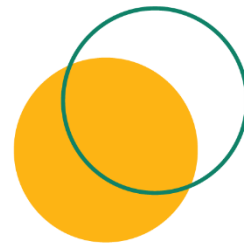




# Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment



Paul Vinyard  
Dorothy House Hospice Care, Winsley, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 2LE

October 2025

# Project Information

|               |                               |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
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The findings, assessments, and recommendations in this report are based on the information available at the time of writing. If project details, design plans, or site conditions change, this report will require revisiting and reviewing to ensure its continued relevance and accuracy. No warranties or guarantees, express or implied, are provided regarding the conclusions drawn in this report, and it should not be considered an up-to-date assessment if project conditions evolve.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

Paul Vinyard ('the client') is seeking consent for a proposed development at Dorothy House Hospice Care, Winsley, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 2LE (hereafter referred to as the 'proposed development site'), which is within Wiltshire Council (WC).

The proposal is for a ground floor extension and a first floor extension on the Nicholson House building, located northwest of Dorothy House.

ACP Consultants Ltd. was instructed by the client to produce a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment to accompany the planning application to the WC for consent to undertake the proposed work. Major developments are required to submit a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment demonstrating biodiversity enhancements that contribute to the objectives of the latest WC Local Plan. Relevant planning policy and legislation can be found in Appendix E.

Local Authorities are tasked with determining new development and local planning applications against a wide range of social, economic and environmental criteria. The purpose of this report is to assess whether the development proposal is compliant with the relevant local policies in terms of ecological impact and whether the Proposed Development will result in a biodiversity net gain.

This assessment has been carried out in accordance with good practice guidelines, including the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and applicable local supplementary guidance.

The remainder of this report is presented in the following order:

- Section 2: Existing Site Conditions
- Section 3: Biodiversity Net Gain
- Section 4: Conclusions

## 1.2 Objectives

- Assess the proposed landscape plans and compare this to the current habitats on site to see if the proposed residential development will result in a biodiversity net gain.
- Demonstrate the sites biodiversity loss or gain through habitat impact assessment calculations.

## 2 Existing Site Conditions

### 2.1 Habitats On-site

The existing site has one building present, which will be altered by the proposed development. A driveway, located in front of the building, extends to the road situated southwest of the building. There is also a storage shed on the driveway, which may be removed as part of the proposed development. There are trees present on-site, which are not expected to be impacted by the proposed development. An area of vegetated garden, comprising of modified grassland and scattered scrub, extends from the rear of the building and wraps around the left-hand side to the front of the building. This is expected to be impacted by the proposed development. The proposed development area is shown in Figures 2.1 to 2.4. The wider site included in the redline boundary (Appendix B) was also assessed and included Modified Grassland (g4).

UKHab classifications present on-site were determined during a site visit carried out by Brydie Stacey on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2025. These were Building (u1b5), Other developed land (u1b6), Vegetated Garden (828), and Trees (200). A Conditions Assessment of baseline habitat types present can be found in Appendix D.

The proposed plans provided by the client can be found in Appendix B.



Figure 2.1 - Area proposed for development (ACP, 2025)



Figure 2.2 - Area proposed for development (ACP, 2025)



Figure 2.3 - Area proposed for development (ACP, 2025)



Figure 2.4 - Area proposed for development (ACP, 2025)

## 3 Biodiversity Net Gain

### 3.1 Calculation

As mentioned in previous sections, all developments are required to submit an ecology assessment demonstrating the sites biodiversity loss or gain using a Biodiversity Metric.

Biodiversity Net Gain is calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric tool to determine if the proposed development will result in a habitat biodiversity net loss or gain. The tool helps to calculate the biodiversity value of a site before and after the proposed development.

The percentage net change by measuring many factors including:

- The existing habitats on site.
- How distinctive the habitats are on site.
- Habitat condition.
- Habitats to be retained and enhanced within the development.
- Habitats to be lost within the development.
- Any indirect negative impacts.
- Habitat creation on site, and
- Habitat enhancement.

The net change result is displayed as a percentage loss or a gain.

Proposals received an on-site net percentage change of +10.63% (Gain) in habitat units, with trading rules satisfied as a result of the proposed development. As a result, the development is considered to offer sufficient ecological benefits as the 10% gain target and trading rules have been met. Provided plans which show that 6 additional trees will be planted in the wider site to offset initial habitat loss (primarily vegetated garden habitat) and that 300 square metres of Modified Grassland (g4) habitat will be enhanced to meet the criteria for 'good condition' Other Neutral Grassland (g3c) have been provided in Appendix B.

