



envirotech

**Ecological Consultants
Environmental and Rural Chartered Surveyors**

Biodiversity Net Gain

**Reliance Precision and International House, Rowley Mills,
Huddersfield**



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ACCURACY OF REPORT

This report has been compiled based on the methodology as detailed and the professional experience of the surveyor. Whilst the report reflects the situation found as accurately as possible, all of the protected species this survey covers are wild and can move freely from site to site. Their presence or absence detailed in this report does not entirely preclude the possibility of a different past, current or future use of the site surveyed.

We would ask all clients acting upon the contents of this report to show due diligence when undertaking work on their site and/or in their interaction with protected species. If protected species are found during a work programme, and continuing the work programme could result in their disturbance, injury or death, either directly or indirectly an offence may be committed.

If in doubt, stop work and seek further professional advice.

Quality and Environmental Assurance

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Report

Envirotech were requested to carry out a biodiversity assessment of Reliance Precision, Rowley Mills, Huddersfield. The aim was for an ecologist with botanical expertise to carry out a site visit to map the habitat types present at the site in order to establish the biodiversity baseline.

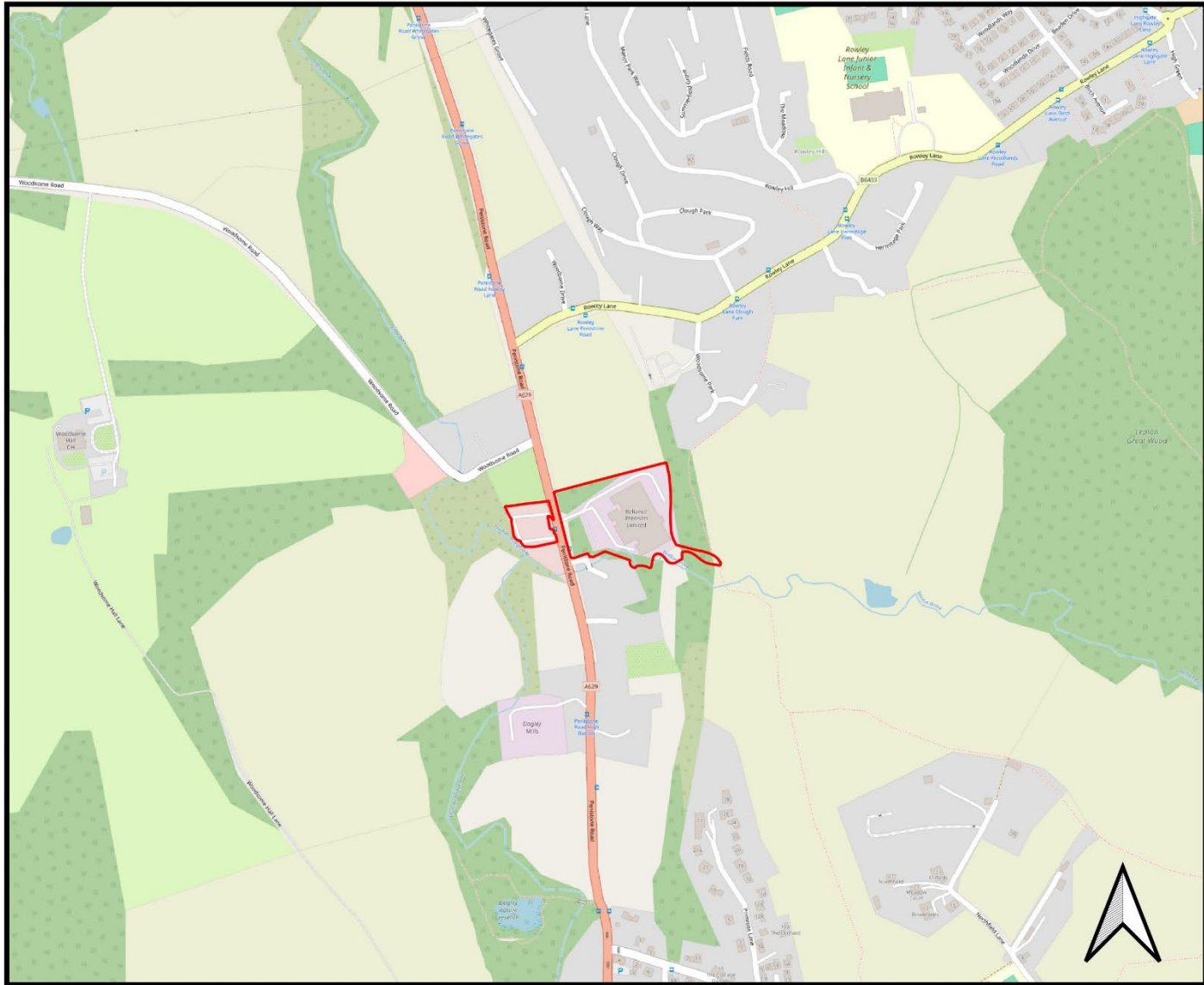
Each habitat type was mapped using the standard habitat mapping convention using UK Habitat Classification V2 (Butcher et al., 2023) for the purposes of using the Defra metric.

