

Biodiversity Net Gain Report Ashdown and Beechlydene

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Ecology | Green Space | Community | GIS

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Report Produced for **Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust**

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EXCECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an assessment of the biodiversity change at Ashdown and Beechlyded, Salisbury.
- 1.2 The baseline habitats include an area of modified grassland, introduced shrub, and developed land; sealed surface. This amounts to an on-site baseline value of 0.07 area habitat units. The proposals include two extensions to the main building within it's boundary along with introduced shrub, individual trees, and modified grassland. This amounts to an on-site post-intervention value of 0.09 area habitat units.
- 1.3 Based on the DEFRA Statutory Metric the habitats will generate a gain of 0.02 units (26.35%) for area habitat units. Because of this, the project does meet the trading rules within the metric and secures the required >10% gain in biodiversity for area habitat units.

CONTENTS

	Page(s)
1 INTRODUCTION	5
2 SCOPE OF REPORT	6
3 METHODOLOGY	7
4 DESKTOP SURVEY	10
5 BASELINE HABITATS	12
6 PROPOSALS	15
7 POST INTERVENTION HABITATS	15
8 SUMMARY OF ONSITE BIODIVERSITY CHANGE	17
9 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN PRINCIPLES	18
10 CONCLUSIONS	18
11 REFERENCES	19
APPENDIX 1 POLICY AND LEGISLATION	21
APPENDIX 2 CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS	25
APPENDIX 3 PROPOSED HABITAT CONDITION JUSTIFICATION	27

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an assessment of the biodiversity change following the proposals for the site at Ashdown and Beechlydene, referred to as the 'site'. As shown within figure 1
- 1.2 The site is located within Wiltshire Local Planning Authority (LPA) and the Salisbury Plain and West Wiltshire Downs National Character Area (NCA).
- 1.3 This report is submitted alongside the Statutory BNG Metric and detailed plans of the baseline and proposed habitats. This is used to inform the planning process in terms of the BNG objective for this project.



Figure 1 Site location

2 SCOPE OF REPORT

- Establishes the total number of baseline Area Habitat Units (AHU) and Linear Biodiversity Units (LBU), and River Biodiversity Units (RBU) within the site.
- Establishes the total number of AHU, LBU, and RBU which will be retained, enhanced, and created under the current design of the proposed development's landscape plan.
- Determine whether the proposed development will result in a quantitative net loss, no net loss or a net gain for biodiversity on site.
- Determines whether the proposed development achieves a scheme-wide net gain for biodiversity by evidencing compliance with the good practice principles.

2.1 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment

2.1.1 This BNG assessment uses the following industry recognised best practice methods:

- CIEEM, IEMA & CIRIA (2016). Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development
- DEFRA (2023) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric
- CIEEM (2021). Biodiversity Net Gain Report & Audit Templates

2.1.2 The quantitative outcomes of the calculations are one component of the BNG assessment and associated good practice principles. A BNG assessment also requires the collation of qualitative evidence on the application of the mitigation hierarchy, stakeholder engagement and post-development habitat management. Collectively, these quantitative outcomes and qualitative evidence are used to inform the outcomes of the project wide BNG assessment.

2.2 Legislation

2.2.1 The relevant primary legislation for the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain is principally set out under Section 90A and Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This legislation was inserted into the Act by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 and includes amendments made by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations (2024). The relevant biodiversity net gain regulations most directly relevant to planning are:

- The Environment Act 2021 (Commencement No. 8 and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (2024) which commence biodiversity net gain for most types of new planning applications and provides transitional arrangements for section 73 permissions.
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations (2024) which prescribe exemptions for categories of development to which biodiversity net gain does not apply.

- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations (2024) which amend the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and the Town and Country Planning (Section 62A Applications) (Procedure and Consequential Amendments) Order 2013 to include provisions related to planning applications and the Biodiversity Gain Plan, as well as modifications for phased development.
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024) which set out the modifications for irreplaceable habitat.

2.3 BNG Hierarchy

2.3.1 The biodiversity gain hierarchy for the purpose of the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain is set out in Article 30A of the Development Management Procedure Order. This hierarchy is separate to the general mitigation hierarchy set out within the NPFF.

- Avoiding adverse effects of the development on onsite habitat with a habitat distinctiveness score, applied in the biodiversity metric, equal to or higher than six.
- So far as those adverse effects cannot be avoided, mitigating those effects.
- So far as those adverse effects cannot be mitigated, habitat enhancement of onsite habitat.
- So far as there cannot be that enhancement, creation of onsite habitat.
- So far as there cannot be that creation, the availability of registered offsite biodiversity gain.
- So far as that offsite habitat enhancement cannot be secured, purchasing biodiversity credits.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desktop Survey

- 3.1.1 The LPA and NCA have been identified within this assessment. This is displayed within the desktop survey section of this report in figure 2.
- 3.1.2 A search was undertaken using publicly available information for priority using the Natural England Priority Habitat Inventory.
- 3.1.3 A search using publicly available information has been used to identify any irreplaceable habitats which are within or in proximity to the site. This included a search for Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Ancient Trees using the Ancient Tree Inventory (ATI) online layer.

