ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN STATEMENT: GREEN ACRES PARK, GEDNEY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ESL (Ecological Services) Limited has been commissi oned by Caroline's Greenacres Ltd to undertake an Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain S tatement in order to identify any constraints and opportunities associated with a planning applicatio n for a residential development at Green Acres Park Gedney.

Summary of findings:

■ No sites with statutory or non-statutory designati on for nature conservation will be affected by the proposed development.

■ Standard protective measures will be put in place to ensure no adverse effects on birds and hedgehogs.

■ All other species were scoped out of the appraisal due to the absence, low value and/or unsuitability of the habitats present on or adjacen t to the Site.

■ The Site has a Biodiversity Net Gain baseline of 2 .74 Biodiversity Units for habitats and 1.06 Biodiversity Units for hedgerows.

Summary of recommendations:

■ No work that could affect nesting birds must be un dertaken during the period March to August inclusive in any year unless a search for ac tive nests has been undertaken by an ecologist in advance.

■ Nest provision for swallows is incorporated into t he masterplan.

■ Site boundary treatments are designed in such a wa y to enable the free movement of hedgehogs between gardens and the wider landscape.

■ The scheme as presented will deliver 1.81 Biodiver sity Units for habitats (a 33.71% net loss) and 1.33 Biodiversity Units for hedgerows (a 26.06% net gain). As a result, the scheme will satisfy the 10% Biodiversity Net Gain t arget for hedgerows but leave a deficit of 1.20 Biodiversity Units in order to achieve the 10% Biodiversity Net Gain target for habitats.

■ Following successful granting of planning permissi on, full details of how the scheme will meet the 10% BNG target (including details of any o ff-site provisions) will be provided in a Biodiversity Gain Plan along with a Habitat Managem ent and Monitoring Plan.

■ The surveys must be updated if planning has not be en consented by 1 June 2025.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 ESL (Ecological Services) Limited (ESL) has bee n commissioned by Caroline's Greenacres Ltd to undertake an Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversi ty Net Gain (BNG) Statement in order to identify any constraints and opportunities associat ed with a planning application for a residential development at Green Acres Park, Gedney (hereafter referred to as the 'Site').

1.2 The aim of the Ecological Appraisal is to:

■ Determine any likely effects on any site designate d for nature conservation.
■ Characterise the habitats and species present and determine their conservation status.
■ Assess the likelihood of any adverse ecological ef fects, identify the need for further information and recommend pragmatic mitigation/enha ncement measures.

1.3 The aim of the Biodiversity Net Gain Statement is to:

■ Calculate the current biodiversity baseline value of the Site.
■ Calculate the pre-intervention scenario (the effec t of the proposed scheme prior to habitat creation and enhancement measures).
■ Identify options for habitat creation and enhancem ent to achieve a 10% net gain.

1.4 A site location map is given as Figure 1, a hab itat map as Figure 2, a BNG baseline as Figure 3 and a BNG post-intervention scenario as Figure 4. Photographs are included within the text. Species are referred to by their English names thro ughout, followed by scientific names where first mentioned. The Statutory Metric Calculation Tool spreadsheet and Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments spreadsheet are provid ed as standalone documents.

2 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY AND LEGAL PROTECTION

2.1 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, adopted Mar ch 2019.

2.1.1 Policy 28: The Natural Environment outlines t hat:

For Nationally or locally-designated sites and prot ected or priority habitats and species:

■ Development proposals that would directly or indir ectly adversely affect these assets will not be permitted unless:
o There are no alternative sites that would cause le ss or no harm.

 o The benefits of the development at the proposed si te clearly outweigh the adverse impacts on the features of the site and the wider n etwork of natural habitats.
o Suitable prevention, mitigation and compensation m easures are provided.

Addressing gaps in the ecological network:

■ By ensuring that all development proposals shall p rovide an overall net gain in biodiversity by:
o Protecting the biodiversity value of land, buildin gs and trees (including veteran trees) minimising the fragmentation of habitats.
o Maximising the opportunities for restoration, enha ncement and connection of natural habitats and species of principal importance.
o Incorporating beneficial biodiversity conservation features on buildings (where appropriate) and maximising opportunities to enhanc e green infrastructure and ecological corridors, including water space.
o Conserving or enhancing biodiversity or geodiversi ty conservation features that will provide new habitat and help wildlife to adapt to c limate change and if the development is within a Nature Improvement Area (NIA), contribu ting to the aims and objectives of the NIA.