Statutory Biodiversity Metric tool results can be found in Appendix C, alongside a Conditions Assessment in Appendix D.

## 4 Conclusions

This report provides an assessment of the following potential key impacts associated with the construction and operational phases of the proposed development at the Dorothy House Hospice Care, Winsley, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 2LE. The aims were to:

- Assess the proposed landscape plans and compare this to the current habitats on site to see if the proposed development will result in a biodiversity net gain; and
- Demonstrate the sites biodiversity loss or gain through habitat impact assessment calculations.

Proposed plans involve the removal of Vegetated Garden (u828) in order to accommodate the proposed extension. It is understood that this habitat loss will be offset through the planting of 6 additional trees throughout the wider site and the enhancement of existing Modified Grassland (g4) habitat to Other Neutral Grassland (g3c) habitat as shown in Appendix B. As a result, calculations resulted in an overall net percentage change of +10.63% (Gain) in habitat units, with trading rules also satisfied. As a result, the proposed development offers sufficient ecological benefits as the 10% net gain and trading rules have been met.

It can, therefore, be concluded that the proposed development is considered to comply with national, regional or local planning policies as sufficient ecological improvement to the site and surrounding area will be implemented.

## Appendices

**Appendix A: UKHab Map**

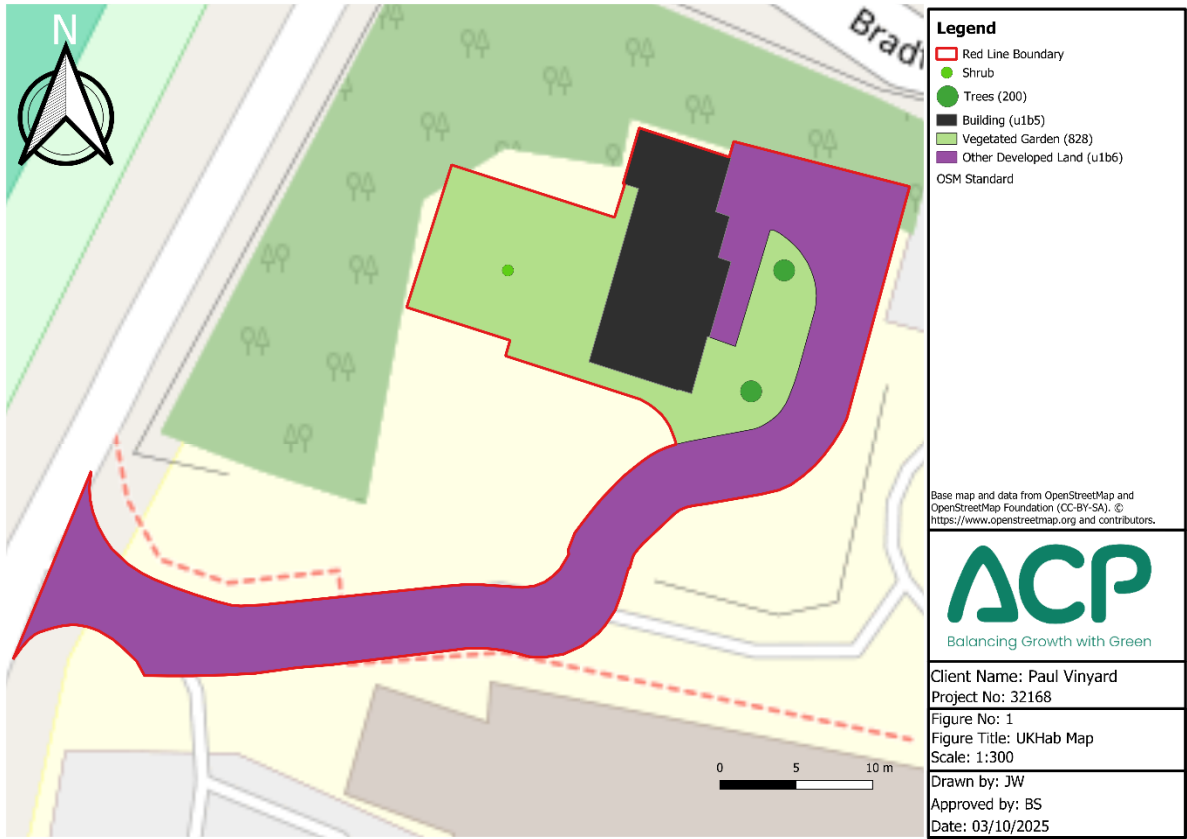
**Appendix B: Proposed Site Plans**

**Appendix C: Biodiversity Net Gain Calculations**

**Appendix D: Conditions Assessment**

**Appendix E: Planning Policy & Legislation**

Appendix A: UKHab Map



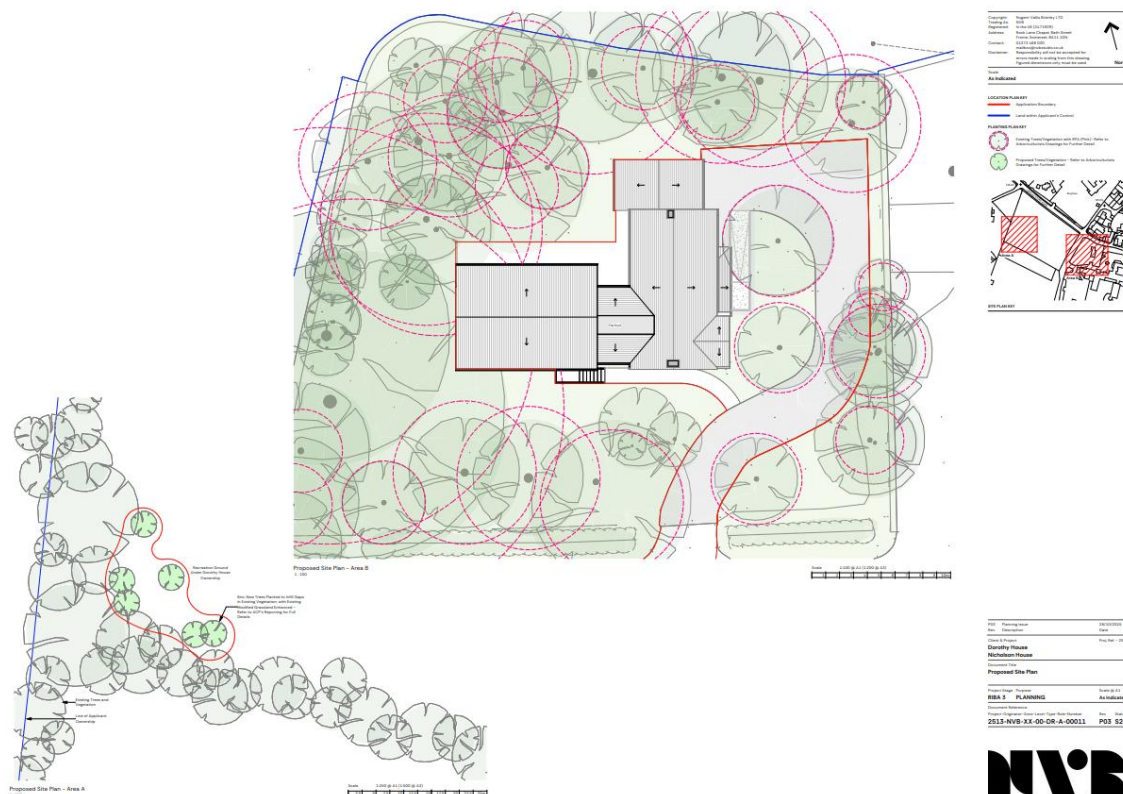


Dorothy House Hospice Care, Winsley, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 2LE



Proposed Site Plan; Level 1 (Source: Client, 2025)

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment  
Dorothy House Hospice Care, Winsley, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 2LE



Proposed Site Plan, Wider Site (Source: Client, 2025)

## Appendix C: Biodiversity Net Gain Calculations

| FINAL RESULTS                                                                                             |                    |        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Total net unit change<br><br>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement) | Area habitat units | 0.15   |
|                                                                                                           | Hedgerow units     | 0.00   |
|                                                                                                           | Watercourse units  | 0.00   |
| Total net % change<br><br>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)    | Area habitat units | 10.63% |
|                                                                                                           | Hedgerow units     | 0.00%  |
|                                                                                                           | Watercourse units  | 0.00%  |
| Trading rules satisfied?                                                                                  | Yes ✓              |        |
|                                                                                                           |                    |        |

| Unit Type          | Target | Baseline Units | Units Required | Unit Deficit |
|--------------------|--------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Area habitat units | 10.00% | 1.40           | 1.54           | 0.00         |
| Hedgerow units     | 10.00% | 0.00           | 0.00           | 0.00         |
| Watercourse units  | 10.00% | 0.00           | 0.00           | 0.00         |

No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓  
No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓  
No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

