





Biodiversity Net Gain Statement

St George the Martyr Church

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All ecologists employed on this project by Ecosurv Ltd are members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and follow the Institute's code of practice when undertaking ecological surveys and associated work, or were supervised by such a member.

All assessment is based upon, and accurate to, the information made available to Ecosurv Ltd prior to the completion of this report. Any alterations to this information at a later date will reduce the accuracy of this report, to which Ecosurv Ltd cannot be held accountable.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ecosurv Ltd have been instructed to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Statement for the proposed development at St George the Martyr Church, South Tyneside.

BNG is the desired result of a process applied to development so that overall, there is a positive outcome for biodiversity. The process itself follows the mitigation hierarchy, which sets out that everything possible must be done to firstly avoid, secondly minimise and thirdly compensate for unavoidable impacts on or off site.

To demonstrate a positive biodiversity outcome using this process, the project is assessed against the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA), the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (hereafter referred to as the Metric) has been used to quantify the biodiversity value of existing habitats present on site, and those proposed under the current design of the post-development landscape.

The calculation is informed by a site visit carried out in June 2024. The survey area comprised of a small area of broadleaved woodland with an understorey of ruderal vegetation.

The proposals are to create a community garden out of this space, however retaining all existing trees. The tall ruderal and understory of the woodland is to be removed and replaced with wildflower planting, planting with native understorey species, wildlife habitat improvement areas and a no-dig pathways.

The conclusion of this Metric is that there will be total net unit change of +0.34 habitat units equating to +70.34%. Trading rules have been satisfied under this calculation.

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.34
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	70.03%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Appropriate habitat creation and future management measures should be implemented to ensure successful establishment of habitats and their maintenance in a favourable condition. Such measures will be outlined within a BNG Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), focused on the delivery of long-term management and monitoring of created or enhanced features. Management should be secured via an appropriate mechanism.

In accordance with BS8683:2021 Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain – Specification "Biodiversity enhancement measures that supplement the projects Biodiversity Net Gain Targets and are outside the scope of a metric, should be described and where possible quantified. It is recommended that bird and bat boxes should be installed both within the properties and to the retained trees on site. The inclusion of such features

would therefore add further improvements to biodiversity gain than that demonstrated within the calculations outlined within this statement. See appendix 9.1 for some example boxes.

1 INTRODUCTION

Ecosurv Ltd were instructed by Mario Minchella Architects to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement for a proposed development at St George the Martyr Church, South Tyneside. The preparation of this report has been undertaken by Harriet Davis BA (Hons).

1.1 Project Information

The site is centred on Grid Reference NZ365896122 and can be accessed by Front street (Figure 1).

The survey area comprised of a small area of broadleaved woodland with an understorey of ruderal vegetation.

The proposals are to create a community garden out of this space. All existing trees will be retained. The tall ruderal and understory of the woodland is to be removed and replaced with wildflower planting, native understorey species, wildlife habitat improvement areas and no-dig pathways.

