

**Wardentree Park,
Spalding, PE11
Net Gain**



**Pinchbeck,
3ZN Biodiversity
Assessment**

Prepared on behalf of

Freshlinc Spalding

Final Report

26 May 2026

Document Control

Client:	Freshlinc Spalding
Date:	26 May 2026
Status:	Final report V2
Report Prepared for Issue by:	Elizabeth Davies BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Disclaimer

This report has been prepared, and is only valid for the named client, for the project described. The information which we have prepared and provided is in accordance with CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct. Liz Ecology confirms that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions. The report is in accordance with the agreement under which our services were performed.

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requested. Information obtained from any third party has not been independently verified by Liz Ecology unless otherwise stated in the report.

Provided no significant changes are made to the proposals or on the site subsequent to the report's issue; this report can be considered valid for 18 months from the date of issue, in line with CIEEM's Advice Note on The Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys (2019).

As part of membership to our professional body (CIEEM) we are required to provide our biological results to applicable biological record centres. As such, it is our intention to supply biological data collected as part of this assessment to the relevant centre unless directly instructed in writing not to do so by the client.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- Liz Ecology was commissioned by Freshlinc Spalding to conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of the land at Wardentree Park, Pinchbeck, Spalding, PE11 3ZN. The survey was conducted to support a planning application for the construction of a biofuel station for lorries.
- The purpose of this report is to identify the net percentage change in biodiversity on-site post development and to aim for a minimum of a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
- Mandatory biodiversity net gain set out in the Environment Act 2021 came into force on 2nd April for small sites. This requires a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- The development site is approximately 0.4ha and consists of modified grassland and outside the northern boundary there is non-native ornamental hedge.
- The baseline habitat units are 1.18 and hedgerow units are 0.00.
- It is predicted that the proposal will have 1.31 habitat units created, with a net gain of 0.13 units, showing a 11.41% net gain.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Liz Ecology was commissioned by Freshlinc Spalding to conduct Biodiversity Net Gain assessment of the land at Wardentree Park, Pinchbeck, Spalding, PE11 3ZN (Grid reference: TF 25691 25294).
- 1.2 The survey was conducted to support a planning application to support a planning application for application for the construction of a biofuel station for lorries.
- 1.3 The aim of this report is to identify the net percentage change in biodiversity on site postdevelopment and where possible to seek a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in accordance with the statutory requirements and National Planning Policy. Where 10% is not achievable by the proposals we will seek to make recommendations for amendments to the proposals or third party compensation to meet the 10% target.

Site description

- 1.4 The site is located within Pinchbeck Industrial Estate, east of Pinchbeck, to the northeast of Spalding, northwest of Wykeham and south of Surfleet and north of Fulney. The site is located within an industrial area, surrounded by industrial buildings on all elevations. There are areas of arable grasslands to the north of the site and to the east. The river Welland is located east of the site.
- 1.5 The site is not listed in the local plan as a designated green belt.
- 1.6 The development site is approximately 0.4 hectares and consists of modified grassland and non-native ornamental hedge.

Brief

- 1.7 To conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment using DEFRA metric version 4.0 to demonstrate, where possible, a minimum of 10% net gain.

Relevant Planning Policy and Legislation

- 1.8 In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). All planning permissions granted in England will have to deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) to be maintained for a period of at least 30 years. The concept seeks measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development.
- 1.9 Mandatory BNG came into force on 12th February 2024 for all developments except exemptions and small sites, and small sites came into force 2nd April 2024 (residential 1-9 units on a site less than one hectare, or number of dwellings is unknown and the site is less than 0.5 hectare; or for non-residential for floor space less than 1000m² or site less than one hectare). Exceptions include developments of less than 25m² habitat or 5m for linear habitats (hedgerows and watercourses), householder applications and small scale self-build.
- 1.10 The planning authority for the site is South Holland District Council.

Assessing Strategic Significance

- 1.11 A desk study was conducted to collate baseline data about ecological sites within the zone of influence of the proposed development site, following guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM, 2017). This data-gathering exercise was undertaken to obtain any available information relating to statutory nature conservation sites, ecological networks, local plans and priority habitats to help establish the strategic significance of the site. Sources of information used are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of information sources used for the desk study

Organisation/source	Information sought
MAGIC	Locations of and citations for all national statutory wildlife sites, including SSSI, and all international sites including SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites within a 5 kilometre radius of the site. Priority Habitats within 300m radius of the site.
South Holland District Council	Adopted Local Plan, evidence base, and polices map

- 1.12 This evidence was reviewed and used to assess the strategic significance of the site, and/or individual habitats and whether it lies within an ecological network for the area.

