

354 Manchester Road, Bury BL9 9NR

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

April 2025

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd Reference: 2024-311

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Document Control

Survey Type:	Surveyors	Survey Date(s)
UK Habitat Classification Survey (including Condition Assessments of habitats).	Brian Robinson B.Sc. (Hons) MCIEEM Senior Ecologist	25 th September 2024
Reporting	Personnel	Date
Author	Brian Robinson B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM Senior Ecologist	4 th November 2024
Signature(s)		
Checked by	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM	4 th November 2024
Revised and issued by	Brian Robinson B.Sc. (Hons) MCIEEM	17 th April 2025
Report issued to	Sedgwick Associates	
Version Number	2: Version 1 revised to reflect an updated site boundary	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

- 1.1.1 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned by Sedgwick Associates to carry out an assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) at land at 354 Manchester Road, Bury BL9 9NR (hereafter the 'site'). The Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference at the centre of the site is SD 80356 09034.
- 1.1.2 The assessment was requested in connection with a planning application proposing the development of a portion of the site to a residential dwelling.
- 1.1.3 This BNG assessment has been prepared to provide an assessment of the biodiversity value of the baseline of the site, a preliminary assessment of the value of post-development habitats based on the site proposals (as they are understood at the time of writing), and provides guidance in relation to the requirements to attain a net gain in accordance with *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016).
- 1.1.4 This report also advises on how compliance with Chapter 15, paragraph 193(d) of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024)¹ can be achieved, which states '*opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments 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*'.

1.2 Site Description

- 1.2.1 An aerial image of the site is appended at **Figure 1**.
- 1.2.2 The total site area is **0.1225 hectares²**.
- 1.2.3 The habitats present within the site are described and assessed in *2024-311 Land at 354 Manchester Road, Bury BL9 9NR: Ecological Survey and Assessment* (ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd, 2025), hereafter referred to as the 'ecology report'.
- 1.2.4 A summary of the habitats present within the site is presented at **Section 3.1** of this report.

1.3 Proposed Development Description

- 1.3.1 The assessment has been requested to inform a planning application for a residential dwelling at the site. A detailed proposals plan is not available for the site. A location plan showing the proposed development as been provided to ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd as 'Location Plan.pdf', and is hereafter referred to as the 'proposals plan',

1.4 Scope of Study

- 1.4.1 This report has been prepared to accompany a completed assessment of BNG using *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool* (Natural England, 2023). The completed Microsoft Excel spreadsheet

¹ Hereafter the NPPF

² As measured by ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd; detail on the methods used to measure the area of the site are presented at **Section 2.0**. It has been considered suitable, in this instance and due to the small size of the site, to measure the habitat areas in hectares to 4 decimal places (i.e. to m² accuracy).

assessment is presented as a separate document, named 'ERAP Ltd 2024-311 Manchester Rd Statutory Biodiversity Metric 17.04.25', hereafter referred to as the 'BNG Metric'.

- 1.4.2 It is intended that this report provides a transparent assessment to demonstrate the calculation of net gain, based on the reasonable parameters assumed for the proposals (refer to **Section 2.3**). This approach has been applied on a number of other sites ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd has assisted with and has been accepted by the relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPA) and their ecological advisors to enable a planning application to progress.

2.0 METHOD OF SURVEY

2.1 Habitat Assessment and Mapping

Baseline Habitats

- 2.1.1 A Phase 1 Habitat Survey including an assessment in accordance with the UKHab and condition assessments of the habitats present was carried out by Brian Robinson on 25th September 2024. The weather was dry and overcast, with a light air (Beaufort scale 1) and an air temperature of 12°C.
- 2.1.2 On site habitat mapping was assisted via use of GPS technology and QField on-site mapping software, using *Land to the Rear of 354 Manchester Road, Bury: Existing Site Layout Drawing Number TRI-442-01* (TriCad Solutions Ltd, 2024) and *ESRI World Imagery* as base plans. The existing site layout was provided to ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd as spatially referenced .dwg file, which was converted to .dxf format and inputted into QGIS.
- 2.1.3 Each of the habitats within the site has been assessed in accordance with the UKHab to determine each habitat type present. This has allowed a reliable classification of habitats in accordance with those used by the BNG Metric.
- 2.1.4 The UKHab has been designed to function at two scales: fine scale (25m² or 5 metres length) and large scale (400m² or 20m² length). It has been considered for the purposes of this survey (where the UKHab has been used to inform the BNG calculation of a relatively small area) that a finer scale of 5m² is appropriate for the classification of habitats.
- 2.1.5 A plan showing the baseline habitats present within the site in accordance with UKHab symbology is appended at **Figure 2**.
- 2.1.6 Condition Assessments for each of the habitats present within the site have been completed in accordance with *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology* (Natural England, November 2023) and are appended at **Section 7.1**.