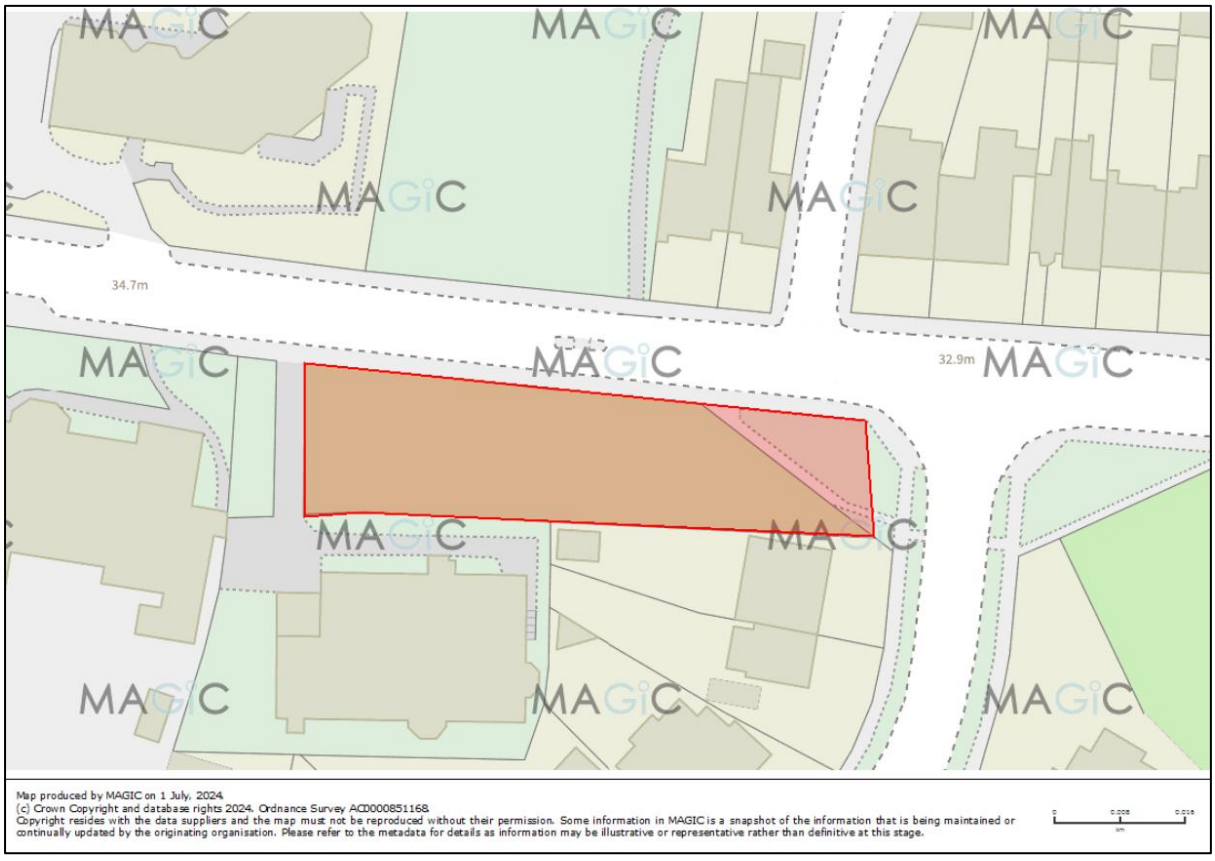


Figure 1. Site location plan.

(© Crown Copyright Ordnance Survey).

1.2 Biodiversity Net Gain

BNG is the end result of a process applied to development so that overall, there is a positive outcome for biodiversity. The process itself follows the mitigation hierarchy, which sets out that everything possible must be done to firstly avoid, secondly minimise and thirdly restore / rehabilitate losses of biodiversity on-site. Only as a last resort, residual losses are compensated for using biodiversity offsets, which are distinguished from other forms of mitigation in that they are off the development site. BNG assessment reports are intended to provide a detailed insight into the adherence of a Proposed Development to the BNG Good Practice Principles.

To demonstrate a positive biodiversity outcome using this process, the project is assessed against the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA), the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (hereafter referred to as the Metric) has been used to quantify the biodiversity value of existing habitats present on site, and those proposed under the current design of the post-development landscape.

The benefit of undertaking a BNG assessment at this stage in the planning process is that results can be used to: Inform the ongoing design of ecological and landscape mitigation; Identify whether current Proposed Development design will likely achieve a net gain, net loss, or no net loss (NNL) for biodiversity; and Demonstrate policy compliance in support of any decision-making.

Adopting a BNG approach can account for biodiversity losses which were previously not fully assessed and mitigated for, via legal and planning systems. Whilst some species are extensively protected, many are not; with the consequence that development can be 'legally compliant' but still result in biodiversity loss. The BNG approach guards against this, enabling development to contribute towards the national and global target of halting biodiversity loss by 2020 (DEFRA, 2011), and towards local and national strategies (listed below) for conserving and enhancing wildlife. BNG assessments allow stakeholders to demonstrate adherence to national legislation and local policy concerning biodiversity.

1.3 Relevant Legislation and Policy

This BNG assessment has been compiled with reference to the following relevant nature conservation legislation, planning policy and the UK Biodiversity Framework from which the protection of sites, habitats and species is derived in England including:

- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2011-2020) (JNCC and DEFRA, 2012);
- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (DEFRA, 2011);
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)1;
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 (DCLG, 2012);
- UK Government's 25 Year Environmental Plan (DEFRA, 2018);

2 METHODS

A summary of the BNG assessment methods and details of project-specific data sources, assessment limitations, and assumptions are provided in the following section.

2.1 Data Sources

A preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) survey and desktop study were completed in June 2024, following the guidelines set out in the CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (GPEA) document (CIEEM, 2017) and includes a standard Phase 1 habitat survey (JNCC, 2010); an assessment of the presence, or likely presence, of notable species; and an assessment of the value of habitats present on site.

