

Little Haven Hotel

Biodiversity Net Gain Report (BNG)

Little Haven Hotel

March 2026

V1

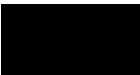
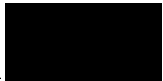


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BIODIVERSITY METRICS BASELINE

Little Haven Hotel, South Shields

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Durham Wildlife Services Ltd were commissioned by Little Haven Hotel in July 2025 to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain baseline assessment for a proposed gym and nursery situated on the grounds of the hotel in South Shields. The approximate National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is NZ 36668 68141.

The Biodiversity Metric calculation shows a baseline of:

- 2.50 habitat units
- 0.49 hedgerow units
- 0.00 watercourse units

The proposed habitats give the following units

- 2.10 habitat units
- 0.72 hedgerow units
- 0.00 watercourse units

An off-site solution should be sought for the habitat units and credits for the watercourse can be purchased from a third-party supplier. In total, the following units need to be attained to achieve the 10% minimum gain.

- 0.66 Tier A1 habitat units if using a local off site provider
- 1.31 Tier A1 habitat units if using statutory credits (worst-case scenario)

A habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) should be created for the proposed habitats on site and agreed with all parties so that the habitats achieve their stated outcomes within the timeframes stipulated under the BNG agreement.

The conclusions of this report are valid for 18 months.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Durham Wildlife Services Ltd were commissioned by Little Haven Hotel in July 2025 to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain baseline assessment for works to extend the hotel on all three elevations, create an on-site nursery/beach school and a proposed gym. The approximate National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is NZ 36780 68186.

2.2 Site Description

The survey area is situated adjacent to River Drive, near the Little Haven Hotel in South Shields. Habitats within the site boundary include modified grassland, ornamental hedge, other developed land and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface. To the west, the site borders the coastal edge and open green space associated with the South Shields promenade. To the east, the landscape transitions into urban infrastructure and road networks leading toward the town centre. South of the site lies a vegetated embankment associated with historic railway infrastructure, beyond which arable land and open fields are present. Further east and south, the area comprises a mosaic of woodland, grassland, and coastal water bodies.

2.3 Objectives

The objective of this report is to show the site baseline biodiversity, in habitat units, and demonstrate the gain/ loss in biodiversity brought about by site proposals.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

The following planning policies and legislation are relevant to BNG and this report. Other legislation is in place to protect various habitats and species within the UK (detailed in other relevant reports):

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997;
- Environment Act 2021.

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how local planning authorities should incorporate them into their own policies and plans. Section 11 of the NPPF contains several policies targeted at enhancing the natural environment and requires local authorities to consider how impacts on biodiversity can be minimised and provide net gains in biodiversity. Additional Planning Practice Guidance (PPGs) supports the NPPF and includes guidance on:

- Landscape;
- Biodiversity, ecosystems and green infrastructure; and
- Brownfield land, soils and agricultural land.

3.2 UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) was succeeded in 2012 by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework' which demonstrates a whole-environment strategy on how the UK contributes to achieving the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In England, 'Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' (Defra, 2011) sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy in the future.

The former UK BAP was used to draw up lists of species and habitats of 'principal importance' which continue to be regarded as priorities under the Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework and are identified under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006; these species have been considered throughout this report.

3.3 Local Planning Policy & Biodiversity Action Plan

South Tyneside Council has a Local Plan made up of a number of documents covering the full set of planning policies that will manage and influence future development in the borough.

The Durham Biodiversity Partnership has produced a Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) which details action for wildlife in Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland, & County Durham. These documents detail how planning authorities should safeguard and seek to enhance biodiversity and includes actions for specific habitats and species.

The LBAP provides a clear plan of action for wildlife in the district and promotes conservation of key habitats/ species. The BAP provides visions and goals for biodiversity conservation by setting out objectives and actions and the key organisations to achieve them.

3.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

As part of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) biodiversity net gain is now mandatory in England. This means developers must deliver a minimum biodiversity net gain of 10% measurable biodiversity net gain resulting in more or better-quality natural habitat than was prior to development.

