

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) habitat creation, enhancement
and management plan for the proposed replacement farmhouse
at Apesford Farm

26/03/2025

Job No. 25_438

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Status	Issued
Date:	06/02/2025
Issue to:	Mr J Harrison / HCS File 25_438
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Revision Status

Issue No	Issued to	Changes Made	Date
1	Client	First Issue	06/02/2025
2	Client	Modified grassland to vegetated garden	03/03/2025
3	Client	Alterations as requested by SWT	26/03/2025

INTRODUCTION

Background

Hewitt&Carr Services (HCS) was commissioned by Mr J Harrison to produce a habitat plan to address the mandatory biodiversity net gain required for the proposed erection of a replacement farmhouse at Apesford Farm – (Grid Ref: SK 01843 53530).

A previous Biodiversity Net Gain report had been conducted by Haslam Ecology on the 24th November 2024 (REF: HE 2391124). From this report, it was found that the spatial data for the survey was inaccurate. Consequently, Hewitt&Carr Services were commissioned to remeasure the habitat areas.

Aim

The purpose of this report is to inform the client, and the local planning authority of the current habitat parcels on the site and achieve at least 10% net gain in biodiversity post-development using habitat creation and/or enhancement.

Site Context

The site is situated off the A523 between Leek and Waterhouses. The site resides within the coombes valley watershed with the valley designated as an SSSI further downstream. The surrounding area consists of bovine and equine grazing pastures connected by old defunct hedgerows and lines of trees.

Ecological record search

A desktop ecological site study with a 1km radial boundary around the site was undertaken. The spatial ecological data was obtained via the National Biodiversity Network. The records search also consisted of a search for designated sites using SER data, Natural England's Green Infrastructure map and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside map.

On-Site Assessment

The site survey was conducted on 06/02/2025 and utilised UKHAB mapping symbology and survey methodology which was utilized to define the site into habitat parcels.

The survey was conducted within the sub-optimal window for grasslands (April-Sept). this was due to time constraints on the project and could not be avoided. The assessment of the grassland habitat considered soil type information via Soilscape along with dead flowering plant material on the site combined with species present to deduce the habitats present on the site as accurately as possible within these parameters.

Metric Calculation

The baseline habitat parcels are inputted into the statutory small site's biodiversity metric calculation tool. Habitat creation and/or enhancements will be inputted to achieve a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain post-development.