3 DESK STUDY

3.1 METHODS

3.1.1 The Natural England ‘MAGIC’ and ‘Nature on th e Map’ websites were consulted to obtain information on any internationally- and nationally- protected sites and for citations of any Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National N ature Reserves (NNR) within 5km of the Site. Information was also sought on any Local Nature Res erves (LNR) within 2km of the Site.

3.1.2 The Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre (LERC) was asked to provide a data report on local sites of conservation interest including Loca l Wildlife Sites (LWS) and notable species within 2km of the Site.

3.2 RESULTS

3.2.1 The LERC data search was provided on 11 June 2024. The results are summarised in Tables 1 and 2 below; pre-2004 records have been screened out. For the purposes of this report, ‘Important Species’ are those:

■ Having statutory protection.

■ Listed as Species of Principal Importance as set o ut in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) (formerly UK BAP species).

 ■ Listed in the Vascular Plant Red List for England (Stroh et al. , 2014).

■ Listed in the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Pla n (Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership, Revised 2015).

TABLE 1. Sites with statutory or non-statutory pro tection for nature conservation within the search area.

Name, Designation and Description	Proximity to the Site
The Wash Ramsar site, Special Protection Area, Spec ial Area of Conservation, SSSI and NNR. Intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes representing one of Britain's most important winter -feeding areas for waders and wildfowl outside the breeding season.	7km northeast.
Gedney Dyke Pits LWS. Disused clay pits now forming part of a garden, including wet woodland, scrub, neutral grassland an d ponds.	1.3km north.
The Shrubberies LWT. Oak parkland and pasture, comprising large trees and grassland wither cattle grazed or hay cut.	1.5km southeast.

TABLE 2. Important species within the search area.

Species/Group	Proximity to the Site
Two records for great crested newt Triturus cristatus , 2004-2018.	1.5km southeast.
Two records for other amphibians, comprising common frog Rana temporaria, 2007-2021.	1.5km southeast.
27 records for water vole Arvicola amphibius , 2014-2023.	Closest 0.5km south.
25 records for hedgehogs Erinaceus europaeus , 2005-2021.	Closest 0.8km southwest.
102 records for at least four species of bats, incl uding 23 roost records, 2004-2021.	Closest 0.25km southeast.
662 records for 56 species of protected and priorit y birds, 2004-2022.	Frequent records from Gedney.
Two records for two species of protected and priori ty invertebrates, 2007-2019.	Closest 1.4km southeast.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

Sites with statutory or non-statutory protection.

3.3.1 The closest statutory designation is 7km nort heast of the Site, there are only two non-statutory sites within 2km and none within 1km. Due to the S ite's current use, the potential risk of an

adverse effect on any site designated for nature co nservation is considered highly unlikely.
Important species.
3.3.2 The significance of important species records germane to the scheme is discussed later in the report.

4 HABITATS AND PLANT SPECIES
4.1 METHODS
4.1.1 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was undertaken on 10 June 2024 by Luke Hartley ACIEEM in accordance with best practice guidelines (JNCC, 2010, CIEEM, 2017). All habitats were characterised by identifying the dominant and typical species, which were given a UK habitat classification (UK Hab, 2023); notes were m ade on adjacent land use. A search was made for any invasive, non-native plant species lis ted on Schedule-9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
4.2 RESULTS
Overview.
4.2.1 The Site is situated northeast of the A17 nea rby to the village of Gedney. The local landscape is dominated to the north, south and west by arable land and agro-industry such as plant nurseries. To the east is a large residential prop erty. The Site is currently used as a traveller's park.
Modified grassland (g4).
4.2.2 The northern third and entrance to the Site c omprises unmanaged and species-poor grassland (Photograph 1), dominated by species such as cock's -foot Dactylis glomerata , creeping thistle Cirsium arvense , Yorkshire fog Holcus lanatus , cow parsley Anthriscus sylvatica , hogweed Heracleum sphondylium and common nettle Urtica dioica .
4.2.3 Grassland is also present in the southern thi rd of the Site, which has three stable blocks and was likely used as horse pasture (Photograph 2). T he sward is similar in composition as in the north but with disturbed ground species such as She phard's-purse Capsella bursa-pastoris , scented mayweed Matricaria chamomilla , curled dock Rumex crispus and bristly oxtongue Helminthotheca echioides .