4.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

4.1 Summary of Ecological Baseline

During the site visit, 7 habitats were recorded on site under the UK Habitat Classification habitat system and were enhanced using secondary codes to provide a fuller description. A full breakdown of the UKHabs codes used can be found in the accompanying EcIA report.

In order to complete the BNG assessment the UKHabs codes were matched to corresponding BNG Habitats.

4.2 Habitat Descriptions

Table 1: Habitat descriptions

BNG Habitat	Grassland; Modified Grassland	UKHabs Primary & Secondary Codes	g4 – Modified grassland 10 – Scattered scrub 32 – Scattered trees 108 – Frequently mown
Parcel	Description		
G1	Adjacent to the southern boundary of the site and the 'Weebles' statues, this sloped area of grassland includes the species outlined in parcel 1 along with bird's-foot trefoil <i>Lotus corniculatus</i>. A folly stands on the grass, resembling an ancient Greek monument, with white columns under a circle of capping stones. There are larger areas of mixed scrub that have been mapped separately, but scattered trees of red pine <i>Pinus resinosa</i> are present, and areas of scattered scrub consisting of gorse <i>Ulex europaeus</i>, New Zealand holly <i>Olearia macrodonta</i> and French tamarisk <i>Tamarix gallica</i> are present.		
	Photograph(s)		
			
BNG Habitat	Grassland; Modified Grassland	UKHabs Primary & Secondary Codes	g4 – Modified grassland 10 – Scattered scrub

			108 – Frequently mown
Parcel	Description		
G2, G3, G5 & G6	Parcel G3 is the modified grassland at the northern end of the site where the tortoise statue is. There are some picnic benches in this area as well. The grassland species are typical of the site and include additional species such as false oat grass <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>, creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> and creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i>. There is scattered gorse across the parcel. Parcel G2 is the central grassland area in the middle of the car park that is surrounded by small box plants <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> that look like they were initially planted as a hedge, but have remained small and widely spaced, forming scattered scrub instead. The grassland species include perennial rye grass, common bent <i>Agrostis capillaris</i>, Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i>, red clover <i>Trifolium pratense</i>, white clover, selfheal <i>Prunella vulgaris</i>, and creeping cinquefoil <i>Potentilla reptans</i>. The other parcels of grassland contain species consistent with the grassland on site and are frequently mown.		
	Photograph(s)		
			
BNG Habitat	Grassland; Modified Grassland	UKHabs Primary & Secondary Codes	g4 – Modified grassland 108 – Frequently mown

Parcel	Description		
G4	This parcel of land is modified grassland that is often used to pitch a marquee for functions such as weddings. As a result, the grass exposed has increased bare ground and more forbs are starting to colonise this area compared to the other grassland on site. Additional species noted in this area include American willowherb <i>Epilobium ciliatum</i>, shepherd's purse <i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>, annual meadow grass <i>Poa annua</i>, common chickweed <i>Stellaria media</i>, common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>, annual pearlwort <i>Sagina apetala</i>, prostrate knotgrass <i>Polygonum aviculare</i>, spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>, common mouse-ear <i>Cerastium fontanum</i>, pineapple weed <i>Matricaria discoidea</i> and thyme-leaved speedwell <i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i>.		
	Photograph(s)		
			
BNG Habitat	Urban; Vegetated garden	UKHabs Primary & Secondary Codes	U1 – built-up areas and gardens 828 – Vegetated garden
Parcel	Description		
VG1	This small area to the south of the conservatory has been planted up as a vegetated garden but it is largely overgrown with common bent and false oat grass.		
	Photograph(s)		
			

BNG Habitat	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	UKHabs Primary & Secondary Codes	h2b – Non-native and ornamental hedgerow 847 – Introduced shrub
Parcel	Description		
OH1	Sections of ornamental hedge run around the edges of the paths and outside of the building. In most places these back on to patches of mixed scrub formed from introduced shrubs. The hedges were dominated by silver ragwort <i>Jacobaea maritima</i> with evergreen spindle <i>Euonymus japonicus</i> , New Zealand broadleaf <i>Griselinia littoralis</i> and Feijoa <i>Acca sellowiana</i> .		
	Photograph(s)		
			
