



Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment
Land at Former Westholme Nursery,
Littlehampton

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Dowsett Mayhew to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for land at the former Westholme Nursery, Littlehampton, BN17 7PP, hereafter referred to as the 'site' (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Site red line boundary.

- 1.2 The proposed development includes the erection of residential dwellings (Figure 2) with an area of open space on the northern aspect. The open space in the north will be a mixture of open space provision and new planting for the benefit of species such as house sparrow.



Figure 2: Proposed development.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The site was surveyed on 12th May 2026 by Alexia Tamblyn MA (Oxon) MSc CEcol CEnv MCIEEM FRGS. The surveyors identified the habitats present, following the UK Habitat classification system (UKHab V2). The habitats within the site were also subject to the Statutory BNG Metric Condition Assessment. The site was surveyed on foot and the existing habitats and land uses were recorded on an appropriately scaled map.
- 2.2 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (version 1.0.4) has been used to calculate biodiversity losses and gains for habitats within the site. The metric is a separate excel document and

underpins the Environment Act's provision for mandatory BNG in England. This excel document supports this report and will be provided separately.

- 2.3 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses habitat as a proxy for wider biodiversity with different habitat types scoring different values according to their relative biodiversity value. These are dependent on the condition and location of the habitat, in order to calculate '**biodiversity units**'.
- 2.4 The site has been assessed in terms of the condition assessment of the baseline, and habitats were classified in more detail during this assessment.
- 2.5 The condition assessments provide further scrutiny of the measured habitats. The condition of habitats is dependent on several parameters and may include aspects of management, the impact of invasive species and nutrient enrichment, which would affect species abundance and specific characterisation of habitat value.

3.0 RESULTS

Baseline Value

- 3.1 The on-site baseline habitat units is 2.48 and on-site baseline hedgerow units is 0.10. The baseline map is shown in Figure 3 below.

Table 1: On-Site Habitat Baseline

Habitat	Area (ha)	Condition
Other neutral grassland	0.35	Poor
Mixed scrub	0.02	Moderate
Bramble scrub	0.03	Condition Assessment N/A
Ruderal/Ephemeral	0.20	Moderate
Developed land; sealed surface	0.09	N/A - Other
Total (excluding individual trees)	0.69	

Table 2: On-Site Hedgerow Baseline

Habitat	Length (km)	Condition
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.096	Poor (by default)
Total	0.096	

