Biodiversity Net Gain Report

The Shires

The Oval, Sutton-In-Ashfield

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Issued By:

Eco 360 Ltd

Hollinscroft House

Uttoxeter Road

Stoke-on-Trent

ST10 4LJ

Tel: 0330 133 8294

Email: info@eco-360.co.uk

1. Introduction

1.1. Report Rationale

This report was processed on behalf of Krishna Singh. A biodiversity Net Gain Assessment was requested for the site at The Shires Care Centre, The Oval, Sutton-In-Ashfield, NG17 2FR (Grid ref: **SK 48749 59559**). This report should be read in conjunction with the completed Xcel spreadsheet. The survey was completed by Bryony Haines, Ecologist and report was completed by Nathan O'Shea, Consultant Ecologist.

1.2. Site Description

The site makes up ~2748m^2, consisting of a large disused public service building complex with surrounding unmanaged vegetation. The site is situated within The Oval, a mixed commercial, residential centre with a communal park and garden within the West of Sutton-In-Ashfield. This is surrounded by The Oval roadway, beyond which, there are further residential areas, associated garden space and scattered trees. Brierley Forest Park (LNR) boundary is located approximately 200m West of the site boundary.

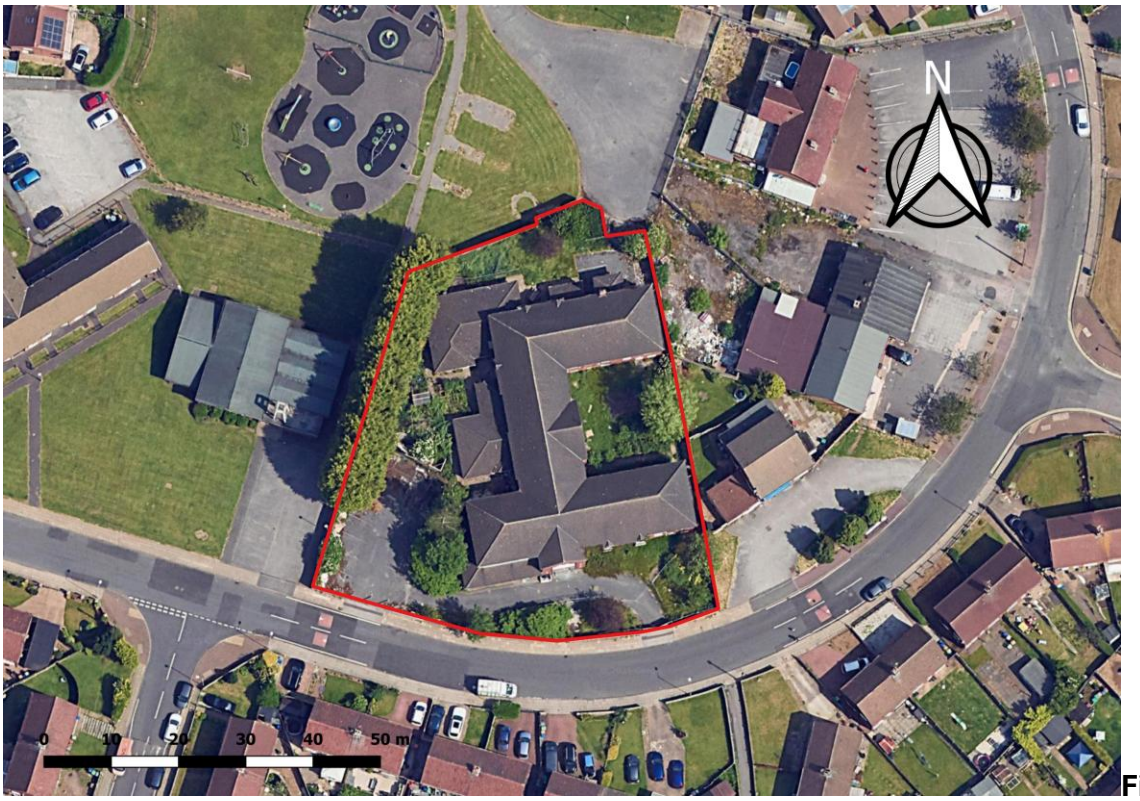

Fig.1. Site boundary.