Photograph 1. Gravel track and modified grassland at northern entrance to the Site. Photograph 2. Typical composition of modified grassland in the south of the Site.

Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c).
4.2.4 Centrally, three plots comprise static homes over a gravelled substrate (Photograph 3). Only the western of the three is currently in use, the o thers are well vegetated (Photograph 4).

Photograph 3. Central of the three plots. Photograph 4. Eastern plot of the three.
Scattered trees [32].
4.2.5 In the north of the Site, cherry Prunus sp. trees have been planted either side of existin g access tracks. In the south, the odd young Lawson's cypre ss Chamaecyparis lawsoniana is located in proximity to the stable blocks (Photograph 5).
Other native hedgerow (h2a6).
4.2.6 The western boundary is marked by a large, gr own-out hedgerow, comprising predominantly native species such as hawthorn Crataegus monogyna , hazel Corylus avellana and silver birch Betula pendula , with occasional ornamentals of garden privet Ligustrum ovalifolium and Lawson's cypress.

Non-native and ornamental hedgerow (h2b).
4.2.7 Along both the northern and eastern boundarie s, cherry laurel Prunus laurocerasus hedgerows have been planted. In places, as well as within th e Site, much of the planting has died off. The southern boundary is similarly marked with non-nati ve hedgerow planting, which this time comprises exclusively Lawson's cypress.
4.3 ASSESSMENT
4.3.1 None of the recorded plant species is listed above the 'Least Concern' threat level in the Briti sh Red Data Book (Stroh et al ., 2014). The habitats, plant communities and indi vidual species are generally common and widespread in a local and nati onal context.
4.3.2 No Schedule-9 non-native plant species were r ecorded.

 4.4 SURVEY SCOPE
4.4.1 Having reviewed the desk study, consulted an Ordnance Survey map and aerial imagery to set the Site in a local context and having undertaken a Site walkover, the habitats on Site were assessed for their potential for use by a range of protected and notable species including amphibians, reptiles, birds, bats, badgers and hedg ehogs, as per published guidelines.
4.4.2 Of those, birds and hedgehogs are considered a material consideration. All other protected and notable species can be scoped out of the assess ment due to:
■ An absence of suitable habitat to support a viable population.
■ No evidence of use being found during the PEA.
■ The Site being beyond their known distribution ran ge.
■ The species, even if present, most likely being re silient to any effects of the scheme or any effect being negligible and not warranting mitigati on.
5 BIRDS
5.1 METHODS
5.1.1 All bird species observed during the survey o n-site were recorded. The Site was assessed for its potential to support Schedule-1 bird species, a s well as being searched for signs of historic nesting use by a range of protected and priority bi rds.
5.2 RESULTS
5.2.1 A typical assemblage of birds was recorded bo th on the Site and along the boundary features, including dunnock (Section 41 and Amber List specie s of conservation concern).
5.2.2 Evidence of previous and/or current swallow n esting was present in two of the three stable blocks. Though, no swallows were observed using th e stable blocks during the survey.
5.3 ASSESSMENT
5.3.1 The Site is unlikely to support nesting Sched ule-1 species and no evidence of barn owl was observed in any of the stable blocks.
5.3.2 Boundary hedgerows and scattered trees provid e opportunities for a range of common and widespread birds and future use can be expected in the nesting season, which for most species typically runs from March to August inclusive. No further bird surveys are required and standard measures to protect active nests during any vegetat ion removal will be put in place. As a result, no adverse effect on birds is predicted.

 5.4 AVOIDANCE/MITIGATION/ENHANCEMENT MEASURES
5.4.1 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as ame nded) protects all wild birds, their nests and eggs. Under this Act, it is an offence to:
■ Kill, injure or take any wild bird.

■ Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
■ Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.
5.4.2 The removal of any habitat suitable for use b y nesting birds must be undertaken outside the nesting bird season, which typically runs from Marc h to August inclusive. If this is not possible, an experienced ecologist must carry out a hand-sear ch for active nests before work begins. Any active nest must be cordoned off and left until the young have fledged.
5.4.3 The stable blocks must be demolished outside of the nesting bird season, as swallows are communal nesters, have a high degree of affinity to nesting sites and often have multiple broods. As such, waiting until the nesting bird se ason to demolish the stable blocks may result in significant project delays if active nests are p resent.
5.4.4 The scope to provide nesting opportunities fo r birds will comprise landscaping features, such as additional hedgerow planting to gap up existing hedgerows, or new tree planting at the frontage of the Site.
5.4.5 Swallow nesting cups must be designed into th e buildings of the scheme, ideally on south or southeast facing elevations, slightly under the eav es of buildings, facing outwards of the development. ESL can advise on the most appropriat e box type and location during the design stage.
6 BATS
6.1 METHODS
6.1.1 A Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW) was conducted du ring the PEA by the same surveyor to record and photograph features in any trees and structures suitable for use by roosting bats, together with potential flyways and foraging areas, both on Site and on adjacent land as per the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines (Collins, 2023) .
6.1.2 A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was unde rtaken by David Hughes, Natural England bat survey Class Licence Number 2015-14463-CLS-CLS (CL20), Bat Conservation Trust (BCT): Level 5, CIEEM Competency level: Specialist.
6.3 RESULTS
6.3.1 The three stables are each constructed of a t imber stud frame clad with a single-skin of timber boards under a pitched roof covered by unlined corr ugated bitumen roofing sheets
 (Photographs 5 and 6). There are no wall cavities or roof spaces. Ambient light levels were high due to the open stable doors. No evidence of use by bats was recorded in the stables.

Photograph 5. Western most of the three stable blocks. Photograph 6. Typical Internal view of the roof (with old swallow nests.

6.3.2 There are no trees within or adjacent to the Site with features suitable for use by bats.
6.3.3 The boundary features, in particular the west ern boundary hedgerow, provide limited habitat connectivity and minor foraging opportunities for l ocal bats but the Site is not very well connected to the wider landscape.
6.4 ASSESSMENT
6.4.1 The habitat features on the Site are assessed as per the criteria in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 of the BCT Guidelines, 2023 and are presented in Table 3 b elow.
TABLE 3. Assessment of the Habitat Features on the Site for their use by Bats.

Habitat feature	Description	Potential Suitability
Roosting habitats in structures.	No habitat features on site likely to be used by ro osting bats.	Negligible
Suitability of trees.	Either no PRFs in trees or hi ghly unlikely to be any.	None
Potential flight paths		

and foraging habitats. Habitat that could be used by small number of bats as flight paths but isolated and not very well connected to t he wider landscape. Low

6.5 AVOIDANCE/MITIGATION/ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

is included into each. A wide range of off the she lf solutions are readily available and are easily installed during construction, https://www.wildcare .co.uk/wildlife-nest-boxes/bat-boxes/wall-integrated.html Some are more discreet than others and many come with manufacturer's instructions but if necessary, ESL can advise on th e most appropriate box type and location during the design stage.

7 HEDGEHOGS

7.1 METHODS

7.1.1 The Site was assessed for its suitability for use by hedgehogs. Habitat features that suggest suitability for hedgehogs comprise dense scrub to b uild hibernation nests during the winter, short grass to forage in for invertebrate prey, lon ger grass to forage in and to make nests in during the summer, areas of leaf litter to collect and use for hibernation nests, log piles and decaying vegetation to forage in and hibernate in a nd hedgerows and boundary vegetation which provide important corridors for travel and ne sting sites (British Hedgehog Preservation Society, 2022).

7.2 RESULTS

7.2.1 Boundary hedgerows provide opportunities for hedgehog nesting, as well as travel corridors through the landscape. The unmanaged areas of gras sland of the Site also provide good foraging opportunity

7.3 ASSESSMENT

7.3.1 Given the abundance of local records from the data search, it is highly likely that hedgehogs utilise the Site. Nationally, hedgehog numbers are in decline and new residential developments can play a role in slowing this by ensuring there a re gaps in the fences between gardens to minimise barriers to movement.

