

EEL981 The Springfield Academy – Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment

Ellendale Environmental Limited was commissioned by CMS Group, on behalf of their client, to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for an area of land and two buildings at The Springfield Academy, Springfield Drive, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0DS ('the site'). The applicant is seeking to install two new temporary modular units at the school ('the proposed development').

Using current information on the proposed development, this assessment estimates the BNG anticipated to be achieved through the proposed plans and has been undertaken with reference to the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool¹. This is a biodiversity accounting tool used for the purposes of calculating biodiversity net gain for a site and is based on 'biodiversity units' calculated according to the habitats present and their size, distinctiveness and condition. This enables the quantitative calculation of the predicted change in biodiversity value as a result of the proposed development, with the objective of achieving a net gain in biodiversity.

In England, BNG is mandatory² under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) and developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means a development will result in more or better-quality natural habitat than there was before development.

The site is located within the grounds of The Springfield Academy in Calne and is surrounded to the north, east and west by residential properties; to the south there is Curzon Street. The site predominantly comprises amenity grassland which is managed through mowing, with some areas of introduced shrub and scattered trees. There are seven Phase 1 habitat types recorded on the site including boundary features

¹ [Natural England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/natural-england)

² From 12th February 2024.

Overall, the site is assessed as providing low suitability to support protected species (excluding nesting birds) and no evidence of protected species was detected during the survey (information from the site has been obtained from a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) undertaken in 2025³).

The post-development site habitat units have been determined using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool and this is summarised in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Site habitat creation (post-development)

BROAD HABITAT	HABITAT TYPE	AREA (HA)	CONDITION	TOTAL HABITAT UNITS	COMMENTS
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.02158	N/A - Other	0.00	Proposed permeable hardstanding
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.03405	N/A - Other	0.00	Proposed building footprint
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.00180	N/A - Other	0.00	Proposed outbuilding
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.01133	N/A - Other	0.00	Permeable artificial grass
Individual trees	Rural tree	0.03260	Good	0.13	Two trees proposed to north of the site
Individual trees	Rural tree	0.08200	Good	0.31	20 additional 'small' trees required to be planted within wider school site (as required by BNG metric)
Individual trees	Rural tree	0.326	Good	1.25	20 additional 'medium' trees required to be planted within wider school site (as required by BNG metric)

³ EEL981R250523SP The Springfields Academy Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) CIC v1.0.

The grassland habitat present will largely be lost through the placement of the temporary modular units and additional hardstanding. As a result of this, the trading rules of the metric calculation tool are not complete, as the habitat cannot be replaced within the site; however, BNG will be achieved through the planting of individual trees. Given the heavy disturbance at the site it is recommended that these trees are planted on an area outside of the site's redline boundary, i.e., within the wider school boundary.

Based on this, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool indicates that the proposed development will result in a net gain of **21.61%** for non-linear habitats.

Positive effects for biodiversity are encouraged in new developments by contributing to the enhancement of biodiversity, restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks. Examples of additional biodiversity improvements could include:

- The installation of bird and bat boxes to provide suitable nesting and roosting habitat;
- The plantation of native trees, shrubs and fruit trees to provide important resources, especially for early season pollinators, other insects and birds;
- The plantation of wildflower areas to benefit a large number of species including pollinators, small mammals, birds and other invertebrates; and
- The use of wildlife-friendly lighting to reduce the light disturbance for the local wildlife, including bats.

Appendix A – Proposed Site Layout