Post-development Habitats

- 2.1.7 A proposals plan has not been provided; the post development habitats have been calculated using *the proposals plan*. It is recommended that this BNG assessment is revised once the site plans have been formalised for the site.
- 2.1.8 A plan showing the proposed habitats in accordance with UKHab symbology is appended at **Figure 3**.

2.2 Survey and Reporting Limitations

- 2.2.1 All measurements have been either estimated whilst on site or measured using QGIS.
- 2.2.2 A detailed landscaping scheme has not been provided for the site. As described at **Section 4.0** below, this report provides a detailed assessment of the ecological value of the baseline habitats (in accordance with the BNG Metric) prior to development and a preliminary assessment of the ecological value of the site post development in accordance with the proposed habitats outlined for the site.

2.3 Evaluation Methods and Rules Applied

Habitats and Assessment

- 2.3.1 Habitats have been assessed to determine whether they meet those described in *UK Biodiversity Action Plan: Priority Habitat Descriptions* (Maddock, A (ed), 2008); these lists are used to help draw up the statutory lists of Priority Habitats, as required under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006*. Where suitable, the ecological value of the habitats present have been assessed using the terms outlined in *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018).
- 2.3.2 QGIS has been used to calculate the total area / length of each baseline habitat present within the site and the area / length of the proposed habitats at the site.
- 2.3.3 Each habitat and individual trees have been assessed to determine whether they are 'irreplaceable habitat', defined in NPPF as '*Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen*'. The further detail presented in *The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024* (GOV.UK, 2024) has also been referred to.

Relevant Guidance

- 2.3.4 Government advice on wildlife, as set out in the NPPF and associated government circulars has been taken into consideration.

Assumptions

- 2.3.5 The site supports areas of managed garden. In accordance with *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide* (DEFRA, 2024):

'A private garden is a garden within the curtilage of a privately owned or tenanted dwelling house. Private gardens can contain important features for biodiversity, including mature trees and hedgerows.

When recording habitats at baseline within a private garden you may need to assess any important features as individual habitat parcels to avoid under-recording biodiversity. This may include:

- *recording individual trees*
- *recording hedgerows*
- *recording other habitats, such as ponds'...*

2.3.6 And

'Record all medium, large and very large individual trees within private gardens.'

2.3.7 It is assumed in this report that all areas of the site will be developed to housing, gardens and an access track.

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Site Description

3.1.1 Refer to **Figure 2**. The site is described in the ecology report as follows:

'The approximately 0.12 hectares site is located within suburban housing and supports an area of woodland and access track. An area of garden and a single building are adjacent to the western site boundary. A structure (a possible former air raid shelter or cellar) is located within the woodland.'

And

'Only common and widespread plant species were found. None of the habitats present are representative of semi-natural habitat. The NVC communities present are typical of the geographical area and conditions present. It is not considered that the woodland habitat within the site is representative of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat. No irreplaceable habitats are present within the site.'

3.2 Assessment of Baseline Habitats

3.2.1 **Table 3.1** provides a summary of the habitats present, their condition assessment result and their area within the site. Condition assessments for each habitat are appended at **Section 7.1**.

Table 3.1: Summary of Baseline Area Based Habitats within the Site

Habitat Reference	UK Habitat Classification Type	BNG Habitat Equivalent	Phase 1 Habitat Equivalent	Condition Assessment Result	Area (ha)
Habitat 1 Woodland 1	w1g other woodland: broadleaved with the secondary codes 203 mature tree, 200 tree, 202 young trees – self-set, 31 secondary woodland and 521 unmanaged.	Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved	A1.1.1 Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural	Poor	0.0862
Habitat 2 Garden habitats	g4 modified grassland with the secondary codes 200 tree and 106 mown; u1 built up and urban areas with the secondary code 847 introduced shrub; and g3 neutral grassland with the secondary code 16 tall forbs. All with the secondary code 828 vegetated garden.	Urban – vegetated garden	J1.2 Cultivated/disturbed land - amenity grassland; J1.4 Introduced shrub; and C3.1 Other tall-herb and fern - tall ruderal	Condition Assessment N/A	0.0090
Habitat 3 Hardstanding	u1b6 other developed land.	Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	J4 Bare ground	N/A - Other	0.0273
Total:					0.1225

4.0 POST DEVELOPMENT HABITATS

4.1 Consideration of Target Condition Assessments

- 4.1.1 No Condition Assessments for the proposed habitats are required; all are automatically generated by the Metric.

