

**THE VALE OF
GLAMORGAN COUNCIL**

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

APPROVED

SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS (IF ANY)

**Land to the
North of the
Railway Line
(West)**

**Hedgerow
Report**

Prepared by:
**The Environmental
Dimension
Partnership (EDP)**

On behalf of:
Taylor Wimpey Plc

January 2014
Report Reference
EDP2127_01b



THE
ENVIRONMENTAL
DIMENSION
PARTNERSHIP



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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1 This short report has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP) on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Plc (hereinafter referred to as 'the client'). It sets out the results of a hedgerow update assessment required to inform development proposals located at Land north of the railway line (West) (hereinafter referred to as 'the site'). The site is centred approximately at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference ST 066 663 on the edge of Rhose and falls within the Vale of Glamorgan Local Planning Authority area.
- 1.2 This hedgerow assessment has been undertaken to inform an outline planning application for residential development of the site. It draws upon historical survey data, where available, including an Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey undertaken in 2004 and 2013 and Hedgerow surveys undertaken in 2004 and 2007.
- 1.3 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:
 - (i) **Section 2** describes the methodologies employed in undertaking the assessment; and
 - (ii) **Section 3** summarises the baseline conditions as identified through the above and the key recommendations in accordance with legislative, planning policy and biodiversity action planning considerations.

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Section 2

Hedgerow Survey Methodology

- 2.1 All hedgerows on site were assessed by experienced ecologists on 16 January 2014 for their importance following the Wildlife criteria provided in Part II of Schedule 1 of the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. Hedgerow Regulations 1997 serve the purpose of ensuring the retention of important countryside hedgerows; their removal only being approved by the relevant local authority.
- 2.2 The aims of the hedgerow assessment were to:
- (i) Identify hedgerows that are classified as 'important' under the ecological criteria of the Hedgerow Regulations (1997); and
 - (ii) Identify hedgerows that, although not deemed 'important' under the ecological criteria of the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) have ecological value in terms of species diversity or as potential wildlife corridors.
- 2.3 A total of 15 hedgerows located on or adjacent to the site were surveyed, these hedgerows qualify for assessment by exceeding 20m in length or by being connected at both ends to another hedgerow of any length. The middle 30m of all hedgerows up to 100m in length were surveyed, whilst two 30m sections were surveyed for hedgerows up to 200m in length where access was possible. For hedgerows exceeding 200m in length, three 30m sections were surveyed. Hedgerows surveyed were assigned points dependant upon the number of qualifying "features" as defined by the Hedgerow Regulations, with total scores per hedgerow determining their status.
- 2.4 Qualifying as an "Important" requires the hedgerow assessed to be greater than 30 years of age and contain species listed in Schedule 5 (animals) and 8 (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), birds categorised as declining breeders (Category 3) within the 'Red Data Birds in Britain' (Batten 1990), or any species categorised as 'endangered', 'extinct', 'rare' or 'vulnerable' by any of the British Red Data Books.
- 2.5 Hedgerows are also considered important should they satisfy any of the following criteria:
- That the hedgerow is referred to in a record held by a biological records centre as containing protected plants (within 10 years) or birds and animals (within 5 years); or
 - That the hedgerow contains one of the following criteria per average 30m section surveyed:

-
- seven Schedule 3 species; or
 - six Schedule 3 species and three listed features (see below); or
 - six Schedule 3 species, including one of the following: Black Poplar *Populus nigra subsp.betulifolia*, Large-leaved Lime *Tilia platyphyllos*, Small-leaved Lime *Tilia cordata* or Wild Service-tree *Sorbus torminalis*; or
 - five Schedule 3 species and four listed features; or
 - four Schedule 3 species, two listed features and lying adjacent to a bridleway or footpath; with
 - Listed features to include:
 - A bank or wall which supports the hedgerow along at least half of its length;
 - Gaps which together do not exceed 10% of the length of the hedgerow;
 - At least one standard tree per 50m of hedge;
 - At least three Schedule 2 woodland species within the hedgerow;
 - A ditch along at least one half of the length of the hedgerow;
 - Connections scoring 4 points or more (1 point per connection of the hedgerow with another, 2 points per connection of the hedgerow to a pond or broad-leaved woodland; and
 - A parallel hedge within 15m of the hedgerow.

