Biodiversity Net Gain Matrix

For

Vicky Watson

Gedney Hill Playing Field

North Road

Gedney Hill

Spalding

Lincolnshire

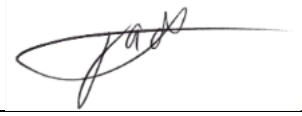
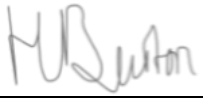
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Quality Assurance

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	Gedney Hill Spalding Lincolnshire PE12 0NL
Remarks	Version 1
Reference	Q17119
Date	24th October 2025
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1. Introduction

ProHort Limited have been commissioned by Vicky Watson to conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment for Gedney Hill Playing Field, North Road, Gedney Hill, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 0NL (grid reference: TF 34127 11644). A site survey was undertaken on the 7th September 2025 and a desktop study was undertaken in October 2025.

The Local Planning Authority has requested that a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment is completed to support the planning application. The development includes the construction of a playground.

South Holland District Council requires developments in the area to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, with a minimum of a 10% gain compared to the pre-development value of the site. A quantitative measure of the base value of a Site for biodiversity, and the value of a Site post-development, is arrived at by using a recognised Biodiversity metric. Biodiversity metrics measure the value of a Site in terms of Biodiversity Units. Biodiversity Units are a proxy measure of

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biodiversity, arrived at by assessing the type, area and condition of semi-natural habitats on site. A limitation of the use of metrics is that they only measure habitat areas, and do not consider species-specific measures which may nevertheless make meaningful contributions to gains in local biodiversity.

2. Site and Surroundings

The area surveyed is an open greenspace at Gedney Hill Playing Field, North Road, Gedney Hill, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 0NL (grid reference: TF 34127 11644), (Figure 1), hereafter referred to as the 'Site'. The Site is adjoining The Gedney Hill Church of England (VC) Primary School within the village of Gedney Hill. The surrounding area is dominated by arable fields and small numbers of residential. Site access is off North Road.

There are a number of priority costal and floodplain grazing marsh blocks within the surrounding area, as well as a traditional orchard c. 1km northwest. There are no designated sites within proximity to the Site. There are no water features in close proximity for the project area.

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Figure 1 – Red line boundary of the Site and the surrounding area.
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3. Methodology

The pre-development (baseline) and post development (proposed) value of the habitats have been calculated using the DEFRA/Natural England's Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator. The methodology for determining habitat distinctiveness and condition values, follows the guidelines set out in the User Guide and Technical Supplement for Biodiversity Metric.

The current assessment utilised the principles outlines in the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' denoting the steps involved in reaching the conclusions outstated in this report and preserving natural features and resources of importance. The 'Mitigation Hierarchy' states:

- Avoid: The easiest, cheapest and most desirable method of reducing potential impacts of the proposed development.
- Minimise: Where avoidance is not possible, measures can be taken to minimise the impacts of the proposed development.
- Mitigate: Where minimisation is not possible, measures can be taken to enhance/ create on Site habitats to compensate for potential losses caused by the proposed development.
- Offset: Where mitigation is not possible, on-site habitat loss must be compensated off site. This should be utilised as a last resort for compensating losses as it is the most risk involved, expensive and complex solution.

Site Boundary

The following data sources have been used to define the boundary for the BNG calculation and determine the relevant attributes for BNG (e.g. size, condition and habitat type) for the pre and post-development habitats.

The boundary used for the BNG assessment is the red line application boundary for the project (See Figure 2 for a detailed red line boundary).



Figure 2 – Red line boundary of the Site
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Baseline Habitats:

In order to generate the site baseline habitat data (e.g. habitat type, condition), a phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken, where the site was systematically walked over and the dominant habitat type in each area recorded. Dominant plant species were noted, as were any that are legally protected (Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981), invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Additionally, 5 (1 meter-squared) quadrats were used to determine species richness on any grassland habitats and the other grassland conditions were estimated from a visual inspection of the site.