3.1.4 The desktop survey included a search for local plans, wildlife strategies, or local policy which may inform strategic significance of the habitats within this assessment. If habitats within the project are identified as part of a plan and are in the correct spatial location, they will be entered as being of high significance within this assessment. Habitats which are identified within a plan but fall outside spatial location or which are well suited to the area will be assigned as being of moderate strategic significance. Other habitats will be entered as being of low strategic significance. The following strategies were used to inform the strategic significance of the habitats within this project:

- Wiltshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Wiltshire Local Plan Review Habitat Regulations Assessment

3.2 UK Habitat Classification Survey

3.2.1 The habitat survey was carried out on the 23rd of February 2026 according to the UKHab Classification system. The survey included a detailed assessment of the land within the development boundary, including a description and mapping of all key features and habitat types. The survey was carried out to identify the range of habitats within the site and the predominant and notable species of flora.

3.3 Condition Assessments

3.3.1 Condition assessments were undertaken for each habitat which require condition assessment sheets. Following the methodology and criteria provided within The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessments Sheets and Methodology (2024).

3.4 Grassland Survey Methodology

3.4.1 Grasslands were surveyed using a systematic approach, using 1x1m² quadrats sample. A minimum of three quadrats were undertaken of each grassland section. However, this can be increased to take into account variation across the grassland or the extent of the field. Information collected within each quadrat included aspect, slope, average ground cover, sward variation, species, and their percentage cover.

3.4.2 Where the grassland differed to a certain extent or was divided by field boundary such as hedgerows it was considered that the grassland was a different habitat parcel, and another assessment was undertaken.

3.4.3 This survey methodology provides information required to classify the grassland to the correct grassland habitat type and provides sufficient information to undertake a metric statutory condition assessment.

3.5 Limitations and Assumptions

- 3.5.1 Habitat surveys were carried out in February, outside of the optimal survey window, which could impact the species list for any of the modified grasslands.
- 3.5.2 In addition, a species list was not collected for the modified grassland parcel A4, therefore essential criterion A was assumed to have passed as the species list collected for grassland parcel adjacent to this area contained an average of 7 species.
- 3.5.3 Statutory metric rounds to two decimal places when calculating units gained or lost. For smaller sites this may lead to discrepancy in the calculations, however this is not considered to be a limitation of the study due to the nature of the habitat distinctiveness.