2.6 **Plan EDP 1** illustrates the location of hedgerows assessed within the site.

2.7 Where a hedgerow did not meet the 'important hedgerow' criteria, it was considered whether this boundary feature had ecological value, in terms of species diversity or as potential wildlife corridors.

Limitations

2.8 It is recognised that, with reference to the Hedgerow Regulations (1997), certain species of bird or animals listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act or by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) that could result in a hedgerow being recognised as 'important', may have gone unrecorded due to the timing and nature of the survey. Indeed, the use of the hedgerow by such species may be seasonal (e.g. nesting dormice)

or at particular periods during the day (e.g. commuting bats at dusk). The full survey of such species falls outside the scope of a hedgerow survey. Instead, incidental records of these species were made during the course of the hedgerow survey and historical data reviewed, where available, for such records.

- 2.9 January is considered to be a sub-optimum time for surveying hedgerows as deciduous woody species are not in leaf and the ground flora is not present in its floristic or sometimes even vegetative form. While some species may still have therefore gone unrecorded, species information derived from the 2013 Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report has been used to further inform this assessment and owing to the species-poor nature of the hedgerows the findings are not considered to have been significantly affected.

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Section 3

Results and Recommendations

- 3.1 The results of the survey are illustrated in **Plan EDP 1** and summarised in **Appendix EDP 1**.
- 3.2 In summary, the hedgerows on site are predominantly species-poor, being dominated by hawthorn stands and small elm trees, unmanaged and often gappy in nature. Of the 15 hedgerows surveyed 3 qualified as 'important' according to the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) namely H1, H2 and H3 bounding the bridleway running down the east of the site. While not species-rich these hedgerows are considered to be important owing to their additional interest features and provide corridors for the movement of wildlife.
- 3.3 While the other hedgerows were not considered to qualify as 'important' and are of no more than site value owing to their gappy nature and species-poor composition they do provide corridors for wildlife through the site, including potentially protected or notable species, and require due consideration accordingly. The results of the update survey confirm the findings of previous hedgerow surveys.
- 3.4 The following recommendations are therefore made to conserve and enhance the hedgerow resource in line with legislative, planning policy and biodiversity action planning:
- Where possible the existing hedgerow network should be retained particularly hedgerows H1, H2 and H3 that qualify as 'important'. Where the loss of these important hedgerows for access and infrastructure requirements is unavoidable this should be kept to a minimum and compensatory hedgerow planting/enhancement undertaken. Owing to the prevalence of dead elm, the hedgerows species-poor composition and limited ground flora a translocation of this habitat is not considered to be necessary;
 - Undertake any vegetation clearance works outside of the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive);
 - Protect retained hedgerows from construction activities through the clear demarcation of working areas delivered through a construction method statement;
 - Protect the functionality of hedgerows as wildlife corridors, particularly bats, by providing buffers to development and restricting the use of lighting. The most important corridors for the movement of wildlife across the site and to the wider landscape are considered to be the double banded hedgerows (H1-H3) along the bridleway and the hedgerows associated with the railway line along the sites southern boundary (H9-H11);

- Consolidate and enhance the existing network - owing to their species-poor composition, the presence of diseased elms and their unmanaged gappy nature, the hedgerows offer considerable potential for enhancement through thinning of dead elms, gap planting using native species of local provenance and traditional management such as coppicing and hedge laying; and
 - Create new hedgerow habitat – ensure that there is no net loss in hedgerow habitat resource to fulfil planning policy and BAP targets through the planting of native hedgerows of local provenance. New hedgerow planting should seek to maintain habitat connectivity across the site and assist in fulfilling both biodiversity and landscape aspirations as an integral part of the sites green infrastructure.
- 3.5 The long-term management of any retained, enhanced or created hedgerows and indeed other habitats within the proposed development should be secured through the preparation of an Ecology Management Plan.