The information collected during the site visit was used to baseline any applicable habitats and satellite mapping was used to calculate habitat areas. The areas and conditions of any onsite habitats were inputted into DEFRA/Natural England's Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator. The metric includes 3 broad categories of habitats and biodiversity units for which scores are calculated differently:

- Area habitats, such as grasslands, woodlands and ponds

- Linear hedgerows and lines of trees
- Linear rivers and ditches

4. Habitat Baseline

4.1. Habitat descriptions

All habitats within the Site are outlined below:

- Modified grassland

The location of all baseline habitats can be seen in Appendix 1 and habitat descriptions are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 – baseline habitat descriptions

Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Flora Species
Modified Grassland	A habitat altered by human activity, such as agricultural practices like fertilizing, mowing, or reseeding with productive species like rye-grass.	**Abundant**: - Perennial Rye (*Lolium perenne*) **Frequent**: - White Clover (*Trifolium repens*) - Winter Grass (*Poa annua*) **Occasional**: - Dandelion (*Taraxacum*) **Rare**: - Moss (*Bryophyta*) - Catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata)* - Bristly Oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*) - Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense)* - Golden Ragwort *(Packera aurea)* - Creeping Buttercup *(Ranunculus repens)*

4.2. Baseline Metric

The value of the area and linear baseline habitats was calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and is outlined in Tables 2 below.

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Table 2 – area habitat baseline calculation

Habitat	Notes	Area (ha)	Habitat Units	Area retained	Area enhanced	Units lost
Modified Grassland	Poor condition	0.2211	0.44	0	0	0.44
Developed land; sealed surface	Poor condition	0.0285	0	0.0285	0	0
Totals		**0.025**	**0.44**	**0.0285**	**0**	**0.44**

The area habitat baseline of 0.44 units must be enhanced by 10% resulting in at least a 0.49 units baseline post intervention. If this cannot be achieved on-Site, off-Site credits will need to be acquired.

5. Proposed Habitats

All habitats proposed within the Site are outlined below:

- Developed land; sealed surface
- Native trees

The location of these proposed habitats can be seen in Appendix 2.

We outline indicative suggestions on how such habitats may be established and should be treated as general guidelines.

5.1. Developed land; sealed surface

The proposals outline the construction of a children's fenced playground, including gym equipment, a pergola, a zipwire, and a mountain bike track.

5.2. Native Trees

The proposals outline the planting of 4 native trees offsite.

5.3. Proposed habitats metric

Table 4 – area habitat proposal calculation

Habitat	Notes	Area (ha/m^2)	Habitat Units Delivered
On-site habitat creation	Criteria required to reach target conditions		
Individual Trees	4 moderate condition trees	0.0163	0.05
Totals		**0.04**	**0.05**

If all area habitats and conditions are met post intervention, then an 88.73% loss of biodiversity will occur.

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6. Achieving a Net Gain in Local Biodiversity

Under the mandatory BNG regime, habitats determined by the LPA to constitute "significant on-site enhancements" must be retained, appropriately managed, monitored and reported on for a minimum of 30-years following completion of development, and this requirement must be legally secured by a Conservation Covenant.

The application needs to be supported by clear, site-specific proposals e.g. details of long-term management and monitoring, a draft long-term management plan (Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan [HMMP]) - set out "initial" habitat creation and enhancement works and to demonstrate that appropriate management will be delivered so the predicted target conditions are achieved. In addition to long-term management of these habitats, appropriate long-term management of retained habitats is required to ensure they do not decline / deteriorate in condition.

7. Conclusion

The development will result in a measurable loss to local biodiversity.

There will be a total decrease of 88.73% biodiversity of area habitats. In order to achieve the obligatory 10% uplift of area habitats, at least 0.44 off site biodiversity units must be acquired.