1.3. Proposed Plans

The current proposed plans are to renovate the existing building complex, whilst also adding extensions to three areas of the site. Parking space and driveway improvements will also be implemented around the site, including bike and electric vehicle bays.

1.4. Scope of Report

This report aims to:

Establish the total number of baseline and lost habitat, hedgerow, and river units at the site of the proposed scheme.

Establish the total number habitat, hedgerow, and river units that are to be created, retained and/or enhanced under landscape and ecological mitigation proposals at the proposed works site.

Determine whether the proposed scheme will result in a net loss, no net loss, or a net gain for biodiversity.

Make further recommendations to gain the required 10% minimum net gain for biodiversity.

1.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Relevant Policies

The appraisal 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. These are:

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2011-2020)

Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

Environmental Act 2021

Local policy

A full explanation of these policies can be found within **Appendix C.**

2. Methodology

Personnel

Field surveys have been undertaken by licensed ecologist/s, members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM) and members of Eco 360 staff.

The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been carried out in line with CIEEM Guidelines on Good practice principles for development (2016), CIEEM A Practical Guide (2019) and BS 8683:2021 - Process for designing and implementing biodiversity net gain.

Survey of Baseline Habitats and Condition

Habitat typing and condition assessments are undertaken during a Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (PEA) or similar studies. The baseline also considers historic records for the site and local area via a desktop study desktop study (satellite imagery, previous ecological reports), as well as additional surveys to assess the presence/absence of species in certain situations. Conditions of habitats and hedgerows are assessed using the scoring systems provided in Technical Annex 1 of the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Condition Assessment Sheet.

River assessments are carried out through a MoRPH5 Pro survey and River type survey. At least one MoRPH5 is undertaken per reach on site that will be directly or indirectly impacted with a further MorPH5 undertaken upstream to record a more “natural setting” if required. This date is then processed via Cartographer to give the condition of the rivers on site.

Calculations of Baseline Habitats

Using Geographic Information Software (GIS), baseline habitats are measured in hectares (ha) using vector layer polygons. These measurements are then input into the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool. Habitat condition and connectivity are then input into the calculator. The area of habitat retained is then entered into the calculation to give a final sum of baseline units and lost unit.

Each habitat has a base score of 1, this is then multiplied by the size of the habitat (ha). The habitat is then multiplied by its distinctiveness:

- Very low – 0
- Low – 2
- Medium – 4
- High – 6

The next multiplier is based on the condition of the habitat:

- N/A-other/agricultural – 0
- Poor – 1
- Fairly poor – 1.5
- Moderate – 2
- Fairly good – 2.5
- Good – 3

Calculations of Post-development Habitats

The calculation is informed by planning design, landscape plans, and proposed ecological mitigation. Plans are georeferenced into GIS and are similarly measured in hectares (ha) using vector layer polygons. These measurements are then converted into input into the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool. A target condition will be assigned to each new habitat following the same scores as above.

The calculator will generate a proposed time to hit this target condition and difficulty score.

3. Baseline Calculation and Proposed Impact

3.1. Baseline Habitats

The table below outlines the existing site status based on the most recent site survey.

Habitat Type	Area (m^2)	Distinct-iveness	Distinct-iveness score	Con-dition	Con-dition score	Total Hab-itat Units	Baseline Units Retained	Baseline Units Enhanced	Area of Habitat Lost (m^2)	Units Lost
Devel-oped Land; Sealed Surface	2038	V.Low	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Modified Grass-land	305	Low	2	Moder ate	1	0.12	0.11	0	24	0.01
Introduce d Shrub	125	Low	2	N/A	1	0.03	0.03	0	0	0
Tall Forbs	280	Low	2	Good	3	0.17	0.16	0	16	0.01
Individual Trees	732	Medium	4	Moder ate	2	0.67	0.67	0	0	0

Linear Habitats:

There were no linear habitats on-site at the time of the survey, nor during April 2025 (whereby imagery collected from google maps showed an absence of the West boundary treeline shown in **Fig.1.**).

3.2. Proposed Habitats

Habitat Type	Area (m^2)	Target Distinctive ness	Score	Target Condition	Score	Habitat Units Delivered
Developed Land; Sealed Surface	40	V.Low	0	N/A-Other	0	0.00

Linear Habitats:

There are no proposed linear habitats to be created on-site.

