



TECHNICAL NOTE: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG) STRATEGY

SITE NAME & ADDRESS	Land at Meltham Grange Farm, Deer Hill Road, Meltham, HD9 5PT
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	Residential development
PLANNING REFERENCE	Not yet registered
DATE	1 June 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Knight Sky Ecology Ltd was commissioned to provide a BNG strategy for the proposed development on land at Meltham Grange Farm. The BNG strategy includes the submission of the following documents:

- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (hereafter referred to as 'the Biodiversity Metric')
- Habitat condition assessment
- UK Habitat Classification map – Baseline (Figure 1)
- UK Habitat Classification map – Post-development (Figure 2)

In England, the primary legislation for the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain (BNG) is principally set out under Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This legislation was inserted into the 1990 Act by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021, and was amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Under the statutory framework for BNG, subject to some exceptions, every planning permission is subject to a condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat. This increase can be achieved through on-site biodiversity gains, registered off-site biodiversity gains or through statutory biodiversity credits.

This document sets out an overview of the BNG strategy and provides a clear and proportionate approach to how the biodiversity gain condition would be delivered.

Forthcoming changes to national policy and legislation are expected to exempt such minor residential developments from the mandatory BNG requirements. However, until this time, the BNG condition must still be met.



2. METHODS

The latest version of the Biodiversity Metric and User Guide (3 July 2025) have been accessed from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

Habitat Assessment

A site walkover was undertaken on 4 November 2026 by Ryan Knight MCIEEM (Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management). All habitats within the site were described and mapped using UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Version 2 definitions (UKHab Ltd, 2023).

The site visit was undertaken outside the habitat survey season (April –October). However, the habitat types were relatively basic and sufficient data was obtained without any constraints to the assessment.

3. BASELINE VALUES

West Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The West Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy was reviewed and is available from [West Yorkshire LNRS](#).

The LNRS forms the basis for the justification of the strategic significance categories within the post-development values. In accordance with the Biodiversity Metric User Guide, once an LNRS has been published, the baseline strategic significance values for habitat parcels in that area should always be scored as low.

Priority & Irreplaceable Habitats

No priority or irreplaceable habitats were present in the site.

Habitat Degradation

No habitat degradation was identified.

Habitats

Figure 1 in Appendix A provides an overview of the habitat baseline.

u1b5 Building / u1b6 Other developed land

The site contains two agricultural buildings, an access road and areas of concreted hardstanding located immediately in front of the buildings.

g4 Modified grassland / 16 Tall forbs

A section of grassland is present between the two agricultural buildings. The sward comprised common productive grasses dominated by perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*. The grassland also supported abundant soft rush *Juncus effusus* with locally frequent broadleaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* and common nettle *Urtica dioica*.



Along the northern elevation of the northernmost building is a vegetated margin containing rye grass and cocks-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, with frequent creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, common nettle, broadleaved dock and Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*. All grassland and tall-herb habitats were assessed as being in poor condition.

32 Scattered trees

Three small, self-seeded sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* were recorded within the site. These have been automatically assigned a moderate condition score within the Biodiversity Metric, which is considered an appropriate reflection of their ecological value. A formal condition assessment was not submitted.

The combined biodiversity value of the habitats within the site is **0.25 units**. The development will result in the loss of grassland habitat and one tree.

4. POST-DEVELOPMENT VALUES (ENHANCEMENT AND CREATION)

Figure 2 in Appendix A provides an overview of the post-development habitat plan. Detailed design information, including landscaping specifications, was not available at the time of assessment. However, the applicant supplied the extent of vegetated garden areas, and these habitats would provide the majority of the biodiversity value within the site following development.

To deliver biodiversity net gain on-site, a strip of land along the eastern boundary has been set aside outside of any residential curtilage. This area is to be used for habitat creation, primarily through native tree planting.

To achieve at least a 10% increase in habitat value, the site requires only one of the following:

1. **Three native trees** established to **moderate condition**, or
2. **Four native trees** established to **poor condition**.

Either scenario is sufficient to meet the minimum 10% net gain requirement. Scenario 2 is included in the Biodiversity Metric.

Post-development Habitat Value

Based on current projections, the post-development biodiversity value would be **0.28 habitat units**.



5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Biodiversity Metric has calculated that the development proposals will result in a **net gain of 0.04 habitat units (15.36%)**

The development will therefore meet the biodiversity net gain condition on-site as the 10% net gain would be achieved.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN AND BIODIVERSITY GAIN PLAN

The post-development habitat creation is not considered 'significant'. Trees do also not require long-term monitoring after establishing (~5yrs). However, all habitats need to be retained for at least 30 years. A basic habitat management plan is recommended. The statutory framework for biodiversity net gain requires a Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) to be submitted and approved by the planning authority to discharge the biodiversity gain condition prior to the commencement of development. The BGP should detail the measures undertaken to achieve the required 10% net gain as stated in this document.

INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Himalayan balsam species is listed on Schedule 9, Part II of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 making it an offence Under Section 14 of the Act to plant or otherwise cause these species to grow in the wild. Any soil or plant material contaminated with these invasive plants are regarded as controlled waste. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 contains a number of legal provisions concerning such controlled waste. These create offences to do with the deposit, treating, keeping or disposing of controlled waste without a permit. The plants must be disposed of safely at a licensed landfill site according to the Environmental Protection Act (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991.

