



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report

Land off Stockwell Gate, Whaplode

Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 6UE

August 2026

Prepared for: G R Merchant Ltd.

Prepared by: Mr Ben Whyman, BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist

Baseline survey: Miss Bryony Haines, MSc, Ecologist

Survey date: 4 March 2026

Eco 360 Ltd | Hollinscroft House, Uttoxeter Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 4LJ

Tel: 0330 133 8294 | Email: info@eco-360.co.uk | www.eco-360.co.uk

Document Control

Item	Details
Document title	Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report - Land off Stockwell Gate, Whaplode
Client / applicant	G R Merchant Ltd. / Mr Welch
Local planning authority	South Holland District Council
Relevant condition	Condition 16
Metric	[UPDATED] Small Sites Metric_Stockwell Gate (August 2026)
Development	Four detached bungalows with associated access, parking, gardens and landscaping
Date	25 August 2026

Revision Record

Revision	Date	Prepared by
Draft 2	25 August 2026	Ben Whyman

Contents

1. Purpose and Scope
2. Site and Development
3. Methodology and Limitations
4. Baseline and Post-development Habitats
5. Biodiversity Metric Outcome
6. Policy Context
7. Recommendations
8. References
- Appendix A: Site Context Plan
- Appendix B: Baseline Habitat Plan
- Appendix C: Proposed Development Plan
- Appendix D: Proposed Habitat Plan
- Appendix E: Site Photographs
- Appendix F: Notice to Readers

1. Purpose and Scope

Eco 360 Ltd was commissioned by G R Merchant Ltd to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for land off Stockwell Gate, Whaplode, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 6UE (OS grid reference TF 33227 24585). The assessment comprised a desk study, habitat survey undertaken on 4 March 2026 and calculation using the Small Sites Metric (Statutory Biodiversity Metric), version 1.2.3.

The assessment establishes the pre-development biodiversity value of the site, quantifies the anticipated effects of the proposed development and demonstrates the biodiversity outcome arising from the agreed habitat retention, creation and enhancement measures. It supports the discharge of Condition 16 and should be read alongside the completed metric, Biodiversity Net Gain Plan, proposed habitat plan and Biodiversity Management and Monitoring Plan (BMMP).

The objectives are to:

- establish the baseline habitat and hedgerow biodiversity-unit values within the site;
- quantify habitats and hedgerows to be retained, lost, created or enhanced;
- calculate post-development units, percentage changes and applicable trading rules; and
- confirm the measures required to achieve and maintain the agreed biodiversity outcome.

2. Site and Development

2.1 Site Description

The approximately 0.38 ha site comprises several buildings previously used for agricultural or horticultural purposes, associated sealed surfaces and areas of modified grassland. It is situated on the eastern edge of Whaplode and is bordered by residential development, agricultural land and the Whaplode River corridor. The wider landscape is predominantly arable, with hedgerows, lines of trees and small groups of trees providing local ecological connectivity.

Individual trees occur principally within the northern and south-eastern parts of the site, and a native hedgerow is present within the western part. The eastern and western site margins are affected by drainage-maintenance access requirements.



Figure 1. Aerial context showing the red-line site boundary.

2.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises demolition of the existing buildings and construction of four detached bungalows with associated access, parking, hardstanding, private gardens and landscaping.

The post-development layout comprises approximately 1,435 m² of developed land and sealed surfaces and 1,231 m² of vegetated garden. Approximately 1,095 m² of retained modified grassland within the eastern and western margins will be enhanced to good-condition other neutral grassland.

Seven small trees and one medium tree will be retained, while five small trees will be removed. Following consultation with the client and architect, 16 new small native trees have been agreed as part of the on-site BNG scheme. The trees are incorporated into the proposed habitat plan and Small Sites Metric and will be planted within land subject to the long-term biodiversity management arrangements. Approximately 91 m of native hedgerow will also be created.

The grassland-enhancement areas overlap with drainage-board maintenance strips that may be accessed approximately once or twice each year. Access will be controlled and any rutting, compaction, bare ground or vegetation loss will be reinstated and monitored in accordance with the BMMP.