Baseline Assessment

- 1.13 A baseline botanical assessment was undertaken by Elizabeth Davies, qualified ecologist, on 19th March 2026 before works commenced on site in mostly clear, still and dry weather conditions. The survey employed techniques based on the UK Habitat Classification System. Botanical information was collected, focussing on the dominant and/or key indicator species for each habitat, to enable allocation of habitats to hierarchy levels 3 and/or 4. Where relevant priority habitats were also identified. The conditions of the habitats on the site were assessed in line with the technical sheets supplied alongside DEFRA Metric 4.0.
- 1.14 The UK habitats map was digitised using QGIS. The mapped habitats were measured using the derived areas, and habitat areas are provided in hectares. Linear features were measured using the derived length and the measurements provided in kilometres.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 1.15 Biodiversity Net Gain complements and works with the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 180a. To achieve a net gain in a way that is consistent with the mitigation hierarchy and reflects the 'spatial-hierarchy' preference for local enhancements, the following steps should be followed:

- (1) Aim to avoid or reduce biodiversity impacts through site selection and layout;
- (2) Enhance and restore biodiversity on-site;
- (3) Create or enhance off-site habitats, either on their own land or by purchasing biodiversity units on the market; and

- (4) As a last resort, to prevent undue delays, purchase statutory biodiversity credits from the UK Government where they can demonstrate that they are unable to achieve biodiversity net gain through the available on-site and off-site options.

1.16 On completion of the fieldwork the habitat information was mapped and areas were imported into the DEFRA Biometric version 4.0 calculation tool. The metric calculates the baseline biodiversity units for the site based on the following factors:

- Area
- Habitat distinctiveness
- Habitat condition
- Strategic significance

1.17 Once inputted the metric provides biodiversity units for the proposed habitats based on the following factors:

- Area
- Habitat distinctiveness
- Habitat target condition
- Strategic significance
- Time habitat is created
- Time to target condition
- Difficulty of creation

1.18 The difference between the baseline units and proposed units is then used as a measure of change and is used to assess the number of biodiversity units achieved. Habitats, hedgerows and rivers are inputted as separate factors, with each requiring net gains.

1.19 **Limitations**

1.20 Whilst every effort has been made to accurately map the habitats on site there may be discrepancies associated with the projected coordinate reference system. The National Grid transformation, however, is considered to be the most accurate with an accuracy level of less than one metre.

2. **BASELINE CONDITIONS**

2.1 The results of the Baseline Assessment are presented below. A UK Habitat survey map is shown in Appendix I. The map illustrates the location and extent of the sites surveyed, along with additional notable features.

Strategic Significance

2.2 The site is located within Pinchbeck Industrial Estate, east of Pinchbeck, to the northeast of Spalding, northwest of Wykeham and south of Surfleet and north of Fulney. The site is located within an industrial

area, surrounded by industrial buildings on all elevations. There are areas of arable grasslands to the north of the site and to the east. The river Welland is located east of the site.

2.3 The site is not listed in the local plan as a designated green belt.

2.4 There are two designated sites within 5km of the site shown on MAGIC. Due to the distance from the designated sites the site is considered to be outside the zone of influence.

Internationally important sites

2.5 There are no internationally important sites, within 5km of the site.

Nationally important sites

2.6 There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest including:

- Surfleet Lows. SSSI 3km north

Locally important sites

2.7 There is one locally important site within 5km of the site.

- Vernatts, LNR, 1251m southwest

Non-statutory sites

2.8 There are no non-statutory sites within 2km of the site.

3. ON-SITE HABITATS

3.1 The following were recorded on site, and are described below:

- Modified grassland
- Non-native ornamental hedge

Modified grassland

3.2 The majority of the site consists of modified grassland. Species include creeping thistle, red dead nettle, bristly ox tongue, Yorkshire fog, perennial rye grass, speedwell species and hemlock species.

3.3 The grassland has a short sward length, and is managed, with physical damage approximately 10%, bare ground approximately 10%. There is an absence of invasive, non-native species. There were between 3-4 species per m².

3.4 This area has a distinctiveness of very low and condition is assessed to be poor.

Non-native ornamental hedge

3.5 There is a non-native ornamental hedge located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. Species include cotoneaster species, privet, croton species, cotton lavender, laurel species, shrubby honeysuckle, birch species, rose species and bramble.

