



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report

Prepared for John Reid, JCB Farms Limited.

JCB Wardlow Site 2, Ashbourne Road,
Rue Hill, Caudon Low, Staffordshire

November 2025

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Site Name:	JCB Wardlow Site 2, Ashbourne Road, Rue Hill, Cauldon Low, Staffordshire
Document Number:	FFELTD-01215-V2
Project:	Erection of agricultural barn and concrete apron
National Grid Reference:	SK 08657 47600

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fauna Forest Ecology Limited was commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment Report to determine the potential impact on biodiversity arising from the proposed development on land off Ashbourne Road, Rue Hill, Cauldon Low, Staffordshire. The proposals are to erect an agricultural barn with surrounding concrete apron and plant trees around the perimeter to screen the buildings and provide wildlife interest.

The site supports an artificial gravel access track, a single mature tree and an area of neutral grassland bisected by a timber fence and dry-stone wall. A BNG calculation, using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (version 1.0.4 dated 3rd July 2025), was completed on 3rd November 2025 to assess whether the proposed development would deliver the minimum 10% net gain required by law. The results indicate that the proposals would result in a 61.28% net loss of habitats within the site.

As part of the proposals, some of the other neutral grassland will be retained and planted with 16 small, native trees along the north and south sides of the barn.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Fauna Forest Ecology Limited on behalf of John Reid, JCB Limited in relation to land off Ashbourne Road, Rue Hill, Staffordshire. It presents the findings of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment for a proposed development comprising the erection of an agricultural barn and associated concrete apron. The total site area is approximately 0.24 hectares (ha). A map with the site boundary is shown in Figure 1.
- 1.2 The site is located approximately 9.6km west of Ashbourne and 20km east of Stoke-on-Trent and contains a gravel access track, a single mature tree and an area of neutral grassland which is bisected from north to south by a timber fence and dry-stone wall. The site is bordered by arable and pasture fields to the north and east and small parcels of deciduous woodland to the west, and beyond these habitat parcels lie two large quarries: an active limestone quarry approximately 400m to the north and a disused quarry now used as an industrial test facility approximately 120m to the south of the site. The surrounding countryside also features dry stone walls, hedgerow margins, tree lines and scattered trees as well as other semi-natural habitats such as calcareous grassland and further deciduous woodland parcels.
- 1.3 This BNG Assessment Report largely follows the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidance.¹ The BNG Assessment has been informed in part by a UKHab assessment undertaken by David Nixon MCIEEM MRSB and Frances Horsford MSc.
- 1.4 The assessment process involved calculating the baseline ecological BNG unit score by classifying habitat types according to their distinctiveness, condition, connectivity and strategic significance at both the pre-development and post-development stages, in line with the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric (hereafter referred to as 'the Metric'). Baseline habitat conditions were classified in a robust and consistent manner, using the data available at the time of assessment, and with all data collection methods and limitations clearly identified.
- 1.5 Pre-development and post-development habitat units and hedgerow units for the site were then calculated based on the current development proposals. The feasibility of the proposals to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity through the Metric was assessed. A BNG design was developed with the aim of maximising biodiversity gain through habitat creation, enhancement and natural succession, where appropriate. The approach prioritised achieving BNG on-site wherever possible, with off-site measures considered only if necessary.