This report has been produced in accordance with the methodology set out in the following guidance documents:

- Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide;
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Sheets

The following Application documents submitted as part of the application have been used to inform this report:

- 3597 C-02 PROPOPSED SITE PLAN rev C
- StGeorgePDF
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal June 2024

2.2 BNG Assessment

This BNG assessment uses the following industry recognised best practice methodologies:

- CIEEM, IEMA & CIRIA (2016). Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development;
- CIEEM, IEMA & CIRIA (2019). Biodiversity Net Gain. Good Practice P\principles for Development. A Practical Guide;
- DEFRA (2024) Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide
- BS8683:2021 – Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain – Specification

BNG assessment calculations are separated into four key sections which are used to produce the quantitative outcomes of the assessment. They are:

- Separating out irreplaceable baseline habitats and any mitigation proposed for impacts to irreplaceable habitats, from the main data set;
- Quantification of baseline biodiversity units using Phase 1 habitat data and habitat condition assessment data;
- Quantification of post-development biodiversity units using Phase 1 habitat data translated from the post-development landscape design;
- Assessing the net change in biodiversity value as a result of the Proposed Development.

It is important to recognise that the quantification of biodiversity is one of several factors to be considered when assessing the impact of the Proposed Development on biodiversity. Please note that this BNG assessment report

does not cover potential impacts of the Proposed Development on protected species and designated sites. These are covered within the Ecological Impact Assessment.

JNCC Phase 1 habitat types determined in the habitat survey were translated to UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) (UKHab v2, 2023) habitat types using professional judgement, UKHab guideline documents and the habitat translation information provided in the Metric toolkit. Retained habitats in the post-development landscape design maintained the UKHab type assigned to the baseline.

In the Metric, distinctiveness is pre-assigned for each habitat based upon the UKHab system.

2.3 Limitations and Assumptions

The list of habitats provided in the DEFRA calculator are not all directly comparable with the habitats within the development both pre-and post-construction. As a result, professional judgement has been used to best match pre- and post-construction habitat types to those available within the DEFRA calculator.

Only direct impacts within the red line boundary of the Proposed Development were considered at this time. Any impacts on protected species, and indirect habitat impacts (including dust, shading and nutrient deposition) should be addressed separately from this assessment. Whilst not within the redline boundary specifically for this site, the access road has been included as this will have an impact upon the baseline features and the inherent complexities of prior approvals and existing applications in respect to timings of BNG being a mandatory requirement.

The ‘Tree Helper’ function within the metric has been used to provide area equivalents of both existing and proposed urban trees. The area of the trees has been used in addition to the site area.

3 On-Site Baseline Habitats

3.1 Overview

The condition assessment of habitats was undertaken on the site visit undertaken in June 2024. There were no irreplaceable habitats or statutory designated sites within the site, therefore these are not discussed further within this report. There were no watercourses or hedgerows present within the baseline or Proposed Development, therefore these units were not assessed and are not discussed further within this report.

3.2 On-site Habitat Summary

The site comprised of a small area of broadleaved woodland with an understorey of ruderal vegetation.

The characteristics and ecological value of each habitat is described in the paragraphs below and summarised in Table 1 and are shown on the baseline habitats map figure 3.

Table 1. Area habitat summary

Broad Habitat Category	Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Distinct-iveness	Condition	Description
Woodland	Other woodland; broadleaved	0.1214	Medium	Poor	Dominant canopy species within the woodland are ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus.* Other tree species present include horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum,* oak *Quercus robur,* common laburnum *Laburnum anagyroides* and Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia.* Understorey species present included elder *Sambucus nigra*, holly *Ilex aquifolium,* guelder rose *Viburnum opulus* and wych elm *Ulmus glabra.* The ground flora within the woodland consisted of bramble *Rubus fruticosus,* broad-leaf dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens,* cleavers *Galium aparine,* cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris,* dandelion *Taraxacum officinale,* forget-me-not *Myosotis sylvatica*,

					ivy *Hedera sp.,* nettle *Urtica dioica,* large-leaved avens *Geum macrophyllum,* poppy *Papaver somniferum,* spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare,* rose *Rosa rubiginosa,* ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris* and wood spurge *Euphorbia amygdaloides.* The nettle, dock, cow parsley and cleavers are the dominant species.



Figure 2. Baseline Habitat Map

4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Habitat Loss, Retention & Enhancement from Baseline

The proposals are for the woodland to be improved and utilised as a community garden with no-dig pathways and wildflower planting and planting of native understorey species.