Using the findings of the baseline surveys, pre-construction ecology was measured against proposed habitat changes arising from future ecological enhancements based on an Illustrative Landscape Plan (post-construction) provided by the client.

This report presents the results of this desk-based study to assess net change in biodiversity 'units' in connection with the removal of habitats for the proposed development at the site.

Ecological Context

The site is 2.1ha and *Figure 1* shows the site location.



 Red Line Boundary

Figure 1
Site Location



Policy context

The primary aims of Biodiversity Net Gain are to secure a measurable improvement in habitat for biodiversity, to minimise biodiversity losses and to help to restore ecological networks whilst streamlining development processes.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes provisions for the delivery of biodiversity net gain. Additionally, there is a 10% net gain requirement in the Environment Bill.

METHODS

Biodiversity Assessment Methods

To calculate biodiversity units for the site and assess any changes arising from the proposed development this study uses methods set out the latest Statutory Biodiversity Metric user guide (Natural England, 2024).

The biodiversity metric uses three core measurements:

- Habitat area
- Length of linear terrestrial habitats
- Length of linear aquatic habitats.

Consequently, a site can have three biodiversity unit values, which are assessed using the same metric, but cannot be summed together.

Habitat area is multiplied by several factors that indicate its quality: distinctiveness, condition, strategic location and connectivity, and this gives its biodiversity unit value. This can be used for existing and future created habitats. In addition, when habitats are to be enhanced or newly-created, the risk of failure is accounted for by applying multipliers for risk factors (difficulty, time to target condition, and off-site risk).

Habitat Distinctiveness

Habitats are classified using the UK habitat classification V2 system (Butcher et al., 2023).

The metric pre-assigns each habitat type to a distinctiveness band according to its distinguishing features, i.e. species richness, rarity (at local, regional, national and international scales), and the degree to which it supports species rarely found in other habitats. On rare occasions, the habitat distinctiveness of a habitat can be altered up or down from the preassigned value. Any alterations must then be fully explained using evidence relevant to the site, e.g. an increase in distinctiveness because of rare flora or fauna or a decrease in distinctiveness because of significant damage to the habitat.

Habitat Condition

Habitat condition measures the varying quality of similar habitats against what is perceived to be their optimal state. The statutory biodiversity metric technical supplement (Natural England, 2023) contains condition sheets for all habitats to which the metric can apply. The condition

sheets contain a habitat description, contextual information to aid the assessment, and the assessment criteria. The criteria describe what components need to be present for a habitat to be in good, moderate or poor condition.

Strategic Location

Strategic location - sometimes called 'strategic significance' - works at a landscape scale, allowing additional value to be added to habitats in 'priority' or 'biodiversity target areas'. They include statutory and non-statutory sites and other areas with biodiversity value or potential, and they are mainly identified from local plans and objectives. If a habitat is within such a target area, a multiplier is applied to increase its value.

Difficulty of Creation and Restoration

The risks associated with creating new or enhancing existing habitats, are known as difficulty factors; for example, where habitats fail to establish owing to natural changes in local conditions, incorrect management or for unknown reasons. The statutory biodiversity metric contains default values for each habitat based on the average difficulty of creating or enhancing a habitat. Occasionally, under exceptional circumstances, these can be modified, but any deviation from the default value must be fully justified.

Time to Target Condition

There is often a lag between a habitat being removed and the new compensation habitats achieving their target condition. This gives reduced biodiversity value for a time. The statutory biodiversity metric preassigns the time to target condition based on good practice and typical conditions, and assigns a multiplier based on the number of years required to achieve it.

Using bespoke techniques under unique conditions, or creating compensation habitats prior to impacts taking place, the time to target condition can be adjusted. Any changes must again be fully justified.

Off-site Risk

Sometimes it is not possible to compensate adequately for loss of biodiversity within the site boundary, so off-site compensation is required. If the off-site compensation is a significant distance from the development site, then there will be a local loss of biodiversity and a multiplier is applied to any off-site compensation.

BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT

Biodiversity Baseline

The sites baseline BNG value was calculated using the Statutory BNG metric and UKHabs v2 methodology. This was shown in the PEA report, as Figure 6 and 7, reproduced overleaf.