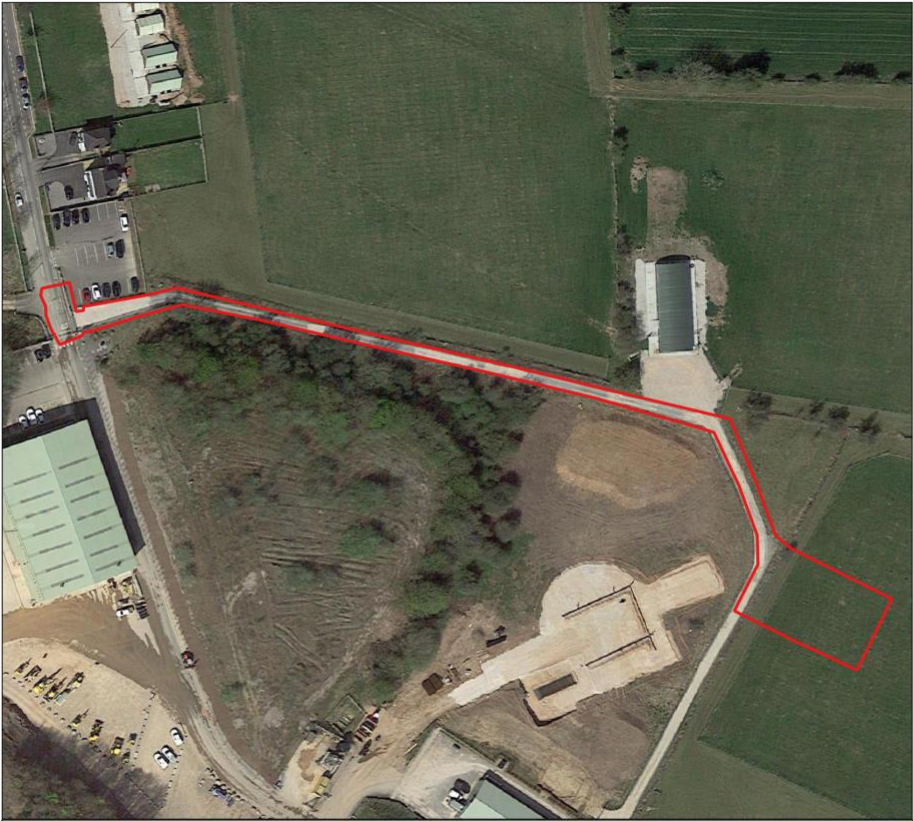
¹ CIEEM (2021). *Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Audit Templates*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management: Winchester, UK.

Planning policy and legislation

- 1.6 BNG has been defined as ‘development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, and an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation’ (*BNG: Good Practice Principles for Development*).²
- 1.7 BNG became mandatory in England under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) from February 2024 for large sites and April 2024 for small sites. All sites must achieve a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity.
- 1.8 Using a biodiversity metric means that a developer applies a standardised formula to calculate the value of the site both before and after the development in the form of biodiversity units. These vary dependent upon the habitats affected, their condition and their extent. Where necessary, the developer will then provide an offset to deliver an equivalent number of biodiversity units. Offsetting is only used to compensate for adverse impacts on the biodiversity present on the site that will be impacted once appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures have been completed. This ensures that the mitigation hierarchy as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is followed.³
- 1.9 The NPPF (2024) seeks to ensure that the planning system contributes to and enhances the natural and local environment, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity by:
*“187. 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;
192. 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.”*
- 1.10 Public authorities have a specific duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 to consider biodiversity and are required by central government to deliver no net loss.
- 1.11 A BNG Assessment must be completed prior to works commencing to allow any planning officers the opportunity to consider the likely impacts the proposed development will have on the local biodiversity.

² CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA (2016). *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice principles for development*. London: CIRIA/CIEEM/IEMA.

³ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. Available at: [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Accessed: November 2025).



Base map: © Google, Imagery © Google / Maxar Technologies
Map created with QGIS Geographic Information System version 3.44.3 (2025). Open Source Geospatial Foundation Project. <http://qgis.org>.

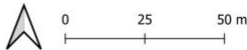
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Site Location Map

JCB Wardlow: Site 2
Ashbourne Road, Rue Hill,
Cauldon Low, Staffordshire

Legend

Red Line Boundary



Map completed by: Charlie Fothergill MSc ACIEEM
Map completed on: 02/11/2025

Figure 1: Site Location Map

2 METHODOLOGY

Desk study

- 2.1 To assess the potential ecological impacts of the scheme, a desk-based study was undertaken using online resources, including the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC). This was used to identify records of designated sites and ecologically important habitats within a 1km radius of the site. Google Earth was also consulted to review the surrounding landscape context (see limitations).
- 2.2 Staffordshire Ecological Record (SER) were commissioned to provide ecological and site records within a 1km radius of the site.

Baseline habitat assessment

- 2.3 A UK Habitat Survey (UKHab) was carried out on 1st May 2025 by David Nixon MSc MCIEEM MRSB and Frances Horsford MSc to identify and assess the baseline condition of habitats within the site. The habitats recorded have been mapped and are referenced within the Ecological Appraisal Report (May 2025).
- 2.4 During the UKHab survey, broad habitat types were identified across the site.⁴ These were subsequently converted into habitat classifications compatible with the Metric.

