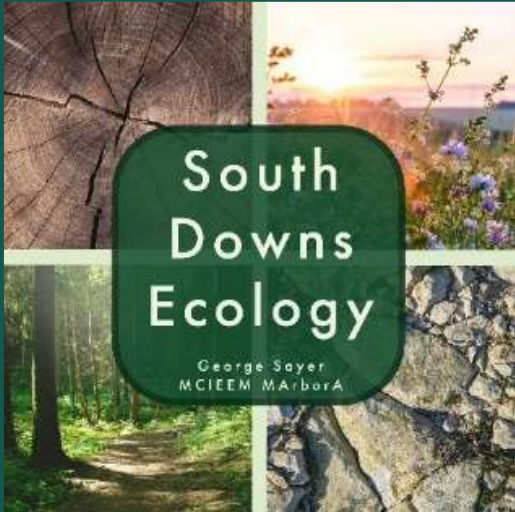


**Biodiversity
Net Gain
Assessment**

**Fairhaven, Nyetimber
Lane, Pagham**



**South
Downs
Ecology**

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Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
Fairhaven, Nyetimber Lane, Pagham

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Summary

Randmere Ltd has commissioned a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of proposals for a new residential development at Fairhaven, Nyetimber Lane, Pagham.

The site consists of existing dwelling, areas of surfacing and unvegetated gardens, outbuildings, introduced shrubs, modified grassland garden and pond, surrounded by ornamental hedges.

A quantitative assessment of the ecological impact of the proposals has been undertaken through use of the Natural England statutory Metric (2025). The calculation is completed to confirm whether the proposals accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and Arun Local Plan Policies.

The proposals would result in a 0.12 Unit 43.44% net loss in habitat units and a 34.21% gain in hedge units. The proposals would need to purchase 0.15 units of any habitat type to achieve the gain.

The proposals include non-significant enhancements which would be secured through a condition of planning alone. Purchase of off-site units would be secured as part of the planning condition.

The proposals achieve a gain and as such the proposals accord with the Environment Act 2021, relevant local policies and the guidance within the NPPF (2024).

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Randmere Ltd has commissioned a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of proposals for a new residential development at Fairhaven, Nyetimber Lane, Pagham.
- 1.2 The following report details the rationale, methodology, calculation, and management required as part of this assessment. This assessment has been carried out by George Sayer (BSc(Hons) Environmental Sciences, PgDip Endangered Species Recovery, MCIEEM, MA ArborA).

Site Description

- 1.3 The proposal area consists of a domestic dwelling with workshop, summerhouse and garage. The garden is dominated by modified grassland. Gravelled areas with plant pots were also noted as was a small pond. The boundary was lined with introduced shrubs, with a small number of fruit trees at the back of the garden. The boundaries were lined predominantly with non-native hedgerows.

Proposals

- 1.4 The proposals are for the renovation of the existing dwelling, including addition of further dormer windows, and construction of 3no. new dwellings in the existing rear garden.

2.0 Scope of Assessment

1. *Assess the current baseline habitat and linear value of the site*
2. *Assess the likely habitat and linear features retained, removed and enhanced*
3. *Calculate the change in habitat and linear biodiversity value*
4. *Provide recommendations for management to ensure habitats proposed are achieved*

- 2.1 This appraisal and assessment is deemed to be relevant for a maximum of one year due to the possibility of changes in the habitats on-site and the methodology used to calculate Biodiversity Net Gain. Should the site conditions, methodologies or proposals alter, the ecologist should be consulted to confirm that the assessment is still valid.

3.0 Legislative Background

Legislation and Policy

- 3.1 In England, BNG is mandatory from 12 February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%.
- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) Paragraph 174 states:
- “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;
 - (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.
- 3.3 BNG is also mandated through Arun Local Plan Policy ENV DM5 Development and biodiversity, which states that:
- 3.4 *“Development schemes shall, in the first instance, seek to achieve a net gain in biodiversity and protect existing habitats on site. They shall also however incorporate elements of biodiversity including green walls, roofs, bat and bird boxes as well as landscape features minimising adverse impacts on existing habitats (whether designated or not). Development schemes shall also be appropriately designed to facilitate the emergence of new habitats through the creation of links between habitat areas and open spaces. Together, these provide a network of green spaces which serve to reconnect isolated sites and facilitate species movement. Where there is evidence of a protected species on a proposed development site, planning applications shall include a detailed survey of the subject species, with details of measures to be incorporated into the development scheme to avoid loss of the species. This involves consideration of any impacts that will affect the species directly or indirectly, whether within the application site or in an area outside of the site, which may be indirectly affected by the proposals. All surveys shall be carried out at an appropriate time of year and shall be undertaken by a qualified and, where appropriate, suitably licensed person. All developments shall have regard to Natural England’s standing advice for protected species.”*
- 3.5 Further information on how BNG is dealt with in Arun, including what is considered ‘significant’ habitat creation or enhancement can be found at: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/biodiversity-net-gain-information-and-guidance/>

4.0 Methodology

Assessment Method

- 4.1 The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment within this report was carried out by George Sayer (BSc(Hons) PgDip MCIEEM MABorA) in July 2025.

