

THE PRIORY, CLECKHEATON

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

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Report Control Sheet

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOPE & PURPOSE

1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd was commissioned by McCarthy and Stone to prepare a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment for the proposed works at The Priory, Cleckheaton, BD19 6HQ. This report has been prepared to inform planning application for a care home and apartment block, including access roads, amenity gardens and Public Open Space.

1.1.2. The author of this report is Eleanor Clark BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM Consultant Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. Eleanor is experienced managing schemes and has produced many ecological reports to inform planning management plans.

1.1.3. This report has been written broadly following the Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Audit Templates (CIEEM, 2023).

1.2. LOCATION

1.2.1. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the site location. The site is located on the outskirts of the town Cleckheaton, a metropolitan borough of Kirklees, West Yorkshire, England.



Figure 1.1 Site Location

1.3. OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. The report has been produced to document the methods, results and conclusions of a BNG Assessment undertaken based on the proposed development for the site to fulfil the following:

- Ensure that the mitigation hierarchy has been applied;
- Identify the baseline habitats present and provide a condition assessment;
- Identify the post development habitats on site, assess the possible target condition and provide an indication of the likely importance of those habitats;
- Calculate the overall change in biodiversity score from pre- post development
- Provide design recommendations to maximise potential net gain achievable
- Provide an indication of likely outcomes and indicative cost as required.

1.4 PLANNING CONTEXT

- 1.4.1 The Government 25-year Environment Plan states that government will “embed environmental net gain principle for development.”
- 1.4.2 National policy already sets out that planning should provide Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) where possible. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraphs 174(d), 179(b) and 180(d) refer to this policy requirement and the Natural Environment Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further explanation on how this should be done.
- 1.4.3 Under the Environment Act 2021, all planning permissions granted in England (with a few exemptions) except for small sites will have to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain from January 2024. BNG will be required for small sites from April 2024. BNG will be measured using Defra’s biodiversity metric and habitats will need to be secured for at least 30 years. Key points regarding BNG are listed below:
- Minimum 10% gain required calculated using Biodiversity Metric & approval of net gain plan.
 - Habitat secured for at least 30 years via obligations/ conservation covenant.
 - Habitat can be delivered on-site, off-site or via statutory biodiversity units.
 - There will be a national register for net gain delivery sites.
 - The mitigation hierarchy still applies of avoidance, mitigation, and compensation for biodiversity loss.
 - Will also apply to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)
 - Does not apply to marine development.
 - Does not change existing legal environmental and wildlife protections.
- 1.4.4 Developers will be required to undertake an assessment (using the nationally set BNG metric tool) of the current biodiversity value of their site both prior to and post the development proposal. In the event that the value of the site post-development is less than 10% better than it was prior to development then the developer will have an obligation to provide additional off-site BNG units to achieve the mandatory 10% net gain.

2 METHODS

2.1 EXISTING HABITAT (BASELINE)

2.1.1. A walkover of the site was undertaken by Collington Winter Environmental Ltd in January 2025. The methods were based on the standard methodology as detailed by UKHab classifications (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, May 2023) using the UK Habitat Classification V2 guidance tool.

2.2 PLANNING LAYOUT (POST-DEVELOPMENT)

2.2.1 The Landscape Plan created by Highstone Building Services (reference: H24 WC - 010) has provided a red line boundary as well as the habitats to be incorporated within the site.

2.3 STATUTORY BIODIVERSITY METRIC

2.3.1 The BNG calculation was undertaken utilising The Statutory Biodiversity Metric from DEFRA, the site's UK Habitat map and the Site Plan. The calculation was performed by a technically competent and experienced ecologist as detailed in British Standard BS8683 – Suitably qualified person –definition in BS8683:2020.

2.3.2 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses habitat features as a proxy measure for capturing the value and importance of nature. The metric considers the size, ecological condition, location and proximity to nearby 'connecting' features. The metric enables assessments to be made of the present and forecast future biodiversity value of a site.

2.4 HABITAT SCORING

2.4.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric supplies reference documents and user guides in which to accurately evaluate and assess the different habitats on site. The methodology for the baseline and post development calculations are demonstrated in the following sections.