BNG Habitat	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	UKHabs Primary & Secondary Codes	h2b – Non-native and ornamental hedgerow 524 – Invasive non-native species 847 – Introduced shrub
Parcel	Description		
OH2	This is another area of ornamental hedgerow that stretches along the east of the car park and around the eastern edge of the building. Species composition is similar, but there are two trees in the parcel: a holm oak <i>Quercus ilex</i> and an Italian alder <i>Alnus cordata</i> . As the hedge extends along the outside of the building, it becomes more dominated by Japanese rose <i>Rosa rugosa</i> , which is an invasive non-native species.		
	Photograph(s)		

			
BNG Habitat	Urban; Introduced shrub	UKHabs Primary & Secondary Codes	u1 – Built up areas and gardens 847 – Introduced shrub
Parcel	Description		
S1	There are multiple pockets of introduced shrubs around the building which form areas of mixed scrub. Species include gorse, French tamarisk, dog rose <i>Rosa canina</i> and burnet rose <i>Rosa spinosissima</i>. In the parcel to the south of site there is a large area of vegetative waste inside it where it appears cuttings from the rest of the site have been deposited. Species in this area include common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>, bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg., sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>, gorse, sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>, ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>, elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i>, New Zealand holly <i>Olearia macrodonta</i>, euonymus <i>Euonymus japonicus</i>, burnet rose common dogwood <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> and buddleia <i>Buddleja davidii</i>.		
	Photograph(s)		
			

		
Parcel	Description	
U1	This parcel covers all developed land and buildings on site.	
	 	
	 	

4.3 Area measurements

The area measurements for the current site are as follows:

Table 2: Area measurement per existing habitat

Habitat	Approximate Area (hectares)	Habitat Distinctiveness
Modified grassland	0.609	Low
Vegetated garden	0.005	Low
Introduced shrub	0.028	Low
Developed land; sealed surface	0.593	Very Low
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.004	Very Low

4.4 Constraints

The habitat survey was completed in July 2025, an optimal time of year for recording plants and posed no constraint to the classification or condition assessment. The species present were reviewed whilst surveyors were on site for other surveys to ensure the assessments were accurate.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

The aim of the biodiversity net gain is to ensure that developments include an increase in habitat biodiversity in comparison to the habitats on site before development. Documentation is available for classifying habitats so that there is consistency, and the approach is unified across the sector. The biometric calculator tool produced by DEFRA (2025) allows information to be processed so that biodiversity is quantified before and after development, allowing a % change in biodiversity to be produced. The tool is also useful for providing advice when estimating areas of habitat required for management or habitat creation when off-site compensation is needed.

5.2 Personnel

The initial survey work was carried out by Melissa Young BSc, Ecologist and Dominic Maxwell BA(Hons), Assistant Ecologist. This Biodiversity Metrics calculation and this report has been prepared by Melissa Young BSc, Ecologist. Both persons are employed by Durham Wildlife Services.

Melissa Young

Melissa has been working with Durham Wildlife Services since 2022 as a sub-contractor and became a full time Ecologist with the company in 2023. Prior to that she volunteered with a variety of groups including the Wildlife Trusts at Durham and Northumberland, Durham Bat Group, Durham Botany Group and The Mammal Society where she helped with a range of projects and surveys. She has also been a biodiversity volunteer with the Wildfowl and Wetlands trust since 2010, assisting in undertaking surveys covering great crested newts, water voles, reptiles, birds, bats, small mammals, insects, invertebrates, botany and biodiversity across the group's sites. She is a class 2 bat licence holder for both Natural England and NatureScot, licenced to survey small mammals including shrews through trapping and has a class 1 licence for work with great crested newt.

Dominic Maxwell

Dominic is employed by Durham Wildlife Services as an ecological assistant. He has been employed with a variety of different ecology companies doing various bat surveys such as transect & static, during dusk and dawn hours. This has been undertaken within a wide range of different environments such as schools, housing estates, heritage sites, etc, in all parts of the country. He has over 9 years' experience and is proficient with all the associated equipment used when conducting surveys.

5.3 BNG Methodology

BNG works have been carried out in line with the Biodiversity Net Gain Good practice principles for development (CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2016 & 2019) and BS8683.