## Appendix D: Conditions Assessment

| Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Habitat Types</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |
| <b>Individual trees – Urban trees</b><br><b>Individual trees – Rural trees</b><br>Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |
| <i>Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of <u>rural</u> trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in <u>rural</u> locations.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |
| <b>Habitat Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |
| Tree (u200)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |
| <b>Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment):</b><br>Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |
| <b>Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only):</b><br>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 should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |
| <b>On-site or off-site, site name and location</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | On-site                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Survey date and Surveyor name</b>                    | 04.09.2025<br>BS                     |
| <b>Limitations (if applicable)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)</b> | N/A                                  |
| <b>Grid reference</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Habitat parcel reference</b>                         | N/A                                  |
| <b>Condition Assessment Criteria</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Criterion passed (Yes or No)</b>                     | <b>Notes (such as justification)</b> |
| A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Yes                                                     |                                      |
| 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).                                                                                         | Yes                                                     |                                      |
| C                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) <sup>1</sup> .                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Yes                                                     |                                      |
| 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. | Yes                                                     |                                      |
| E                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.                                                                                                                                                     | Yes                                                     |                                      |
| F                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Yes                                                     |                                      |
| <b>Number of criteria passed</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 6                                                       |                                      |
| <b>Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Condition Assessment Score</b>                       | <b>Score Achieved x/√</b>            |
| Passes 5 or 6 criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Good (3)                                                | X                                    |
| Passes 3 or 4 criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Moderate (2)                                            |                                      |
| Passes 2 or fewer criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Poor (1)                                                |                                      |
| Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                         |                                      |

Table 1. Tree (u200) Condition Assessment, using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tool (DEFRA, 2025).

## Appendix E: Planning Policy & Legislation

This section summarises the relevant National and Local legislative and policy background, statutory and non-statutory guidelines relevant to the potential commercial development.

### National Policy

#### National Planning Policy (December 2024)

The principal national planning policy guidance with respect to the potential development is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The most recent update of the NPPF was published in December 2024 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. This guidance sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. Three dimensions to sustainable development have been identified in the NPPF: economic, social, and environmental.

The NPPF Section 187 states that:

*"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;*
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."*

Section 188 states that:

*"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."*

Section 189 states that:

*"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads<sup>63</sup>. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while*

*development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.”*

Section 190 states that:

*“When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development<sup>64</sup> other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:*

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.”*

Section 192 states that:

*“To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:*

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and steppingstones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*
- b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”*

Section 193 states that:

*“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while 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.”*

Section 194 states that:

*“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or*

projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.”

### **Relevant National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG, 2016)**

NPPG is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

The guidance note on ‘Natural Environment’ explains key issues in implementing policy to protect and enhance the natural environment, including local requirements. This has been referred to when preparing this report. It states that:

*“Planning authorities need to consider the potential impacts of development on protected and priority species, and the scope to avoid or mitigate any impacts when considering site allocations or planning applications. Guidance on the law affecting Habitats Sites, protected species and SSSIs.*

*Natural England has issued standing advice on protected species. A protected species mitigation licence from Natural England may be required before any work can start.”*

The PPG also states that:

*“Information on biodiversity and geodiversity impacts and opportunities needs to inform all stages of development (including site selection and design, pre-application consultation and the application itself). An ecological survey will be necessary in advance of a planning application if the type and location of development could have a significant impact on biodiversity and existing information is lacking or inadequate. Pre-application discussions can help to scope whether this is the case and, if so, the survey work required.*

*Even where an Environmental Impact Assessment is not needed, it might still be appropriate to undertake an ecological survey, for example, where protected species may be present or where biodiverse habitats may be lost.*

*As with other supporting information, local planning authorities should require ecological surveys only where clearly justified. Assessments should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development proposed and the likely impact on biodiversity. Further guidance on information requirements is set out in making an application.”*

Biodiversity net gain is mentioned in the PPG and states that:

*“The National Planning Policy Framework encourages net gains for biodiversity to be sought through planning policies and decisions. Biodiversity net gain delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Biodiversity net gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures. It may help local authorities to meet their duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.”*

## **Species and Habitats Legislation**

### **The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)**

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) consolidates all various amendments made to The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994, in respect of England and Wales. The 1994 Regulations transposed the EC Habitats Directive 1992 (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) into national law.

Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive list (respectively) habitats and species for which member states are required to establish and monitor SACs. The EC Birds Directive provides a similar network of sites (SPAs) for all rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex I and all regularly occurring migratory species, with particular focus on wetlands of international importance.