Baseline Units

2.4.2 To assess the quality of a habitat and therefore calculate the units scored the Statutory Biodiversity Metric utilises three scoring factors as detailed below.

Condition

2.4.3 The condition of a habitat is assessed utilising the Condition Sheets provided for each habitat type. These list positive indicators for each habitat and indicate how many of these indicators need to be present to meet certain thresholds of condition. These condition sheets can be found in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric habitat condition assessment sheets with instructions tool Technical (Natural England Joint Publication, 2023).

Distinctiveness

2.4.4 The distinctiveness of each habitat (area and linear) is automatically assigned by the tool, based upon national records of the occurrence and rarity of each habitat (The Statutory Biodiversity metric).

Strategic Significance

2.4.5 The idea of strategic significance works at a landscape scale. It gives additional unit value to habitats that are in preferred locations for biodiversity and other environmental objectives. Strategic significance utilises published local plans and objectives to identify local priorities for targeting biodiversity and nature improvement, such as Nature Recovery Areas, local biodiversity plans, National Character Area objectives and green infrastructure strategies.

Post Development Units

2.4.6 Additional factors are implemented when assessing post development habitats.

- Difficulty of Creation/Enhancement
- Temporal Risk "Time to target condition"
- Spatial Risk (when offsite mitigation is necessary)

2.5 LIMITATIONS OF ASSESSMENT

- 2.5.1 Whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. The conclusions and recommendations detailed in this report are based upon the site redline boundary and the development proposals as outlined by the client at the time of writing. Should there be any changes to the site redline boundary or development proposals at a later stage, this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether any amendments or additional survey work is required.
- 2.5.2 Habitat areas (predevelopment) have been measured using online mapping, and therefore will not be completely accurate. Post development areas have been provided by the client.
- 2.5.3 The Proposed Site Layout used for post development areas is indicative in nature and does not constitute a detailed landscape plan.

Table 2.1 Limitations of Assessment

Limitation	Analysis
Competence of surveyor	Condition Assessment was undertaken by Eleanor Clark BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM, Consultant Ecologist at Collington Winter who holds 4 years experience. The survey was overseen and reviewed by: Olivia Collington BSc (Hons), MEnvSc, CEnv, Managing Director at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd who has over 10 years professional experience in ecological consultancy and holds key experience undertaking BNG assessments and providing advice on habitat creation, management and enhancements for both developers and habitat banks.
Competence of ecologist completing the metric	As above.
Age of survey data	The condition assessment was undertaken in January 2024 and is therefore less than 12 months old. There is no constraint to the age of survey data and this falls within best practice guidance.
Timing of survey	The survey was undertaken in January which is a sub-optimal time of year to undertake condition assessments due to the lack of vegetation and inability to assess presence of invasive non-native species accurately. In this instance, a precautionary approach has therefore been taken and the presence of invasive non-native species assumed as a "worst case" scenario.
Departure from best practice guidance	N/A

3 BASELINE CONDITIONS - HABITATS

3.1. STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

3.1.1. There is currently no Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Kirklees Council, therefore, the Local Plan and Magic.gov.uk were utilised to identify the Strategic Significance of the site. The Kirklees Local Plan identified the site being located with the 'Pennine Foothills Biodiversity Opportunity Zone'. As such, the individual trees were given a High Strategic significance. Whilst the hardstanding and vegetated garden were given a medium Strategic Significance.

3.2. HABITATS PRE-DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1. The site was comprised of a former pub currently used as a residential dwelling with associated garden. Four medium trees were located on the eastern boundary of the site.

3.2.2. Table 3.1 summarises the baseline habitats and condition assessment. Please refer to the Appendix for the Condition Assessment Sheets for each habitats.