4.2 Consideration of Proposed Habitats

- 4.2.1 It has been assumed by this metric that the whole site will be developed to a residential dwelling, access track and associated garden habitat. A 70 / 30 % calculation has been made to determine the size of the developed land and garden (not including the access track).

Table 4.1: Summary of Area-based Habitats to be Retained, Enhanced and Created at the Site

Habitat Type	BNG Equivalent Habitat	Target Condition	Area (ha)
Proposed Habitats			
Habitat A Access track	Urban – developed land, sealed survey	N/A – Other	0.0319
Habitat B Residential dwelling	Urban – developed land, sealed survey	N/A – Other	0.06342
Habitat C Vegetated garden	Urban – vegetated garden	Condition Assessment N/A	0.02718
Total			0.1225

5.0 HEADLINE RESULTS, EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The headline results of the BNG Metric are presented at **Table 5.1** below.

Table 5.1: Results of Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool

On-site Baseline	Habitat units	0.36	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site Post Intervention	Habitat units	0.05	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units % percentage)	Habitat units	-0.31	-85.54%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Total Net % Change	Habitat units	-85.54%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	

Trading Rules Satisfied?	No
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Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	Comment
Habitat units	10%	0.36	0.40	0.35	
Hedgerow units	10%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target

Watercourse units	10%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target
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- 5.2 A net gain for area-based habitats in accordance with the statutory BNG requirements is not demonstrated by the above BNG Metric.
- 5.3 If net gain cannot be attained at the site in accordance with any future site proposals and the detailed landscape planting proposals then the following options are available (a combination of the approaches outlined below may be appropriate):
- A redesign of the site to minimise impacts and establish enhancement of retained areas where possible;
 - Further enhancement of off-site habitats to compensate for the loss of units associated with the proposed development; and
 - Agreeing a biodiversity payment for the loss of habitat units associated with the site with a habitat bank or other similar provider.
- 5.4 It is essential that, in addition to the result of the BNG Metric, the assessment of biodiversity net gain takes into account the measures to be accommodated and implemented at the site to secure gains and betterment for biodiversity that the BNG Metric cannot take account of.
- 5.5 At this site it is advised that the following measures are also considered as part of the assessment of biodiversity net gain:
- Incorporation of opportunities for roosting bats at the new properties as, although the habitats are suitable for use by foraging bat species such as *Pipistrellus* species;
 - Incorporation of opportunities for use by nesting birds at the developed site;
 - Eradication / control of invasive plant species from the site including the Montbretia and Japanese Rose; and
 - Preparation and implementation of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (or similar) to secure long-term management of the retained and created habitats in accordance with conservation targets and objectives.

6.0 REFERENCES

- Birtle Tree Services Ltd, 2024. *354 Manchester Road, Bury BL9 9NR: Arboricultural Report*, Bury: Birtle Tree Services Ltd.
- CIEEM, 2016. *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development*, Winchester: CIEEM.
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- Stace, C. A., 2010. *New Flora of the British Isles 3rd Edition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stanbury, A. et al., 2021. The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. *British Birds*, Issue 108, pp. 723-747.
- TriCad Solutions Ltd, 2024. *Land to the Rear of 354 Manchester Road, Bury: Existing Site Layout Drawing Number TRI-442-01*, Blackburn: TriCad Solutions Ltd.
- UKHab Ltd, 2023. *The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (at <https://www.ukhab.org>), Stockport: UKHab Ltd.