Statutory Biodiversity Metric

- 2.5 The Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Defra Metric was used to calculate biodiversity units. This spreadsheet-based tool requires input of both pre-development and post-development habitat types, their associated condition, and the measured extent of each habitat.
- 2.6 Habitat areas (measured in hectares) were derived from development plans prepared by JCB Farms Ltd, for Wardlow Quarry, Cauldon Low, dated 18/03/2022 and verified using QGIS.
- 2.7 Habitat condition was assessed in accordance with guidance set out in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide.⁵ Each broad habitat type was assessed against the published criteria to determine condition.

⁴ UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0*. Available at: <https://www.ukhab.org>. (Accessed: November 2025).

⁵ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2025). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/689c5ee17b2e384441636196/The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_User_Guide_-_July_2025.pdf (Accessed: November 2025).

- 2.8 Once all habitat types, conditions and areas were entered for both pre-development and post-development stages, the Metric calculated the changes in biodiversity units (including habitat units, hedgerow units and river units if applicable), as well as the overall percentage gain or loss arising from the proposals. The Metric calculations were completed by Charlie Fothergill MSc ACIEEM.

Strategic Significance

- 2.9 The strategic significance of habitats was assessed for both pre-development and post-development scenarios, taking into account the site's location, proximity to existing areas of biodiversity interest, inclusion within local ecological networks, and its position within wider habitat corridors.
- 2.10 The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is at the final draft stage and is due to be published by early 2026.⁶ The following documents were used to inform the decision to apply the strategic significance multiplier to habitats within the site:
- 2.10.1 Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).⁷
 - 2.10.2 Staffordshire County Council's Natural Environment Strategy 2024-26.⁸

Limitations

- 2.11 The accuracy of habitat area measurement is limited by the form of baseline data collection and can only be relied upon to a certain degree of resolution.
- 2.12 The biodiversity calculations are based upon ecological assessment of habitat carried out in November 2025; and as such, should a prolonged period of time pass prior to the commencement of the project, changes which may affect the conclusions of this report may occur.
- 2.13 This report is not intended to address impacts to protected species even though a records search has been commissioned.
- 2.14 No other limitations specific to this report influenced the assessment.

⁶ Staffordshire County Council, (2025). *Notice of Key Decisions*. Available at: <https://staffordshire.moderngov.co.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=367> (Accessed: November 2025).

⁷ Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, (2001). *Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan*. Available at: <https://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Staffordshire%20Biodiversity%20Action%20Plan%202nd%20Edition%202001.pdf> (Accessed: November 2025).

⁸ Staffordshire County Council, (2025). *Enhancing Nature: Staffordshire County Council's Natural Environment Strategy 2024-26*. Available at: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Environment/Documents/Staffordshire-County-Council-Natural-Environment-Strategy.pdf> (Accessed: November 2025).

3 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Desk study

- 3.1 Two statutory designated sites within 1km of the application site were identified, both of which were Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Rue Hill SSSI, approximately 150m north of the site, and Caldon Dales SSSI, approximately 800m northeast of the site. There were 10 non-statutory designated sites within 1km of the application site was returned by SER.
- 3.2 Two priority habitat types were identified within 1km of the application site, including 10 parcels of lowland deciduous woodland and 21 parcels of lowland calcareous grassland. No priority habitats were found within the site boundary.
- 3.3 Notable fauna records returned by SER included four records of common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, nine records of brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, and two records of noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. 72 records of badger *Meles meles*, four records of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, a variety of bird records and 18 records of great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*.
- 3.4 More details can be found in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report written by Fauna Forest Ecology Limited, October 2025.

Strategic significance

- 3.5 The Staffordshire County Council's Natural Environment Strategy focuses on hedgerow creation, woodland expansion and strategic tree planting where it improves habitat connectivity, the enhancement of road verges and improvements to heathland biodiversity as priority areas for nature recovery. The Staffordshire BAP underlines the importance of priority habitats, emphasising the reinstatement of river valley meadows and an increase in heathland coverage and connectivity as of particular regional importance. None of these habitat types were identified within the site, which only featured poor quality neutral grassland and a single, isolated tree. Therefore, all of the habitats present on site are considered to be of low strategic significance.