The scheme was input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric using the following methodology:

- Distinctiveness is filled in automatically by the metrics.
- Existing habitats and their condition assessments were recorded during the survey visits carried out on 12th September 2024.
- The Biodiversity Metric QGIS template is used to map habitats with the programme also used to gain area measurements.
- BNG works have been carried out in line with the Biodiversity Net Gain Good practice principles for development (CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2016 & 2019) and BS8683.
- Proposed habitats have been discussed with Sunderland City Council.
- In lieu of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) the Sunderland City Council's Green Infrastructure Delivery and Action Plan 2019 and the Wildlife Corridors Review 2020 (Burton Reid, 2020) were consulted to assess the sites strategic significance. The site location is identified as part of the Fullwell Quarries GI improvements area, an area where broken green corridors need to be repaired and improved. The habitats within the metrics were therefore with a strategic significance category of "High (Formally identified in local strategy)"
- All habitats were recorded as "On site".

5.4 Mitigation Hierarchy

This Biodiversity Metrics has been carried out with the mitigation hierarchy of avoidance, minimisation, restoration, and compensation in mind. Therefore, habitats have been retained or enhanced where possible before removal and replacement. The site to be developed effects a small amount of land as possible.

5.5 Limitations and Constraints

Proposed habitats within the Biodiversity Metrics have been made in a conservative manner, aiming to be achievable. Should any habitats created within site not meet the conditions within the Biodiversity Metrics, then the net gain figure will differ from that quoted in this report.

6.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

6.1 Habitat Condition Assessments – On Site

As part of the biodiversity metrics, it is necessary to condition assess each habitat where relevant. The following condition assessment criteria were used as per the statutory biodiversity metric – habitat condition assessment sheets and instructions.

6.2 Modified grassland

All parcels of grassland had at least 6 species of vascular plants but failed on the assessment of sward height as they were all regularly mown with a very short sward. Parcels G3 and G4 failed to pass the criteria for physical damage, being the areas with the most pedestrian traffic as well as the temporary gazebo for events. Parcels G3 and G4 failed due to the presence of self-seeded Japanese Rose. These seedlings were small and stunted due to the regular mowing, but they were present up to 1m from the edge of the hedgerow.

All grassland parcels achieve moderate condition.

Table 3: Condition Assessment Sheet 5 (Grassland Low Distinctiveness) (DEFRA 2023)

Condition Assessment Criteria: Modified grassland		Habitat parcel reference					
		G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)					
A	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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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 vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
C	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).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
D	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.	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Number of criteria passed		4	4	5	4	5	5
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score		Score Achieved ✗/✓			
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good (3)		✓	✗	✗	✗
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate (2)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)		Poor (1)		✗	✗	✗	✗

6.2.1 Other Habitats

The other habitats on site do not require a condition assessment for the following reasons:

- Urban – Developed land; sealed surface; Condition Assessment = N/A – Other
- Urban – Introduced shrub; Condition Assessment N/A
- Urban – Vegetated garden; Condition Assessment N/A
- Hedgerows – Non-native and ornamental hedgerow – No assessment required – condition fixed at Poor

7.0 BNG GOOD PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

7.1 Good Practice Principles for Development

Taken from the document prepared by CIEEM, CIRIA, & IEMA, the following are the BNG good practice principles for development:

1. Apply the mitigation hierarchy;
2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere;
3. Be inclusive and equitable;
4. Address risks;
5. Make a measurable net gain contribution;
6. Achieve the best outcome for biodiversity;
7. Be additional;
8. Create a Net Gain legacy;
9. Optimise sustainability;
10. Be transparent.

Appendix B details how this project has applied these principles to the BNG.

8.0 PROPOSED DESIGN

8.1 Habitat Loss, Retention and Creation

The proposal are to retain areas of modified grassland around the site covering parcels G1, G2 and G3. A section of ornamental hedgerow (OH2) will also be retained. All other habitat parcels (excluding developed land sealed surface) will be modified in some way.

Phase 1 (Autumn 2026 – Autumn 2027)

Phase 1 of the development involves extending the hotel. The works are planned to start in Autumn 2026 with the extension to the northern elevation of the west wing to create a restaurant. This will cause the loss of hedgerow and grass in this area. The restaurant includes a sedum roof in areas alongside a terrace.