7.0 APPENDIX: CONDITION ASSESSMENTS AND FIGURES

7.1 Condition Assessments of Baseline Habitats

Table 7.1: Condition Assessments for Habitat 1: Woodland

Habitat Reference	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	Total No. of Criterion Passed	Condition Assessment Result
Habitat 1: Woodland 1	2	3	1	3	3	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	24	Poor
Good (total score >32)															
Moderate (total score 26 to 32)															
Poor (total score 13 to 25)															
Indicator	Good (3 points)			Moderate (2 points)			Poor (1 point)								
A. Age distribution of trees. See EWBG method INDICATOR 1 for more information. If tree species is not a birch <i>Betula</i> sp., cherry (<i>Prunus</i> sp.) or <i>Sorbus</i> sp.: 0 – 20 years (Young); 21 - 150 years (Intermediate); and >150 years (Old). For birch, cherry or <i>Sorbus</i> species; 0 - 20 years = Young; 21 - 60 years = Intermediate; >60 years = Old. A recognisable age-class should be a consistent recognisable layer across the woodland or stand being assessed. Presence of a few saplings would not indicate that the woodland has an 'age-class' of young trees.	Three age classes present.			Two age classes present.			One age class present.								
B. Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage. See EWBG method INDICATOR 2 for more information. Browsing pressure is considered to be significant where >20% of vegetation visible within each survey plot shows damage from any type of browsing pressure listed.	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland.			Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or less of whole woodland.			Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland.								
C. Invasive plant species. See EWBG method INDICATOR 3 for more information. Assessed for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, the habitat has been split into parcels accordingly. Check for the presence of all plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the <i>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</i> (as amended), particularly the following invasive non-native species: American Skunk Cabbage, Indian Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, Cherry Laurel, Shallow, Snowberry, Variegated Yellow-archangel, Rhododendron and Tree-of-heaven.	No invasive species present in woodland.			Rhododendron or cherry laurel not present, other invasive species <10% cover.			Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species >10% cover.								
D. Number of native tree species. See EWBG method INDICATOR 4 and Table 2 for more information. The number of different native tree or shrub species including young trees and shrubs. A list of commonly found native tree and shrub species is provided in Table 2. Not all species listed are native to all parts of the UK. Note a list of commonly found non-native tree species are also included and should be recorded if present.	Five or more native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.			Three to four native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.			None to two native tree or shrub species across woodland parcel.								
E. Cover of native tree and shrub species. See EWBG method INDICATOR 5 and for more information. The abundance of native tree species in upper (>5 m) and understorey (up to 5 m) layers including young trees and shrubs.	> 80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native.			50-80% of canopy trees and 50-80% of			< 50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native.								

Indicator	Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)
		understory shrubs are native.	
F. Open space within woodland. See EWBG method INDICATOR 6 for more information. Open space within woodland in this context is temporary open space in which trees can be expected to regenerate (for example, glades, rides, footpaths, areas of clear-fell). This differs from permanent open space where tree regeneration is not possible or desirable (for example, tarmac, buildings, rivers). Area is at least 10 m wide with less than 20% covered by shrubs or trees. Automatically 'Good' if woodland is less than 10 hectares, given the increased ratio of edge habitat to woodland where the woodland is less than 10ha.	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted.	21- 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ .	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category.
G. Woodland regeneration. See EWBG method INDICATOR 8 for more information. This indicator measures regeneration potential of the woodland by considering three classes: seedlings; saplings; and young trees of 4-7 cm DBH. All three classes would fall in the 'young' category of the 'age distribution of trees' indicator, but the regeneration indicator gathers additional information by considering regeneration potential - if seedlings, saplings and young trees are all present that means natural regeneration processes are happening.	All three classes present in woodland; trees 4-7cm DBH, saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland.	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland.
H. Tree health. See EWBG method INDICATOR 9 for more information and Table 3 for a list of diseases and pests and their risk level.	Tree mortality less than 10%, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback.	11% to 25% mortality and/or crown dieback or low risk pest or disease present.	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present.
I. Vegetation and ground flora. See EWBG method INDICATOR 10 directing to NVC key for more information. The 'UKHab to NVC translation table' in the UK Habitat Classification resources may also be useful to assess this.	Recognisable NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.
J. Woodland vertical structure. This criterion looks at structural diversity and is useful to understand in conjunction with the age of trees in a woodland. Vertical structure is defined as the number of canopy storeys present. Possible storey values are: 1) Upper; 2) Complex: recorded when the stand is composed of multiple tree heights that cannot easily be stratified into broad height bands (such as upper, middle or lower); 3) Middle; 4) Lower; and 5) Shrub layer. There might be no storeys where the woodland has been felled. See EWBG INDICATOR 11 for more information.	Three or more storeys across all survey plots or a complex woodland.	Two storeys across all survey plots.	One or less storey across all survey plots.
K. Veteran trees. See EWBG method INDICATOR 12 for more information. 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: <i>Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK</i> (www.gov.uk).	Two or more veteran trees per hectare.	One veteran tree per hectare.	No veteran trees present in woodland.
L. Amount of deadwood. See EWBG method INDICATOR 13 for more information. This includes logs, large dead branches on the forest floor and stumps (<1 m tall) >20 cm diameter at narrowest point and >50 cm long. Also includes standing dead trees (>1 m tall) and also deadwood on standing live trees. Diameter is measured at the narrowest point on the stem. Minimum diameter of 20 cm.	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems, branch stubs and stumps or an abundance of small cavities.	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems, branch stubs and stumps or an abundance of small cavities.	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems, stubs and stumps or an abundance of small cavities.