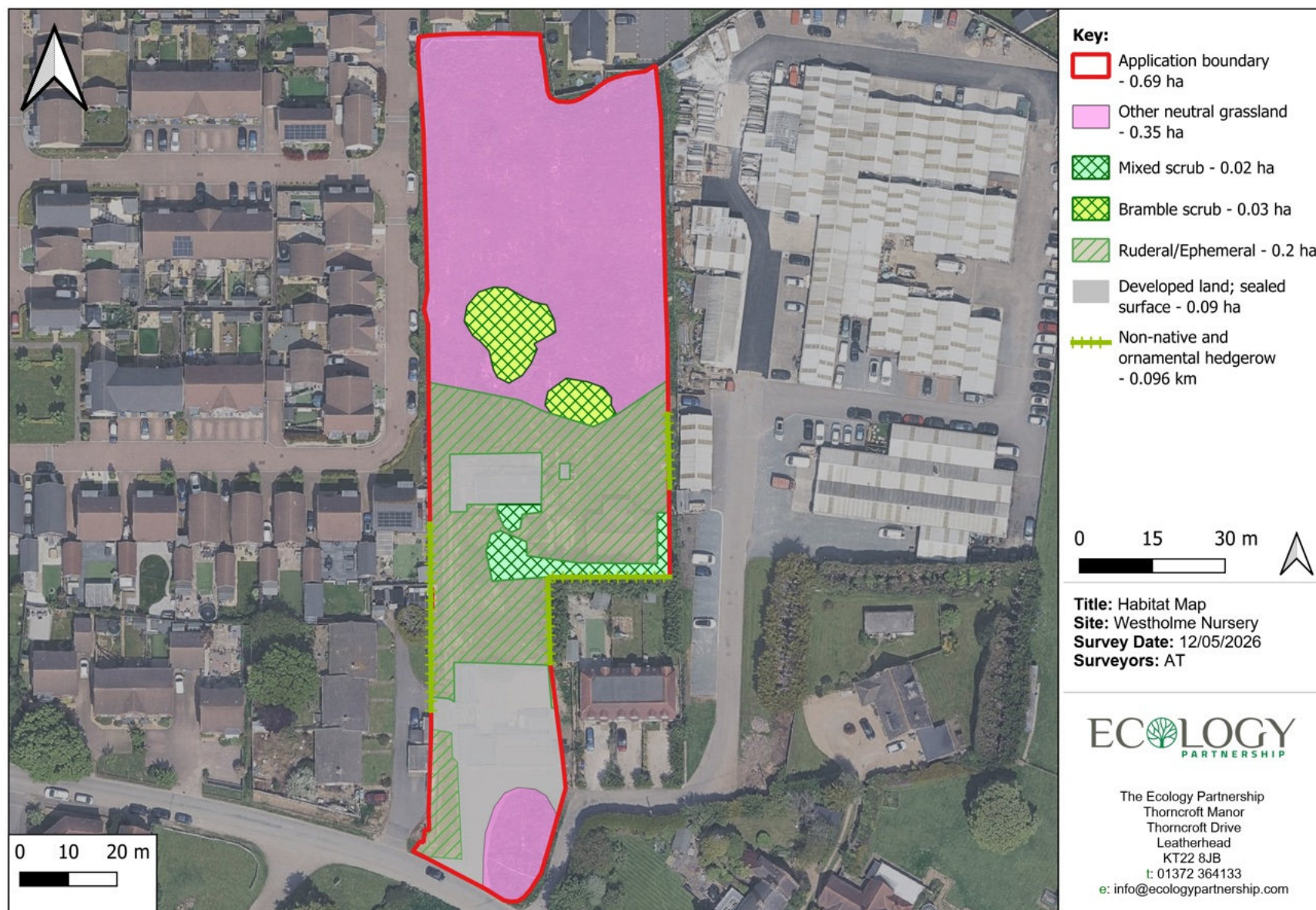


Figure 3: Baseline habitats

Post development / creation

- 3.2 The on-site post-intervention habitat units is 1.44 and on-site post-intervention hedgerow units is 0.13. The proposed development is shown in Figure 4 below.

Table 3: On-Site Habitat Creation

Habitat type	Area (ha)	Condition
Modified grassland	0.056	Poor
Vegetated garden	0.073	Condition Assessment N/A
Developed land; sealed surface	0.354	Condition Assessment N/A
Other neutral grassland	0.19	Poor
Mixed scrub	0.02	Moderate
Urban tree (28x small - created)	0.114	Moderate
Total (excluding individual trees)	0.69	

Table 4: On-Site Hedgerow Creation

Habitat	Length (km)	Condition
Native hedgerow	0.068	Moderate
Total	0.068	



- 3.3 The habitat creation detailed in Figure 4 would result in a **-41.97%** biodiversity net loss in habitat units and a **+137.10%** biodiversity net gain in hedgerow units and does not satisfy the trading rules (Figure 5).

