



Biodiversity Net Gain Report

The Mermaid Inn

2 Gosberton Road, Surfleet

Survey Date: 11th March 2026

Issued By:

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1. Introduction

1.1. Report Rationale

This report was processed on behalf of G. R. Merchant Ltd. A biodiversity Net Gain Assessment was requested for the site at The Mermaid Inn, 2 Gosberton Road, Surfleet, PE11 4AB (grid ref: **TF 25061 28139**). This report should be read in conjunction with the completed Xcel spreadsheet. The survey and report were completed by Nathan O'Shea (BSc), Consultant Ecologist.

1.2. Site Description

The site is the former car park, garden and storage for The Mermaid Inn, within the centre of Surfleet, South-East Lincolnshire. The site is predominantly developed land, with areas of grassland and ornamental vegetation. Immediately South of the site runs River Glen, and surrounding the site are areas of woodland and open grassland within predominantly developed residential areas.

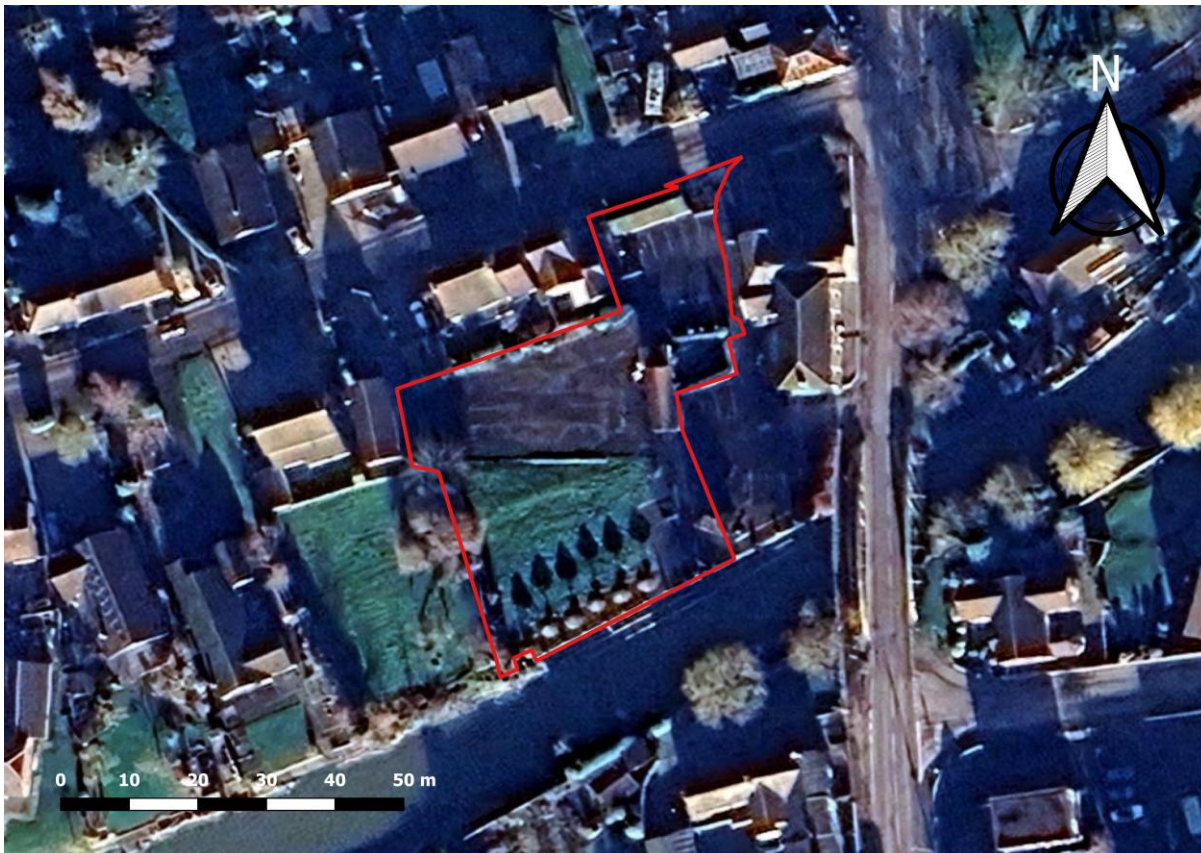


Fig.1. Site boundary.

1.3. Proposed Plans

The current plans are to re-develop the Northern building structure on site, whilst also erecting two detached dwellings towards the South. This will result in the alteration of some existing habitats on-site.

1.4. Scope of Report

This report aims to:

Establish the total number of baseline and lost habitat, hedgerow, and river units at the site of the proposed scheme.