3. Methodology and Limitations

3.1 Personnel and Guidance

The habitat survey was undertaken by Miss Bryony Haines MSc, Ecologist. The assessment and metric were prepared and reviewed by suitably qualified and experienced ecological personnel employed by Eco 360 Ltd.

The assessment follows BS 8683:2021, relevant CIEEM guidance and the Small Sites Metric (Statutory Biodiversity Metric), version 1.2.3, together with its July 2025 user guide and condition assessment criteria.

3.2 Habitat Survey and Calculation

Habitats were identified and mapped using categories compatible with the Small Sites Metric. Habitat condition was assessed using the statutory metric criteria where applicable. The baseline was also informed by aerial imagery, available plans and the condition of the site recorded during the field survey. No watercourse within the red-line boundary was assessed and no river units were generated.

Habitat areas were measured in square metres using Geographic Information System software and converted to hectares for entry into the metric. Baseline area-habitat units are calculated from habitat area, distinctiveness, condition and strategic-significance multipliers. Individual trees are calculated using their metric canopy-area equivalents. Hedgerow units are calculated separately using length in kilometres and the applicable multipliers.

The post-development calculation separates retained habitats, habitat creation, habitat enhancement, hedgerow creation and individual-tree planting. It incorporates applicable spatial-risk, difficulty and temporal-risk multipliers and therefore forecasts the units expected once the proposed habitats reach their target conditions.

3.3 Limitations and Assumptions

The field survey was undertaken in March, when some grassland species may have been less detectable. The observed sward composition, structure, management and land use were nevertheless sufficient to identify the baseline modified grassland and undertake the condition assessment.

Precise planting positions may be adjusted to accommodate drainage access, underground services and appropriate planting distances, provided that the committed habitat areas, hedgerow length, tree numbers and metric outcome are maintained.

The 16 new small native trees have been agreed with the client and architect and form a firm component of the scheme. The calculated gain and individual-tree trading-rule compliance depend upon their delivery and retention.

Drainage maintenance may cause localised damage within the grassland-enhancement areas. The assessment assumes that access will be controlled and that damage will be promptly reinstated and monitored. Repeated or uncontrolled disturbance could prevent the target condition from being achieved.

The metric provides a forecast. The calculated outcome depends on successful establishment, management and monitoring of the committed habitats for 30 years.

4. Baseline and Post-development Habitats

4.1 Baseline Habitats

Habitat	Extent	Distinctiveness	Condition	Baseline units	Impact
Modified grassland	2,217 m ²	Low	Moderate	0.8868	1,095 m ² enhanced; 1,122 m ² lost
Developed land; sealed surface	1,544 m ²	Very low	N/A	0.0000	1,544 m ² lost/redeveloped
Individual trees	12 small; 1 medium	Medium	Moderate	0.7862	7 small and 1 medium retained; 5 small lost
Native hedgerow	45 m	Low	Moderate	0.1800 hedgerow units	45 m lost

The total baseline value is 1.6730 area-habitat units and 0.1800 hedgerow units.

4.2 Post-development Habitats

Intervention	Extent	Target	Units delivered
Developed land; sealed surface	1,435 m ²	N/A	0.0000
Vegetated garden	1,231 m ²	Condition assessment N/A	0.2376
Modified grassland enhancement	1,095 m ²	Good-condition other neutral grassland	0.5134 enhancement units
New individual trees	16 small native trees	Moderate condition	0.1991 creation units
New native hedgerow	91 m	Moderate condition	0.3046 hedgerow units

The intervention units above are those delivered through creation or enhancement. Retained baseline units are included separately within the headline post-development total.

5. Biodiversity Metric Outcome

Component	Baseline	Post-development	Net change	Percentage
Area habitats	1.6730	1.9870	+0.3140	+18.77%
Hedgerows	0.1800	0.3046	+0.1246	+69.23%
Watercourses	0.0000	0.0000	Not applicable	Not applicable

The completed Small Sites Metric confirms that the scheme exceeds the 10% target for area habitats and hedgerows and satisfies all applicable trading rules. No off-site biodiversity units or statutory biodiversity credits are required.

The outcome depends upon delivery of the full 1,095 m² grassland-enhancement area, retention of seven small and one medium tree, planting of all 16 agreed small native trees, creation of 91 m of native hedgerow and successful long-term management.