Indicator	Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)
M. Woodland disturbance. See EWBG method INDICATOR 15 for more information. Examples of disturbance are: significant nutrient enrichment; soil compaction from trampling, machinery, animal poaching or litter.	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident.	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area and/or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground.	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment and / or more than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground.

7.1.1 No Condition Assessment is required for Habitats 2 and 3 (vegetated gardens and hardstanding).

7.2 Figure 1

Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Site

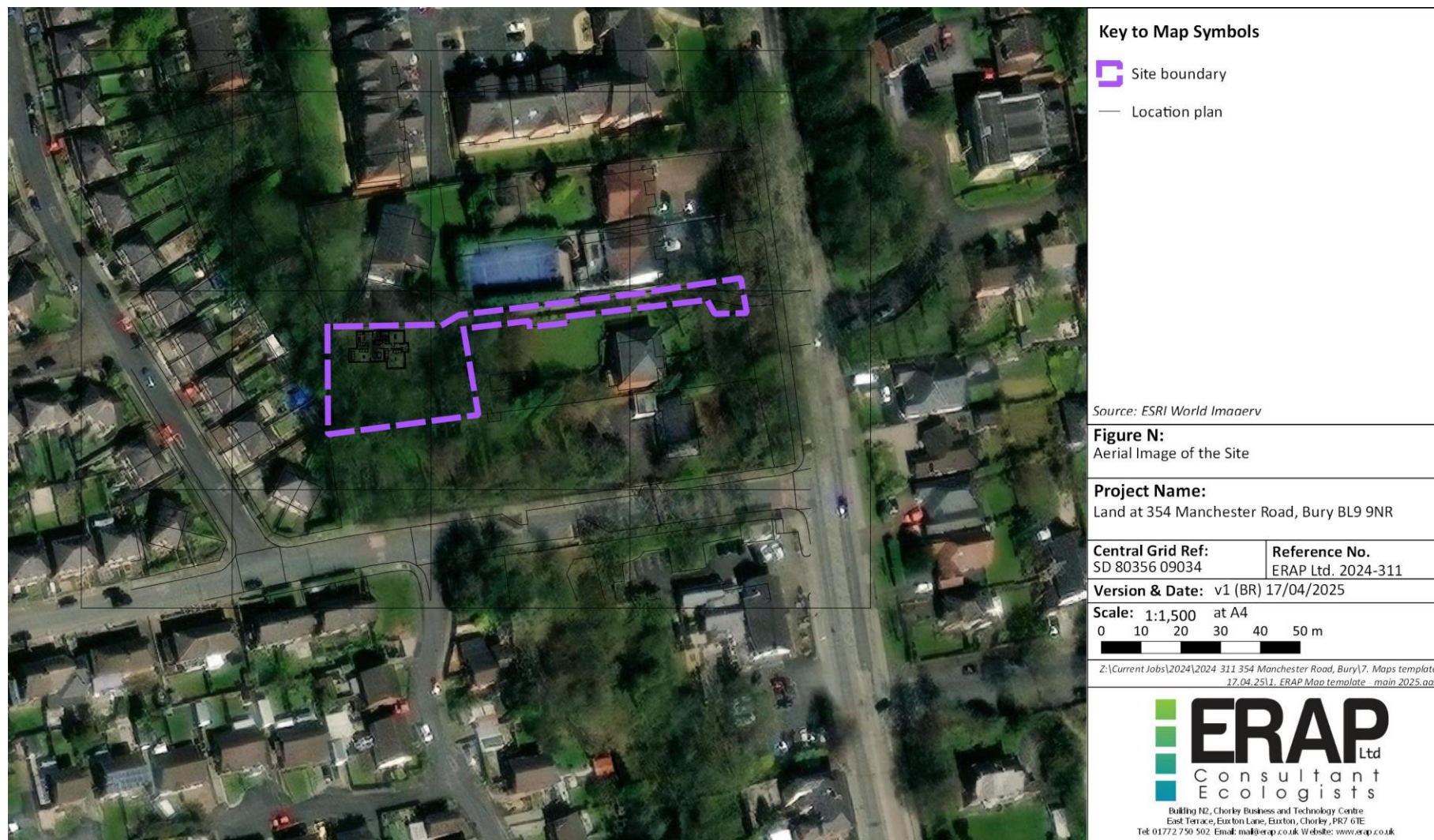


Figure 2: UKHab Plan of the Baseline Habitats

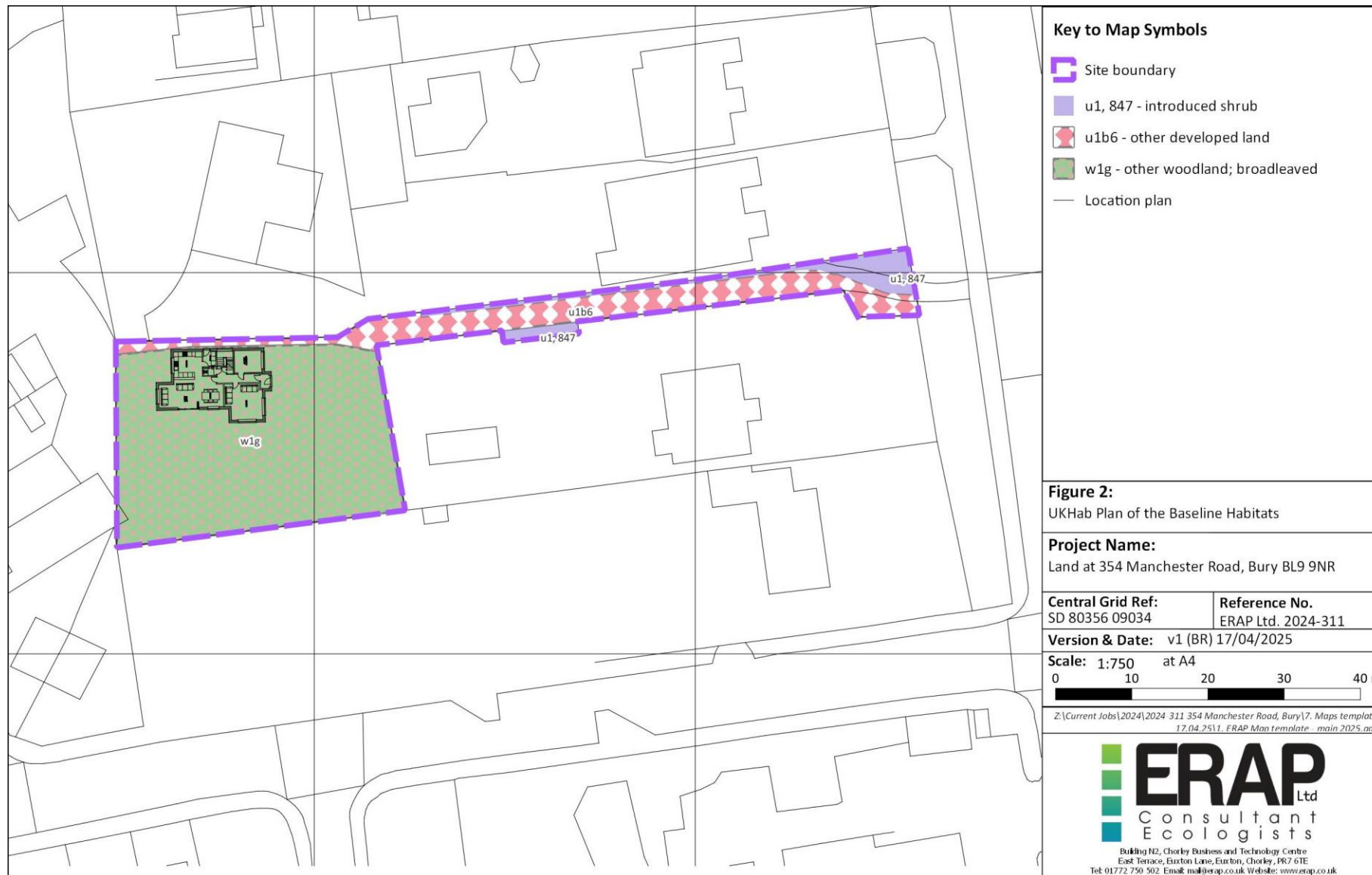


Figure 3: UKHab Plan of the Post-intervention Habitats