There will also be an extension to the existing restaurant between the east and north wings to create a conference centre. This will largely cover existing hard standing but will involve the loss of introduced shrub, areas of vegetated garden and some grass to the east of the building.

The final stage of phase 1 will see the creation of the sun lounge on the southern elevation of the west wing which involves the loss of ornamental hedgerow in that area.

Phase 2 (Spring 2027 – Spring 2028)

This will see the creation of the beach school and landscaping to the south of site.

Phase 3 (Autumn 2028 – Spring 2029)

This final phase of the development sees the creation of a gym in the current roundabout of the carpark. Some grass will be lost to pathways and the building will be topped with a grass roof, classed as 'other green roof' in the BNG metric.

8.1.1 Modified Grassland

This habitat will be present around the site and will be maintained with regular mowing. Whilst some areas will be fenced off, pedestrian encroachment is still highly likely so the condition assessment for all parcels of retained and created modified grassland is set to Moderate.

Table 4: Condition Assessment sheet 5 Grassland (Low Distinctiveness) Habitat Type (DEFRA 2023)
for created modified grassland

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). 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 those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	✓	These areas will be planted with a commercial seed mix that includes a variety of grasses and forbs. The proposed mix has been selected for sandy soils.
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 vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	✗	These areas are likely to be regularly mown so will have no variation in sward height.
C	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.	✓	Controlled through mowing and maintenance
D	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.	✗	
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	✓	
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	✓	
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	✓	
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			Yes
Number of criteria passed			5
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good (3)	✗
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)		Poor (1)	✗

8.1.2 Native Hedgerow

Native hedgerow will be planted around the grass surrounding the beach school and bounded by a fence to provide a secure area for the children. The planting mix will include hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, hazel *Corylus avellana* and guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*, with planting designed to create a hedge at least 1.5m wide.

A conservative judgement has been based on the usage of the site and potential management regimes to give a condition assessment of **Moderate** although a higher level of achievement may be attained with careful management.

Table 5: Condition Assessment Sheet 8 Hedgerow Habitat Types (DEFRA 2023) for created native hedgerows without trees

Condition sheet: HEDGEROW Habitat Types				
Hedgerow favourable condition attributes				
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types				
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height).	✓
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).	✓
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).	✓

B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m	This is the horizontal 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).	✓
C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: · Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and · Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least).	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow. This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.	✗
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	✗
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and recently introduced species.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website.	✓
D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	✗

The hedgerow condition assessment generates a weighting (score) ranging from 1 - 3, which is used within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The scores for each are set out in the tables below.

Condition categories for hedgerows without trees			
Category	Category Requirements	Metric Score	
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	3	
Moderate	No more than 4 failures in total; AND Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and C2 = Moderate condition).	2	
Poor	Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; OR Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1	
Score achieved:		2	

8.1.3 Individual Trees – Urban Trees (Native)

Native trees will be planted around the beach school consisting of a mix of silver birch *Betula pendula* and rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* with 2m clear stems and a girth of 12 – 14cm. These will not be planted until the end of phase 2 once the beach school building is complete to prevent accidental damage to trees, therefore a 2 year delay in habitat creation has been added to these trees in the metric calculation. These trees are expected to achieve a **Moderate** condition.

Table 6: Condition Assessment Sheet 9 Individual Trees Habitat Type (Defra 2023) for newly planted native urban trees

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	✓	
B	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).	✓	
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	✗	
D	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.	✓	
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	✗	
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	✓	
Number of criteria passed		4	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✗/✓
Passes 5 or 6 criteria		Good (3)	✗
Passes 3 or 4 criteria		Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)	✗

8.1.4 Individual Trees – Urban Trees (Non-native)

An avenue of Japanese flowering cherry trees *Prunus serrulate* Shirofugen Zone 3 will be planted from the northeast corner of the building towards the new gazebo. These will be planted as 2m clear stems and reach 3.5m height.

These trees are assessed as being able to achieve a **Moderate** condition assessment.