4 DESKTOP SURVEY

4.1 Site Context

4.1.1 The site is located within Wiltshire LPA and the Salisbury Plain and West Wiltshire Downs NCA, see figure 2 below.

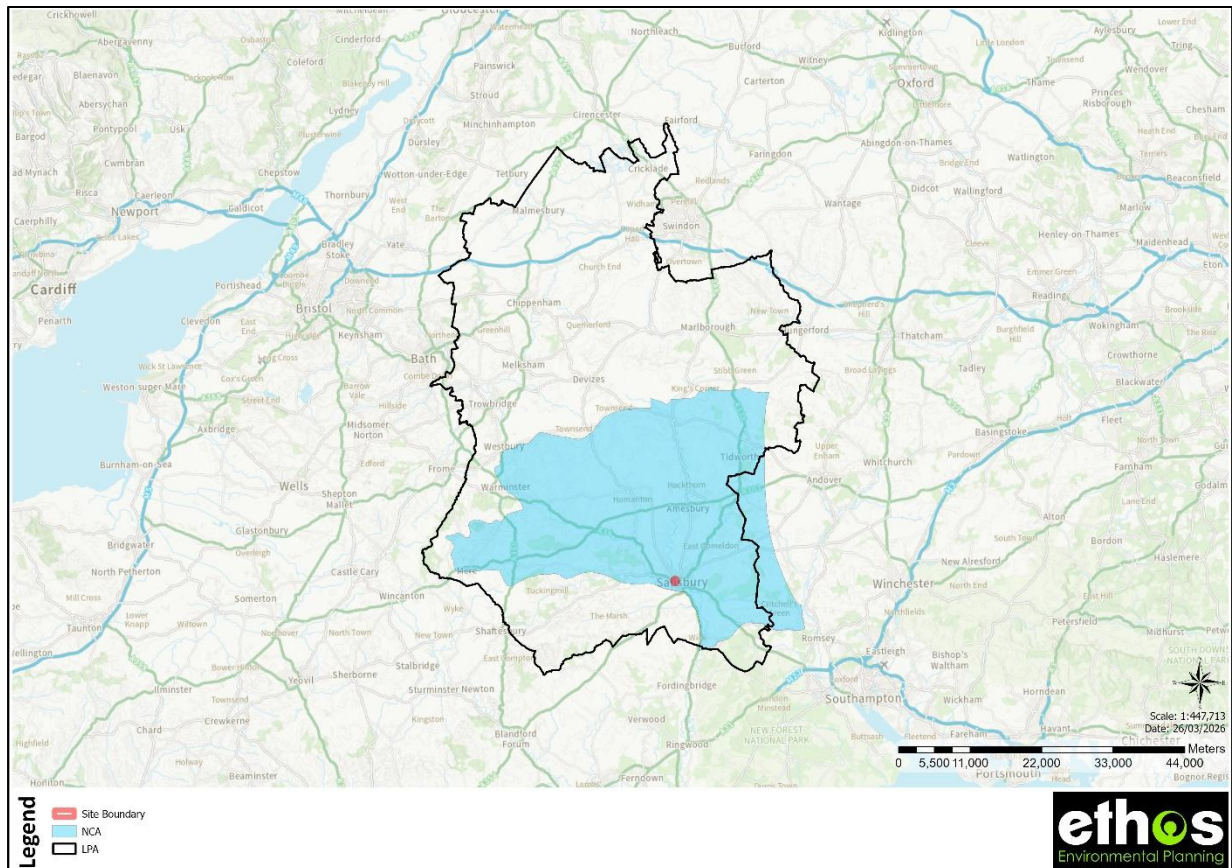


Figure 2 LPA and NCA

4.2 Strategic Areas and Priority/Irreplaceable Habitats

- 4.2.1 This site is not located within any strategic area and as such, all of the habitats within this assessment have been input as being of a low strategic significance. However, the Wiltshire LNRS illustrates that there are several areas within Salisbury that have been identified as strategically significant habitat networks under the title Nature on Our Doorstep; these areas are adjacent to the site.
- 4.2.2 The site is located near to areas of deciduous woodland and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh priority habitats, however, there are no priority habitats within the site boundary. It is considered that the site proposals will not result in an impact on the adjacent woodland and as such, priority habitats will not be impacted by the development.
- 4.2.3 A desktop search using publicly available information did not identify any irreplaceable habitats onsite. This was confirmed during the UKHab survey.