Treatment

In order to control Himalayan Balsam in-situ it must be prevented from producing seeds until the seed bank is exhausted (i.e. no viable seeds remain in the soil). Seed bank longevity is around two years. The existing plants can be killed relatively quickly by:

- **Hand Pulling.** This method is particularly useful for smaller stands of balsam. Hand pulling should ideally commence in late May / June when plants can be easily identified and they will not have set seed. The optimum time for control is when the Himalayan balsam is just starting to develop flowering buds. The plants should not be pulled when in seed (August to October). The whole plant must be uprooted.
- **Cutting or Mowing.** Cutting can be done before the flowering stage in June. Plants must be cut at ground level, below the lowest node. Any cuts above the lowest node will lead to regrowth and re-flowering. Cutting too early will promote greater seed production from the plants that re-grow.
- **Chemical Control.** Where access to pull / cut the plants is not possible, then the infestation can be sprayed with a Glyphosate-based herbicide. Spraying should be undertaken by an appropriately trained and licensed contractor. Chemical control is often most practical for high density stands of Himalayan balsam. Use of a weed wiper or spot treatment with a hand lance can increase the selectivity of this herbicide (particularly useful in mixed stands). Fitting the hand lance with a guard can direct the spray to the target more accurately.



APPENDIX A: PHOTOS

Photo 1.

View north over east section of site.



Photo 2

View south over east section of site.





Photo 3

Land between buildings



Photo 4.

Land on north side of building.





Photo 5

View towards side entrance.



Photo 6.

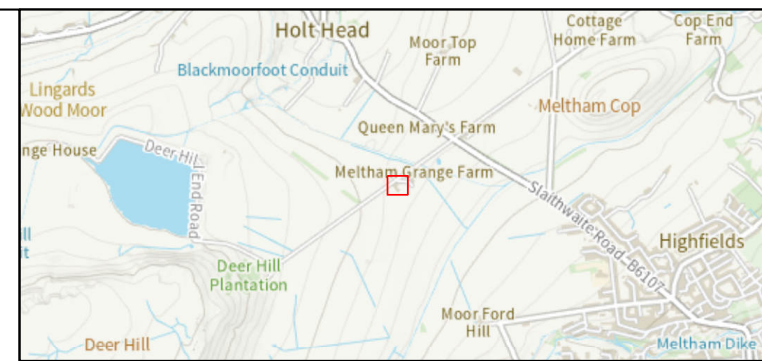
Himalayan balsam on north boundary.











APPENDIX B. FIGURES (NEXT PAGE)

- **FIGURE 1. UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP (BASELINE)**
- **FIGURE 2. UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP (POST-DEVELOPMENT)**



Survey Information	
	Site boundary (1,973.5m ²)
UKHab Habitat Survey	
	g4 - Modified grassland (326.8m ²)
	u1b5 - Building (558.0m ²)
	u1b6 - Other developed land (669.5m ²)
	16 - Tall forbs (419.2m ²)
	32 - Scattered tree (3)



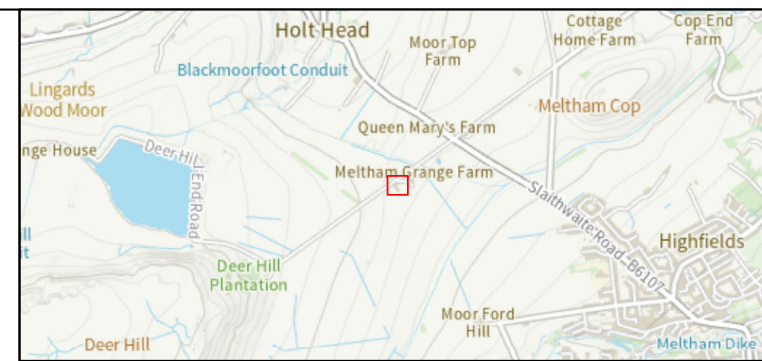
PROJECT TITLE
MELTHAM GRANGE FARM, MELTHAM









DRAWING TITLE
Figure 1: UK Habitat Classification Map (Baseline)

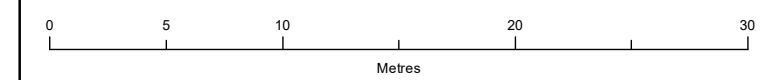
VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
2.1	01/06/26	UKHab	MP	RK

DRAWING NUMBER:
KSEcology/MelthamGrangeFarm/UKHab

SCALE	1:325	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
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Survey Information	
	Site boundary (1,973.5m ²)
UKHab Habitat Survey	
	g4 - Modified grassland (186.2m ²)
	u1b5 - Building (501.2m ²)
	u1b6 - Other developed land (578.9m ²)
	16 - Tall forbs (75.2m ²)
	828 - Vegetated garden (632.0m ²)
	32 - Scattered tree (2)
	32 - Scattered tree, newly planted



PROJECT TITLE
MELTHAM GRANGE FARM, MELTHAM

DRAWING TITLE
Figure 2: UK Habitat Classification Map (Post-Development)

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
2.0	01/06/26	Post-Development	MP	RK

DRAWING NUMBER:
 KSEcology/MelthamGrangeFarm/Post-Development

SCALE	1:325	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
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