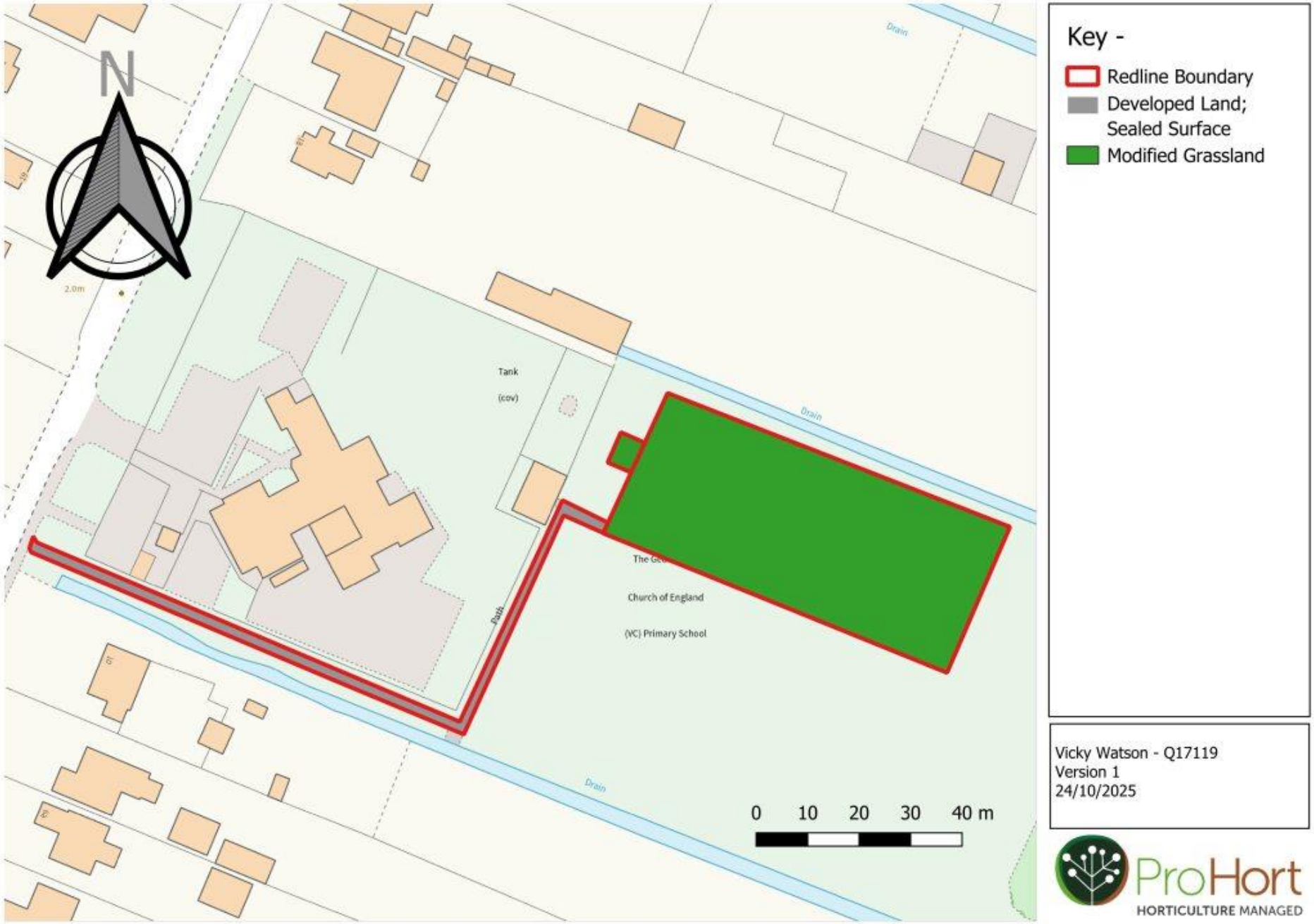
Offsite biodiversity units can be obtained through local landowners, habitat banks and the market which can be found through your LPA, a broker etc. If this is not possible statutory biodiversity credits must be purchased from the UK government as a last resort. The number of statutory credits required is 0.87 A1 units. These units are exclusively purchased from the government and the cost of these is inflated to equate 2 credits per 1 off site biodiversity unit.

As mitigating and minimising was not a viable option due to the scale of the project off setting was the only feasible option.

8. Other recommended enhancements

It is likely bats and birds will use the site for commuting and foraging. It is proposed that 1 bat box for crevice dwelling species or 1 bird box is installed on the mature trees. Green and Blue Bee Bricks should be used within any new brick walls to be constructed. This species intervention would enhance local biodiversity.

Appendix 1 Baseline Habitats Map



Appendix 2 Habitat Proposals



Key -

- Redline Boundary
- Proposed Development: Developed Land; Sealed Surface
- x4 Rural Trees (1m x 6m)

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Appendix 3 Photographs



Image 1 – Footpath onsite

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Image 2 – Baseline habitat, modified grassland

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