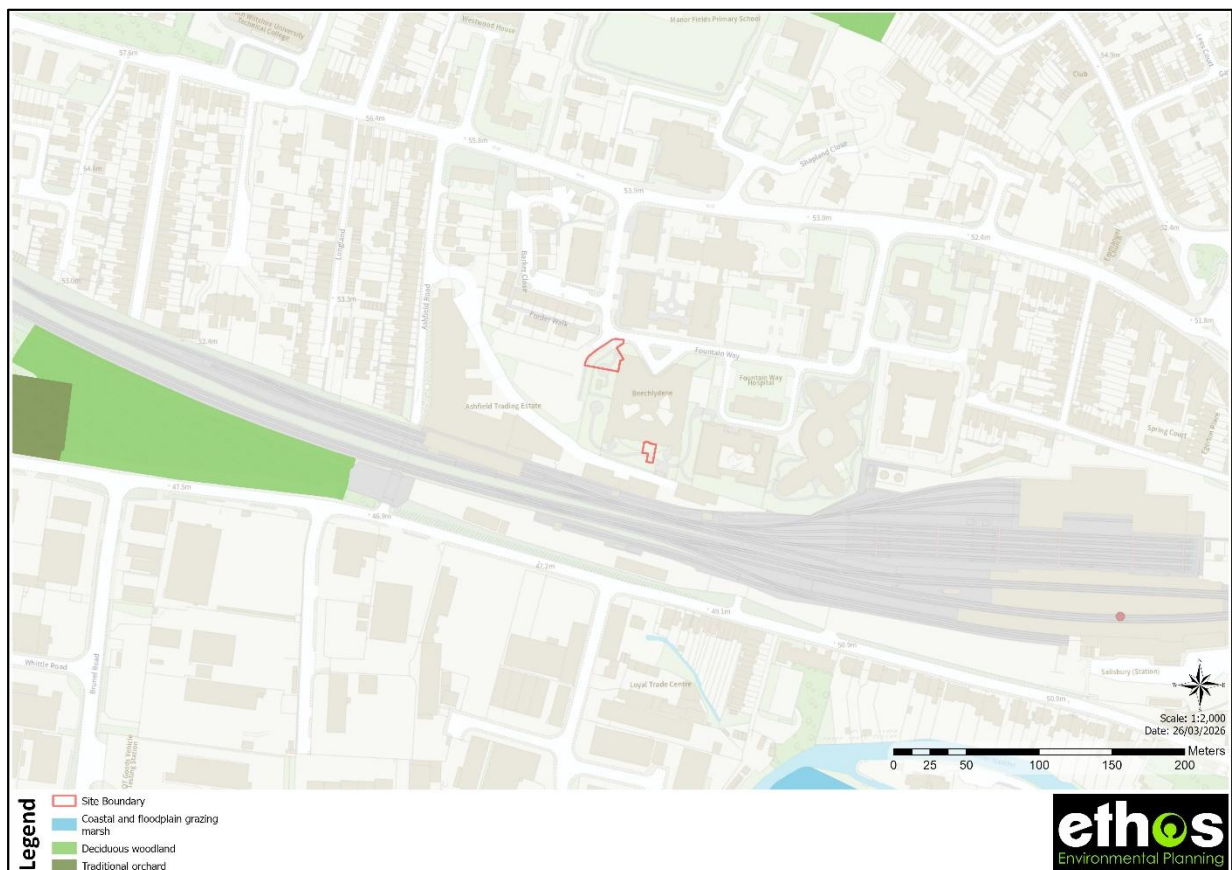


Figure 3 Priority and irreplaceable habitat map

5 BASELINE HABITATS

5.1.1 The site encompasses 0.05 hectares. The baseline map displays the existing habitats onsite (figure 4) and the habitats are listed below. Conditions sheets for the baseline habitats are provided within appendix 2 of this report.

- Grassland – Modified grassland
- Urban – Introduced shrub
- Urban – Developed land; sealed surface.

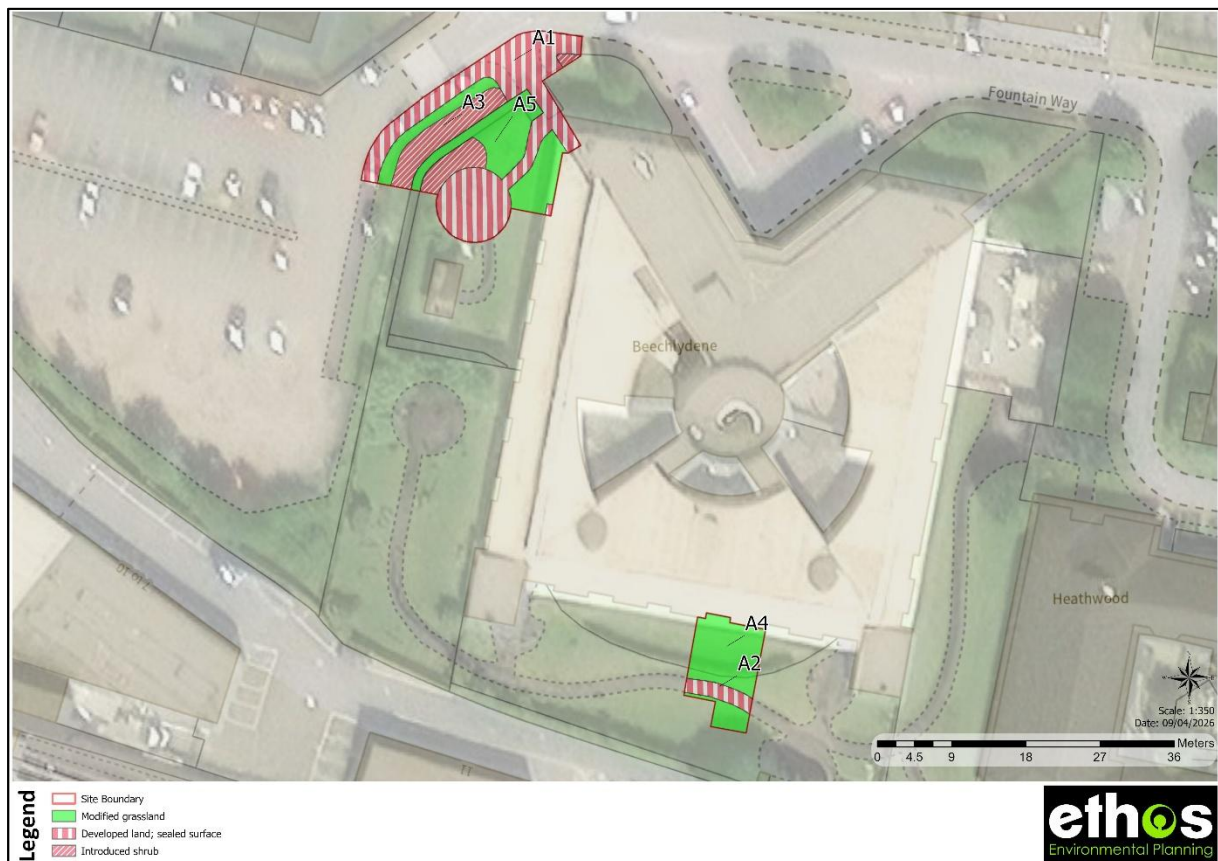


Figure 4 Baseline Habitats

5.2 Area Biodiversity Units

Developed land; sealed surface (A1 and A2)

5.2.1 The site consists of a 0.0215ha of hard standing developed land, this is area consists of the paved areas that act as access to the facility. This urban habitat is a very low distinctiveness habitat with no ecological value and therefore does not need a condition assessment.



Photo 1 Developed land in northern area (A1)



Photo 2 Developed land in southern area (A2)



Photo 3 Road included in A1

Introduced shrub (A3)

- 5.2.2 There are stands of introduced shrub on site in the northern section of the site, this covers an area of 0.0074ha of land; ornamental shrubs dominate this habitat. This is also classified as an urban habitat with low distinctiveness, however a condition assessment is not required due to its low ecological value.