3.3. Total Net Unit Change

Area Habitat Summary	
Total Net Unit Change Habitats	-0.02
Total Net % Change Habitats	-1.94%
Trading Rules Satisfied	No

3.4. Site Limitations

There were no site limitations at the time of the survey.

4. Recommendations

The development proposals currently do not meet the recommended 10% net gain in biodiversity units.

The grassland and tall forbs lost to facilitate the development leads to the main loss of 0.01 habitat units each. As habitats of 'low' distinctiveness, these habitats should be compensated for with the 'same distinctiveness or better habitat'.
Using the biodiversity metric, the current development proposal results in a net unit loss of –0.02 units, which correlates to a –1.94% net change in habitat biodiversity with the new plans. This does not meet the minimum requirement for a 10% biodiversity net gain. Additionally, the proposal fails to meet trading rules, as the loss of valuable habitats like the tall forbs and grassland is not compensated with habitats of equal or greater distinctiveness.
Should BNG targets be unable to achieve under on-site and off-site habitat creation/ enhancement measures biodiversity credits can be bought from the government.
0.12 habitat units are required to comply with the requirement for a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity, the following enhancements and additional habitat creation measures are recommended:

On-Site Habitat Creation/Enhancement:

There is space and opportunity on-site to facilitate habitat creation and achieve Biodiversity Net Gain targets. 3 'Medium' sized trees can be planted to off-set the shortfall in habitat units and achieve 10% biodiversity net gain targets. This can be achieved as shown in **Fig.6.** Any habitats created must be secured for 30 years post-development.

Off-site Habitat Creation/Enhancement:

Should on-site units not be achievable, any owned land off-site be available or purchasable, habitat creation/ enhancement on this would aid in offsetting the shortfall in habitat units from the site works at Beck House.

5. References

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Kirby, P. (2013). Habitat Management for Invertebrates. Exeter: Pelagic Publishing.