7.4 AVOIDANCE/MITIGATION/ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

7.4.1 Site boundary treatments must be designed to enable the free movement of hedgehogs between gardens and the wider landscape. Where tim ber fence panels and gravel boards are used, this can be achieved on Site by cutting a gap measuring 130mm x 130mm from the bottom edge of a panel in the least disturbed part of the garden. With concrete gravel boards, it will require a cut-off saw with a diamond blade, however, some manufacturers are now doing this during the manufacturing process, which achiev es a neater finish.

7.4.2 In all cases, during installation, a 300mm x 300mm concrete slab must be set in the ground directly below the opening to form a threshold, thu s maintaining the size of the opening and keeping it clear of obstructions.

8 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN STATEMENT

8.1 METHODS

8.1.1 The habitats were condition-assessed during t he PEA by the same surveyor, utilising the Statutory Metric methodology (Defra, 2023), hereaft er referred to as 'the Metric'. The Metric calculation tool was used to determine the value of the Site's biodiversity in terms of Biodiversity Units (BU).

Strategic significance.

8.1.2 The desk study was utilised to identify and r eview Local Planning Policy and other relevant documentation detailing local biodiversity prioriti es and to determine the strategic significance of habitats both within the baseline and the post-i ntervention scenario.
8.1.3 The Site is isolated and does not lie within any Local Planning Policy Strategies such as Green Infrastructure Networks, Biodiversity Opportunity M apping Networks or Non-statutory biological designations. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy f or South East Lincolnshire is also currently unavailable. Therefore, no habitats have been assi gned a High strategic significance.
8.1.4 Due to the Site's current and recent use as a traveller's park and the 'Low' and 'Very Low' distinctiveness of much of the habitats and hedgero ws present, all habitats have been assigned a Low strategic significance.
Post-development calculations.
8.1.5 The Block Plan and Indicative Landscape (draw ing no. JP/PL/01) has been used to model the post-intervention value of the Site and to identify all on-site opportunities to maximise biodiversity gain.
Temporal multipliers
8.1.6 A delay in starting habitat creation of one y ear has been assigned to all habitat creation and enhancement measures to accommodate for the type an d scale of the development.
8.2 BASELINE CONDITIONS
8.2.1 The Site comprises four Habitat types (1.27ha) generating 2.74BU and two Hedgerow types (0.42km) generating 1.07BU. The contribution of ea ch habitat and hedgerow types are given in Tables 4 to 5 and illustrated on Figure 3.
TABLE 4: Summary baseline of Habitats present on-si te and their contributing values.
Broad Habitat
Category Habitat Type Condition Area
(ha) Habitat
BU
Grassland Modified grassland Poor 1.0102 2.02
 Broad Habitat
Category Habitat Type Condition Area
(ha) Habitat
BU
Urban Artificial unvegetated, unsealed
surface N/A 0.2151 0.00
Developed land; sealed surface N/A 0.0436 0.00
Individual trees Urban tree Moderate 0.0896 0.72
Total 1.27* 2.74
*Excluding the area of Urban tree.
TABLE 5: Summary baseline of Hedgerows present of o n-site and their contributing values.
Broad Habitat
Category Hedgerow Type Condition Length
(km) Hedgerow
BU
Hedgerow Native hedgerow Good 0.1279 0.77
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow Poor 0.2912 0.31
Total 0.42 1.07
8.3 MITIGATION HIERARCHY AND IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSE D SCHEME
Habitats.
8.3.1 The Site comprises mainly 'Low' distinctivene ss urban and grassland habitats and avoidance

or minimising impact is considered unnecessary. In stead, offsetting biodiversity impact can be achieved through meeting the BNG target.
Hedgerows.
8.3.2 With the exception of limited ornamental hedg erow removal to facilitate widening of the site access off Roper's Gate no hedgerow features will b e impacted by the scheme. Instead, opportunities to plant up gaps in boundary hedgerow s are present.
Scheme impacts.
8.3.3 Considering all these impacts and mitigation measures, Table 6 below highlights the Habitat BU required through habitat creation and enhancemen t measures to reach no net loss and then 10% net gain.
TABLE 6: Impact of the proposed scheme and requirem ent to achieve 10% net gain

BU Type	Proposed scheme impact (i.e., habitat creation/enhancement to achieve no net loss) (BU)	Habitat creation/enhancement to achieve 10% net gain (BU)
Habitat	2.03	2.30
Hedgerow	0.04	0.15

8.4 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN OUTCOME OF THE PROPOSED S CHEME
8.4.1 The target condition for each Habitat and Hed gerow type are detailed in Tables 7 and 8 below and illustrated on Figure 4, along with summary lab els of the habitat creation and enhancement measures to be undertaken.
TABLE 7: Summary post-intervention scenario of on-s ite Habitats and their contributing values.