Photo 4 Introduced shrub (A3)

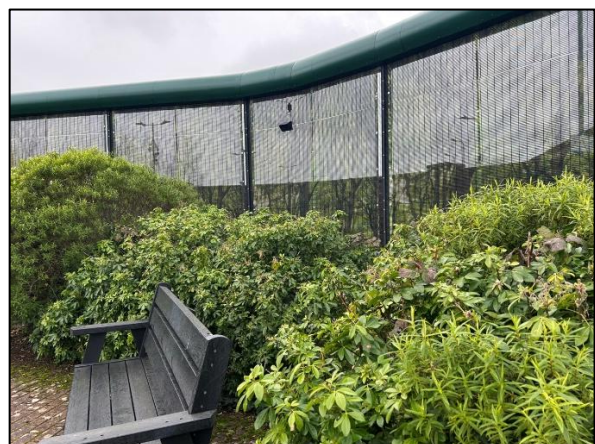


Photo 5 Introduced shrub within compound (A3)

Modified grassland (A4 and A5)

- 5.2.3 The site also consists of a 0.0201ha of modified grassland which is a low distinctiveness habitat. This area is spread across both northern and southern areas of 0.0081ha in the south of the site (A4) and 0.012ha in north (A5).
- 5.2.4 The northern parcel of modified grassland was assessed to be in poor condition as it fails essential criterion A which means that this area cannot score greater than poor. Essential criterion A outlines how an average of 6 vascular species must be present across the different survey quadrats; A4 had an average of 4 (perennial rye grass, daisy, annual meadow grass, and red fescue).
- 5.2.5 A5 however scored in moderate condition as we have assumed that the area has passed essential criterion A as a species list was not carried out within this parcel. This area therefore passes five of the seven criteria, failing on criteria B and E. This is due to a lack of variation in sward height as the area was managed short at 4cm across the whole parcel as well as cover of bare ground being less than 1% of the habitat parcel.



Photo 6 Southern grassland (A4)



Photo 7 Northern grassland (A5)

6 PROPOSALS

- 6.1.1 The proposals outlined in Osmond Tricks Proposed Site Plan (2026) illustrates how two extensions from the building Beechlydene will be created on areas currently occupied by introduced shrub, hardstanding, and modified grassland. With these buildings there will be associated access paths, gates, and walls created as well as areas of amenity grassland and planted trees.

7 POST INTERVENTION HABITATS

- 7.1.1 Condition assessment sheets for the created habitats are provided within appendix 2 of this report. The proposed condition assessments include justification for how the habitats will meet their target conditions.