Important ecological features

- 3.6 No important ecological features were identified within the site during the field survey.

Biodiversity units

- 3.7 The baseline habitats recorded during the survey comprised two different habitats and a single individual tree. A summary of the baseline habitats and their associated condition assessments is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of baseline habitats

Baseline Habitat (including UKHab code if applicable)	Area (ha)	Condition	Description	Baseline Units
Other neutral grassland (g3c)	0.1021	Poor	A parcel of short-mown neutral grassland dominated by Yorkshire fog with abundant red fescue in addition to forbs typical of neutral grassland with signs of nutrient enrichment such as meadow buttercup, ribwort plantain and cuckoo flower. The presence of salad burnet and meadow saxifrage indicated the influence of calcareous soils, however the grassland did not meet the UKHab criteria for calcareous grassland.	0.41
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)	0.1358	N/A - Other	A gravel access track leading to the grassland parcel from the Ashbourne road.	0.00
Individual tree (203 – mature tree)	0.0366 ⁹	Good	One large, mature rowan tree present within the grassland.	0.44

⁹ For individual trees, the biodiversity metric tool 'tree helper' has been used to generate an area equivalent value based on the tree's diameter at breast height (DBH) and condition.

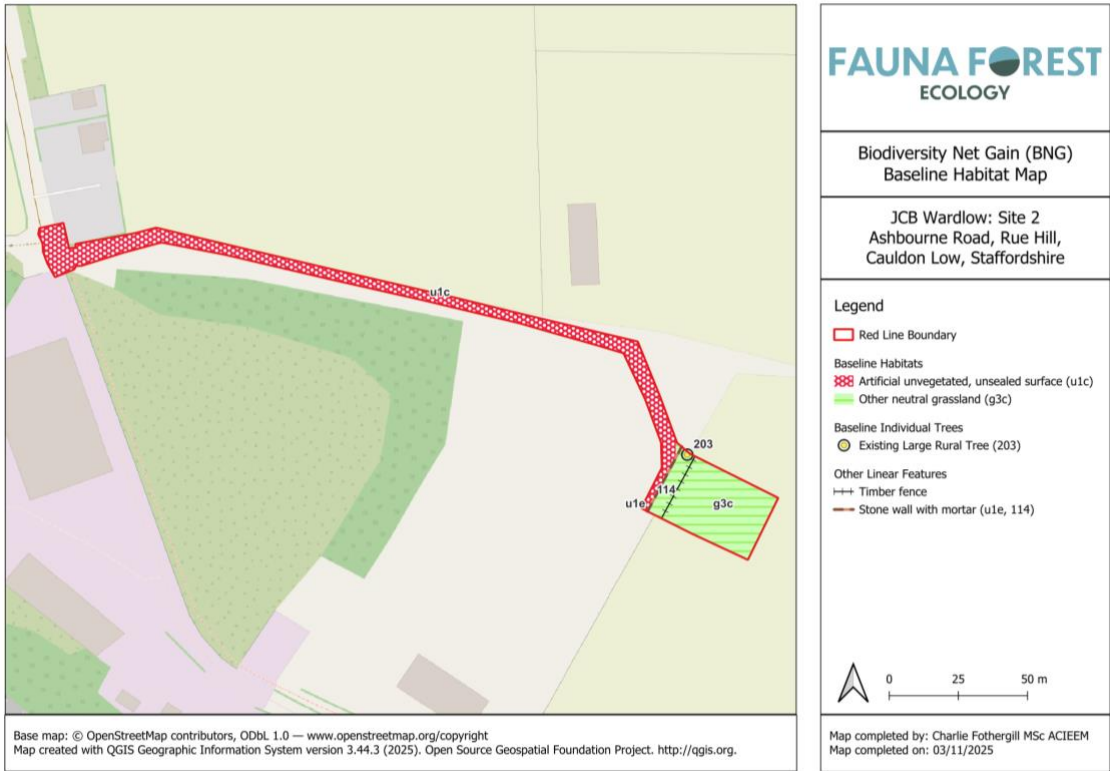


Figure 2: BNG Baseline Habitat Map

4 BNG GOOD PRACTICE PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The good practice principles for BNG are set out within Table 1.1 of Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development.¹⁰ The principles include:

- Apply the mitigation hierarchy (avoiding, then minimising and finally compensating for any impacts and losses).
- Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere (e.g. irreplaceable habitats).
- Be inclusive and equitable (engaging stakeholders early is key).
- Address risk (mitigating for difficult and uncertain risks to achieve net gain).
- Make a measurable net gain contribution (making sure that the calculation uses an appropriate metric) and be consistent and transparent with calculations.
- Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity (use robust credible evidence and local knowledge to inform decisions).
- Be additional (exceed existing obligations).
- Create a net gain legacy (involving stakeholders, securing funding for long-term management, allowing resilience in the net gain design, mitigating risks from other land users and supporting local-level management of net gain activities).
- Optimise sustainability (prioritising BNG and optimising the wider environmental benefits).
- Be transparent (communicate clearly and timely and share the learning with all stakeholders).

4.2 All of the above principles have been considered. No irreplaceable habitats are being lost. Biodiversity loss is being mitigated on site through the retention of some of the other neutral grassland, in addition to tree planting within this remaining grassland.

¹⁰ Baker, J., Hoskin, R. and Butterworth, T. (2019) *Biodiversity Net Gain. Good Practice Principles for Development – A Practical Guide*. Available at: [Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide](#). (Accessed: November 2025).

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

- 5.1 The proposed development will involve the construction of an agricultural barn with a concrete apron around the perimeter.
- 5.2 Effects on the biodiversity of the surrounding landscape caused by the works will be mitigated by retaining neutral grassland where possible, and the planting of trees along the north and south sides of the barn.
- 5.3 The trees will be maintained for a minimum of 30 years after the target condition has been achieved.
- 5.4 The proposed habitats are shown in Figure 3, with details of habitats to be retained, enhanced and created set out in Table 2, along with the associated habitat management proposals.

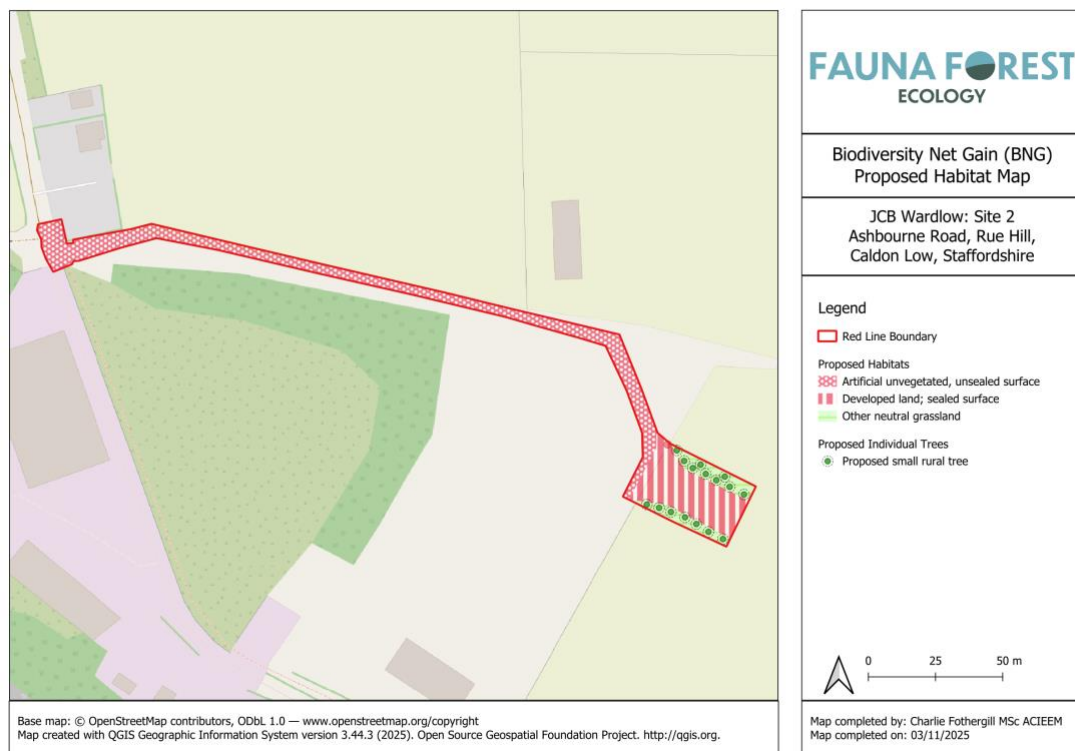


Figure 3: BNG Proposed Habitat Map

Habitat retained

- 5.5 Habitats to be retained are detailed in Table 2.