Broad Habitat Category	Habitat Type	Condition	Area (ha)	Habitat BU
Grassland	Modified grassland	Poor	0.2550	0.51
Urban	Vegetated garden	N/A	0.5080	0.95
	Developed land, sealed surface	N/A	0.5059	0.00
	Individual trees Urban tree	Moderate	0.0610	0.36
Total			1.27*	1.81

*Excluding the area of Urban tree.
TABLE 8: Summary post-intervention scenario of on-s ite Hedgerows and their contributing values.

Broad Habitat Category	Hedgerow Type	Condition	Length (km)	Hedgerow BU
Hedgerow	Native hedgerow	Good	0.1859	0.99
	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	Poor	0.3234	0.33
Total			0.51	1.32

Habitats.
8.4.2 The grassland at the frontage of the Site has been captured as principally amenity use 'Low' distinctiveness habitat in this Statement. This St atement also captures opportunity for six new trees to be planted separating the residential from this grassland as an example of the indicative landscaping illustrated on the Block Plan and Indic ative Landscape Plan.
Hedgerows.
8.4.3 New internal hedgerow planting either side of the access road to the development must be a

composition of native a locally appropriate species to achieve the net gain detailed in Table 8. Planting with ornamental species such as cherry lau rel will result in a deficit.
Additional on-site opportunities for habitat creati on and enhancement.
8.4.4 Allocating one or both areas of the grassland frontage for wildlife provision comprising seeding with a suitable wildflower meadow mix and managing appropriately would help reduce the net gain deficit on the Site.
 8.5 CONCLUSION
8.5.1 The scheme as detailed in this Statement will deliver 1.81BU for habitats (a 33.71% net loss) and 1.33BU for hedgerows (a 26.06% net gain). As a result, the scheme would satisfy the 10% BNG target for hedgerows but require an additional 1.20BU in order to achieve the 10% BNG target for habitats.
Trading requirements.
8.5.2 The habitats and hedgerows on-site are 'Low' and 'Very Low' distinctiveness and thus possess no trading requirements. The exception to this bei ng the 'Urban trees' which require like for like planting, or replacing with higher distinctiveness habitats.
Opportunities to meet the Biodiversity Net Gain tar get.
8.5.3 Even when incorporating all additional opport unities for on-site habitat creation and enhancement detailed above, the scheme will likely be required to supplement with an off-site solution to meet the 10% BNG target.
8.5.4 Option 1. Engage a commercial habitat bankin g company, such as the Environment Bank, from which to buy BUs via ongoing habitat creation and enhancement schemes within the local area. Habitat banks outside West Lindsey may be ut ilised with agreement from the Local Planning Authority (LPA), however, this will affect the number of BUs provided to the scheme as there is a penalty where off-site habitat is dis tant from the impact site.
8.5.5 Option 2. Explore the availability of BUs th rough the biodiversity gain sites register (Defra, 2024a), where independent landowners register their sites to sell BUs.
8.5.6 Option 3. Statutory biodiversity credits can be purchased directly from Natural England (Defra, 2024b). However, these should be seen as a last re sort due to their significant cost premium.
9 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
9.2 No work that could affect nesting birds must be undertaken during the period 1 March to 31 August in any year unless a search for active nests has been undertaken by an ecologist in advance. Any active nests (those with eggs or youn g) must be protected until the young have fledged.
9.3 Nest provision for swallows is incorporated int o the masterplan.
9.4 Site boundary treatments are designed in such a way to enable the free movement of hedgehogs between gardens and the wider landscape.
 9.5 Following successful granting of planning permi ssion, full details of how the scheme w the 10% BNG target (including details of any off-si te provisions), will be provided in a Biodiversity Gain Plan along with a Habitat Managem ent and Monitoring Plan (HMMP).
9.6 Surveys provide a snapshot of activity and situ ations can change over time. It is recommended that the survey is repeated if reserved matters per tinent to ecology have not been approved by 1 May 2025.
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