Site Name		Land off Stockwell Gate	
Sheet Name		Headline Results	
Headline Results			
Headline		BNG Targets Met ✓	
Trading Rules		Trading Rules Satisfied ✓	
Next steps		Submit metric to LPA	
Baseline Units	Habitat units	1.6730	
	Hedgerow units	0.1800	
	River units	Zero Units Baseline	
Post-development Units	Habitat units	1.9870	
	Hedgerow units	0.3046	
	River units	0.0000	
Total net unit change	Habitat units	0.3140	✓
	Hedgerow units	0.1246	✓
	River units	0.0000	✓
Total net % change	Habitat units	18.77%	✓
	Hedgerow units	69.23%	✓
	River units	% target not appropriate	

Figure 2. Headline results from the completed Small Sites Metric.

6. Policy Context

6.1 Environment Act 2021 and Statutory Biodiversity Gain

The Environment Act 2021 inserted Schedule 7A into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Where the statutory biodiversity gain condition applies, development may not commence until a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to and approved by the planning authority. The biodiversity objective is generally a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity value calculated using the statutory biodiversity metric. Significant on-site gains and all off-site gains must be secured for at least 30 years.

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

The August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework replaced previous versions. Policy N2 requires development proposals to consider the environmental qualities of land, conserve and enhance existing natural features where possible, strengthen ecological networks, minimise adverse effects on biodiversity and provide appropriate long-term management for green infrastructure and other nature-supporting features. Significant harm should be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated.

6.3 Local Policy and Condition 16

Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological networks and supports measurable biodiversity gains. Condition 16 requires the biodiversity measures to be supported by an appropriate BNG Plan and long-term management and monitoring arrangements. The grassland enhancement, hedgerow creation and tree retention and planting described in this assessment respond to those requirements.

7. Recommendations

Provided that the habitat retention, creation and enhancement measures shown on the proposed habitat plan and entered into the Small Sites Metric are implemented in full, the development will achieve a biodiversity net gain of 18.77% for area habitats and 69.23% for hedgerows, with all applicable trading rules satisfied. The agreed measures include planting 16 new small native trees.

No additional biodiversity compensation or enhancement is required. The proposed habitats must be established, managed and monitored in accordance with the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and BMMP so that the target conditions and calculated outcome are achieved and maintained for 30 years.

8. References

British Standards Institution (2021). BS 8683:2021 Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain - Specification.

CIEEM, CIRIA and IEMA (2016). Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development.

CIEEM, CIRIA and IEMA (2019). Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development - A Practical Guide.

Defra (2025). The Small Sites Metric (Statutory Biodiversity Metric): User Guide, updated July 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

Defra (2025). Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments, July 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

Environment Act 2021, c.30. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents>

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2026). National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (2019). South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, including Policy 28.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Schedule 7A (as amended). <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/schedule/7A>

Appendix A: Site Context Plan



Figure A1. Site context and red-line boundary.

Appendix B: Baseline Habitat Plan

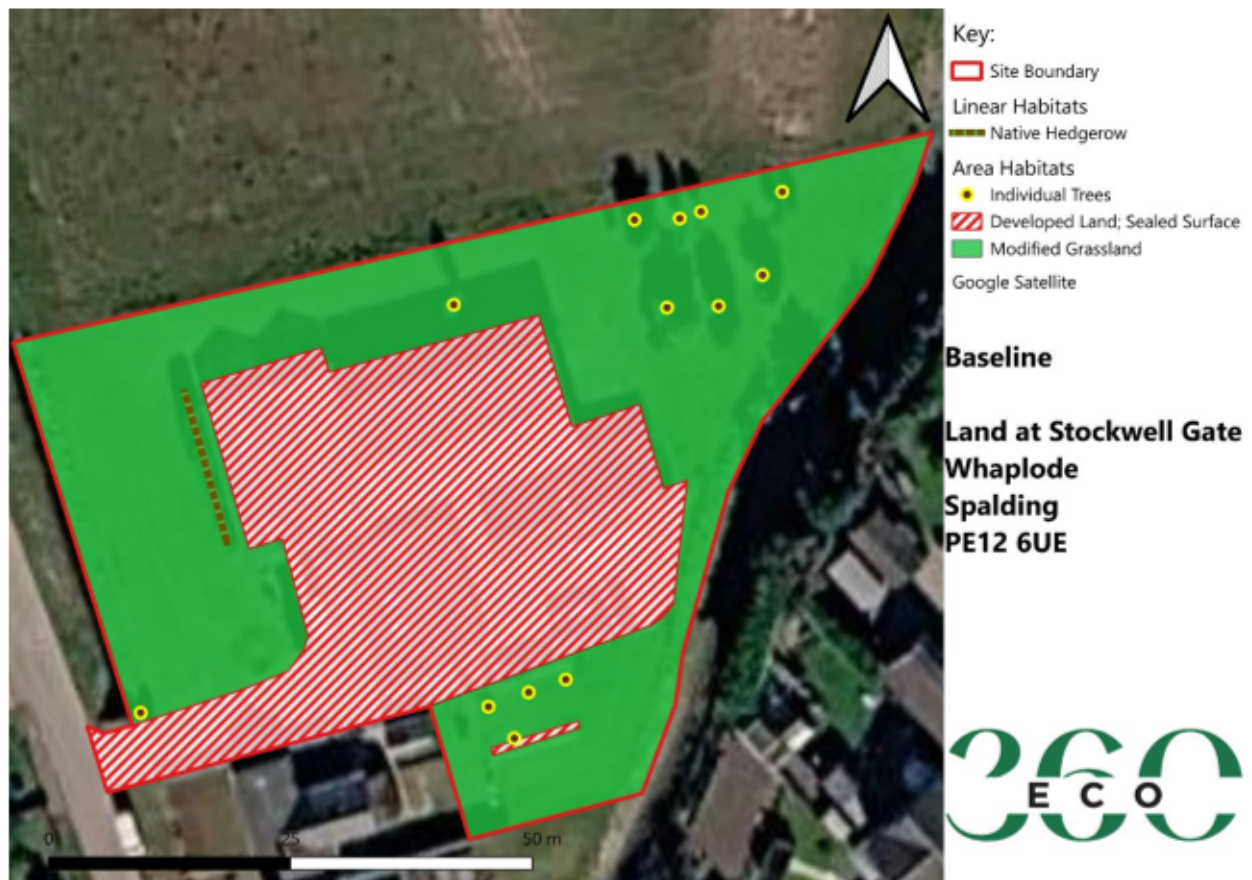


Figure B1. Baseline habitats within the red-line boundary.

Appendix C: Proposed Development Plan



Figure C1. Proposed four-dwelling development layout.

Appendix D: Proposed Habitat Plan



Figure D1. Proposed habitats, retained trees and 16 agreed new tree-planting locations.

Appendix E: Site Photographs



Photograph E1. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E2. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E3. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E4. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E5. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E6. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E7. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E8. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E9. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E10. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E11. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E12. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E13. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E14. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E15. Representative site photograph.



Photograph E16. Representative site photograph.

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E17. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E18. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E19. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E20. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E21. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E22. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E23. *Representative site photograph.*



Photograph E24. *Representative site photograph.*

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E25. Representative site photograph.



Photograph E26. Representative site photograph.

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E27. Representative site photograph.



Photograph E28. Representative site photograph.

Appendix E: Site Photographs (continued)



Photograph E29. Representative site photograph.



Photograph E30. Representative site photograph.

Appendix F: Notice to Readers

This report has been prepared for the named client for the purpose stated. It must not be altered or relied upon for another purpose without the written agreement of Eco 360 Ltd.

Eco 360 Ltd has undertaken the commissioned services with reasonable skill, care and diligence and in accordance with the agreed terms and relevant professional guidance. Ecological survey results represent the conditions recorded at the time of survey and do not constitute an exhaustive list of all species that may use the site at other times.

The assessment is based on the plans and information available at the date of issue. Material changes to the development layout, habitat extents, tree numbers, hedgerow length, target conditions or management arrangements may require the metric and report to be revised.

This report is normally valid for two years from the date of the most recent survey, subject to there being no material change in site conditions, proposals, legislation, policy or relevant guidance. An updated assessment may be required after that period.

Comments relating to buildings, structures or trees are ecological observations only and must not be treated as structural or arboricultural advice.