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6. Appendices

Appendix A: Existing Site Plans

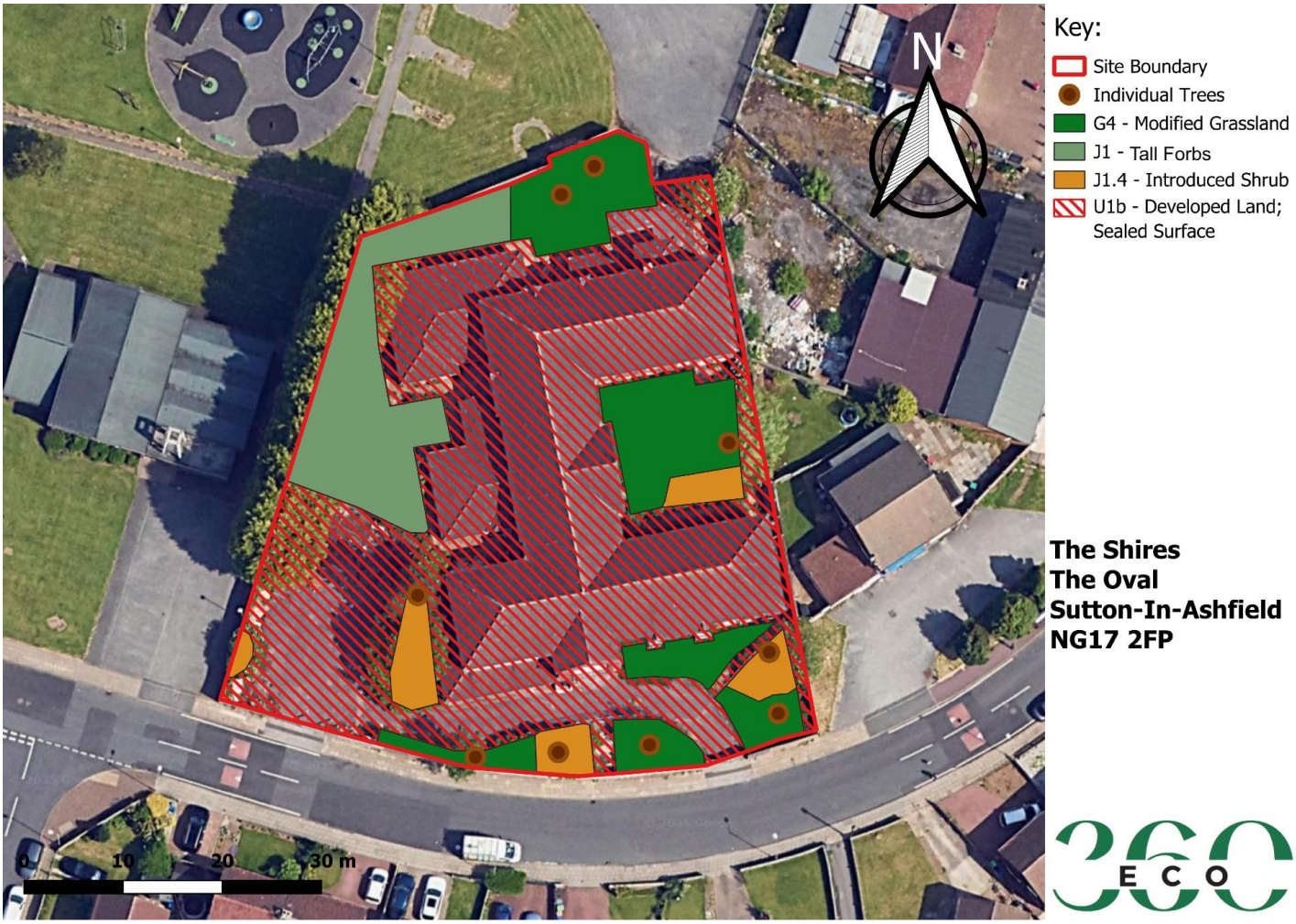

Fig.2. Existing habitat map within the site boundaries.

Appendix B: Proposed Site Plans

Fig.3. Proposed habitat map within site boundary after the completed works in plan.

Fig.5. Existing (Left) and Proposed (Right) plans for site.

Fig.6. Proposed placement of new 'medium' tree planting to achieve BNG targets.

Appendix C: Site Photographs

Img.1. South-East corner

Img.2. South-East boundary.

Img.3. South boundary.

Img.4. Inside SW corner of site.

Img.5. Scots pine and introduced shrub.

Img.6. Tall Forb species.

Img.7. Area of building extension.

Img.8. North of site.

Appendix D: Biodiversity Net Gain Relevant Policies

Environmental Act 2021

Part 6 on nature and biodiversity covers all areas of biodiversity net gain across two core sections. This Act mandates that all planning meets a minimum of a 10% gain in biodiversity calculated using the appropriate Metric and that the newly created habitats are secured for at least 30 years.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

While currently not a legal obligation, biodiversity and environmental net gains are mentioned in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) within the following paragraphs (please refer to the NPPF for the full quotations):

Achieving sustainable development

Paragraph 8 Section C. "*an environmental objective – **to protect and enhance our natural,** built and historic **environment**; including making effective use of land, **improving biodiversity**, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy*."

Preparing and reviewing plans

Paragraph 32. "*Local plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements. This **should demonstrate how the plan** has addressed relevant economic, social and **environmental objectives** (including **opportunities for net gains**). Significant **adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided** and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).*"

Identifying land for homes

Paragraph 73 section C. "*consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for **net environmental gains***"

Transport infrastructure:

Paragraph 104. "*Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan- making and development proposals, so that:*

d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for ***net environmental gains.***

Planning decisions:

Paragraph 119 "*Planning decisions and planning policy should a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land … and taking opportunities to* ***achieve net environmental gains - such as developments that would enable new habitat creation."***

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Paragraph 174 Section 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*"

Habitats and biodiversity

Paragraph 179. "*To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:*

a) *Identify, map and* ***safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats*** *and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management,* ***enhancement, restoration or creation****;*

and b) promote ***the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats,*** *ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing* ***measurable net gains for biodiversity****.*"

Paragraph 180. "*When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*

a) *if* ***significant harm to biodiversity*** *resulting from a development* ***cannot be avoided*** *(through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then* ***planning permission should be refused;***
b) *development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*

c) *development resulting in the **loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats** (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) **should be refused,** unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;*

*and d) development **whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported;** while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can **secure measurable net gains for biodiversity** or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*"

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