A summary of the habitats to be lost, retained and enhanced from the sites baseline is presented in table 2 below.

Table 2. Summary of habitat loss, retention & enhancement from baseline

Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Baseline Area (ha)	Condition	Area Lost (ha)	Area Retained (ha)	Area Enhanced (ha)
Woodland	Other woodland; broadleaved	0.1214	Poor			0.1214

4.2 Proposed post-development Habitats

A summary of the habitats to be enhanced is presented in table 3 below. The proposed post intervention plans are shown in figure 4.

Table 3. Summary of enhanced habitats

Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Area	Baseline condition	Proposed condition	Notes
Woodland	Other woodland; broadleaved	0.1214	Poor	Moderate	New native planting to achieve increase in age distribution of trees and uplift in criteria A. Seed mix such as Emorsgate EM4 woodland mix or equivalent to be planted across woodland floor. Native scrub planting to the west of the site and to understorey to achieve uplift in criteria J. Deadwoodpiles createdon the woodland floor to achieve uplift in criteria L.



Figure 3. Proposed Habitat Plan

5 BNG Metric Results

The completed metric spreadsheet, including the full calculations that lead to the final biodiversity unit scores are submitted separately to this report. The headline results are provided in table 4 below. In summary, the conclusion of this Metric is that there will be total net unit change of +0.34 habitat units equating to +70.03%.

Table 4. Headline Results

St George the Martyr Headline Results Scroll down for final results ⚠	Return to results menu		
On-site baseline	*Habitat units*	0.49	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.83	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	*Habitat units*	0.34	70.03%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	*Habitat units*	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	*Habitat units*	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%

Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.34
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	*Habitat units*	0.00
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.34
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	70.03%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

5.1 Trading Summary

Trading rules have been satisfied under this calculation. See Table 5 below for breakdown of trading summaries.

Table 5. Trading Summary

Trading Summary		
Distinctiveness Group	Trading Rule	Trading Satisfied?
Very High	Same habitat required =	Yes ✓
High	Like for like or better	Yes ✓
Medium	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓
Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓
Very Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓

6 BNG Good Practice Principles for Development

The table below discusses adherence of the Proposed Development to each of the BNG Good Practice Principles.

Table 6. BNG Good Practice Principles.

Principle	Description	Evidence	Current Outcome
1. Apply the mitigation hierarchy	Do everything possible to first avoid and then minimise impacts on biodiversity. Only as a last resort, and in agreement with external decisionmakers where possible, compensate for losses that cannot be avoided. If compensating for losses within the development footprint is not possible or does not generate the most benefits for nature conservation, then offset biodiversity losses by gains elsewhere.	Habitat losses have been compensated for by way of improving the existing habitats on site.	Achieved
2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere	Avoid impacts on irreplaceable biodiversity – these impacts cannot be offset to achieve No Net Loss or Net Gain.	No irreplaceable habitats will be impacted by the proposed development.	Achieved
3. Be inclusive and equitable	Engage stakeholders early, and involve them in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the approach to Net Gain. Achieve Net Gain in partnership with stakeholders where possible.	The BNG outcome is to be shared with relevant stakeholders through delivery of the proposed development.	Achieved
4. Address risks	Mitigate difficulty, uncertainty and other risks to achieving Net Gain. Apply well-accepted ways to add contingency when calculating biodiversity losses and gains in order to account for any remaining risks, as well as to compensate for the time between the losses occurring and the gains being fully realised.	The BNG assessment used industry recognised risk multipliers from the Metric.	Achieved

5. Make a measurable Net Gain contribution	Achieve a measurable, overall gain for biodiversity and the services ecosystems provide while directly contributing towards nature conservation priorities.	The BNG assessment determined a quantitative: • Net gain for area habitats	Achieved
6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity by using robust, credible evidence and local knowledge to make clearly justified choices when: • Delivering compensation that is ecologically equivalent in type, amount and condition, and that accounts for the location and timing of biodiversity losses; • Compensating for losses of one type of biodiversity by providing a different type that delivers greater benefits for nature conservation; • Achieving Net Gain locally to the development while also contributing towards nature conservation priorities at local, regional and national levels; • Enhancing existing or creating new habitat. • Enhancing ecological connectivity by creating more bigger, better and joined areas for biodiversity.	Existing habitats on site of a moderate condition. The proposed landscaping has therefore sought to improve this habitat to good condition through appropriate planting and clearance of ruderal vegetation.	Achieved
7. Be additional	Achieve nature conservation outcomes that demonstrably exceed existing obligations i.e. do not deliver something that would occur anyway.	The proposed enhancement and creations are complementary of the surrounding habitats and considered to be additional.	Achieved
8. Create a Net Gain legacy	Ensure Net Gain generates long-term benefits by:	The HMMP associated with the Proposed Development will	Achieved