The baseline value for the site is as at 12.2.2025. This is the date that our assessment was undertaken. We consider there will have been no substantive changes to habitat condition at the time of the planning application being made.

We are not aware of any habitat features which have been purposefully degraded after 30th January 2020.

We consider planning permission, if granted, would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition

The type, area and distinctiveness values are shown on Table 1.










-  Red Line Boundary
-  Target Notes
-  h3h Mixed Scrub
-  u1 Built Up Areas and Gardens
-  u1b5 Building
-  w1f Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland
-  w1h Other Woodland; Mixed

Figure 6
UK Habitats Survey
Map





- Red Line Boundary
- Target Notes
- Trees
- g4 Modified Grassland
- u1 Built Up Areas and Gardens
- u1b Developed Land Sealed surface
- u1b5 Building
- w1h Other Woodland; Mixed

Figure 7
UK Habitats Survey
Map



Habitat Parcel	Habitat	Area	Distinctiveness	Notes
1	Developed land; sealed surface	1.099	V.Low	Buildings
2	Vegetated garden	0.028	Low	Introduced shrubs to carpark
5	Mixed scrub	0.117	Medium	To bank rear of buildings
3	Other woodland; broadleaved	0.334	Medium	Plantation woodland to side of carparks
4	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	0.231	High	Native woodland to South and East
	Urban tree	0.1303	Medium	Trees around carpark
6	Developed land; sealed surface	0.2664	V.Low	Buildings
8	Introduced shrub	0.0118	Low	Introduced shrubs to carpark
7	Modified grassland	0.0449	Low	Short mown species poor around carpark
9	Urban tree	0.0489	Medium	Trees in modified grassland

Table 1- Habitat, Area and Distinctiveness Values

Avoidance: the first step of the mitigation hierarchy comprises measures taken to avoid creating impacts from the outset, such as careful spatial placement of infrastructure, or timing construction sensitively to avoid or disturbance. Examples include the placement of roads outside of rare habitats or key species' breeding grounds, or timing of seismic operations when aggregations of whales are not present. Avoidance is often the easiest, cheapest and most effective way of reducing potential negative impacts, but it requires biodiversity to be considered in the early stages of a project.

There are no irreplaceable habitats on the site

There are no High or Very High distinctiveness habitats on the site

Medium distinctiveness woodland and trees are retained and enhanced where possible. Scrub is lost as this is the only area of the site where buildings can be extended. Plantation woodland is lost to new carparking, this is the only area of the site where carparks can be extended

Minimisation: these are measures taken to reduce the duration, intensity and/or extent of impacts that cannot be completely avoided. Effective minimisation can eliminate some negative impacts, such as measures to reduce noise and pollution, designing powerlines to reduce the likelihood of bird electrocutions, or building wildlife crossings on roads.

The new buildings/ carpark are the smallest needed to meet the required need.

Rehabilitation/restoration: The aim of this step is to improve degraded or removed ecosystems following exposure to impacts that cannot be completely avoided or minimised. Restoration tries to return an area to the original ecosystem that was present before impacts, whereas rehabilitation only aims to restore basic ecological functions and/or ecosystem services - such as through planting trees to stabilise bare soil. Rehabilitation and restoration are frequently needed towards the end of a project's life cycle but may be possible in some areas during operation.

New native tree planting will be undertaken. Woodland will be managed and enhanced. New scrub will be planted and grassland overseeded.

Collectively, avoidance, minimisation and rehabilitation/restoration serve to reduce, as far as possible, the residual impacts that a project has on biodiversity. Typically, however, even after their effective application, additional steps will be required to achieve no overall negative impact or a net gain for biodiversity.

Offset: offsetting aims to compensate for any residual, adverse impacts after full implementation of the previous three steps of the mitigation hierarchy. Biodiversity offsets are of two main types: 'restoration offsets' which aim to rehabilitate or restore degraded habitat, and 'averted loss offsets' which aim to reduce or stop biodiversity loss in areas where this is predicted. Offsets are often complex and expensive, so attention to earlier steps in the mitigation hierarchy is usually preferable.

Despite avoidance, minimisation and rehabilitation/restoration, onsite BNG cannot be achieved. It is therefore proposed that offsite BNG credits are purchased in order that development achieves an overall +10% BNG score. Credits in the same local authority area will be sought in preference to those nationally.

Additional landscaping will be considered as part of the BNG condition discharge once the quantum of development has been agreed.

The UK Habs V2 habitat survey has been used to identify relevant habitat areas, linear habitat areas and watercourse units.

These habitats have been input into the statutory biodiversity metric calculator R3 and indicate a total of 6.18 habitat units and zero terrestrial linear units and zero watercourse units. The results of the calculations are presented in the full biodiversity assessment calculation in the Excel document 'BNG Reliance Precision Rowley Mills Huddersfield R3'.