Establish the total number habitat, hedgerow, and river units that are to be created, retained and/or enhanced under landscape and ecological mitigation proposals at the proposed works site.

Determine whether the proposed scheme will result in a net loss, no net loss, or a net gain for biodiversity.

Make further recommendations to gain the required 10% minimum net gain for biodiversity.

1.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Relevant Policies

The appraisal has been compiled with reference to the following relevant nature conservation legislation, planning policy and the UK Biodiversity Framework from which the protection of sites, habitats and species is derived in England. These are:

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2011-2020)

Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

Environmental Act 2021

Local policy

A full explanation of these policies can be found within **Appendix C**.

2. Methodology

Personnel

Field surveys have been undertaken by licensed ecologist/s, members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM) and members of Eco 360 staff.

The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been carried out in line with CIEEM Guidelines on Good practice principles for development (2016), CIEEM A Practical Guide (2019) and BS 8683:2021 - Process for designing and implementing biodiversity net gain.

Survey of Baseline Habitats and Condition

Habitat typing and condition assessments are undertaken during a Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (PEA) or similar studies. The baseline also considers historic records for the site and local area via a desktop study (satellite imagery, previous ecological reports), as well as additional surveys to assess the presence/absence of species in certain situations. Conditions of habitats and hedgerows are assessed using the scoring systems provided in Technical Annex 1 of the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Condition Assessment Sheet.

River assessments are carried out through a MoRPH5 Pro survey and River type survey. At least one MoRPH5 is undertaken per reach on site that will be directly or indirectly impacted with a further MorPH5 undertaken upstream to record a more “natural setting” if required. This data is then processed via Cartographer to give the condition of the rivers on site.

Calculations of Baseline Habitats

Using Geographic Information Software (GIS), baseline habitats are measured in hectares (ha) using vector layer polygons. These measurements are then input into the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool. Habitat condition and connectivity are then input into the calculator. The area of habitat retained is then entered into the calculation to give a final sum of baseline units and lost unit.

Each habitat has a base score of 1, this is then multiplied by the size of the habitat (ha). The habitat is then multiplied by its distinctiveness:

- Very low – 0
- Low – 2
- Medium – 4
- High – 6

The next multiplier is based on the condition of the habitat:

- N/A-other/agricultural – 0
- Poor – 1
- Fairly poor – 1.5
- Moderate – 2
- Fairly good – 2.5
- Good – 3

Calculations of Post-development Habitats

The calculation is informed by planning design, landscape plans, and proposed ecological mitigation. Plans are georeferenced into GIS and are similarly measured in hectares (ha) using vector layer polygons. These measurements are then converted into input into the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool. A target condition will be assigned to each new habitat following the same scores as above.

The calculator will generate a proposed time to hit this target condition and difficulty score.

3. Baseline Calculation and Proposed Impact

3.1. Baseline Habitats

The table below outlines the existing site status based on the most recent site survey.

Habitat Type	Area (m ²)	Distinct-iveness	Distinct-iveness score	Con- dition	Con- dition score	Total Hab- itat Units	Baseline Units Retained	Baseline Units Enhanced	Area of Habitat Lost (m ²)	Units Lost
Developed Land; Sealed Surface	1197	V.Low	0	N/A - Other	0	0.00	0.00	0	637	0
Introduced Shrub	98	Low	1	N/A	1	0.02	0.02	0	0	0.00
Modified Grassland	700	Low	2	Poor	1	0.14	0.00	0	677	0.14
Individual Urban Tree	203.47	Medium	4	Moder- ate	2	0.19	0.19	0	0	0.00

Linear Habitats:

Habitat Type	Length (m)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Habitat Units	Habitat Units Retained	Length Habitat Lost (m)	Habitat Units Lost
Non-Native and Ornamental Hedgerow	24	V.Low	1	N/A	1	0.024	0.017	7.00	0.01

3.2. Proposed Habitats

Habitat Type	Area (m ²)	Target Distinctiveness	Score	Target Condition	Score	Habitat Units Delivered
Developed Land; Sealed Surface	62	V.Low	0	N/A	0	0.00
Vegetated Garden	615	Low	2	N/A	1	0.12
Individual Trees (Immediately Off-Site within owned curtilage)	40.69	Moderate	4	Moderate	2	0.01

As the proposed individual trees on-site are located within private vegetated gardens within residential plots, these have been classed within the metric as ‘vegetated garden’ as they cannot be secured for the 30 years required post-development. The tree planted within the off-site blue line owned curtilage of The Mermaid Inn, however, has been recorded within habitats created.

Linear Habitats:

There are no proposed linear habitats within the plans.

3.3. Total Net Unit Change

Area Habitat Summary	
Total Net Unit Change Area Habitats	-0.004
Total Net % Change Area Habitats	-1.23%
Total Net Unit Change Linear Habitats	-0.01
Total Net % Change Linear Habitats	+29.17%
Trading Rules Satisfied	No

3.4. Site Limitations

There were no site limitations during the survey undertaken on the 11th March 2026.

4. Recommendations

The development proposals currently do not meet the recommended 10% net gain in biodiversity units.

The modified grassland lost leads to -0.14 habitat units, respectively, and as habitats of 'low' distinctiveness, would require compensation with 'the same distinctiveness or better'. Due to the creation of vegetated garden space on-site and one tree planted immediately off-site within the blue line owned curtilage of The Mermaid Inn, the total net loss from the development through combined on-site/off-site measures is **-0.004 habitat units (-1.23%)**.

The development proposals do not achieve a 10% net gain for either area or linear habitats. To comply with the requirement for a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity for area habitats and comply with trading rules, habitat creation must achieve:

- **0.04** additional area habitat units of 'low' distinctiveness or better
- **0.01** additional linear habitat units of 'low' distinctiveness or better

Due to the site becoming private residential plots, off-site habitat compensation measures are recommended, as outlined below:

Off-Site Habitat Creation/Enhancement:

Option 1: Consult the private market to purchase off-site biodiversity units. This should ideally be within the same LPA area or National Character Area to maximise the points gained.

Option 2: Acquire additional land off-site to use for biodiversity offsetting and habitat creation. This should ideally be within the same LPA area or National Character Area to maximise the points gained. These sites may be required to be registered as a biodiversity gain site, and habitat creation/enhancements and management must be secured for at least 30 years via a suitable legal agreement such as a planning obligation (section 106) with an LPA or a conservation covenant agreement with a responsible body.

Option 3: As a last resort, the client may wish to purchase Statutory Biodiversity Credits from the government. The client will need to provide evidence that the other above options have been explored in order to purchase these credits.

5. References

- Bickmore, C. J. (2002). Hedgerow Survey Handbook. London: DEFRA Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011).
- Blakesley, D. & Buckley, P. (2010). Woodland creation for wildlife and people in a changing climate.
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- Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Professional Guidance Series.
- Kirby, P. (2013). Habitat Management for Invertebrates. Exeter: Pelagic Publishing.
- The natural choice: securing the value of nature (2011) (Natural Environment White Paper).
- Treweek J. et al. (2009) Scoping study for the design and use of biodiversity offsets in an English Context.
- Treweek J., Butcher B., and Temple H. (2010) Biodiversity offsets: possible methods for measuring biodiversity losses and gains for use in the UK. CIEEM In Practice.

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Existing Site Plans

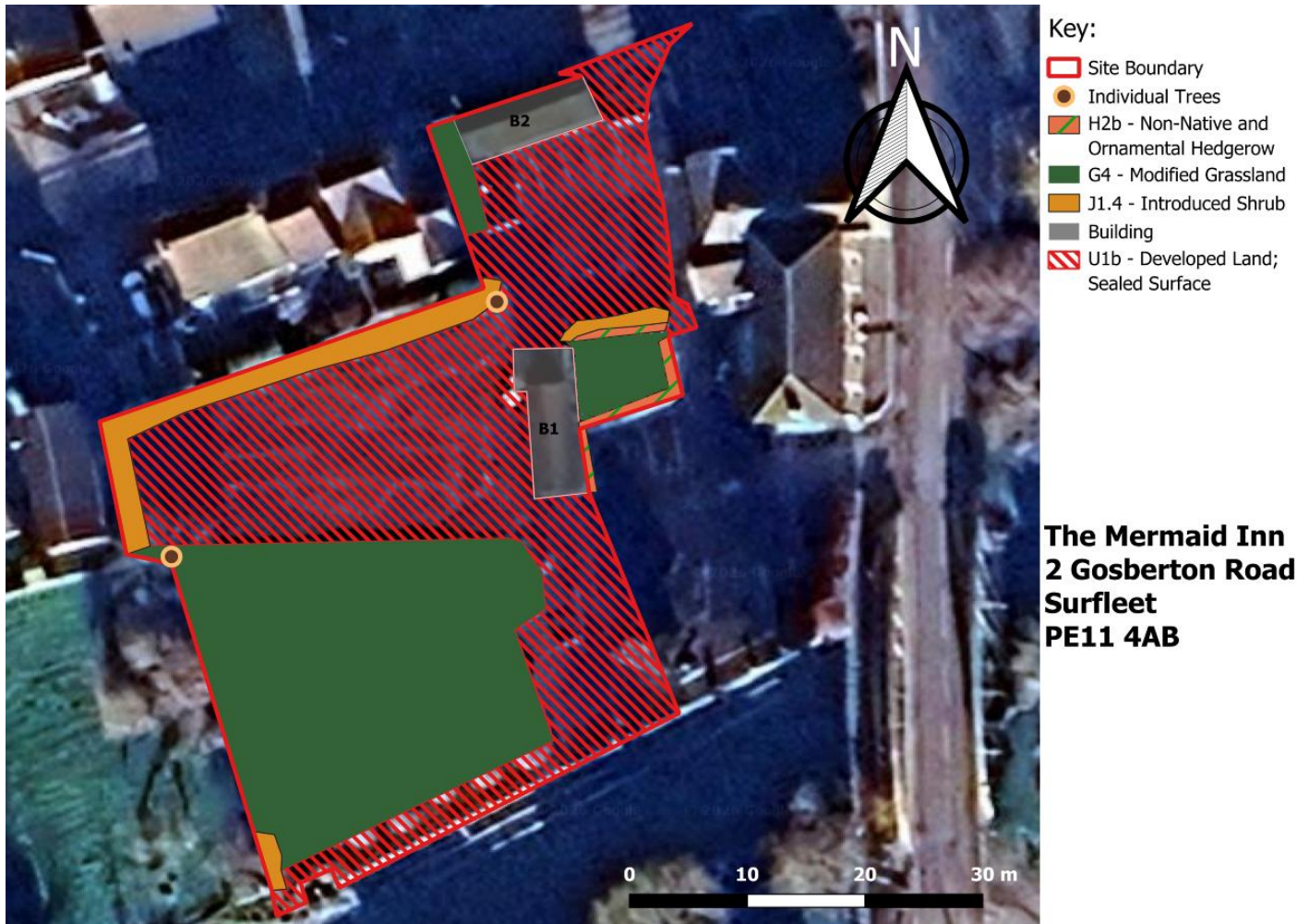


Fig.2. Existing habitat map within the site boundaries.

Appendix B: Proposed Site Plans



Fig.3. Proposed habitat map within site boundary after the completed works.



Appendix C: Site Photographs



Img.1.

Site Entrance.



Img.2. Holly

tree and ornamental shrubbery leading to existing car park.



Img.3. Car park, shrubbery and grassland area.



Img.4. Shrubby and crab apple tree (left of image).



Img.5.

West boundary.



Img.6. Grassland.



Img.7. South-West boundary.



Img.8.

Development area.

Appendix D: Biodiversity Net Gain Relevant Policies

Environmental Act 2021

Part 6 on nature and biodiversity covers all areas of biodiversity net gain across two core sections. This Act mandates that all planning meets a minimum of a 10% gain in biodiversity calculated using the appropriate Metric and that the newly created habitats are secured for at least 30 years.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

While currently not a legal obligation, biodiversity and environmental net gains are mentioned in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) within the following paragraphs (please refer to the NPPF for the full quotations):

Achieving sustainable development

Paragraph 8 Section C. *“an environmental objective – **to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment**; including making effective use of land, **improving biodiversity**, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”*

Preparing and reviewing plans

Paragraph 32. *“Local plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements. This **should demonstrate how the plan** has addressed relevant economic, social and **environmental objectives** (including **opportunities for net gains**). Significant **adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided** and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).”*

Identifying land for homes

Paragraph 73 section C. *“consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area’s economic potential and the scope for **net environmental gains**”*

Transport infrastructure:

Paragraph 104. *“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan- making and development proposals, so that:*

d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for **net environmental gains**.

Planning decisions:

Paragraph 119 “Planning decisions and planning policy should a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land ... and taking opportunities to **achieve net environmental gains - such as developments that would enable new habitat creation.**”

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Paragraph 174 Section 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”

Habitats and biodiversity

Paragraph 179. “To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and **safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats** and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, **enhancement, restoration or creation**;

and 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.**”

Paragraph 180. “When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if **significant harm to biodiversity** resulting from a development **cannot be avoided** (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then **planning permission should be refused**;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

c) development resulting in the **loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats** (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) **should be refused**, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;

and d) development **whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported**; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can **secure measurable net gains for biodiversity** or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”

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Should any equipment be damaged or lost on site at the fault of the client(s), then Eco 360 withholds the right to charge 100% above the current market value for that exact product or the nearest similar product.

The survey results purport the current status of the site and its potential for protected species utilisation at the time of surveying. It should not be viewed as a complete list of the possible flora and fauna species that could be using the site at different times of the year.

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No reliance should be made on any such comments in relation to the structural integrity of the features located on the surveyed site. All information within the report is based solely on evidence that has been found on site during the service provided. No individual opinion or inference will be made other than that of the suitably qualified ecologist appointed to the project.