	• Engaging stakeholders and jointly agreeing practical solutions that secure Net Gain in perpetuity; • Planning for adaptive management and securing dedicated funding for long-term management; • Designing Net Gain for biodiversity to be resilient to external factors, especially climate change; • Mitigating risks from other land uses; • Avoiding displacing harmful activities from one location to another; • Supporting local-level management of Net Gain activities.	include measures to maintain the created habitats for a period of no less than 30 years. A scheme of auditing and monitoring could be implemented as and when measures to implement such schemes are introduced.	
9. Optimise sustainability	Prioritise Biodiversity Net Gain and, where possible, optimise the wider environmental benefits for a sustainable society and economy.	The proposals seek to enhance existing site biodiversity, whilst providing functional links for both people and wildlife.	Achieved
10. Be transparent	Communicate all Net Gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders.	The BNG outcome is to be shared with relevant stakeholders through delivery of the Scheme.	Achieved

7 IMPLEMENTATION

A selection of a range of trees and shrub, including flowering and fruiting varieties, alongside species rich grassland mixes, will create some value for invertebrates, herpetofauna, birds and small mammals. This approach to improving biodiversity means that the habitats on site can support a range of species and provide other food sources, which will then provide a benefit to the larger fauna in the local area.

7.1 Source and Species

Flowering vegetation will attract a range of butterflies, moths and insects which will in turn provide a food source for birds, bats, other mammals and amphibians. The linear features of the site will ensure that green corridors are present across the site and that the site is connected to other areas of suitable habitats in the wider area.

New planting within the site will consist of native, locally grown species wherever possible and should be suitable for planting. Should these not be obtainable locally, alternative suppliers shall be identified to provide appropriate specimens grown elsewhere within the UK.

Species planted should mostly comprise of a similar species mix to that found in the local area and surrounding the site. However, the provision of some other native species not common to the area should also be included considering the potential impact of future global warming. **Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* trees should not be planted at present** until a reliable source of this species can be found that is unaffected by Ash dieback disease.

The off-site habitat enhancements will seek to use species of local provenance, to maintain the semi-natural character of these habitats.

7.2 Biodiversity Measures Outside the Metric Calculation

In accordance with BS8683:2021 Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain – Specification "Biodiversity enhancement measures that supplement the projects Biodiversity Net Gain Targets and are outside the scope of a metric, should be described and where possible quantified.

The lack of mature trees on site limits the potential to include bird and bat boxes on site. Bird boxes could therefore be installed to boundary fencing and the use of pole mounted bat boxes could be considered to the site boundaries. See appendix 9.1 for some example boxes.

7.3 Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

The BNG Habitat Management and Monitoring plan is a document that focuses on the delivery of long-term management and monitoring of created or enhanced features. For example, a BNG HMMP plan would typically provide detailed management and maintenance information for years 1 – 5 and with broader management aims for the lifetime of the BNG commitment, e.g., the lifetime of the project impacts or 30 years.

- Plans shall be concise, proportionate and SMART. i.e., each target set is Specific to a feature that can be Measured accurately, reasonably achievable within the project scope and time bounded.
- Proposals for monitoring, including methods, frequency and timing should be included, as well as setting out the reporting procedures and options for remedial works, if needed.
- The roles, responsibilities and competency requirements of those involved in implementing the BNG MMP should be clearly stated and secured.
- Legal, financial and other resource requirements for delivery of the BNG MMP should be detailed.

- Maps and drawings should be provided in spatially accurate digital drawings, e.g., using GIS to allow accurate monitoring.

8 CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this Metric is that there will be total net unit change of +0.34 habitat units equating to +70.03%.

Appropriate habitat creation and future management measures should be implemented to ensure successful establishment of habitats and their maintenance in a favourable condition. Such measures will be stipulated in a BNG Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan, focused on the delivery of long-term management and monitoring of created or enhanced features. Management should be secured via an appropriate mechanism.

In addition to the habitat enhancement and creation measures within this report, it is recommended that bird and bat boxes should be installed within the existing nearby woodland. The inclusion of such features would therefore add further improvements to biodiversity gain than that demonstrated within the calculations outlined within this statement. Some suggested features are shown in appendix 9.1.