3.6 There is an absence of invasive, non-native species.

3.7 This area has a distinctiveness of very low and condition is set at poor

Summary

3.8 Below in table 2 is a summary of the baseline habitats, areas, condition assessment and distinctiveness.

Table 2: Summary of baseline habitats

Habitat	Biodiversity Units	Area (ha)	Condition	Distinctiveness	Suggested action
Modified grassland	1.18	0.589	Poor	Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required $\geq$

4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN METRIC

Biodiversity Metric

- 0.1205ha other neutral grassland in moderate condition will be created. This will be created using a shade tolerant mix, managed to a varied sward height and to have a good species diversity.
- 0.0445ha sustainable drainage system will be installed.
- 36 small trees will be planted. These will be native, disease resistant species managed to be in moderate condition.

4.1 The calculation has been based off the current landscaping plans. The biodiversity metric calculated a net change in habitat units of +11.41%. Table 3 below summarises the biodiversity metric results.

Table 3: DEFRA Biodiversity metric results scenario 1

On-site baseline	Habitat units	1.18
	Hedgerow units	0.00
On-site post intervention	Habitat units	1.31
	Hedgerow units	0.00
Total net change %	Habitat units	11.41%
	Hedgerow units	N/A
Trading rules satisfied	Yes/No	Yes

- 4.2 The client will incorporate the management of the habitats into the general management of the site. This will be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition.

5. REFERENCES

CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA (2016) Biodiversity Net Gain. Good practice principles for development.

CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA (2019) Biodiversity Net Gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide. CIRIA C776a. London, 2019.

CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine*. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2005), *Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System*.

DEFRA (2023) Biodiversity Metric Calculation tool (spreadsheet) (Biodiversity Metric 4.0)

DEFRA (2023) Biodiversity Metric 4.0 User guide

DEFRA (2023) Biodiversity Metric 4.0 and SSM: Technical Annex1 (habitat condition assessments)

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021), *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Website

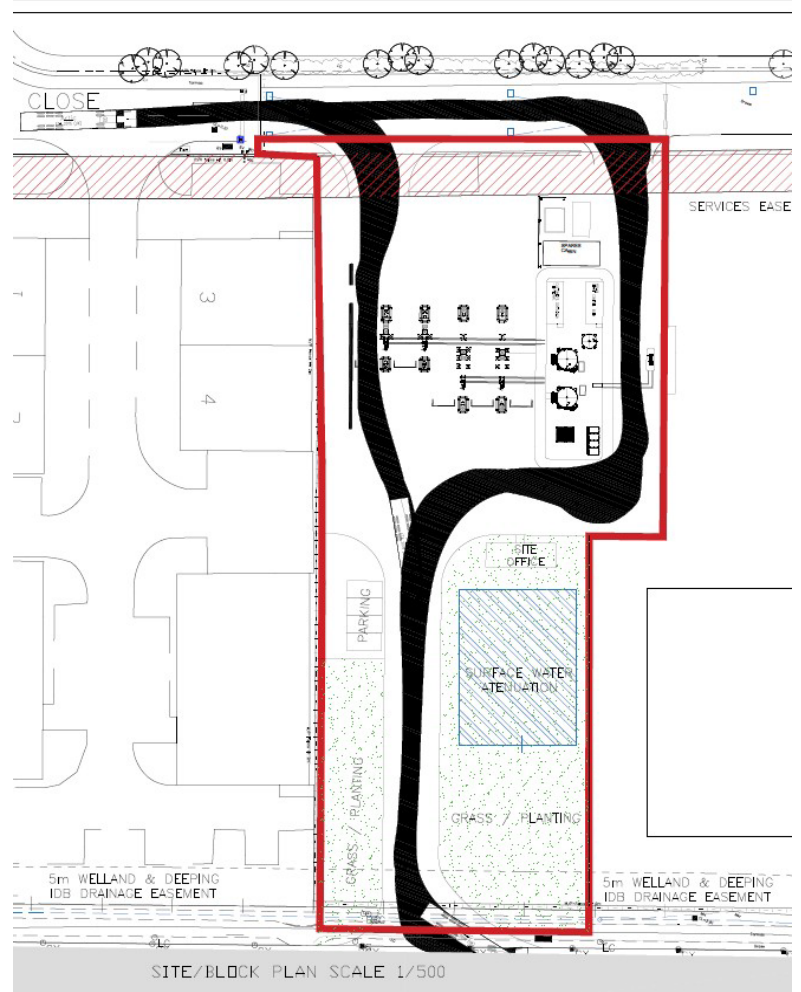
Appendix 1

Existing habitats



Appendix 2

Proposed site layout



Appendix 3

Site photographs

Photograph 1: General view of site



Photograph 2: General view of site



Photograph 3: General view of site