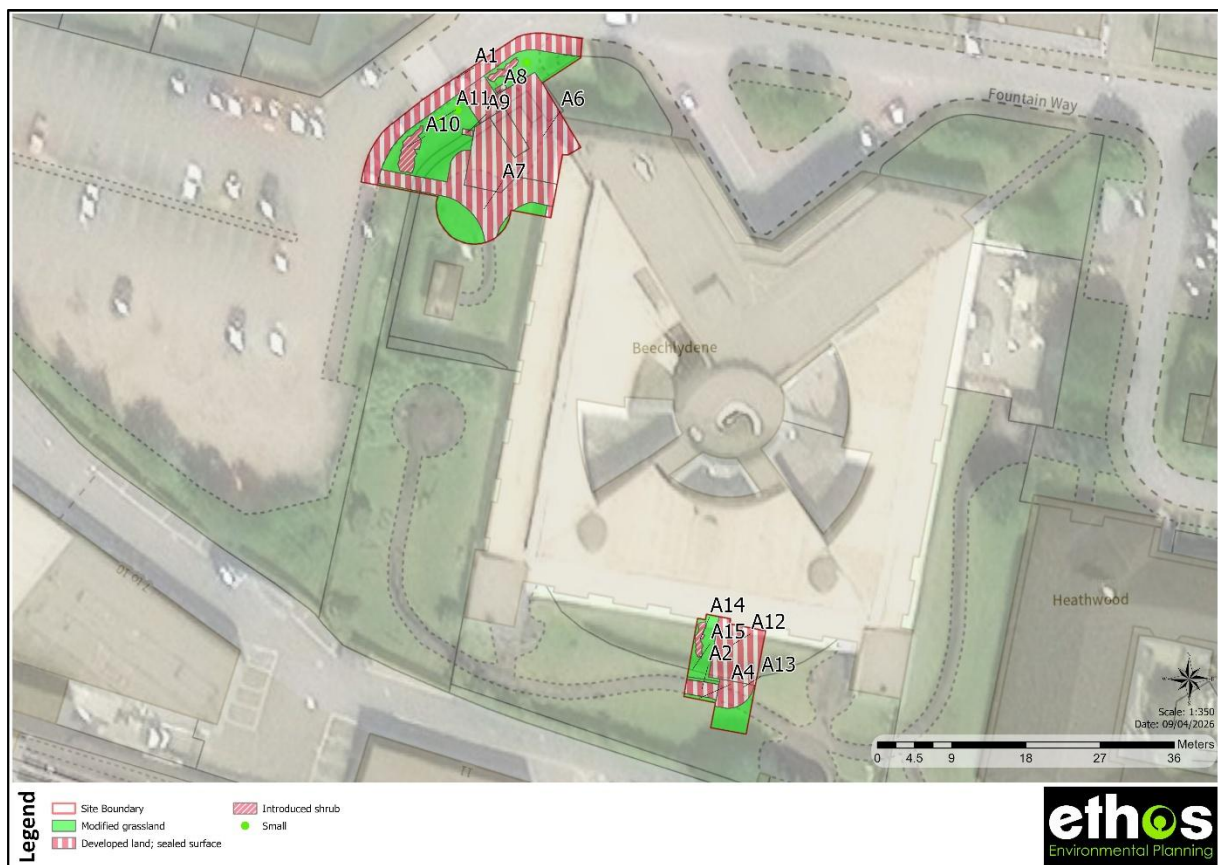


Figure 5 Proposed Habitats

7.2 Lost Area Biodiversity Units

Developed land; sealed surface (A1 and A2)

- 7.2.1 Most of the hard standing which currently resides on site will be removed as part of the development. A total of 0.0135ha of hard standing will be lost in the northern area of the site and approximately half of the existing hard standing will be lost from the southern section of the site.

Introduced shrub (A3)

- 7.2.2 All of the introduced shrub which is found in the northern area of the site will be removed as part of this development.

Modified grassland (A4 and A5)

- 7.2.3 In the northern section of the site all of 0.012ha of modified grassland will be removed as well as all 0.0079ha of modified grassland in the southern area of the site will be removed.

7.3 Retained Area Biodiversity Units

Developed land; sealed surface (A1 and A2)

- 7.3.1 A small area of the hard standing will be retained from this proposal; this is the pavement/car park in the northern area of the site totalling an area of 0.0065ha. In addition, in the southern area of the site, part of the paved area will be retained (0.0007ha)

Modified grassland (A4)

- 7.3.2 Along either side of the paved area in the south of the site, strips of modified grassland will be retained (0.0002ha).

7.4 Created Area Biodiversity Units

Developed land; sealed surface (A6 – A9 and A12 – A13)

- 7.4.1 A total of 0.0258ha of hard standing will be created across the site; this is a very low distinctiveness habitat providing little to no ecological value to the BNG metric as such it has a score of N/A – other in the statutory metric. These areas include access paths as well as the extension to the medical centre.
- 7.4.2 These habitats are split across the two development areas with 0.02078ha being in the northern area and 0.00502ha in the southern area.

Introduced shrub (A10 and A14)

- 7.4.3 Across the site, created introduced shrub will span an area of 0.00153ha, two parcels in the northern area (0.0012ha in A10) and one parcel in the southern area (0.00033ha in A14). These areas will be created within the modified grassland parcels.
- 7.4.4 This is a low distinctiveness habitat as it represents a common and widespread habitat which generally has a low biodiversity value. It is because of this that a condition assessment is not required, therefore a score of condition assessment N/A will be used across these areas in the statutory metric.

Modified grassland (A11 and A15)

- 7.4.5 Associated grasslands will be created adjacent to the proposed buildings acting as areas of open space for people within the medical facility. This low distinctiveness habitat type will be managed in moderate condition.
- 7.4.6 A11 covers an area of 0.011ha and is found in the northern area of the site and A15 cover an area of 0.0031ha and is found in the southern area of the site.
- 7.4.7 As mentioned before this habitat type will be managed in moderate condition meaning four or five of the seven conditions need to be met including essential criterion A, these will include condition A, C, F, and G. Passing these criteria will mean that there is an average of 6 to 8 vascular plant species/m² including at least two forbs, scrub present within the grassland account for less than 20% of the area, cover of bracken is less than 20%, and no non-native invasive species will be present.

Individual trees

- 7.4.8 As part of the development, three individual trees will be planted in the northern section of the site. This is a medium distinctiveness habitat and will also be managed in moderate condition.
- 7.4.9 In order to achieve moderate condition these tree whips have to meet three or four criteria – the targeted criteria to achieve this condition will be criteria A, B, D, and F. Passing these criteria will mean that at least 70% of the trees within this block will be native, the canopy of grouped trees (the two western trees) is predominately continuous, there is no evidence of adverse human impacts, and more than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation.

8 SUMMARY OF ONSITE BIODIVERSITY CHANGE

- 8.1 Table 1 shows how the proposal meets the required BNG gain as percentage gain of 26.35% for AHU is achieved. In addition, the trading rules have been met from this proposal largely due to the medium distinctiveness tree habitat trading down for the lost low distinctiveness habitats.