Appendix EDP 1

Hedgerow Assessment Summary Table

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Appendix EDP 1
Hedgerow Survey Summary Table

Section number	Hedgerow description	Woody species (recorded within the 30m sample sections)											Mean count of Schedule 3 species from the 30m samples	Woodland plants	Additional Features							Adjacent footpath, bridleway, road used as a public path or byway open to all traffic?	Protected species / species of conservation concern	Important Hedgerow	
		Schedule 3 species													Bank/wall	Gaps <10%	Standard Trees (1 per 50m)	Ditch	Connections (>4)	Parallel hedge	Woodland species >3				
		Apple sp. (<i>Malus</i> spp.)	Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>)	Dogwood (<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>)	Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>)	Elm sp. (<i>Ulmus</i> spp.)	Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)	Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>)	Maple, field (<i>Acer campestre</i>)	Plum (<i>Prunus</i> spp.)	Rose sp. (<i>Rosa</i> spp.)													Non-schedule 3 species
H1	Thin leggy hedgerow growing upto 5m in height and 3-4m in depth. Some evidence of of mature dead elms being removed but otherwise unmanaged. Understorey is dominated by bramble.		x	x		x	x	x		x			4.5	Herb-robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>) Lords-and-ladies (<i>Arum maculatum</i>)	x	x	x				x			x	Y
H2	As with H1 but denser bramble understory and species/management influence along the garden boundaries.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	4.5	Herb-robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>) Lords-and-ladies (<i>Arum maculatum</i>)	x	x	x				x			x	Y
H3	As with H1 but dominated by hawthorn with fewer elm trees present. Signs of historical management.		x			x	x	x				x	Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)	Herb-robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>) Lords-and-ladies (<i>Arum maculatum</i>)	x	x					x			x	Y
H4	Defunct and leggy hedgerow dominated by old hawthorn stands growing to 3-4m. Evidence of traditional management but no recent trimming.					x	x	x				x	3		x				x						N
H5	Continuous hawthorn dominated hedgerow growing to 3-4m. Evidence of traditional management but no recent trimming.						x	x					2		x	x			x						N
H6	Dense continuous blackthorn and hawthron dominated hedge managed to 1.5m.		x			x		x				x	3			x									N
H7	Short section of non-native leylandii hedgerow.												Leylandii Cypress spp.	1			x								N
H8	Dense continuous blackthorn and hawthron dominated hedge managed to 1.5m and upto 2.5m deep.			x		x		x				x													N
H9	Dense unmanaged hawthorn dominated scrub belt along railway emankment with dense bramble understorey along fence.			x		x		x				x	3.5	Herb-robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>) Lords-and-ladies (<i>Arum maculatum</i>)	x	x					x				N
H10	Continuation of H9 & H10 but more gappy and a greater prevelance of bramble.					x		x				x	3	Herb-robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>)	x	x				x	x				N