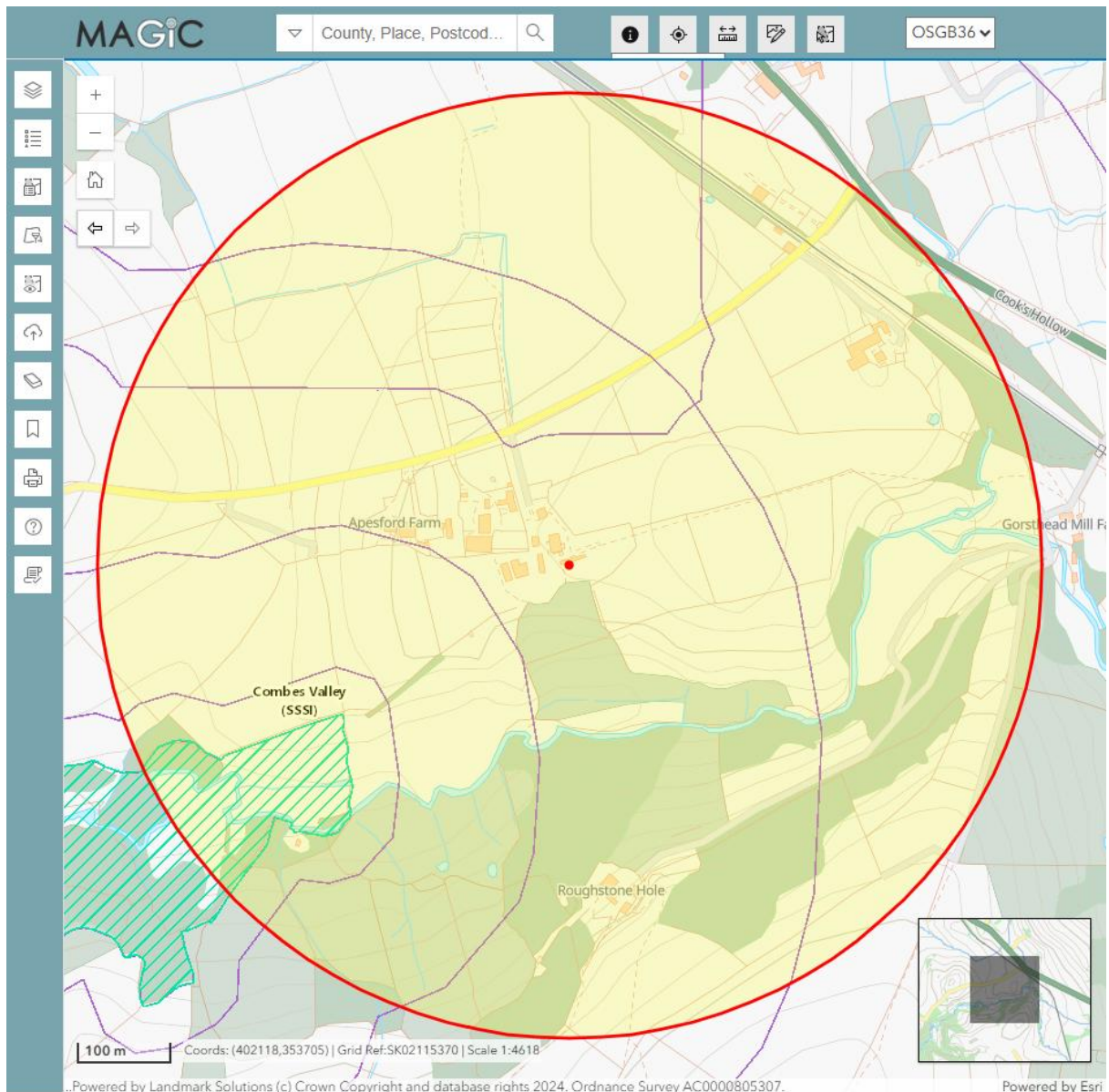
Habitat plan

The proposed habitats used to generate a post-development net gain will be given creation, enhancement and maintenance methodologies.

DESIGNATED SITES

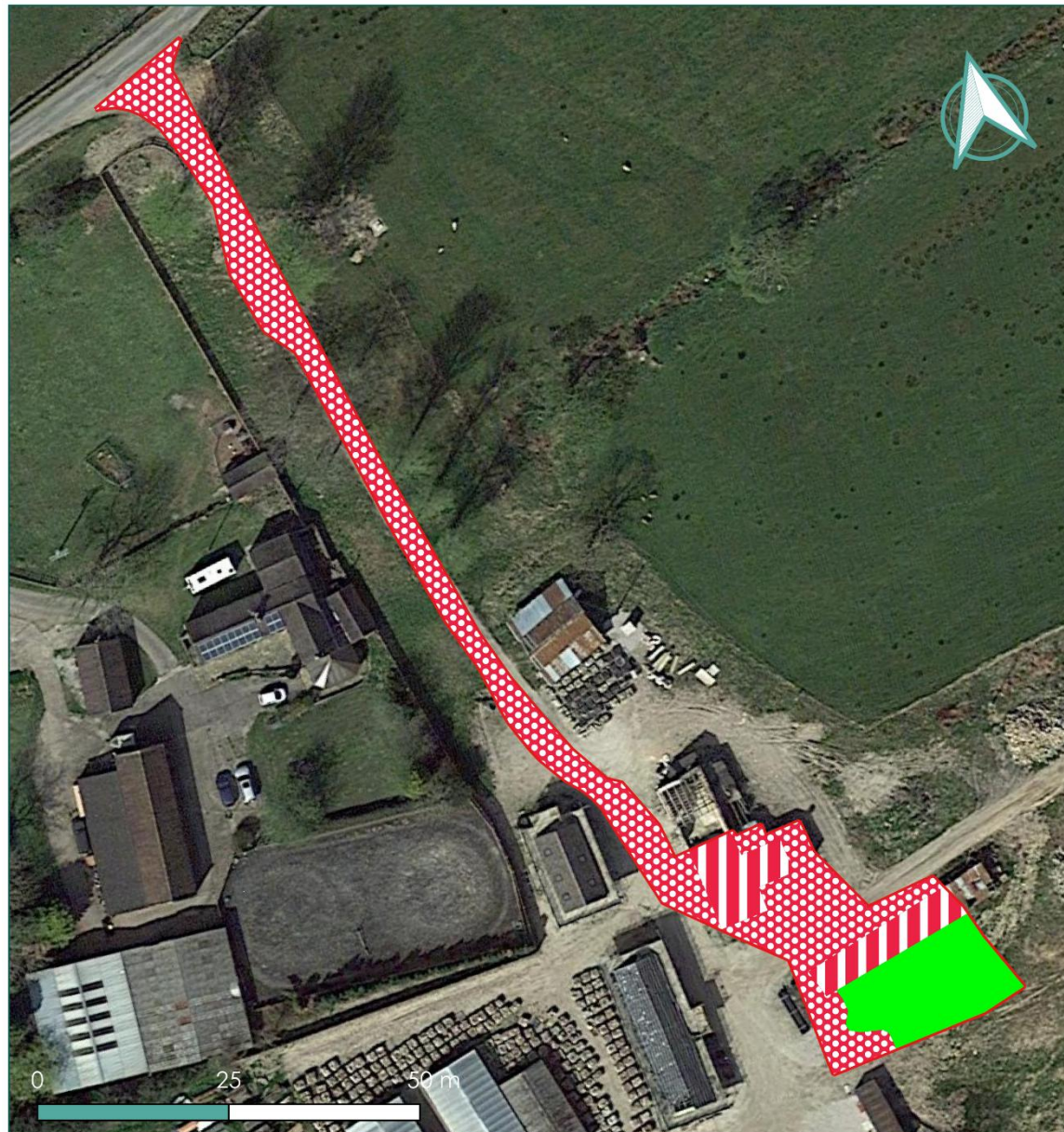
Figure 1.