Habitat enhanced

- 5.6 Habitats to be enhanced are detailed in Table 2.

Habitat created

5.7 Habitats to be created are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of habitat management for proposed and post-development habitats

Habitat	Retained/ Enhanced/ Created	Area (ha)	Target Condition	Units	Proposed Habitat Management
Other neutral grassland	Retained	0.1021	Poor	0.41	This small area of retained grassland is proposed for planting 16 small, native trees. Although the grassland could be managed more sensitively than the current management regime, future shading and leaf litter from the proposed trees will make it difficult to improve the grassland condition to moderate condition. Therefore, this grassland will be retained as poor.
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	Retained	0.1358	N/A - Other	0.00	Not applicable.
Developed land; sealed surface	Created	0.0698	N/A - Other	0.00	Not applicable.
Rural tree	Created	0.0651	Moderate	0.2	At least 16 small trees of locally sourced native species will be planted within the other neutral grassland areas to the north and south of the proposed building.

6 BNG METRIC

- 6.1 The habitats proposed for retention, enhancement, and creation, as detailed in this report, have been entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (July 2025). Table 3 provides a summary of the headline results, with full metric details included in Appendix A.

Table 3. Biodiversity metric headline results

Baseline Habitat Units	0.85
Post Development Habitat Units	0.33
Total Net Unit Habitat Change	-0.52 (negative)
Total Net Percentage Habitat Changes	-61.28% (negative)

- 6.2 The assessment has demonstrated that the proposals will lead to a net -0.52 medium distinctiveness habitat units, resulting in an overall loss of 61.28%.
- 6.3 An additional 0.66 habitat units will be required to reach the minimum 10% net gain.
- 6.4 As no hedgerows were recorded during the baseline habitat survey, there is no requirement for a net gain in hedgerows.

Habitat trading

- 6.5 Although the planting of 16 trees within the retained grassland areas will contribute towards the loss of medium distinctiveness habitats, (grassland and a rural tree), there will still be a shortfall of units in this area which cannot be achieved onsite. The loss of other neutral grassland and a large, native tree will result in a measurable shortfall in onsite biodiversity units.
- 6.6 To achieve the required minimum 10% biodiversity net gain, the deficit will need to be offset through local offsite habitat creation or enhancement, or, where this is not feasible, through the purchase of statutory biodiversity credits from Natural England.
- 6.7 Any offsite provision will be secured and managed for a minimum period of 30 years through a Section 106 agreement or other appropriate legal mechanism. In the event that statutory credits are purchased, this requirement will instead be secured by way of a planning condition requiring evidence of credit purchase prior to commencement of development.

Assumptions and justifications

- 6.8 It is assumed that a minimum of 16 native, locally sourced small trees will be planted across the site and maintained over the long term. These trees should be carefully selected to suit the local soil type and conditions, with native species such as oak, field maple, silver birch and rowan recommended to provide ecological value. Each tree will be inspected annually to monitor health and growth, and any that show signs of disease, stress, or dieback will be replaced in the next planting season with a tree of the same species and comparable size. Trees will be managed in accordance with best practice to ensure they reach and maintain a moderate condition for a minimum of 30 years, contributing to long-term habitat structure and biodiversity enhancement.
- 6.9 It is assumed that the neutral grassland will grow up to the edge of the barns with no paths or access roads created.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Project implementation and construction plan

- 7.1 An implementation plan will be prepared to include detailed drawings, such as landscape planting schedules, as well as management proposals, a construction handover checklist, and a clear timetable for implementation. The plan will also identify those responsible for each activity. This document should be closely aligned with the Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan (BNG MMP) outlined below.

Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan

- 7.2 The BNG MMP is a document that sets out the long-term management and monitoring of all created and enhanced habitats. It should include detailed management and maintenance prescriptions for each habitat during years 1–5, along with broader management objectives for the full duration of the BNG commitment, typically a minimum of 30 years.