Table 1 BNG headline results

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	0.02
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	26.35%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

9 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN PRINCIPLES

- 9.1 The project adheres to the BNG principles by delivering the 10% uplift in biodiversity value through on-site habitat creation. This approach aligns with national guidance requiring developments to demonstrate a measurable improvement in biodiversity using the statutory Defra Metric and follows good practice by avoiding and minimising ecological impacts before applying habitat creation measures.
- 9.2 By achieving all required gains within the site boundary, the project prioritises on-site delivery, which is consistent with BNG guidance on preferred sequencing of gains. The habitats created will be secured and managed for a minimum of 30 years, meeting statutory long-term management requirements designed to ensure biodiversity improvements are enduring rather than temporary. In doing so, the project provides ecological additionality by creating new, legally secured habitat value beyond the pre-development baseline, in accordance with Defra's expectations for what can legitimately contribute towards BNG.

10 CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 This project includes the creation two building extensions with associated access gates, fencing, greenspace, shrubs, and trees.
- 10.2 The proposal does meet the trading requirements and provide a 26.35% gain in biodiversity for area. This project aligns with the BNG principles, and is in accordance with local and national policy, and emerging national legislation.
- 10.3 The project meets the BNG objective and can form the BNG condition which can be discharged within the reserved matters of this application.
- 10.4 Paragraph 9 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires 'significant' on-site habitat enhancement to be secured under a planning condition, section 106 agreement, or conservation covenant.

11 REFERENCES

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Swindon/pdf/Revised_Copy_of_Local_Nature_Recovery_Strategy_for_Wiltshire_and_Swindon_landscape-compressed_1.pdf?m=1762355778637

APPENDIX 1 POLICY AND LEGISLATION

11.1 Statutory Framework

- 11.1.1 Biodiversity net gain is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity.
- 11.1.2 In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). This is referred to as biodiversity net gain in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains.
- 11.1.3 Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to a general biodiversity gain condition to secure the biodiversity gain objective. This objective is to deliver at least a 10% increase in relation to the pre-development biodiversity value of the development granted permission. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.
- 11.1.4 The general biodiversity gain condition is a pre-commencement condition: once planning permission has been granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan must be submitted and approved by the planning authority before commencement of the development. There are exemptions and transitional arrangements which disapply the condition from certain planning permissions, as well as special modifications for planning permissions for phased development and the treatment of irreplaceable habitats.
- 11.1.5 The statutory framework for biodiversity net gain also includes provisions about information requirements for planning applications and the treatment of the condition on planning decision notices.

11.2 Environment Act 2021

- 11.2.1 The Act requires a minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity as a condition of planning permission.
- 11.2.2 Net gain is to be measured by the biodiversity metric published by the Secretary of State. The Act requires that gains must be secured for a minimum of 30 years post completion of development. Also, under Section 40 the NERC Act 2006, as amended by the Environment Act 2021, “A public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time-to-time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.”...the biodiversity objective is, “...the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in England through the exercise of functions in relation to England”. This is referred to as the Biodiversity Duty.
- 11.2.3 The Environment Act received Royal Assent in November 2021, meaning that by February 2024 the expectation for all planning permissions to include a biodiversity net gain of at least 10% will become a legal requirement.

11.3 BNG Exemptions

Small sites (exempt until April 2024)

- residential development where the number of dwellings is between 1 and 9, or if this is unknown, the site area is less than 0.5 hectares
- commercial development where floor space created is less than 1,000 square metres or total site area is less than 1 hectare
- development that is not the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits
- development that is not waste development

Developments below Threshold

- 11.3.1 A development that's below the threshold means that it does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than:
- 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of habitat
 - 5 metres of linear habitats such as hedgerows

Householder Applications

- 11.3.2 These are applications made by householders as defined within article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. It includes, for example, small projects like home extensions, conservatories or loft conversions

Self-build and Custom Applications

11.3.3 An exemption applies to this type of development when all the following conditions apply:

- it consists of no more than 9 dwellings
- it's on a site that has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares
- it consists exclusively of dwellings that are self-build or custom housebuilding as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015

Biodiversity Gain Site

11.3.4 Developments undertaken for the purpose of fulfilling the BNG planning condition for another development are exempt.

High Speed Railway Network

11.3.5 An exemption applies to any development forming part of, or ancillary to, the high-speed railway transport network, comprising connections between all or any of the places or parts of the transport network specified in section 1(2) of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013.

11.4 National Planning Policy Framework

11.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policy for England. Paragraphs of particular relevance from the NPPF are listed below:

11.4.2 Paragraph 180 states "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures".

11.4.3 Paragraph 185 states "To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should 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."

11.4.4 Paragraph 186 states "When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles 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."

11.5 UK Governments 25 Year Environment Plan

- 11.5.1 The UK Government's 25 Year Environment Plan (DEFRA, 2018) states a desire to 'embed a 'net environmental gain' principle for development to deliver environmental improvements locally and nationally' and plans to consult on making Biodiversity Net Gain a mandatory requirement.
- 11.5.2 On 14th March 2019, Her Majesty's Treasury confirmed that following consultation, the government will use the forthcoming Environment Bill to mandate BNG for development in England, ensuring that the delivery of much-needed infrastructure and housing is not at the expense of vital biodiversity.

