



Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment

Land at Rockley House

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Robinson Escott to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for land at Rockley House, South Street, Meopham, DA13 0QN, hereafter referred to as the 'site' (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Site red line boundary.

- 1.2 The proposed development includes the erection of 6 residential dwellings (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Proposed development.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The site was surveyed on 5th February 2026 by principal ecologist Eddie Selwyn BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM and assistant ecologist Finn Young BSc (Hons). The surveyors identified the habitats present, following the UK Habitat classification system (UKHab V2). The habitats within the site were also subject to the Statutory BNG Metric Condition Assessment. The site was surveyed on foot and the existing habitats and land uses were recorded on an appropriately scaled map.
- 2.2 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (version 1.0.4) has been used to calculate biodiversity losses and gains for habitats within the site. The metric is a separate excel document and underpins the Environment Act's provision for mandatory BNG in England. This excel document supports this report and will be provided separately.
- 2.3 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses habitat as a proxy for wider biodiversity with different habitat types scoring different values according to their relative biodiversity value. These are dependent on the condition and location of the habitat, in order to calculate '**biodiversity units**'.
- 2.4 The site has been assessed in terms of the condition assessment of the baseline, and habitats were classified in more detail during this assessment.
- 2.5 The condition assessments provide further scrutiny of the measured habitats. The condition of habitats is dependent on several parameters and may include aspects of management, the impact of invasive species and nutrient enrichment, which would affect species abundance and specific characterisation of habitat value.
- 2.6 The Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been published and therefore utilised to determine the strategic significance for the site. A potential measure zone for lowland meadow creation covers the majority of the site (Figure 3). Due to the scale and the nature of the proposed development, it is not considered feasible to create lowland meadow within the site. However, other neutral grassland has been proposed and will provide a similar habitat. As such, the strategic significance of the baseline and created habitats is 'low'.



Figure 3: Potential measure zones in relation to the site (red line). Lowland meadow creation – pink; Traditional orchard creation – blue; Acid grassland and heathland – green.

3.0 RESULTS

Baseline

3.1 The on-site baseline habitat units is 0.58 and on-site baseline hedgerow units is 0.17.

Table 1: On-Site Habitat Baseline

Habitat	Area (ha)	Condition
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.1408	Condition Assessment N/A
Developed land; sealed surface	0.1221	Condition Assessment N/A
Modified grassland	0.0884	Moderate
Ruderal/Ephemeral	0.0152	Moderate
Bramble scrub	0.0031	Condition Assessment N/A
Introduced shrub	0.0018	Condition Assessment N/A
Urban tree (3x small)	0.0122	Good
Total (excluding individual trees)	0.3714	

Table 2: On-Site Hedgerow Baseline

Habitat	Length (km)	Condition
Native hedgerow (H1)	0.0204	Poor
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow (H2)	0.0049	Poor (by default)
Native hedgerow (H3)	0.0212	Good
Total	0.0465	