DEFRA MAGIC map of designated sites within 500m of the site



Coombes Valley SSSI is located 280m west of the site and lies within the impact risk zones for this site. However, the scope of the proposed development does not require consultation with Natural England because of the proposal on the SSSI being negligible. Coombes Valley is also a RSPB reserve but again the scope of the development is highly unlikely to influence the local avian populations.

Figure 2.
Baseline Habitats



A: DaisyBank House | 17-19 Leek Road | Cheadle | ST10 1JE
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Legend

Baseline Habitats

-  Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
-  Developed land; sealed surface
-  Modified grassland
-  Boundary

Google Satellite

Client : Mr J Harrison

Project : Proposed replacement farmhouse

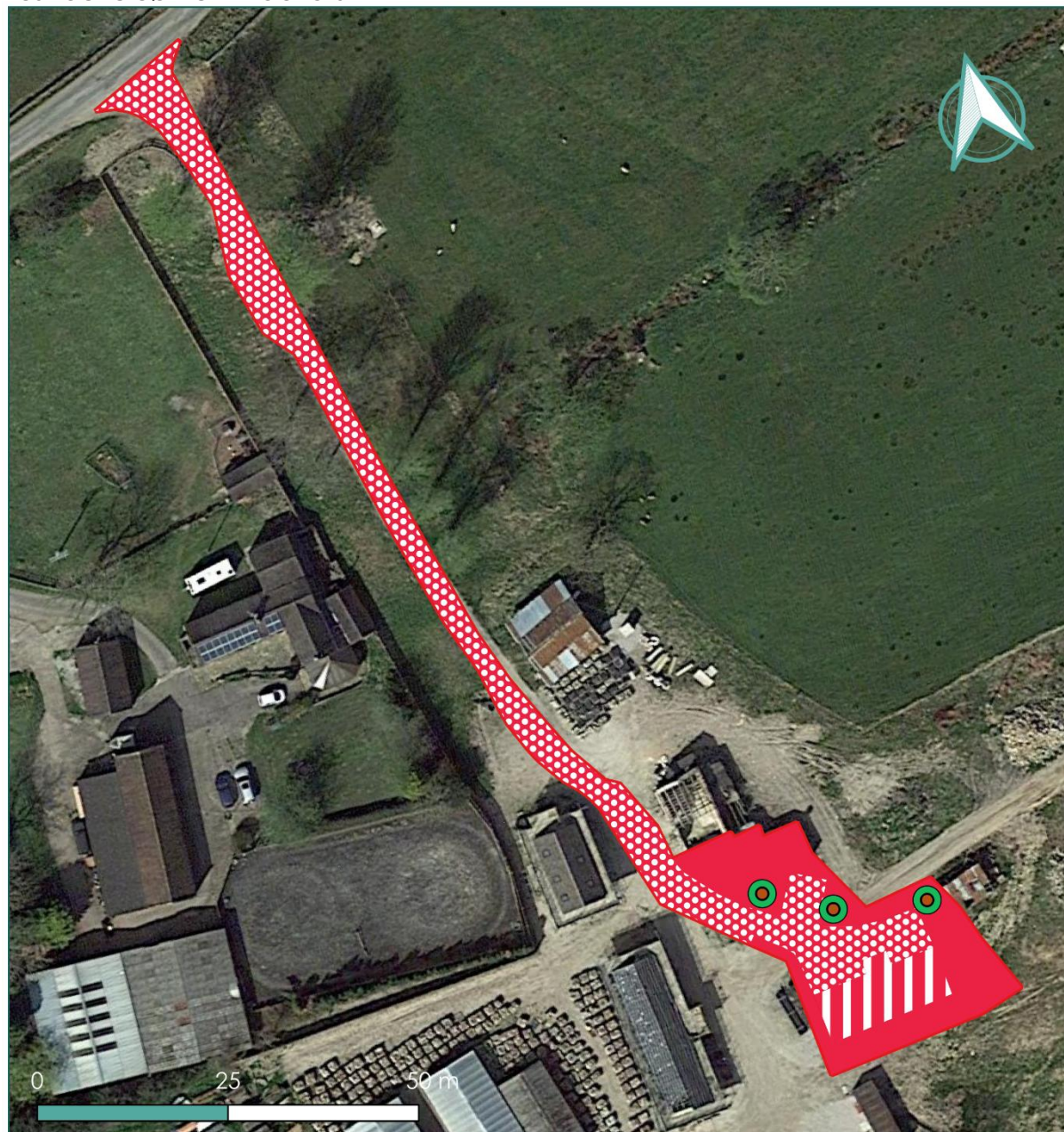
Title : Baseline Habitats

Date : 06/02/2025

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 25_438 01

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Figure 3.
Post-development Habitats



A: DaisyBank House | 17-19 Leek Road | Cheadle | ST10 1JE
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Legend

 Half Standard Rowans

Post-Development Habitats

 Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

 Developed land; sealed surface

 Vegetated garden

 Boundary

Google Satellite

Client : Mr J Harrison

Project : Proposed replacement farmhouse

Title : Post-Development Habitats

Date : 03/03/2025

Project No. Drawing No.
 25_438 02

Rev :

CREATION & ENHANCEMENT

METHODOLOGY

Vegetated Garden

The vegetated garden should incorporate flowering shrubs to support pollinating insects throughout the year. To achieve a broad flowering time range, the following species should be included in the garden:

- Winter Honeysuckle (*Lonicera fragrantissima*)
- Oregon Grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*)
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
- Hebe (*Hebe* spp.)
- Common Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*)
- Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)
- Wild Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*)

The turf should also be seeded with low lying flowering species such as:

- Micro Clover (*Trifolium repens* var. 'Pirouette')
- Creeping Thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*)
- Chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*)
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)
- Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*)
- Bugleweed (*Ajuga reptans*)
- Creeping Jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*)
- Heath Pearlwort (*Sagina subulata*)
- Speedwell (*Veronica* spp.)
- Lawn Chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*)

With the integration of these species into the vegetated garden, the development will have a significant positive impact on pollinating insect species on and near the site.

Half Standard Rowans

3 rowan trees will be planted on the site, to ensure their condition, the following methodology should be adhered to:

1. The rowans should be planted in late autumn or early spring
2. Before planting, the ground should be loosened, and compost added to the soil where the trees will be planted
3. The trees can then be planted and watered thoroughly
4. Mulch should be added around the base of the trees, avoiding the trunk
5. Until established, the trees should be prevented from drying out in summer months.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

Following this plan, the site will achieve an **23.91% net gain in habitats**

Maintenance and monitoring

The habitats created will be maintained for 30 years and will be the responsibility of the homeowner to maintain the habitats and arrange for a suitably qualified ecologist to perform a site audit at least once every 2 years for the required 30 years. All audit records will be collated by the homeowner in a log and subject to review at any given time.

If following a site audit, the suitably qualified ecologist recommends alterations to the management plan to keep the sites condition on track, these changes will be recorded and added to the site log.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP), published in 1994 and updated in 2007, is a government initiative aimed at preserving and enhancing species and habitats in the UK. It includes a list of priority habitats and species, along with biodiversity initiatives. The UKBAP also mandates county-level conservation through the creation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs), which target specific species of conservation concern. Local authorities and large organizations have also produced their own BAPs, with these targets being a crucial part of the planning process.

Planning Policy (England) and National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaced previous guidance in 2012, with a presumption towards sustainable development. The latest update, updated in 2019, includes a section on conserving the natural environment. Section 15 outlines how the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimizing impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains. Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity gains should be encouraged, and planning permission should be refused if a proposed development would result in significant harm to the natural environment that cannot be avoided, mitigated, or compensated for.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Section 40 of the NERC Act mandates local authorities and public bodies in England and Wales to enhance biodiversity in all their functions. It lists habitats and species of principal importance to biodiversity conservation, superseding Section 74 of the CRow Act 2000.

Biodiversity 2020

The government's Biodiversity 2020 policy aims to prevent biodiversity loss and promote healthy ecosystems by establishing ecological networks for wildlife and people, involving individuals, communities, local authorities, charities, businesses, and the government in their roles.

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