Together with SACs, SPAs form a network of pan-European protected areas known as 'NATURA 2000' sites.

The Habitats Regulations also make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade on the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, cut, uproot, destroy or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 4.

This legislation was amended in January 2021: The main changes to the 2017 Regulations are:

- *“the creation of a national site network within the UK territory comprising the protected sites already designated under the Nature Directives, and any further sites designated under these Regulations*
- *the establishment of management objectives for the national site network (the ‘network objectives’)*
- *a duty for appropriate authorities to manage and where necessary adapt the national site network as a whole to achieve the network objectives*
- *an amended process for the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)*
- *arrangements for reporting on the implementation of the Regulations, given that the UK no longer provides reports to the European Commission*
- *arrangements replacing the European Commission’s functions with regard to the imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) test where a plan or project affects a priority habitat or species*
- *arrangements for amending the schedules to the Regulations and the annexes to the Nature Directives that apply to the UK.”*

### **The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979)**

The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979) aims to ensure conservation and protection of all wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats (listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention), to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to afford special protection to the most vulnerable or threatened species (including migratory species).

### **The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981)**

The WCA is the primary UK mechanism for statutory site designation (Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSIs]) and the protection of individual species listed under Schedule 1, 2, 5 and 8 of the Act, each subject to varying levels of protection.

### **The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000**

This legislation strengthens the provision of the 1981 WCA (as amended), both in respect of statutory sites such as SSSIs and protected species. It also places a statutory obligation on Local Authorities and other public bodies to further conservation of biodiversity in the exercise of their functions, thus providing a statutory basis to the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) process, which began in 1994. Section 74 of the Act lists the habitat types and species of principal importance in England. The UK Biodiversity action Plan has now been superseded by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework' (July 2012), however, many of the species and habitats in the UK and local BAPs have not been updated and are still considered relevant to date.

A Bill to amend the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to extend the right of public access to the countryside, including to woodlands, the Green Belt, waters and more grasslands; and for connected purposes is currently in second reading in the House of Commons (November 2022).

## Local Policy: Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

The Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) provides the framework for planning policy for Wiltshire up to 2026. The Strategy outlines the basis for biodiversity and environmental measures against which planning applications are determined.

The “Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and geodiversity” states:

### **“Protection**

*Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource, and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.*

*All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.*

*Any development potentially affecting a Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in paragraphs 6.75-6.77 above where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000 network. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy.*

### **Biodiversity enhancement**

*All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character.*

### **Local sites**

*Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:*

- i. cannot reasonably be avoided*
- ii. are reduced as far as possible*
- iii. are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest*
- iv. where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements.*

*Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long-term.” (p.263-264)*

The “Core Policy 51: Landscape” states:

*Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. Proposals should be informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s) and any other relevant assessments and studies. In particular, proposals will need to demonstrate that the following aspects of landscape character have been conserved and where possible enhanced through sensitive design, landscape mitigation and enhancement measures:*

- i. The locally distinctive pattern and species composition of natural features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and waterbodies.*
- ii. The locally distinctive character of settlements and their landscape settings.*
- iii. The separate identity of settlements and the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the urban fringe.*
- iv. Visually sensitive skylines, soils, geological and topographical features.*
- v. Landscape features of cultural, historic and heritage value.*
- vi. Important views and visual amenity.*
- vii. Tranquillity and the need to protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise, and motion.*
- viii. Landscape functions including places to live, work, relax and recreate.*
- ix. Special qualities of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the New Forest National Park, where great weight will be afforded to conserving and enhancing landscapes and scenic beauty.” (p.268)*

The “Core Policy 52: Green Infrastructure” states:

*Development shall make provision for the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire’s green infrastructure network, and shall ensure that suitable links to the network are provided and maintained. Where development is permitted developers will be required to:*

- i. retain and enhance existing on site green infrastructure*
- ii. make provision for accessible open spaces in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Wiltshire Open Space Standards*
- iii. put measures in place to ensure appropriate long-term management of any green infrastructure directly related to the development*
- iv. provide appropriate contributions towards the delivery of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy*
- v. identify and provide opportunities to enhance and improve linkages between the natural and historic landscapes of Wiltshire.*

*If damage or loss of existing green infrastructure is unavoidable, the creation of new or replacement green infrastructure equal to or above its current value and quality, that maintains the integrity and functionality of the green infrastructure network, will be required.” (p.272)*

*“Development will not adversely affect the integrity and value of the green infrastructure network, prejudice the delivery of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy, or provide inadequate green infrastructure mitigation.” (p.272)*