Site Assessments

- 4.2 The site was subject to a site survey on 17th October 2024 conforming to the UK Habitat Classification system v2.01 (UKHab Ltd 2023) and the habitats assessed in accordance with the Natural England Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide (2025). Where required, existing and proposed habitat condition was assessed using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments (2024). Existing habitats are detailed on the Site Habitat Plan (GS425.Fairhaven.SHP.v1). Proposed habitats are detailed on the Site Proposed Habitat Plan (GS425.Fairhaven.SPHP.v1). The areas of habitat proposed have been determined through reference to proposal plans produced by DLS:Arch (DLS-131-PL-01-B planning - 21.05.25).
- 4.3 The site was subject to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in accordance with current best practice (JNCC, 2010; CIEEM, 2017) to ascertain whether any other ecological constraints, or impacts upon protected species or priority habitats were likely. The results of this are detailed separately within the Ecological Impact Assessment (GS425.Fairhaven.EcIA).

Calculations

- 4.4 All calculations were carried out using the current Natural England Statutory Biodiversity Metric, in accordance with the User Guide (updated 5th July 2025), available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>.
- 4.5 Calculations were undertaken to the nearest 10 square metres. Linear habitats were measured to the nearest linear metres. A summary of the results is included below; the full metric spreadsheet and condition assessments accompany this report as Excel documents.
- 4.6 Grassland species richness was assessed using 5no. 1sqm quadrats dispersed across the patches of habitat, within which all species were identified and an estimate of abundance of each species made. The update survey was conducted at a suboptimal season for grassland identification, but given this is a well-maintained garden lawn, this is considered a sufficient level of effort for a small site and ensures that features of ecological interest were not missed.
- 4.7 The site is not part of any strategic wildlife corridor or enhancement network zone. For this reason, all habitats are considered to be of *low strategic significance*.
- 4.8 The site contains no irreplaceable or other priority habitats and no degradation has occurred on-site. There are a number of trees on the site, but as these are all small in size and part of a private garden, are not included in the metric calculations.

5.0 Summary of Baseline and Proposed Ecological Conditions

Area Habitats

5.1 The existing site is formed of the following habitats:

- 0.034 ha of Unvegetated garden / developed land
- 0.141 Ha of Vegetated garden (mixture of modified grassland – poor condition and introduced shrubs)
- 0.016 ha of Developed land – Buildings
- 0.001 ha of Ornamental pond – moderate condition

5.2 It has been determined that 0.004 ha of the unvegetated garden around the existing dwelling would be retained, and that the rest would be lost or converted to vegetated garden. Approximately 0.05 ha of the vegetated garden would be retained, as would 0.012 ha of buildings (the main dwelling).

5.3 The proposals would create:

- 0.094 ha of Developed Land – buildings, access road, parking, bin and bike stores
- 0.032 ha of Vegetated Garden

5.4 Whilst several trees are denoted in the proposal plans, it is uncertain at this time whether these would be in communal land and as such, have not been included. All areas of vegetation are proposed as vegetated garden at this time. The original baseline score of 0.29 biodiversity units will decrease to 0.16 units, representing a loss of 43.44%. To achieve a compliant gain, 0.15 units of any type would be required. Such units would be purchased from a Habitat Bank located either within Arun or the Coastal Plan or within an adjacent area.

Hedge Habitats

- 5.5 The existing site is formed of the following hedges:
- 0.014 km of Non-native Hedge – poor condition
 - 0.077 km of Non-native Hedge – poor condition
 - 0.016 km of Non-native Hedge – poor condition
- 5.6 It has been determined that 0.002 km of the native hedge would require removal at the access, and all other hedge would be retained.
- 5.7 The proposals would create:
- 0.04 km of Hedge, considered as non-native – poor condition
- 5.8 Sections of hedge are also proposed around and between gardens; as their retention long-term cannot be secured these have been excluded from the assessment. Only hedges which would be subject to communal management are included in the above.
- 5.9 The original baseline score of 0.11 hedge units will increase to 0.14 units, representing a gain of 34.21%.

6.0 Management

- 6.1 The proposals involve creation of habitats considered non-significant, including vegetated garden and non-native hedge. As such, the creation and appropriate management of these habitats need only be secured through condition alone. Likewise the purchase of off-site units shall be secured by condition.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The proposals would result in a 43.44% net loss in habitat units and a 34.21% gain in hedge units.
- 7.2 The proposals involve non-significant new habitats. The proposals must purchase 0.15 units of any type of habitat unit to achieve the gain. Assuming the habitat creation on-site, and purchase of off-site units are secured by condition, the proposals are confirmed to result in biodiversity gains in accordance with local and national policy and relevant legislation.

8.o References

CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment, 1st edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Natural England (2025) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool, Condition Assessments and User Guide. Available Online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides> (accessed 15th July 2025)

UK Hab Ltd. (2023). The Habitat Classification Version 2.01. Available online