APPENDIX A: COMPLETED BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN METRIC SPREADSHEET

Headline Results		Return to results menu		
Scroll down for final results ▲				
On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.85		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.33		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	-0.52	-61.28%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	
On-site net gain is less than target set ▲				
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area 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)	Area habitat units	-0.52		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area 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)	Area habitat units	-0.52		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	-61.28%	Total net gain achieved is less than target set ▲	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00%		
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲			
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.85	0.93	0.60
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓				
No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓				
Input errors/rule breaks present in metric ▲				

APPENDIX B: SITE PHOTOS



Photo 1 (above): Short-mown other neutral grassland on the eastern side of the site.



Photo 2 (above): Dry-stone wall and timber fence bisecting the other neutral grassland area.



Photo 3 (above): Gravel access track leading to the other neutral grassland parcel.

APPENDIX C: SPECIES LIST

Other Neutral Grassland

Common name	Scientific name	DAFOR
Bush vetch	<i>Vicia sepium</i>	O
Cock's foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	O
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	O
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	R
Creeping bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	O
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	O
Cuckoo flower	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	R
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	R
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	O
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	O
Meadow grass	<i>Poa</i> sp.	O
Meadow saxifrage	<i>Saxifraga granulata</i>	R
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i> agg.	A
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	O
Salad burnet	<i>Poterium sanguisorba</i>	R
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	O
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	R
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	R
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	D

APPENDIX D: CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS

D1. Grassland Condition Sheet

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high and very high distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types			
Grassland - Other neutral grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site	Survey date and Surveyor name	1st May 2022, David Nixon MSc MCIEEM MRSB & Frances Horsford MSc
Limitations (if applicable)	N/A	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	JCB Wardlow
Grid reference	SK 08805 47491	Habitat parcel reference	g3c
Habitat Description			
Habitat meets UKHab criteria for Other neutral grassland due to not meeting the definition for g3a or g3b AND meeting all four of the following four criteria: >20% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges: <i>Yes - at least 20% herbs</i> >8 species per m2 (incl. forbs, grasses, sedges & rushes, excl. bryophytes): <i>Yes - over 8 species per quadrat</i> >=1 grass species that is not generally sown for intensive agricultural production is at least abundant: <i>Yes – Yorkshire fog dominant, red fescue abundant</i> - Cover of rye-grasses <i>Lolium</i> spp. and White clover <i>Trifolium repens</i>, where present, is <30%: <i>Yes - no rye-grass recorded on site and white clover only occasional (11-25% cover)</i>			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	No	Typically neutral grasses include red fescue and cock's foot, along with forbs such as cuckoo flower, daisy, dandelion and meadow buttercup. Occasional calcareous indicators such as meadow saxifrage but not enough for calcareous grassland.

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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Yes	Longer areas of grassland were present, despite the majority being kept under 7cm.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.	Yes	No more than 5% bare ground cover.
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Yes	No bracken within the site.
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition ³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Yes	Some species indicating nutrient enrichment such as cow parsley and creeping buttercup, however <5% cover of the total area.
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	No	Less than 10 species per square metre.
Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		No	
Number of criteria passed		4	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√	
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)			
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)	N/A	

Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	N/A	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	N/A	
Non-acid grassland types (Result out of 6 criteria)			
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	Good (3)		
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F.	Poor (1)	✓	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
N/A			
Notes			
Footnote 1 - Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description. Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover. Footnote 3 - Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i>, spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>, curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i>, broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>, common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>, creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i>, greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i>, white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site. Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement. Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).			

D2. Individual Tree Condition Sheet

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Individual trees – Rural trees			
Habitat Description			
Mature rowan tree – large			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site	Survey date and Surveyor name	1st May 2022, David Nixon MSc MCIEEM MRSB & Frances Horsford MSc
Limitations (if applicable)	N/A	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	JCB Wardlow
Grid reference	SK 08805 47491	Habitat parcel reference	T1
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	Rowan <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> .
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).	Yes	Individual trees automatically pass.
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	Yes	Tree is 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.	Yes	Tree has grown in an isolated, rural location without any human intervention and shows no signs of damage from agricultural activities.
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Yes	As tree is mature, it features crevices and niches that could be used by small creatures.

F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Tree is growing within other neutral grassland.
Number of criteria passed		6	
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)		
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.			
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
N/A			
Footnotes			
Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and: Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.			