Table 3.1 Habitat Type and Baseline Condition Assessment

Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Condition	Notes
Developed land; sealed surface	0.094	N/A - Other	The driveway, residential dwelling (former pub) and detached garage.
Vegetated Garden	0.044	Condition Assessment N/A	Garden associated with the dwelling.
Urban Tree	0.0081	Good	Two medium trees adjacent to eastern boundary.
Urban Tree	0.0081	Moderate	Two medium trees adjacent to eastern boundary

3.3. RETAINED AND ENHANCED HABITATS

3.3.1. None of the habitats present on site are to be retained by the scheme.

3.4. LOST HABITATS

3.4.1. All habitats within the red line boundary are to be lost to development.

3.5. PRE- DEVELOPMENT HABITAT BASELINE

3.5.1. Please refer to Table 3.3 summarising the Habitat Baseline for the calculation, demonstrating habitats to be retained, enhance and/or lost.

Table 3.3 Habitat Baseline

	On site Baseline	Retained	Enhanced	Lost
Habitat (Area) Units	0.28	0	0	0.28

4 HABITAT CREATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

4.1.1. Please refer to the Landscape Plan (H24 WC - 010) for details of proposed landscaping within the development.

4.1.2. Please refer to the Appendix for details of the condition criteria targeted for each habitat group (where appropriate).

Table 4.1 Post Development Habitats, area sizes and target conditions

Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Condition	Notes
Developed land; sealed surface	0.08	N/A - Other	Residential properties with associated parking and access.
Vegetated garden	0.027	Condition Assessment N/A	Garden associated with the dwellings.
Modified grassland	0.026	Poor	Area of grassland located within the communal open space
Introduced shrub	0.008	Condition Assessment N/A	Areas of shrub planting in the car park.
Urban tree	0.057	Moderate	Urban trees located in the car park.

5 SUMMARY

5.1.1. This report and the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric submitted have demonstrated that the proposed habitat creation create a net loss of biodiversity within the site of 17.69% in habitat units and **the trading rules have been satisfied.**

Figure 5.1 On site net %

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.05
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	17.69%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

5.1.2. It is recommended that a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) be conditioned as part of the planning permission to meeting the targeted conditions of post development habitats. The HMMP will detail full management prescriptions, for the 30-year period required as best practice for biodiversity net gain. The HMMP will be provided to all tenants and future homeowners and will detail where monitoring surveys are to be conducted.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- CIEEM (2021) Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Audit Templates.
- DEFRA (2023) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: Auditing and Accounting for Biodiversity
- DEFRA (2023) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: Auditing and Accounting for Biodiversity. Condition Assessment Sheets (Excel Format)
- Collington Winter Environmental (2025) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal; The Priory, Cleckheaton.



The Priory - UKHab
Date: 27.02.2025

- Individual Trees
- Developed Land Sealed Surface
- Vegetated Garden
- Red line boundary

Scale: 1:800

Drawn By: CW

Checked By: OC

Approved By: OC



Client: Highstone Building Services

Site: The Priory, Cleckheaton, BD19 6HQ

Project Number: 20-2543

Rev: 2.0

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APPENDIX 1 – POST DEVELOPMENT TARGET HABITAT CONDITIONS

Habitat Type: Modified Grassland		Target Condition: Poor
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m², please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	No
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	No
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	No
E	Cover of bare ground between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens.)	No
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> less than 20%.	Yes
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	Yes

Habitat Type: Individual Trees		Target Condition: Moderate
Condition Assessment Criteria		Targeted?
A	The tree is a native species (or more than 70% within the block are native species).	Yes
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	No
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type															
Habitat Types															
Individual trees – Urban trees Individual trees – Rural trees Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees. Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of <u>rural</u> trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in <u>rural</u> locations.															
Habitat Description															
Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment): Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching. Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only): Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.															
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, The Priory, Cleckheaton				Survey date and Surveyor name		15/01/2025 - Eleanor Clark								
					Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)										
Limitations (if applicable)					Habitat parcel reference										
					26570341	26570342	26570344	26570345							
					Grid reference										
Condition Assessment Criteria															
				Criterion passed (Yes or No)								Notes (such as justification)			
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes							
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes							
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .				No	No	No	No							
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.				No	Yes	No	Yes							
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes							
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes							
Number of criteria passed					4	5	4	5							

Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√										
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)		Yes		Yes							
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	Yes		Yes								
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)											
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.												
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score ²												

