

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT AND PLAN FOR POLYTUNNEL APPLICATION

Savernake Park Farm, Cadley, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4NE
4 May 2026

INTRODUCTION

This report provides a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for the proposed development at Savernake Park Farm. The assessment has been undertaken using the statutory Biodiversity Metric to quantify baseline biodiversity value and post-development outcomes. The development comprises the installation of two polytunnels within an area of semi-improved grassland.

METHODOLOGY

The assessment follows the approach set out within the statutory biodiversity metric developed by Defra. Habitats have been classified based on their type, condition, and distinctiveness, and converted into biodiversity units. Due to the small scale and low ecological complexity of the site, this assessment is based on a desk-informed appraisal using reasonable professional assumptions in line with standard practice.

SITE OVERVIEW

The site area is 8810 m² (0.881 hectares) It is made up of neutral grassland and established native hedgerows, interspersed occasional mature trees. These habitats are of medium condition with moderate distinctiveness.

PROPOSED LAYOUT PLAN

The planning application is for the installation of two new polytunnel structures, As per the attached plan the two polytunnels are proposed to be located centrally in the existing neutral grassland area, as indicated on the Biodiversity Enhancement Plan HEP - 100 Revision B included with our application. The dimensions of each tunnel are: length 27.5m x width 9.14m x height 3.7m at highest level. The total footprint: approximately 0.05 ha (500 m²). This will result in the permanent loss of a small area of " other neutral grassland". As the two polytunnels are proposed centrally within the field, approximately 30 metres from the nearest hedgerow, there are no direct impacts on higher-value habitats.



On Friday, 20th March 2026, 3200 trees were planted by volunteers at Savernake Park Farm.

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BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN SUMMARY
Savernake Park Farm, Cadley, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4NE

1. Baseline (before development)

Site Area: 8810 m² (0.881 hectares)

Site boundary indicated in red on the Biodiversity Enhancement Plan HEP -100 Revision B

Habitat	Area	Condition	Distinctiveness	Units
Other neutral grassland	0.8637 ha	Medium (4)	Moderate (2)	6.91 units
Native hedgerow	(0.155 km)	Medium (4)	Moderate (2)	1.24 units
Total Baseline Biodiversity Units			=	8.15 units

2. Proposed Development

Installation of two polytunnels on the grassland

Total footprint: 500 m² (0.05 ha)

Impact: Loss of 500 m² grassland

Remaining grassland: 0.8637 – 0.05 = 0.8137 ha

3. Post-development Habitat Assessment without Mitigation

Habitat	Area	Condition	Distinctiveness	Units
Other neutral remaining grassland	0.8137 ha	Medium x (4)	Moderate x (2)	6.51 units
Native hedgerow (unchanged)	(0.155 km)	Medium (4)	Moderate (2)	1.24 units
Post development total units			=	7.75 units

4. Net Change Calculation

7.75 units less baseline of 8.15 units = - 0.40 units

Percentage change (-4.9%)

We are showing a ~ 5% biodiversity loss. The policy requires +10% gain.

The Target to meet this: 8.15 x 1.10 = 8.97 units

We are ` 1.22 units short.

5. Mitigation & Enhancement Strategy (Recommended)

Our approach is to enhance the remaining grassland on-site.

The plan is to improve the condition from moderate to good condition (x 3)

Updated Calculation

0.8137 x 4 x 3 = 9.76 units + hedgerow 1.24 = 11.0 units

Habitat Type	Units
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Grassland (good condition)	9.76
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Hedgerow	1.24
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Net Gain Achieved (11.00 - 8.15) divided by 8.15 = +35%

Exceeds statutory requirement comfortably

6. Practical Habitat Enhancement Measures

To justify “good condition” grassland, in line with Defra metric criteria, the Grassland Management Plan would include:

- a) reduced mowing to 1–2 cuts per year
- b) removing arisings to reduce soil fertility
- c) the introduction of native wildflower species. The target condition will be supported through overseeding with an appropriate native wildflower mix
- d) the removal of nutrient inputs, avoid fertiliser and herbicide use
- e) consider a light grazing regime (if feasible)

Also Hedgerow Enhancements (optional but beneficial) Gap planting to enhance the hedgerow with native and species-rich shrubs and trees, thereby improving biodiversity and condition uplift to “good”) Allow hedgerow to increase in height and width. Rotational cutting (every 2–3 years) By enhancing and improving the condition of the hedgerows, this will improve the habitat and connectivity for invertebrates and small mammals and maintain ecological connectivity and enhanced nesting and foraging opportunities.

7. Key Planning Conclusion

The development at Savernake Park Farm can meet and exceed Biodiversity Net Gain requirements under the Environment Act 2021 through simple, low-cost habitat management measures. The proposed development will initially result in a minor loss of semi-improved grassland. However, this impact can be fully mitigated and significantly exceeded through on-site habitat enhancement. Enhancing the retained grassland to “good” condition will deliver a net biodiversity gain of approximately 35%, substantially exceeding the minimum 10% requirement set out under the Environment Act 2021. The development is therefore compliant with current biodiversity policy and delivers a measurable ecological benefit. There will be no need for off-site units or credits.

8. Habitat Management and Monitoring

An initial habitat management period of at least 5 years will be implemented to ensure successful establishment of target conditions. Throughout this period, action and monitoring will include:

- The ecological enhancement of all retained grassland within the red line boundary, as shown on the Biodiversity Enhancement Plan.
- There will be annual habitat condition checks
- Adaptive management where required
- Record keeping of management activities

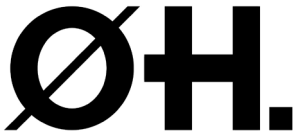
The proposals have been designed to accord with the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, enhance) and deliver measurable biodiversity gains in accordance with the Environment Act 2021. All on-site habitats will be managed to achieve and maintain target condition, ensuring the long-term delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.

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Land-holdings

Commerical site area-8810 sq M

enhanced species rich grassland

species rich wild flower meadow

1500 sq m species-rich wildflower meadow
(habitat enhancement area)

Retained grassland enhanced to
species-rich neutral grassland
+355BNG defensible

200 m Retained and enhanced native
hedgerow (managed on an 2-3 year
rotation)

5 m biodiversity buffer (tussock grass/
unmanaged margins)

Proposed Polytunnels (total footprint 500 msq)

0 25 50 75
Metres

PROPOSED MARKET GARDEN

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN 1:1250

GENERAL NOTES:

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Check all dimensions on site.

FOR PLANNING

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Project:
SAVANAKE PARK FARM
SN8 4NE

Title:
BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN
PLAN
to support BNG (enviro Act2021)

Rev	Notes	dd.mm.yy	By	Chkd	Date: 04/05/2026	Drawn By: EOH	Checked:	Project Ref:	Drawing No:	Revision:
					Scale: 1:1250@A3			SPF	HEP-100	B

HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN (HMMP) - Duration 5 years

1. Objectives	Enhance semi-improved grassland to good condition; Maintain and improve native hedgerows. Deliver and sustain a minimum +10% biodiversity net gain (target: +35%) Establish a simple, practical long-term management regime
2. Habitat Types and Targets	
2.1 Grassland (0.8137 ha)	Target condition: Good (species-rich neutral grassland); Target characteristics: Increased diversity of native grasses and wildflowers Reduced dominance of coarse grasses & absence of nutrient enrichment indicators (e.g. nettles, docks)
2.2 Hedgerows (0.155 km)	Target condition: Good Target characteristics: Structurally diverse (height and width); native species & minimal gaps
3. Management Prescriptions	
3.1 Grassland Management application Avoid overgrazing	Year 1–5 actions: Cut grassland 1–2 times per year (July and/or September) Remove all cuttings to reduce soil fertility; no fertiliser, herbicide, or pesticide or heavy machinery use & Enhancement: introduce native wildflower seed if diversity remains low after Year 2
3.2 Hedgerow Management	Year 1–5 actions: Cut hedgerows on a 2–3 year rotation (not annually); maintain height ≥2 m where possible Allow flowering and fruiting Enhancement measures: gap planting using native species (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel) Protect new planting from grazing.
4. Monitoring	Annual Monitoring (Years 1–5); Visual inspection of grassland condition Check species diversity and sward structure; record presence of undesirable species. Inspect hedgerow condition and growth.
5. Success Criteria	Grassland: Meets “good condition” criteria under the statutory metric Visible increase in species diversity, Balanced sward structure Hedgerow: Increased density and structural diversity & reduced gaps
6. Adaptive Management	If monitoring shows targets are not being met: Adjust mowing frequency Introduce wildflower seeding Reduce any unintended nutrient inputs
7. Responsibility	The landowner / site manager will be responsible for implementing this plan and maintaining records of management and monitoring activities.
8. Summary	This Plan provides a clear and achievable framework to ensure that biodiversity enhancements are delivered and maintained over a 5-year period. The measures set out will secure a minimum +35% biodiversity net gain, significantly exceeding statutory requirements.

PLANNING STATEMENT

Policy Context

This application has been assessed in accordance with the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements set out under the Environment Act 2021.

Baseline Biodiversity Value

The site comprises semi-improved grassland and native hedgerows.
Baseline biodiversity value: 8.15 units

Development Impact

The proposed development will result in:
Loss of 0.05 ha of semi-improved grassland
No loss of hedgerows
Post-development value (without mitigation): 7.75 units
Net change: –4.9%

Mitigation and Enhancement

To achieve Biodiversity Net Gain, the following on-site measures are proposed:
Enhancement of retained grassland to “good” condition
Reduced mowing regime (1–2 cuts per year)
Removal of arisings to reduce soil fertility | No fertiliser or herbicide use
Hedgerow enhancement through sympathetic management

Post-Development Biodiversity Value

Post-development value (with enhancement): 11.00 units
Net Gain Achieved +35% Biodiversity Net Gain

Conclusion

The proposed development will deliver a significant on-site biodiversity enhancement, exceeding the statutory 10% requirement. The scheme is compliant with national policy and delivers measurable ecological benefits.

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