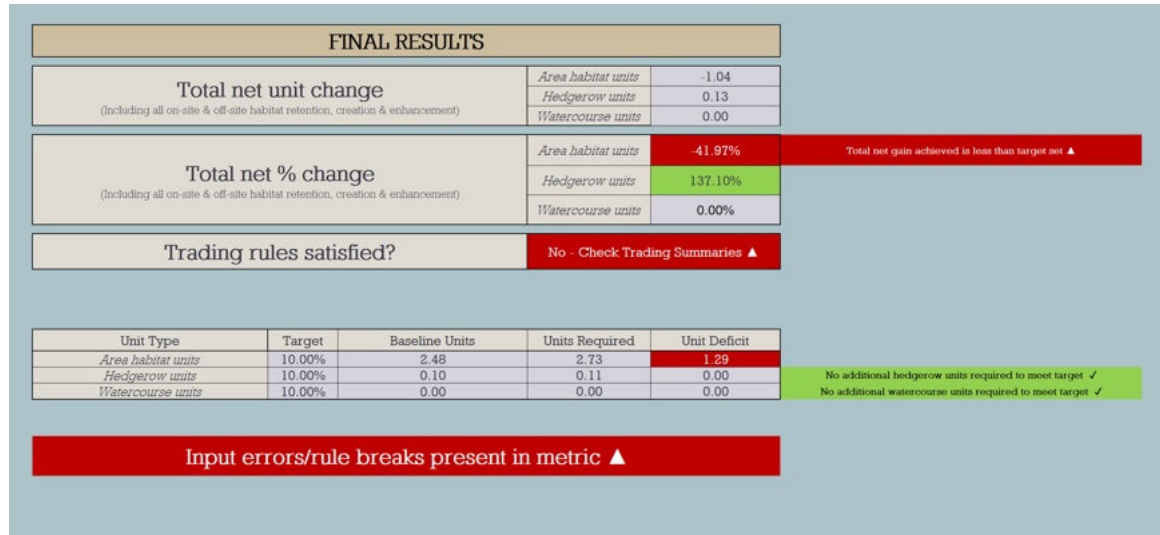


Figure 5: Headline Results

- 3.4 In terms of the mitigation hierarchy, the proposed development has maximised the biodiversity gains within the site, although due to the site solely being dwellings with private gardens, the proposed planting within the gardens cannot be included towards the overall biodiversity net gain. As such, with the purchasing of offsite BNG units, it is considered that the development has followed the mitigation hierarchy.

4.0 PLANNING PORTAL

4.1 The information below details the information required for the planning portal in reference to Biodiversity Net Gain.

- 1) Do you believe that, if the development is granted permission, the general Biodiversity Gain Condition (as set out in Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)) would apply? * Required.

☒	Yes
☐	No

- 2) Please provide the pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitats on the date of calculation * Required.

2.48 area habitat units, 0.10 hedgerow units

Note: This is either on the date of the application, or an earlier alternative date you seek to agree with the planning authority.

- 3) Please provide the date the onsite pre-development biodiversity value was calculated * Required.

12/05/26

- 4) If an earlier date, to the date of the planning application, has been used, please provide details why this date has been used.

N/A

- 5) Which version of the biodiversity metric was used? * Required.

1.0.4

- 6) When was the version of the biodiversity metric used published * Required.

03/07/2025

- 7) Please provide the reference or supporting document/plan names for the:

- i. Biodiversity metric calculation.
- ii. Onsite irreplaceable habitats (if applicable).
- iii. Onsite habitats existing on the date of the application for planning permission (if applicable).

Note: you must supply a complete biodiversity metric calculation with your application

Westholme Nursery.BNG.Issue 1
The_Statutory_Metric_1.0.4.Westholme Nursery.Issue1

- 8) Does the pre-development biodiversity value and date used above factor in the loss of any onsite habitat because of activities carried out before the submission of this application? * Required.

☐	Yes
☒	No

If Yes questions 9, 10 and 11 appear:

- 9) Please provide the pre-development value of the onsite habitat before these activities were carried out * Required.

N/A

- 10) Please provide the date the pre-development biodiversity value was calculated?
* Required.

N/A

11) Please provide supporting evidence * Required.

N/A

12) Does the development site have irreplaceable habitats (corresponding to the description in column 1 of [Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2023)) which are:

- i. On land to which the application relates; and
- ii. Exist on the date of the application for planning permission, (or earlier agreed date) * Required.

