

# **COYNE ENVIRONMENTAL LTD**

**Old Foxes  
North End  
Kelshall  
SG8 9SE**



## **BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT**

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INTRODUCTION

Coyne Environmental Ltd has been instructed to carry out an Ecological Appraisal of Old Foxes, North End, Kelshall, SG8 9SE. This is for a planning application to North Herts District Council (NHDC) for a new dwelling. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken for the presence or absence of ecology and bats (European Protected Species) in particular and no evidence was found. An initial Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Metric only produced a 01% net gain which is below the required 10% needed in the Environment Act 2021. A revised BNG metric has been instructed and has now achieved a **11.24%**habitat Net Gain and an **87.17%** hedgerow Net Gain with Off-site mitigation. This indicates that the BNG target has been met and can be submitted, as required in the legislation, to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for determination.



I am a qualified Ecologist, Associate of the Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management with over 35 years' experience in the environmental field. This includes being a license bat worker (Bat License 2015-15943-CLS-CLS). The PRA and PEA surveys were carried out on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024. This was conducted in the daytime, (12C) variable conditions, medium winds, dry but cloudy.

HEADLINE RESULTS

|                                       |                |               |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Total net unit change                 | Units          | Net gain      |
|                                       | Habitat Units  | <b>11.24%</b> |
|                                       | Hedgerow Units | <b>87.17%</b> |
| Total net% change                     |                |               |
|                                       | Habitat Units  | <b>11.24%</b> |
|                                       | Hedgerow Units | <b>87.17%</b> |
| Habitat units required to meet target |                |               |
|                                       | Habitat Units  | 00.00         |
|                                       | