

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Land off Chaucer's Way, Spalding
May 2025



ENVIROPASS

Quality Assurance			
Report date:	Version:	Author:	Reviewed by:
20 th May 2025	2	Alex Rosenfeld (Assistant Ecologist)	George Sayer MCIEEM MArborA (Principal Ecologist)
Client:	Tulip-Fields Homes Ltd		
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Report conditions:	<p>The content is provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. The methods and recommendations in this report are based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (CIEEM, 2017) • Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report & Audit Templates Version 1 (CIEEM, July 2021) • Natural England (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide. Natural England Joint Publication JP039 		

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1. Executive Summary

This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment appraises the site at Land off Chaucer's Way, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 1LH (central grid reference: TF23552270), in accordance with the Small Sites Metric (Statutory Biodiversity Metric, 2024), the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and the Environment Act (2021), which mandates a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity.

The site contains 0.0011 Habitat Units. The site is currently bare earth. However, the site appears to have been cleared since January 2020, the cut-off date after which degradation must be considered. The latest aerial images (July 2022) show the site contained areas of developed land, ruderal / ephemeral vegetation, and introduced shrubs. As such, this shall be used as the baseline for metric calculations.

The proposed development will result in a net gain of 0.0044 Habitat Units (+40.36%) on-site. The site therefore meets the 10% minimum and is compliant with the Environment Act (2021)..

No watercourse or hedgerow habitats are present, so no Watercourse Unit or Hedgerow Unit calculations are required. The on-site BNG is non-significant and will be secured by a planning condition, considered sufficient for this application.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background and Site Description

The applicant, Tulip-Fields Homes Ltd, has commissioned a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment for the proposed development at Land off Chaucer's Way, Spalding, PE11 1LH (central grid reference: TF23552270).

The site is currently bare earth. The latest aerial images (July 2022) show the site contained areas of developed land, ruderal / ephemeral vegetation, and introduced shrubs. In accordance with current guidelines the clearance is classed as degradation and the previous baseline used for the assessment. As such, this shall be used as the baseline for metric calculations.

The site is not within any priority habitats, designated sites, or Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs). The site is surrounded by similar-sized residential properties, hardstanding, and amenity grassland. No irreplaceable habitats are present on-site or directly adjacent to the site, and no degradation has occurred prior to this application.

2.2 Proposals

The proposals involve the construction of 2no. new dwellings with associated garden and parking.

2.3 Scope of Assessment

This BNG Assessment is valid for a maximum of one year. If there are any alterations to the site conditions, BNG methodologies, or the proposals, the calculations are likely to become invalid, and an ecologist should be contacted for advice.

3. Legislation and Policy

3.1 Legislation

The Environment Act 2021 requires developments to deliver a minimum of 10% BNG. The requirement applies to most non-householder planning applications that result in the loss of more than 25m² of vegetated habitat. Developers must calculate BNG using the Biodiversity Metric and secure it for a minimum of 30 years. Options for achieving BNG include on-site measures, off-site enhancements recorded in a national biodiversity gain site register, or the purchase of statutory Biodiversity Credits. Secondary legislation under the Act sets out the procedural and technical requirements, including Habitat Condition Assessments using the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) methodology and the submission of a completed Statutory BNG Metric. Long-term management of BNG must be secured, e.g. through Section 106 agreements or Conservation Covenants.

3.2 National Policy

Paragraphs 187 - 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) states the need for planning policies and decisions to enhance the natural and local environment. The NPPF highlights the importance of minimising impacts of development on wildlife and providing net gains for biodiversity.

3.3 Local Policy

The site is located within South Holland District which falls under the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan area. The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 was adopted in March 2019. Policy 28: The Natural Environment states that:

“A high quality, comprehensive ecological network of interconnected designated sites, sites of nature conservation importance and wildlife-friendly greenspace will be achieved by protecting, enhancing and managing natural assets:

Nationally or locally-designated sites and protected or priority habitats and species:

a. development proposals that would directly or indirectly adversely affect these assets will not be permitted unless:

i. there are no alternative sites that would cause less or no harm; and

ii. the benefits of the development at the proposed site, clearly outweigh the adverse impacts on the features of the site and the wider network of natural habitats; and

iii. suitable prevention, mitigation and compensation measures are provided.

Addressing gaps in the ecological network: a. by ensuring that all development proposals shall provide an overall net gain in biodiversity, by:

i. protecting the biodiversity value of land, buildings and trees (including veteran trees) minimising the fragmentation of habitats;

ii. maximising the opportunities for restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats and species of principal importance;

iii. incorporating beneficial biodiversity conservation features on buildings, where appropriate; and maximising opportunities to enhance green infrastructure and ecological corridors, including water space; and

iv. conserving or enhancing biodiversity or geodiversity conservation features that will provide new habitat and help wildlife to adapt to climate change, and if the development is within a Nature Improvement Area (NIA), contributing to the aims and objectives of the NIA.

4. Methods

4.1 Desk Study

The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) online resource was accessed on 2nd May 2025 to search for Protected and Priority Habitats, or Habitats of Principal Importance listed under the NERC Act on-site or within 500.0m.

4.2 Site Assessments

A site visit was conducted on 15th April 2025 by Mr R. E. Gaunt of Tulip-Fields Homes Ltd, the Applicant. High-resolution photographs along with existing and proposed site maps and drawings, were provided to George Sayer (MCIEEM, MArborA). George is an experienced Senior Lead Ecologist and a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). He has been undertaking ecology surveys and botanical assessments since 2016.

The habitat classification and assessments were completed using existing site drawings and photographs, in combination with digital resources, including aerial imagery from Google Earth and mapping from magic.gov.uk. Given the residential and built-up nature of the site, it is extremely unlikely that any new or priority habitats have developed on-site since the initial walkover was undertaken.

Habitats were classified in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification System v2.01 (UKHab Ltd 2023) and assessed using Defra's Small Sites Metric (Statutory Biodiversity Metric). The classifications are illustrated on the Site Baseline Habitat Plan, produced using Landapp. See Figure 5.1.

4.3 Biodiversity Metric

Defra's Small Sites Metric (Statutory Biodiversity Metric, 2024) was used to quantify the proposed changes in biodiversity by comparing the baseline habitats with proposed habitats in terms of their extent, condition, and distinctiveness. Accurate habitat measurements were taken using Landapp.

Proposed habitat changes were reviewed against the Metric's risk multipliers, which account for the difficulty of habitat creation or enhancement, the time required to reach the target condition, and spatial risk factors. These multipliers ensure that the compensation for habitat loss is proportional and reflects the ecological value of the affected area. The output of the Metric provides a robust calculation of BNG, guiding the proposed development to meet statutory requirements and align with local planning policies.

Biodiversity Metric calculations were double checked following the calculations to avoid errors. Habitat calculations were performed to the nearest 1sqm for habitats and 1 linear m for hedgerows, which is appropriate given the site's scale. Measurements have been accurately transposed into the Site Baseline Habitat Plan and Site Proposed Habitat Plan, both created using Landapp. Where uncertainty remained, habitats were measured using Google Earth Pro.

The completed Small Sites BNG Metric is provided separately in Excel format and shows the full calculation breakdown for the site. It demonstrates that the trading rules are not satisfied and that the site proposals will not result in +10% BNG.

5. Results

The site is not situated within any Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs), strategic wildlife corridors, or designated enhancement network zones. Consequently, all habitats on-site are classified as having low strategic significance.

5.1 Area Habitats

Baseline Habitats		
The site is composed of the following habitats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 230.0m² of Developed Land; Sealed surface o 19.0m² of Introduced Shrubs o 18.0m² of Ruderal / Ephemeral Vegetation 		
Retained Habitats		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o No habitats are to be retained. 		
Proposed On-Site Habitats		
The following habitats are proposed as part of the development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 80m² of Vegetated Garden o 187m² of Developed Land; Sealed Surface 		
Habitats Summary		
On-site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing site has a baseline of 0.011 Habitat Units. See Figure 5.1. • The proposals on-site will result in a gain of 0.0044 Habitat Units (+40.36%). Therefore, it does achieve the mandatory +10%. 		
	Total Net Unit Change	Total Net % Change
	+0.0044 Habitat Units	+40.36%

Figure 5.1: Site Baseline Habitat Plan



Figure 5.2: Proposed Site Plan

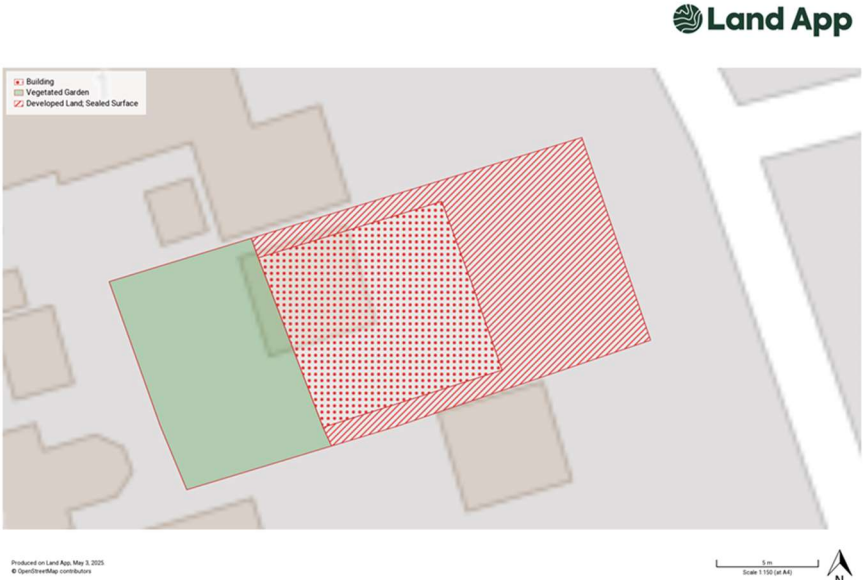


Photo 1: Current view of cleared site



Photo 2: View from Google Maps Streetview (July 2022)



6. Management

6.1 On-site

All existing habitats are to be removed. Habitats to be provided include developed land (buildings and parking areas) and garden areas. As such, a detailed habitat management and monitoring plan is not expected to be required, and designs can be secured by condition. No enhancements within private gardens are legally able to be secured and as such only vegetated garden habitats are proposed.

7. Conclusion

This BNG assessment demonstrates that the proposed development at Land off Chaucer's Way, Spalding meets the statutory requirements for a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity. Therefore, the BNG trading rules will be satisfied and a planning condition is sufficient to secure the gain.

8. References

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). (2017). *Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing*.

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