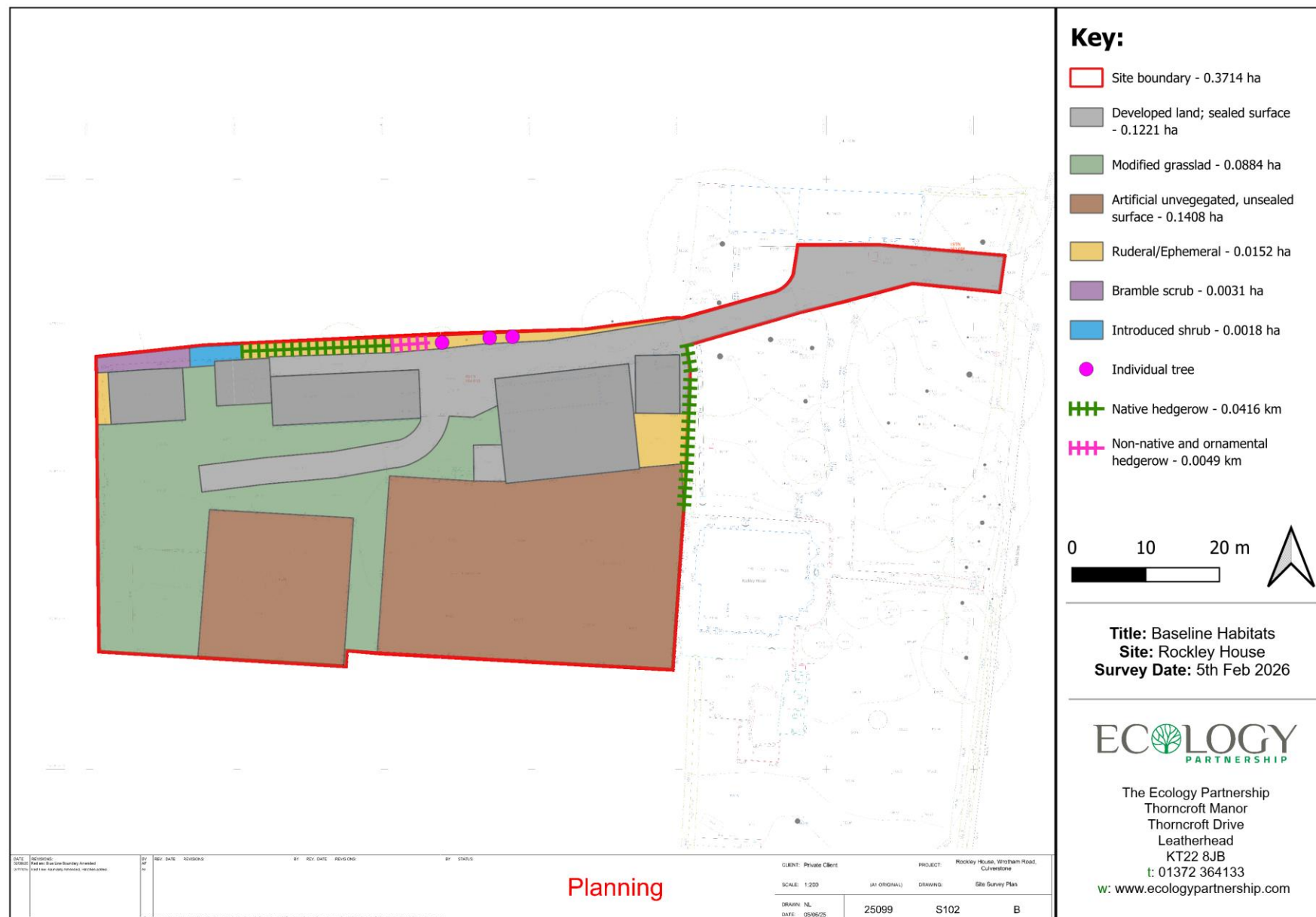


Figure 4: Baseline habitats

Creation

- 3.2 The on-site post-intervention habitat units is 0.69 and on-site post-intervention hedgerow units is 0.67.

Table 3: On-Site Habitat Creation

Habitat type	Area (ha)	Condition
Developed land; sealed surface	0.194	Condition Assessment N/A
Vegetated garden	0.0876	Condition Assessment N/A
Other neutral grassland	0.0721	Poor
Mixed scrub	0.0137	Poor
Pond (non-priority habitat)	0.004	Poor
Urban tree (3x small - retained)	0.0122	Good
Urban tree (3x small - created)	0.0122	Moderate
Total (excluding individual trees)	0.3714	

Table 4: On-Site Hedgerow Creation

Habitat	Length (km)	Condition
[Retained] Native hedgerow	0.0212	Good
[Created] Species-rich native hedgerow	0.1397	Poor
Total	0.1609	



Figure 5: On-Site Habitat Creation

- 3.3 The habitat creation detailed in Figure 5 would result in a **+19.57%** biodiversity net gain in habitat units and a **+285.45%** biodiversity net gain in hedgerow units and would satisfy the trading rules (Figure 6).

Rockley House	Return to results menu		
Headline Results			
Scroll down for final results 			
On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.58	
	Hedgerow units	0.17	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.69	
	Hedgerow units	0.67	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.11	19.57%
	Hedgerow units	0.49	285.45%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.11	
	Hedgerow units	0.49	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area 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)	Area habitat units	0.11	
	Hedgerow units	0.49	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	19.57%	
	Hedgerow units	285.45%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓		

Figure 6: Headline Results

4.0 PLANNING PORTAL

4.1 The information below details the information required for the planning portal in reference to Biodiversity Net Gain.

- 1) Do you believe that, if the development is granted permission, the general Biodiversity Gain Condition (as set out in Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)) would apply? * Required.

☒	Yes
☐	No

- 2) Please provide the pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitats on the date of calculation * Required.

0.58 area habitat units, 0.17 hedgerow units

Note: This is either on the date of the application, or an earlier alternative date you seek to agree with the planning authority.

- 3) Please provide the date the onsite pre-development biodiversity value was calculated * Required.

26/03/2026

- 4) If an earlier date, to the date of the planning application, has been used, please provide details why this date has been used.

N/A

- 5) Which version of the biodiversity metric was used? * Required.

1.0.4

- 6) When was the version of the biodiversity metric used published * Required.

03/07/2025

- 7) Please provide the reference or supporting document/plan names for the:

- i. Biodiversity metric calculation.
- ii. Onsite irreplaceable habitats (if applicable).
- iii. Onsite habitats existing on the date of the application for planning permission (if applicable).

Note: you must supply a complete biodiversity metric calculation with your application

Rockley House.BNG.Issue1
The_Statutory_Metric_1.0.4.Rockley House.Issue1

- 8) Does the pre-development biodiversity value and date used above factor in the loss of any onsite habitat because of activities carried out before the submission of this application? * Required.