Table 7: Condition Assessment Sheet 9 Individual Trees Habitat Type (Defra 2023) for newly planted non-native urban trees

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type			
Condition Assessment Criteria			Criterion passed (Yes or No)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	✘	
B	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).	✓	
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	✘	
D	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.	✓	
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	✘	
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	✓	
Number of criteria passed			3
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✘/✓
Passes 5 or 6 criteria		Good (3)	✘
Passes 3 or 4 criteria		Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)	✘

8.1.5 Ground Based Green Wall

Several walls on the nursery will be created as ground based green walls consisting of sedum *Sedum spp.*, and other plants appropriate for the habitat and conditions.

Table 8: Condition Assessment Sheet 22 Urban Habitat Type (Defra 2023) for ground based green walls.

Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Type			
Condition Assessment Criteria			Criterion passed (Yes or No)
Core Criteria - must be assessed for all urban habitat types :			
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.		✗
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.		✗

C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area. Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	✓	
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)		Y	
Number of criteria passed		1	
Condition Assessment Result	Score Achieved x/√		
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only (all listed urban habitats except Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, Bioswale, SuDS and Green roofs):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Good (3)		x
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Moderate (2)		x
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.	Poor (1)		✓

9.0 BNG METRIC RESULTS

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines government planning policies and how they should be applied within local authorities. The framework places an emphasis on sustainable development, encouraging the re-use of land that has previously been developed in preference to using land that has a higher environmental value and by minimising impacts on biodiversity. The NPPF states that developments should aim to conserve or enhance biodiversity and encourages opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments.

Taking the requirements of the NPPF into account, opportunities should be sought where possible for nature conservation enhancement at this site with an overall 10% net gain recommended. A precautionary approach has been taken when completing the metrics, making sure that proposals are all realistic.

Results of the BNG metric are shown in Table 9.

Table 9 BNG metric results

Habitat Type	Baseline Units	Proposed Units	Difference	% Gain/Loss
Habitat	2.50	2.10	-0.41	-16.23%
Hedgerow	0.49	0.72	0.23	46.72%
Watercourse	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%

The trading summaries are not met, therefore off-site habitat enhancement needs to be used. Units will need to be purchased to offset the Tier A1 habitat units as shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Unit shortfall by Tier/Mode with spatial risk multiplier applied to all unit shortfall values. This is a worst-case scenario based on statutory off-site credits. If a local off-site provider is sourced the units required will be 0.66.

Tier	Unit Shortfall
A1	1.31
A2	0.00
A3	0.00
A4	0.00
A5	0.00
H	0.00
W	0.00

In the first instance, units should be sought from a local habitat bank with statutory credits used as a last resort.

9.1 Recommendations

A habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) should be created for the proposed habitats on site and agreed with all parties so that the habitats achieve their stated outcomes within the timeframes stipulated under the BNG agreement.

10.0 REFERENCES

British Standard (2021) BS 8683:2021 Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain. Specification

Burton Reid Associates (2020) Wildlife Corridors Review

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CIEEM, CIRIA, & IEMA (2016) Biodiversity Net Gain. Good practice principles for development.

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<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>

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JNCC. (1994) UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). JNCC: Peterborough.

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APPENDIX A

Figures



Legend

- ★ Site Location
- 2km Buffer

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Rainton Meadows
Chilton Moor
Houghton-le-Spring
Tyne and Wear
DH4 6PU

info@dwsecology.co.uk
www.dwsecology.co.uk

Project	Little Haven PEA
Title	Location Plan
Client	Little Haven Hotel
Date	November 2024
Ref	Figure 1



Legend

★ Site Location

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Rainton Meadows
Chilton Moor
Houghton-le-Spring
Tyne and Wear
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Project	Littlehaven Hotel
Title	Aerial Overview
Client	Little Haven Hotel
Date	November 2024
Ref	Figure 2



Legend

HABITATS

UK Habs Code

- u1c Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- u1b6 Other developed land
- u1b5 Buildings
- h3h Mixed scrub
- h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- g4 Modified grassland
- u1 Built-up areas and gardens

