

28 June 2024

Gemma Barrett
23.5 Degrees Limited
Unit 3
Hedge End Retail Park
Charles Watts Way
Southampton
SO30 4RT

SLR Project No.: 404.064098.00001

Client Reference No.: UK.VS0009

RE: Proposed Alterations to Starbucks, Hedge End Retail Park UKHab Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain

Introduction

SLR Consulting Limited (SLR) were instructed in May 2024 to undertake an initial UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey and Habitat Condition survey of the proposed alterations to the Starbucks, Hedge End Retail Park, Charles Watts Way, Southampton, SO30 4RT (NGR: SU 484 133) and to use this information ~~as~~ to ascertain whether a Biodiversity Net Gain calculation was required to support the planning application i.e.: was the development at the site subject to an exemption under the Biodiversity Net Gain legislation.

Methodology

Madison Sellar BSc (Hons), Assistant Ecologist at SLR undertook the UKHab survey and Habitat Condition survey. Madison is a Qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM) and maintains 18 months experience in habitat assessment surveys and ecological report writing including in support of PEAs, EIAs and species survey reports.

Final report approvals were completed in line with SLR Quality Assurance Policies by Dr Andrea Wilcockson BSc (Hons), MSc (Technical Director – Ecology & Biodiversity) with SLR. Andrea has over 20 years of professional experience as an ecologist and is a Chartered Environmentalist and Full Member of CIEEM. Andrea has been undertaking Biodiversity Impact Assessments for clients on a range of sites since 2012, initially predominately in Warwickshire using their metric and more recently using DEFRA's Biodiversity Net Gain calculators.

Field Survey

The Starbucks site was visited on 2nd May 2024 by Madison Sellar. The survey area is comprised of land within the red line boundary illustrated in Drawing 01, the surrounding 30m and land within the ownership area, where accessible. All habitats within the survey area were directly assessed for habitat type, condition, and field signs of notable or protected species.

Habitats within the survey's red line boundary were assessed and mapped using the information gathered from the ecological walkover. The assessment followed the UKHab methodology and the resulting habitats are illustrated in Drawing 01. The UKHab

Classification is a comprehensive classification system for the UK that has been developed to benefit from changes in habitat categorisation, recording analysis in recent decades. The system comprises a principal hierarchy (the Primary Habitats) which include broad habitats and priority habitats and non-hierarchical Secondary codes i.e. g4 10 = grassland (modified) with scattered scrub. Habitat nomenclature and definitions have been designed to remain as close to existing systems as possible in order that data can be collected, analysed and translated without ambiguity. Habitats were mapped to a minimum mapping unit of 25m².

Results

Habitats recorded during the survey are described below. The unique UK Habitat Classification survey code (e.g. u1f) that the habitat is attributed to is included within the text.

The results of the UKHab Classification survey are illustrated in Drawing 01. In summary, the following habitats were recorded within the survey area:

- Developed land, sealed surface;
- Building;
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface; and
- Built-up area and garden.

Descriptions of each habitat identified within the survey area are included below within Table 1.

Table 1 Surveyed Habitats Classified using UKHab

Photograph	Description
	Primary Code: Building (u1b5) Starbucks building which is currently in use.
	



Photograph	Description
	Primary Code: Developed Land, Sealed Surface (u1b) The majority of the site is tarmacked and used as a carpark and/or internal roads around the Starbucks drive-thru.
	Artificial Unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c) An area which is composed of woodchip with occasional weed such as dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>).
 	U1c Artificial Unvegetated, unsealed surface Individual Trees (200) Species present included: False acacia (<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>) and whitebeam (<i>Sorbus aria</i>),



Photograph	Description
	Built-up Area and Garden (u1) Secondary Code(s): 847 Introduced Shrub A variety of introduced shrub planting, all of which are low growing and show signs of regular management. Species present included false acacia, bearberry cotoneaster (<i>cotoneaster dammeri</i>), evergreen spindle (<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>) which was dominant, honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera</i> spp), common gorse (<i>Ulex europeans</i>), bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>), wavy bittercress (<i>cardmine flexuosa</i>), common groundsel (<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>) and annual meadow grass (<i>Poa annua</i>).
	

Conclusion

A review of the proposed loss of habitats indicates that approximately 4m² of habitat would be removed to facilitate the development, this would be from within the Introduced Shrub. It is recognised that one of the trees shown on the UKHab plan (Ref: Figure 1 which is appended) and the tree constraints plan (Ref: 404.064093.00001-ARB-D-001) (Tree T6 a false acacia) has been removed between the arboricultural survey and the UKHab survey being undertaken. This is because the arboricultural survey undertaken by Ashley Gore, arboricultural Consultant at SLR identified that this tree was structurally unsound and therefore should be removed, irrespective of if the development were to occur.

Ashley has stated that

“During my site inspection, I observed the multi stemmed *Robinia* tree (mentioned above) exhibiting significant structural instability due to a bark-included union. This particular union, characterized by the inward growth of bark between the stems, compromises the tree's structural integrity as it prevents the proper formation of a strong, cohesive attachment.

In this case, the included bark created a V-shaped union that was inherently weak. During my inspection, I noted that the tree was parting at this union in the wind. This separation indicated a high likelihood of stem failure. The risk of such a failure posed a hazard to public safety and property due to the unpredictable nature of falling limbs or the entire tree.



Given these findings, I determined that the tree required action to mitigate the risk. I contacted Gemma Barrett from 23.5 Degrees immediately after my visit to explain my findings and advised they called out grounds maintenance or an arborist to take a look”

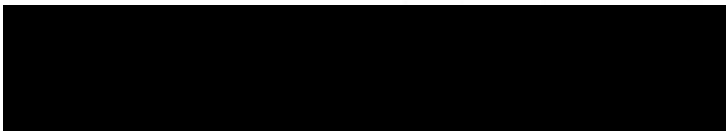
Ashley has also provided a video showing the union opening and closing during wind load.

It is therefore, considered that the loss of this tree should not be included within the decision as to whether biodiversity net gain will be required or not as it was removed for health and safety reasons not to facilitate the development.

It is therefore concluded that biodiversity net gain is not required under the de minimis exemption rules as it does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres of non-priority habitat. A post development landscaping plan has been created.

Regards,

SLR Consulting Limited



**Dr Andrea Wilcockson, CEnv, BSC (Hons), MSc,
MCIEEM**

Technical Director – Ecology & Biodiversity
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Attachments Figure 1 – UK Habitat Classification plan





LEGEND

Site Boundary

Individual Tree (200)

Primary Habitat Classification

Urban - Built-up Areas and Gardens

u1 - Built-up Area and Garden

u1b - Developed Land; Sealed Surface

u1b5 - Building

u1c - Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface

Secondary Habitat Codes

847 - Introduced Scrub





23.5 Degrees°



HEDGE END STARBUCKS

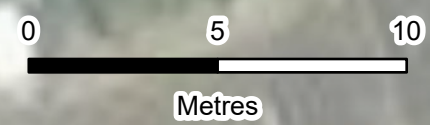
HABITAT SURVEY

UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION

FIGURE 1

Scale1:200 @ A3

DateMAY 2024



404.064093.00001.0001.0 Habitat Plan