9 APPENDICES

9.1 Example Compensatory and Enhancement Features

Habibat Tree/Wall Mounted Nest Boxes





Habibat Wall/Tree Mounted Bat Boxes/ Hedgehog Boxes

017 External Access Box



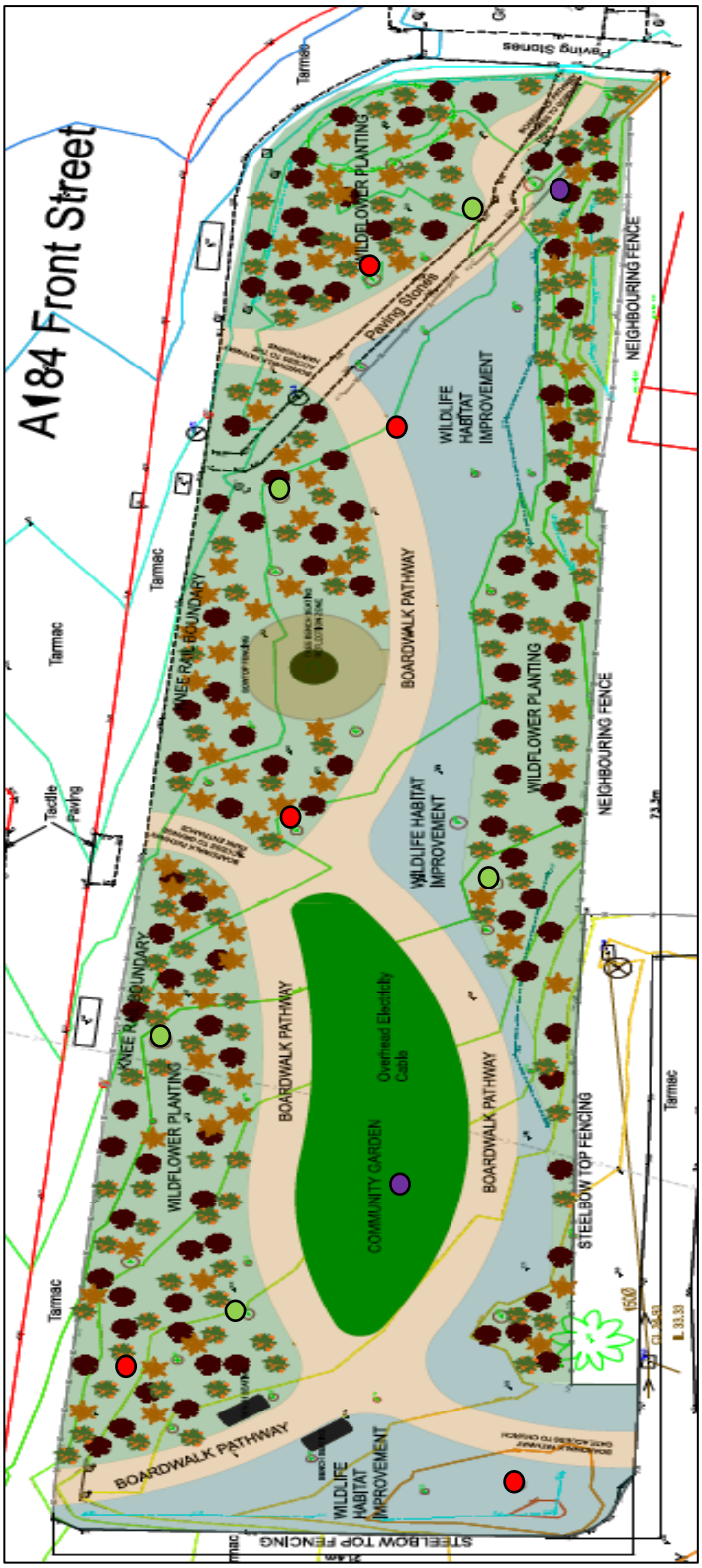
Triple Chambered Access Box



Habibat Hedgehog House



9.2 Biodiversity Enhancement Plan



Red dots represent bat boxes; Green dots represent bird boxes; Purple dots represent hedgehog boxes

Figure 4. Bat, Bird and Hedgehog Box Locations

9.3 Condition Assessment Summaries

Table 7. Habitat Condition Assessment Summary

Ref	Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Condition Sheet	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	Total Score	Condition	Notes
1	Woodland	Other woodland; broadleaved	Woodland, low	1	3	3	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	24	Poor	1 to 25 for poor condition

9.4 Proposed Site Plans



Figure 5. Proposed site plan