Secondary Codes

- (10) Scattered scrub
- (32) Scattered trees
- (108) Frequently mown
- (524) Invasive non-native species
- (804) Car park
- (828) Vegetated garden
- (847) Introduced shrub

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Project	Little Haven Hotel
Title	Habitats Plan
Client	Little Haven Hotel
Date	July 2025
Ref	Figure 3



- Legend
- INDIVIDUAL TREES
- Individual tree Proposed
- Proposed Small Urban Tree
- HEDGEROWS
- Hedgerows Proposed
- Non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- Native hedgerow
- HABITATS
- Habitats Proposed
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Built linear features
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Modified grassland
- Other green roof

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Rainton Meadows
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Project	Little Haven Hotel
Title	Proposed BNG Habitats
Client	Little Haven Hotel
Date	March 2026
Ref	Figure 4b

Appendix B

Application of good practice principles

Application of good practice principles
Below taken from CIEEM GUIDELINES

<u>BNG Principle</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Evidence</u>
Principle 1. Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy	Measures to avoid and minimise biodiversity loss and to rehabilitate/restore biodiversity affected by the project are: 1) defined and documented, 2) implemented and monitored; and 3) managed for the duration of the project's impacts. For example, maintain records of the consideration of alternatives as evidence of avoidance measures implemented.	The landscape plan has been through a number of iterations to minimise the onsite losses and provide suitable replacement habitats. Measures are documented within this BNG plan as well as the accompanying HRA and EcIA. A HMMP and EDS are strongly recommended as additional documents for this project.
Principle 2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere	Project documents describe any impacts to irreplaceable and vulnerable biodiversity resources, e.g., permanent loss or damage to semi-natural ancient woodland, ancient climax vegetation communities, veteran trees, endemic and internationally rare species that cannot be replaced within reasonable timeframes. Projects with impacts on irreplaceable habitats cannot achieve BNG. These projects should demonstrate where biodiversity compensation has been provided but cannot claim project-wide achievement of BNG. These projects should transparently and comprehensively refer to the impacts on irreplaceable habitats in communications and reports.	No priority habitats will be lost on site. Losses have been confined to Tier A1 habitats which can be covered by the purchase of local offsite credits. Additional habitats are being created on site in other tiers.
Principle 3. Be inclusive and equitable	Evidence of input from and consultation with nature conservation bodies, the local community, the local planning authority and other relevant stakeholders. (NB: For smaller scale projects, this may be part of the planning consultation process). Terms of Reference for any Stakeholder Partnerships are agreed and published, with the roles and responsibilities of members clearly defined.	Consultation has been made with local records bodies, government sites and the local council in relation to creating this plan. Further consultation will be undertaken in the planning process.
Principle 4. Address risks	Evidence that BNG has been achieved within the project. Sources of risk and uncertainty in design and implementation of mitigation are	A gain has been achieved onsite with hedgerow units. The loss in habitat units

	documented. Identify risks that may present themselves during the 30-year management period and how these should be dealt with.	will be mitigated through the purchase of off-site credits. Risks during the 30 year management will be addressed in a separate HMMP.
Principle 5. Make a measurable Net Gain	Suitable metric is used for all habitat impacts quantified relative to the 'pre-project' condition of each habitat. Gains anticipated from habitat creation, enhancement and positive management are quantified relative to the predicted condition in the absence of BNG activities.	The most up to date BNG metric has been used for this calculation.
Principle 6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	Evidence is provided that BNG commitments contribute (now or in the future) to regional and national conservation goals, e.g., Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Provide evidence that the BNG design has considered where it is possible to contribute to supporting priority species populations. Provide evidence to show where additionality has been proven within the built environment and what gains are achieved. Biodiversity Net Gain 16 BNG Principle Indicators	This development contributes to regional goals through achieving a 10% gain once off site credits are purchased. These will be sought from a local supplier. On site, native hedgerow is being created to increase the biodiversity of the site. Support for priority species such as birds and bats, also mentioned in the draft LNRS, will be provided through the inclusion of suitable habitats such as bat and bird boxes.
Principle 7. Be additional	Evidence is provided that the conservation gains were caused by project activities and would not have occurred in other circumstances.	If this development did not take place the habitat would remain dominated by modified grassland and introduced shrubs with invasive non-native species present.
Principle 8. Create a Net Gain legacy	Evidence is provided that those responsible for implementing project biodiversity management have the requisite management and technical capacity for their specified roles. Key Performance Indicators are set for biodiversity features affected by the project and specific, measurable and time-bounded targets for indicating conservation success are clearly stated. Evidence is provided that any reasonably foreseeable future developments that might affect long term commitments to biodiversity, including developments by third parties, have been considered. Evidence that legal and financial mechanisms are in place to guarantee the financial and institutional viability of all biodiversity management for a minimum 30 years or at least	The plan has been developed by experienced ecologists and will be supported through the creation of a HMMP for the 30 year management plan.