11.6 Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem

- 11.6.1 A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (DEFRA, 2011) is the national strategy for biodiversity. This sets out an ambition to halt the loss of biodiversity and see an increase in the area of priority habitats by 200,000 ha by 2020. Biodiversity 2020 sets in policy the objectives to improve our wildlife Sites, make them bigger, develop more of them and join them up (summarised as 'Bigger, Better, More and Joined').

11.7 NERC Act

- 11.7.1 The Natural Environment and Rural Countryside (NERC) Act (HMSO, 2006) requires public bodies, including local authorities, 'to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England when carrying out their normal functions'. Section 40 sets out that:
- Paragraph 1. "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity";
 - Paragraph 3. "Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat".
 - Section 41 sets out that: Paragraph 1. "The Secretary of State must... publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat ... of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity" based on consultation with Natural England; and that Every planning authority must "a) take such steps... to further the conservation of the living organisms and types of habitat included in any list published under this section, or (b) promote the taking by others of such steps".

APPENDIX 2 CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS

Table 1 Grassland low distinctiveness (A4)

Condition Assessment Criteria	Evidence	Pass/Fail
There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high, or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding creeping thistle, spear thistle, curled dock broad-leaved dock, common nettle, creeping buttercup, greater plantain, white clover and cow parsley), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland, and then use the relevant condition sheet.	Quadrat not completed within this area therefore assumed pass.	Pass
Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Grassland same sward height. Mown short for amenity purpose.	Fail
Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	No scrub present.	Pass
Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Less than 5% damage.	Pass
Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	No bare ground.	Fail
Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	None present.	Pass
There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	None present.	Pass
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Achieved
<i>Passes <3 criteria or 4-6 criteria, excluding essential criterion A</i>	<i>Poor (1)</i>	
<i>Passes 4 or 5 criteria, including essential criterion A</i>	<i>Moderate (2)</i>	Score 5
<i>Passes 6 or 7 criteria, including essential criterion A</i>	<i>Good (3)</i>	

Table 3 Grassland low distinctiveness (A5)

Condition Assessment Criteria	Evidence	Pass/Fail
There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high, or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding creeping thistle, spear thistle, curled dock broad-leaved dock, common nettle, creeping buttercup, greater plantain, white clover and cow parsley), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland, and then use the relevant condition sheet.	Only 4 species present.	Fail
Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Grassland same sward height. Mown short for amenity purpose.	Fail
Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Some ornamental scrubs but not greater than 20% threshold.	Pass
Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Patches of bare ground along building making up more than 5% of the parcel.	Fail
Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Bare ground approx. 5%.	Pass
Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	None present.	Pass
There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	None present.	Pass
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Achieved
<i>Passes <3 criteria or 4-6 criteria, excluding essential criterion A</i>	<i>Poor (1)</i>	Fail criterion A
<i>Passes 4 or 5 criteria, including essential criterion A</i>	<i>Moderate (2)</i>	
<i>Passes 6 or 7 criteria, including essential criterion A</i>	<i>Good (3)</i>	

APPENDIX 3 PROPOSED HABITAT CONDITION JUSTIFICATION

Table 4 Proposed grassland low distinctiveness (A11 and A15)

Condition Assessment Criteria	Justification	Condition Pass/ Fail
There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high, or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m² (excluding creeping thistle, spear thistle, curled dock broad-leaved dock, common nettle, creeping buttercup, greater plantain, white clover and cow parsley), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland, and then use the relevant condition sheet.	The grassland will be reseeded with a species rich mix to increase the diversity of the grassland. The long-term management will include the annual cut and removal of vegetation which will reduce the fertility of the grassland in the long term.	Pass
Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Not targeted as the grassland will be mown short for amenity purposes.	Fail
Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Regular cuts will include checks to ensure no scrub encroaches onto the habitat.	Pass
Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	This will not be targeted however it is not expected that physical damage will exceed threshold post development.	Not targeted
Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	This will not be targeted however it is not expected that bare ground will be within the 1% to 10% threshold post development.	Not targeted
Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	None will be planted and any found on site will be removed.	Pass
There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	None will be planted and any found on site will be removed.	Pass

Table 5 Proposed trees

Condition Assessment Criteria	Justification	Condition Pass/ Fail
The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Trees planted will be native.	Pass
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).	Eastern individual tree will automatically pass this criterion. Whereas western tree must be monitored to ensure canopy is continuous and makes up 10% of the total area which is expected when planting trees.	Pass
The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	Trees will not be mature in 30-years.	Fail
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.	No adverse impacts to tree health are expected to occur and pruning regimes will not be excessive when carried out.	Pass
Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Trees are unlikely to develop ecological niches in 30-years.	Fail
More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Trees will be planted in modified grassland and will therefore oversail an area of vegetation.	Pass