



Land off Biddestone Lane, Yatton Keynell,
Chippenham, SN14 7BA

Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report



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Notice to Readers:

The results of the survey and assessment work undertaken by All Ecology are representative at the time of surveying.

Every endeavour has been made to identify the presence of protected species on site, where this falls within the agreed scope of works.

The flora and fauna detailed within this report are those noted during the field survey and from anecdotal evidence. It should not be viewed as a complete list of flora and fauna species that may frequent or exist on site at other times of the year.

Up to date standard methodologies have been used, which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory conservation bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where these methodologies fail to identify all species on-site.

All Ecology cannot take responsibility where Government, national bodies or industry subsequently modify standards.

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Reference to sections or particular paragraphs of this document taken out of context may lead to misrepresentation.

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1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 In April 2025, All Ecology was commissioned to produce a Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report for a site known as Land off Biddestone Lane, Yatton Keynell, Chippenham, SN14 7BA. The site consists of an arable field containing a pond with surrounding vegetation and the field is bound by hedgerows and trees. Due to alterations to the application boundary and soft landscape proposals All Ecology was commissioned to update the BNG Assessment and details of this update is presented in this document.
- 1.2 The proposals for the site are for a new housing development comprising 55 new dwellings with associated infrastructure and greenspace as well as attenuation basin and swale. A new access will be created off Biddestone Road. Landscape buffers to the boundary hedges will be retained around the development.
- 1.3 The Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool is used to calculate the biodiversity value of a site before and after development and then calculates if the development is likely to cause a loss or gain to biodiversity. It will also calculate the amount of compensation the site may need in the form of Biodiversity Offsetting.

Site Location



Figure 1: Aerial view of the site.

2.0 Methodology

- 2.1 The Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator was provided by Defra. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric, first published in November 2023, provides developers, planners, land managers and others with a robust but simple tool to account for the value of nature and better understand how development and land management change will impact on its value over time.
- 2.2 The DEFRA Metric uses UKHab habitat definitions translated from JNCC Phase 1 habitat definitions where required, and the Natural England Hedgerow Impact Assessment Guide to calculate the overall scores for habitats and linear features on site and determine net gain/net loss. The User Guide to Defra's Statutory Biodiversity Metric and the supporting Technical Supplements were followed for accurate data entry into the calculator.
- 2.3 The habitats and linear features were originally identified on site during a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site carried out in April 2024 with an update survey in February 2025. The Ecological Appraisal included full habitat descriptions and photographs. Areas and lengths of the current habitats and linear features were determined using Google Earth and topographical surveys. The proposed site plans were used and measured to determine retained and new habitats for the site and to look for opportunities for enhancement.

3.0 Results

Habitats to be retained, created or lost

- 3.1 The site will be generally cleared for the development resulting in the loss of the majority of arable field habitat (Cereal crops) which currently cover 4.55 ha although a small portion of the arable land will be retained (0.0448 ha) beyond an existing hedge along the south boundary of the site. An existing pond (0.0104 ha) with surrounding blackthorn scrub (0.0194 ha) and three trees will be retained near the centre of the site.
- 3.2 The proposed development will see the creation of 1.5281 ha of developed; sealed surfaces consisting of houses with associated garages, patios, footpaths with access roads and parking. Gardens associated with the new dwellings will cover 0.8157 ha. The area surrounding the development will be landscaped comprising of modified grassland (0.84 ha), mixed native scrub (0.187 ha) and meadow/other neutral grassland (0.5136 ha). Small ornamental shrub borders (0.00937 ha) will be created outside of private gardens and a total of 110 individual trees will be planted throughout the site.
- 3.3 A pond/ sustainable drainage system (0.0705 ha) will be created south of the development with associated neutral grassland (0.4855 ha) created by seeding with Emorsgate EP1 Pond Edge Mixture (or similar). Pockets of wet woodland totalling 0.0555 ha will be created associated with this grassland.
- 3.4 The creation, enhancement and maintenance of habitats will be detailed in a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan to be secured by appropriate planning condition.

Hedgerows to be retained and created

- 3.5 Hedgerows, some with associated ditches, on the existing field boundaries will be largely retained; however, a new site access (0.017 km) will be created through the northwest species-rich native hedgerow with trees. The wet ditch recorded during the original PEA was after recent heavy rain and was found to be generally dry during subsequent site visits. It is highly unlikely that this ditch retains water for more than four months of the year and is not marked on OS maps as a ditch; therefore, it is not recorded separately.
- 3.6 New native hedgerows will be planted comprising 0.05 km of species-rich native hedgerow, 0.297 km of species-rich native hedgerow with trees and 0.0243 km of single species ornamental hedge within public open space and infill planting in existing hedge openings. A short section (0.013 km) of species-rich native hedgerow associated with a ditch planted to infill an existing opening in part of the south boundary hedgerow.

Biodiversity Net Gain – Habitats

- 3.7 The site development, based on current and proposed habitat conditions, distinctiveness and areas, would result in a net unit change of +5.72 units; this is a net percentage change of +56.87%.

Table 1: Habitat biodiversity net gain results (further detail in Appendix 1)

	Habitat Biodiversity Value
Baseline Units	10.06
Post-intervention Units	15.77
Net Unit Change	+ 5.72
Net Percentage Change	+ 56.87%

Biodiversity Net Gain – Hedgerows

- 3.8 The site development, based on current and proposed habitat conditions, distinctiveness and areas, would result in a net unit change of **+3.68** units; this is a net percentage change of **+24.65%**.

Table 2: Hedgerow biodiversity net gain results (further detail in Appendix 1)

	Habitat Biodiversity Value
Baseline Units	14.91
Post-intervention Units	18.59
Net Unit Change	+ 3.68
Net Percentage Change	+ 24.65%

4.0 Conclusion

Biodiversity Offsetting

- 4.1 The proposed development and landscape will result in a habitat net percentage change of + 56.87% (+ 5.72 units) and a hedgerow net percentage change of + 24.65% (+ 3.68 units).
- 4.2 As a gain has been demonstrated and trading rules satisfied, Biodiversity Offsetting will not be required. Recommendations within the ecology reports produced to date should be followed.
- 4.3 The on-site habitats and hedgerows to be retained or created that significantly contribute to net gain must be managed and maintained for a minimum of 30 years. The areas considered to significantly contribute to the biodiversity net gains consist of areas of grassland, scrub, trees, wet woodland and SuDS as well as hedgerows planted outside of private gardens; these must be managed and maintained for a minimum of 30 years.
- 4.4 The specification for created habitats and hedgerows and management will be detailed within a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) secured by a suitably worded condition. This HMMP will also specify any monitoring required.

5.0 References

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2025), *Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides> [accessed on 1st December 2025].

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Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2025), *Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides> [accessed on 1st December 2025].

6.0 Plans

Detailed Soft Landscape Plans

Plans provided separately.

7.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool

See attached Excel spreadsheet

Appendix 2 – Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments

See attached Excel spreadsheet

Appendix 3 – Baseline Habitat Plan

See attached plan.