	the duration of the project's impacts. Evidence is provided that management is adapted, where necessary, throughout implementation to deliver the agreed conservation outcomes and monitoring is in place to identify risks to achieving specified outcomes. Evidence that the design has considered where it is possible to create features for species, in particular, priority species.	
Principle 9. Optimise sustainability	Evidence provided that the project prioritises BNG targets, but then seeks opportunities for gains for the wider environment, the community and the economy.	BNG has been prioritised through the habitat creation on site. The development of the beach school will support the wider community and the increased capacity of the hotel and facilities supports the local economy.
Principle 10. Be transparent	The commitment to BNG is stated by the project developer in a publicly available document. Results of project audits are publicly available where claims of BNG are made at relevant project stages, including project closure and any deviations from original design specifications are clearly stated. Evidence that the best available scientific knowledge and methods have been used in BNG design and implementation and knowledge is transferred back to the scientific community.	The commitment to BNG will be available in the planning application.

APPENDIX C

Report Conditions

Durham Wildlife Services

REPORT CONDITIONS

Little Haven Hotel

This report is produced solely for the benefit of Little Haven Hotel and no liability is accepted for any reliance placed on it by any other party unless specifically agreed in writing otherwise.

This report is prepared for the proposed uses stated in the report and should not be used in a different context without reference to Durham Wildlife Services. In time improved practices, fresh information or amended legislation may necessitate a re-assessment. Opinions and information provided in this report are on the basis of Durham Wildlife Services using due skill and care in the preparation of the report.

This report refers, within the limitations stated, to the environment of the site in the context of the surrounding area at the time of the inspections. Environmental conditions can vary, and no warranty is given as to the possibility of changes in the environment of the site and surrounding area at differing times.

This report is limited to those aspects reported on, within the scope and limits agreed with the client under our appointment. It is necessarily restricted, and no liability is accepted for any other aspect. It is based on the information sources indicated in the report. Some of the opinions are based on unconfirmed data and information and are presented as the best obtained within the scope for this report.

Reliance has been placed on the documents and information supplied to Durham Wildlife Services by others but no independent verification of these has been made and no warranty is given on them. No liability is accepted, or warranty given in relation to the performance, reliability, standing etc of any products, services, organisations or companies referred to in this report.

Whilst skill and care have been used, no investigative method can eliminate the possibility of obtaining partially imprecise, incomplete, or not fully representative information. Any monitoring or survey work undertaken as part of the commission will have been subject to limitations, including for example timescale, seasonal and weather-related conditions.

Although care is taken to select monitoring and survey periods that are typical of the environmental conditions being measured, within the overall reporting programme constraints, measured conditions may not be fully representative of the actual conditions. Any predictive or modelling work, undertaken as part of the commission will be subject to limitations including the representativeness of data used by the model and the assumptions inherent within the approach used. Actual environmental conditions are typically more complex and variable than the investigative, predictive and modelling approaches indicate in practice, and the output of such approaches cannot be relied upon as a comprehensive or accurate indicator of future conditions.

The potential influence of our assessment and report on other aspects of any development or future planning requires evaluation by other involved parties.

The performance of environmental protection measures and of buildings and other structures in relation to acoustics, vibration, noise mitigation and other environmental issues is influenced to a large extent by the degree to which the relevant environmental considerations are incorporated into the final design and specifications and the quality of workmanship and compliance with the specifications on site during construction. Durham Wildlife Services accept no liability for issues with performance arising from such factors.

February 2025