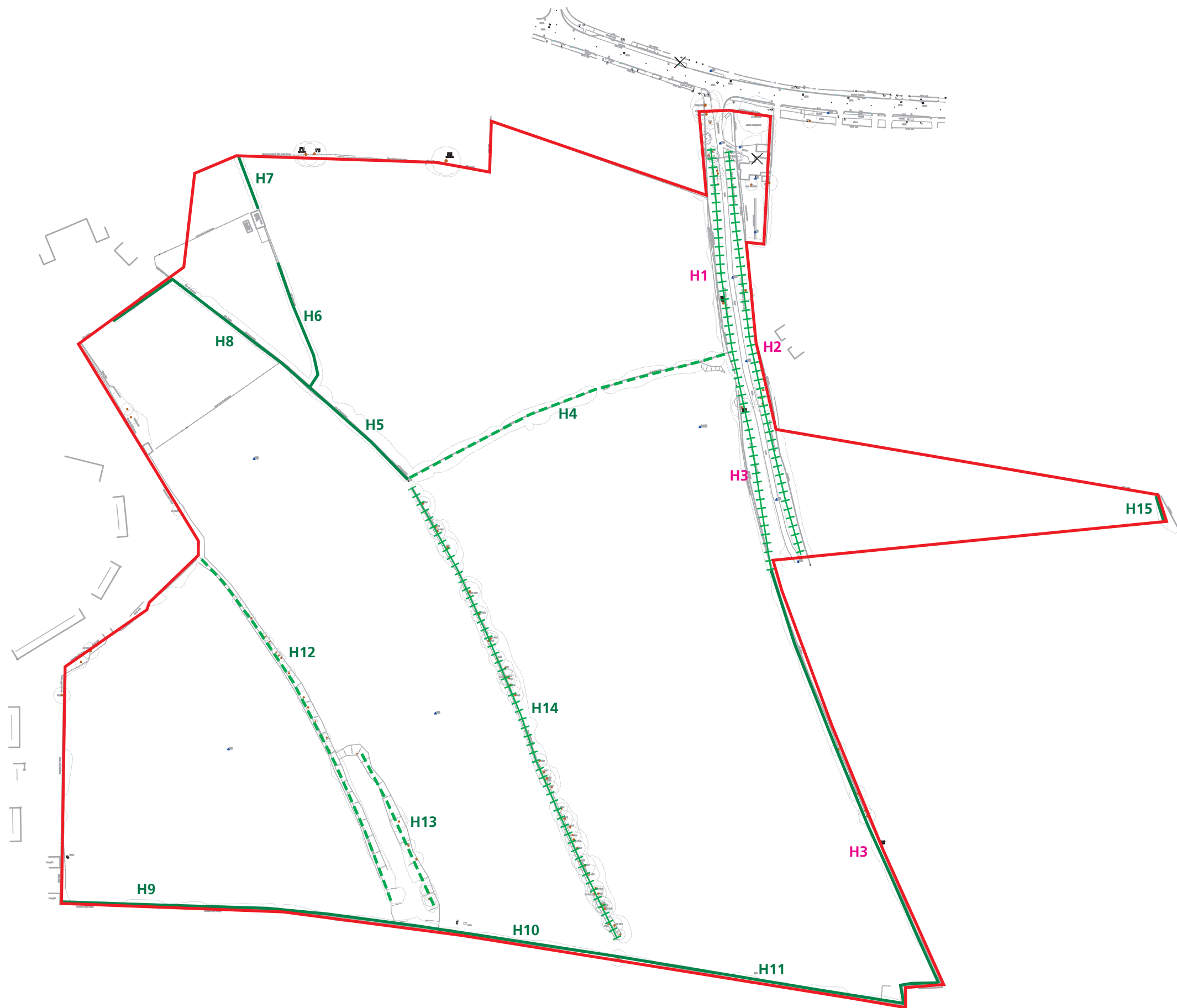
H11	Continuation of H9 but less dense and a greater prevalence of bramble.	x		x	x			x					x		4	Herb-robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>) Male fern (<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>)	x					x					N
H12	Gappy field hedge comprising of unmanaged hawthorn stands growing to 3-4m					x		x									x						x				N
H13	As with H12					x		x									x						x				N
H14	A continuous unmanaged hedgerow dominated by semi-mature/mature elms (both dead and alive) interspersed with stands of hawthorn. Signs of traditional management.						x	x							2		x	x	x				x				N
H15	Short section of hedge dominated by hawthorn. Unmanaged and growing to 2-3m.			x			x	x	x						4			x							x		N

Plan

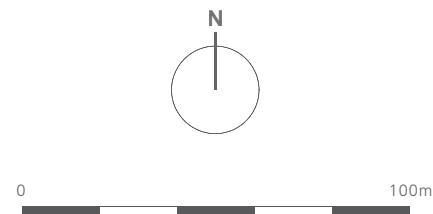
Plan EDP 1

Hedgerow Survey Plan
(EDP2127/01 21 January 2014 GC/RF)

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- Site Boundary
- Intact Species-poor Hedgerow
- Intact Species-poor Hedgerow and Trees
- Defunct Species-poor Hedgerow
- H4 Hedgerow ID
- H1 Important Hedgerows



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