☐	Yes
☒	No

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The habitat creation detailed in Figure 4 would result in a **-41.97%** biodiversity net loss in habitat units and a **+137.10%** biodiversity net gain in hedgerow units and does not satisfy the trading rules. For habitat units, the proposed development would result in a **deficit of 1.29 units** and would not satisfy the trading rules due to the loss of other neutral grassland and scrub habitats. As such, offsite units will need to be purchased from a BNG habitat bank to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain as well as satisfy the trading rules. This should be conditioned as part of the planning permission.

Appendix 1: Condition Assessment Tables

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high & very high distinctiveness)		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): All other grassland types and tall ruderal (ie. not amenity/modified)		
Condition Assessment Criteria		On site grassland
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). ¹ Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	No
B	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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Yes
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ² .	No
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Yes
E	Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition ³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Yes
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types		
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	No
Condition		POOR
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 5 of 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and F	
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 of 6 criteria, including essential criterion A	
Poor	Passes 0, 1, 2 criteria of 6 criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F	
Footnote 1 – Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.		

Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches where not exceeding 5% cover.

Footnote 3 – Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, greater plantain *Plantago major*, white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*.

Footnote 4 – Assess this for distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into the adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgment.

Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Condition Sheet: URBAN - NON PRIORITY Habitat Type		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/ephemeral and Tall forbs; Urban – Allotments/Bioswale/Cemeteries and churchyards/Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land(OMH)/Rain garden/SUDs/bare ground/all green walls and roofs		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Tall ruderals / entrance and around the buildings
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Fail
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Yes
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Yes
Condition		Moderate
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 3 of 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3	Passes 3 of 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3; AND Passes additional criterion 4
Moderate	Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3	Passes 2 of 3 of 4 criteria; OR Passes 4 of 4 criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3
Poor	Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria	Passes 0 or 1 of 4 criteria
Footnote 1 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Footnote 2 – Sources of information about detrimental non-native species can be found on the GB Non-native Species Secretariat (GBNNS) website: Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org) And Natural England Access to Evidence page should also be checked for up-to-date information: Horizon-scanning for invasive non-native plants in Great Britain - NECR053 (naturalengland.org.uk) For criterion C – For green roof habitat types only – buddleia <i>Buddleja davidii</i> should be assessed alongside Schedule 9 species. This species impairs the health of the local ecosystem and reduces the biodiversity potential of the roof. It is also a sign that a roof has not been planted and seeded correctly in subsequent years. Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement. Footnote 4 – Use professional judgement. Sources of information about non-native species that are not detrimental to native wildlife can be found on the GBNNS website: Alternative plants » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org)		

Condition Sheet: SCRUB Habitat Type			
UKHab Habitat Type(s): All forms of scrub			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Scrub / bramble	Scrub / mixed
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range). ¹ - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species ² , - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> , sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , which can be up to 100% cover).	N/A	Yes
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ³) shrubs are all present.	N/A	No
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition ⁶ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	N/A	Yes
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	N/A	Yes
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	N/A	No
Condition		N/A	Moderate
Condition Assessment Result			
Good	Passes 5 of 5 criteria		
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria		
Poor	Passes 2 or fewer criteria		
Footnote 1 – Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.			
Footnote 2 – Native woody species as defined and listed in the Hedgerow Survey Handbook: DEFRA (2007) <i>Hedgerow Survey Handbook: A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK</i> . 2nd ed. [online]. Defra, London. PB1195. Available from: Hedgerow Survey Handbook (publishing.service.gov.uk).			
Footnote 3 – See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran species. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)			
Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.			
Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).			
Footnote 6 – Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type may include: non-native conifers, tree-of-heaven <i>Alianthus altissima</i> , holm oak <i>Quercus ilex</i> , European turkey oak <i>Quercus cerris</i> , cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> , snowberry <i>Symphoricarpos</i> spp., shallon <i>Gaultheria shallon</i> , American skunk cabbage <i>Lysichiton americanus</i> , buddleia <i>Buddleja</i> spp., cotoneaster <i>Cotoneaster</i> spp., Spanish bluebell <i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i> and hybrid bluebells <i>Hyacinthoides x massartiana</i> . There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.			

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