground on either side of the hedgerow faces moderate levels of disturbance.

C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	No	Species indicative of nutrient enrichment dominate >20% cover of the ground around the hedgerow.
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.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website ⁵ where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website ⁷ .	Yes	
D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	No	>10% of the ground around the hedgerow shows signs of being damaged through human activities
Additional group - applicable to hedgerows with trees only					
E1.	Tree class	There is more than one age-class (or morphology) of tree present (for example: young, mature, veteran and or ancient ⁸), and there is on average at least one mature, ancient or veteran tree present per 20 - 50m of hedgerow.	This criterion addresses if there are a range of age-classes or morphologies which allow for replacement of trees and provide opportunities for different species.	No	The trees are all young and semi-mature. No mature trees were recorded.
E2.	Tree health	At least 95% of hedgerow trees are in a healthy condition (excluding veteran features valuable for wildlife). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	This criterion identifies if the trees are subject to damage which compromises the survival and health of the individual specimens.	Yes	

The hedgerow condition assessment generates a weighting (score) ranging from 1 - 3, which is used within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The scores for each are set out in the tables below.

Condition categories for hedgerows without trees

Category	Category Requirements	Metric Score
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	3
Moderate	No more than 4 failures in total; AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and C2 = Moderate condition).	2
Poor	Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; OR <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1
Score achieved:		

Condition categories for hedgerows with trees

Category	Category Requirements	Metric score
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	3
Moderate	No more than 5 failures in total; AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition).	2
Poor	Fails a total of more than 5 attributes; OR <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1
Score achieved:		2

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

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Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral Sparsely vegetated land - Tall forbs Urban - Allotments Urban - Biodiverse green roof Urban - Bioswale Urban - Cemeteries and churchyards Urban - Facade-bound green wall Urban - Ground based green wall Urban - Intensive green roof Urban - Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land Urban - Rain garden Urban - Sustainable drainage system (SuDS) Urban - Vacant or derelict land Urban - Bare ground			
Habitat Description			
Ruderal Vegetation			
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide for green roofs and UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) for other habitats:			UKHab – UK Habitat Classification
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS	Survey date and Surveyor name	27th November 2025 - Licensed Ecologist Eleanor Kemp BSc (Hons) MSc and
Limitations (if applicable)	NA	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	NA
Grid reference	NA	Habitat parcel reference	NA
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - must be assessed for all urban habitat types :			
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Yes	
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Yes	
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	No	Buddleia accounts for >5% of the vegetated ground cover
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land only:			
D	The parcel shows spatial variation and forms a mosaic of bare substrate PLUS: - At least four early successional communities (a) to (i); Communities: (a) annuals; (b) mosses/liverworts; (c) lichens; (d) ruderals; (e) inundation species; (f) open grassland; (g) flower-rich grassland; (h) heathland, (i) pools.		
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for Bioswale and SuDS habitat types only:			
E1	Plant species are mostly native. If non-native species are present, they should not be detrimental to the habitat or native wildlife ⁴ .		
E2	The vegetation is comprised of plant species suited to wetland or riparian situations.		
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Intensive green roofs only:			

F	The roof has a minimum of 50% native and non-native wildflowers. 70% of the roof area is soil and vegetation (including water features).		
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Biodiverse green roofs only:			
G	The roof has a varied depth of 80 – 150 mm; at least 50% is at 150 mm and is planted and seeded with wildflowers and sedums or is pre-prepared with sedums and wildflowers. Note – to achieve Good condition some additional habitat, such as sand piles, stones, logs etc. are present.		
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)			Yes
Number of criteria passed			
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only (all listed urban habitats except Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, Bioswale, SuDS and Green roofs) :			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Good (3)	Good
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Moderate (2)	
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.		Poor (1)	
Results for Green roofs and Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land (requiring assessment of 4 criteria only - core criteria plus additional criterion specified for habitat type):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C; AND • Passes additional criterion relevant to specific habitat type (D, F or G).		Good (3)	
• Passes 2 or 3 of 4 criteria; OR • Passes 4 of 4 criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Moderate (2)	
• Passes 0 or 1 of 4 criteria.		Poor (1)	
Results for Bioswale or SuDS (requiring assessment of 5 criteria - core criteria plus additional criteria specified for habitat type):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C; AND • Passes all additional criteria relevant to specific habitat type (Group E)		Good (3)	
• Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria; OR • Passes 5 of 5 criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Moderate (2)	
• Passes 2 or fewer of 5 criteria.		Poor (1)	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
Footnotes			

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS	Survey date and Surveyor name	27th November 2025 - Licensed Ecologist Eleanor Kemp BSc (Hons) MSc and Assistant Ecologist Jordan Hill BSc (Hons)
Limitations (if applicable)	NA	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	NA
Grid reference	NA	Habitat parcel reference	NA
Habitat Description			
Modified Grassland Grazing Paddock			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
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.	Yes	
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.	Yes	
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.	Yes	
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.	No	Scattered construction equipment present within grassland
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Yes	
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes	
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Yes	
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			Yes
Number of criteria passed			6
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)	Good	
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)		
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Individual trees – Urban trees			
Individual trees – Rural trees			
Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.			
Please see separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of Rural trees.			
Habitat Description			
Individual Oak Trees within Off-site Area. All three trees were assessed to pass and fail the same criteria.			
Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment):			
Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching.			
Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only):			
Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies must overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS	Survey date and Surveyor name	27th November 2025 - Licensed Ecologist Eleanor Kemp BSc (Hons) MSc and Assistant Ecologist Jordan Holman Thatcher BSc (Hons)
Limitations (if applicable)	NA	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	NA
Grid reference	NA	Habitat parcel reference	NA
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	
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).	Yes	
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	No	The oak trees are semi-mature
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.	Yes	
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Yes	
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	
Number of criteria passed		5	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)	Good	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.			
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score ²			

Condition Sheet: LINE OF TREES Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Line of trees			
Line of trees – associated with bank or ditch			
Ecologically valuable line of trees			
Ecologically valuable line of trees – associated with bank or ditch			
Habitat Description			
Line of Trees within Off-site Area			
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide.			
This assessment is based on the Hedgerow Survey Handbook ¹ . For further clarifications please refer to the Handbook.			
Where ancient and veteran trees are present within the line of trees, see Footnote 2 for standing advice.			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0RS	Survey date and Surveyor name	27th November 2025 - Licensed Ecologist Eleanor Kemp BSc (Hons) MSc and Assistant Ecologist Jordan Holman
Limitations (if applicable)	NA	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	NA
Grid reference	NA	Habitat parcel reference	NA
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	At least 70% of trees are native species.	No	Dominated by hybrid poplar
B	Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide.	Yes	
C	One or more trees has veteran features and or natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates, such as presence of standing and attached deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	All young/semi-mature trees. No natural ecological niches were recorded.
D	There is an undisturbed naturally-vegetated strip of at least 6 m on both sides to protect the line of trees from farming and other human activities (excluding grazing). Where veteran trees are present, root protection areas should follow standing advice ² .	No	The line of trees is backed by a timber fence, behind which sits a residential garden.
E	At least 95% of the trees are in a healthy condition (deadwood or veteran features valuable for wildlife are excluded from this). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	Yes	
Number of criteria passed			2
Condition Assessment Result (out of 5 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	Poor	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
Footnotes			