☐	Yes
☒	No

If Yes questions 9, 10 and 11 appear:

- 9) Please provide the pre-development value of the onsite habitat before these activities were carried out * Required.

N/A

- 10) Please provide the date the pre-development biodiversity value was calculated?
* Required.

N/A

11) Please provide supporting evidence * Required.

N/A

12) Does the development site have irreplaceable habitats (corresponding to the description in column 1 of [Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2023)]) which are:

- i. On land to which the application relates; and
- ii. Exist on the date of the application for planning permission, (or earlier agreed date) * Required.

☐	Yes
☒	No

Appendix 1: Condition Assessment Tables

Individual trees				
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Urban tree: Covers the following topographical formations most commonly found in urban areas ¹ : Individual Trees (urban or rural): Young trees over 75mm 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.				
Condition Assessment Criteria		T1	T2	T3
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Pass	Pass	Pass
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).	Pass	Pass	Pass
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	Pass	Pass	Pass
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.	Fail	Fail	Fail
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Pass	Pass	Pass
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Pass	Pass	Pass
Condition		Good	Good	Good
Condition Assessment Result				
Good	Passes 5 or 6 criteria			
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 criteria			
Poor	Passes 2 or fewer criteria			
Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and: Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.				

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Grassland - Modified grassland		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Modified grassland
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m present, including at least 2 forbs (this 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.	Pass
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.	Fail
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.	Pass
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.	Fail
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Fail
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Pass
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Pass
Condition		Moderate
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including essential criterion A	
Moderate	Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	
Poor	Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR 4-6 of criteria but failing criterion A	
Footnote 1 – Creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> .		
Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.		
Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying the buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.		
Footnote 4 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)		

Condition Sheet: URBAN - NON PRIORITY Habitat Type		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/ephemeral and Tall forbs; Urban – Allotments/Bioswale/Cemeteries and churchyards/Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land(OMH)/Rain garden/SUDs/bare ground/all green walls and roofs		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Ruderal/ephemeral
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.	Fail
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.	Pass
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).	Pass
Condition		Moderate
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 3 of 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3	
Moderate	Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3	
Poor	Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria	
Footnote 1 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).		
Footnote 2 – Sources of information about detrimental non-native species can be found on the GB Non-native Species Secretariat (GBNNS) website: Home » NNS (nonnativespecies.org)		
And Natural England Access to Evidence page should also be checked for up-to-date information: Horizon-scanning for invasive non-native plants in Great Britain - NECR053 (naturalengland.org.uk)		
For criterion C – For green roof habitat types only – buddleia <i>Buddleja davidii</i> should be assessed alongside Schedule 9 species. This species impairs the health of the local ecosystem and reduces the biodiversity potential of the roof. It is also a sign that a roof has not been planted and seeded correctly in subsequent years.		
Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.		
Footnote 4 – Use professional judgement. Sources of information about non-native species that are not detrimental to native wildlife can be found on the GBNNS website: Alternative plants » NNS (nonnativespecies.org)		

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criteria achieved?	
Hedgerows		H1	H3
A1	Height >1.5 m average along length	Pass	Pass
A2	Width >1.5 m average along length	Fail	Pass
B1	Gap – hedge base Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	Fail	Pass
B2	Gap – hedge canopy continuity Gaps make up <10% of total length and No canopy gaps >5 m	Fail	Pass
C1	Undisturbed perennial vegetation >1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length (on one side of the hedge (at least))	Fail	Fail
C2	Undesirable species Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	Pass	Pass
D1	Invasive 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.	Pass	Pass
D2	Current Damage >90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	Fail	Fail
Condition:		Poor	Good
Hedgerow Condition Assessment Result			
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND no more than 1 in any functional group.		
Moderate	No more than 4 failures in total; AND does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1 & C2 = Moderate condition).		
Poor	Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; OR fails both attributes in more than one functional group (e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1 & B2 = Poor condition).		
Footnote 1 – DEFRA (2007) <i>Hedgerow Survey Handbook. A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK.</i> [online] Available on: layout (hedgeline.org.uk)			
Footnote 2 – STALEY, J.T. ET AL. (2020) <i>Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows.</i> [online] Available on: Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows - RP2943 (naturalengland.org.uk)			
Footnote 3 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).			
Footnote 4 – CHEFFINGS, C. M. et al. (2005) <i>The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain.</i> Species Status 7: 1-116. [online] Available on: The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain (Species Status No. 7) JNCC Resource Hub			
Footnote 5 – BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND (BSBI). <i>Definitions: wild, native or alien?</i> [online] Available on: Definitions: wild, native or alien? – Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (bsbi.org)			
Footnote 6 – BSBI and Biological Records Centre (BRC) (2022) <i>Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora.</i> [online] Available on: Acknowledgements Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora (brc.ac.uk)			
Footnote 7 – GB NON-NATIVE SPECIES SECRETARIAT (GBNNS) (2022) Available on: Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org)			
Footnote 8 – See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)			

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