The condition assessments for each of the area habitats are presented in Appendix A. No deviations have been made from the default methods for baseline habitats assessment.

Post-development Habitat Creation and Enhancement

The Illustrative Landscape Plan has been used to identify that there will be five retained habitats, four enhanced habitat and five new habitat areas.

These figures have been put in to the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and would comprise a total of 5.86 biodiversity habitat units.

There are no changes to default values for post development habitats.

Details of the assumptions made to achieve the proposed conditions are found in Appendix B

Change in Biodiversity Value

Under the current proposals set out in the Illustrative Landscape Plans there will be a LOSS of -0.31 biodiversity area units (-5.09%). This is shown in Table 1.

There is an overall loss of “urban tree” which results in trading rules not being satisfied.

Table 1. Change in Biodiversity Units Calculation

On-site baseline	Habitat units	6.18			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	5.86			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	-0.31	-5.09%	On-site net gain is less than target set ▲	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%		
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	0.00	0.00%		
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%		
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-0.31			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
FINAL RESULTS					
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-0.31			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	-5.09%		Total net gain achieved is less than target set ▲	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%			
	Watercourse units	0.00%			
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲				
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Habitat units	10.00%	6.18	6.79	0.93	
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

Input errors/rule breaks present in metric ▲

REFERENCES

Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. (2023), UK Habitat Classification - Habitat Definitions V2.01 at <http://ukhab.org>

Natural England 2023. Natural England Joint Publication JP039 The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 User Guide Defra Group. Natural England.

JNCC. (2010), Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey (revised). JNCC, Peterborough.

APPENDIX A – BASELINE DETAILED CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

This appendix presents the assessment of the post-development habitats against the condition sheets in the biodiversity metric 4 technical supplement published by Natural England, 2023. Any deviations from the published guidance is explained and justified.

UK Hab Equivalent	Condition Sheet	Other Habitat Criteria Score									Total Score	Condition Assessment	Notes	
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9				
Mixed Scrub	Mixed Scrub	P	F	P	F	F					2	Poor	Dense scrub, no margins.	
Developed Land; Sealed Surface	Not assessed										-	-	-	
Vegetated Garden	Not assessed										-	-	-	
Urban Tree	Urban Trees	P	P	F	F	F	P				3	Moderate	Trees are in managed grounds	
Modified Grassland	Low Distinctiveness Grassland	F	F	P	P	P	P	P			5	Poor	Fails C1	
Key: P – Criteria passed F – Criteria failed														
Appendix Table C1: Condition Assessment for Area Habitats														

UK Hab Equivalent	Condition Sheet	Other Habitat Criteria Score												Total Score	Condition Assessment	Notes	
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12				C13
Semi-natural broadleaved woodland	Woodland And Forest	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	31	Moderate	
Other deciduous woodland	Woodland And Forest	1	3	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	20	Poor	
Key to woodland condition assessment: 3 (points) = Good 2 (points) = Moderate 1 (point) = Poor Total score >32 – Good Total score 26 – 32 – Moderate Total score <26 – Poor																	
Appendix Table C2: Woodland Condition Assessment																	

APPENDIX B – POST DEVELOPMENT DETAILED CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

This appendix presents the assessment of the post-development habitats against the condition sheets in the biodiversity metric 4 technical supplement published by Natural England, 2023. Any deviations from the published guidance is explained and justified.

UK Hab Equivalent	Condition Sheet	Other Habitat Criteria Score									Total Score	Condition Assessment	Notes	
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9				
Mixed Scrub	Mixed Scrub	P	F	P	P	P					4	Moderate	Glades opened, under planted	
Developed Land; Sealed Surface	Not assessed										-	-	-	
Garden	Not assessed										-	-	-	
Urban Tree	Urban Tree	P	P	F	F	F	P				3	Moderate	Trees are in managed grounds	
Neutral Grassland	Moderate Distinctiveness Grassland	P	P	P	P	P	F				5	Moderate	Fails C6	
Key: P – Criteria passed F – Criteria failed														

Appendix Table B1: Condition Assessment for Area Habitats

UK Hab Equivalent	Condition Sheet	Other Habitat Criteria Score													Total Score	Condition Assessment	Notes
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13			
Semi-natural broadleaved woodland	Woodland And Forest	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	35	Good	Glades opened, under planted
Other deciduous woodland	Woodland And Forest	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	27	Moderate	Underplanted, thinned
Key to woodland condition assessment: 3 (points) = Good 2 (points) = Moderate 1 (point) = Poor Total score >32 – Good Total score 26 – 32 – Moderate Total score <26 – Poor																	

Appendix Table B2: Woodland Condition Assessment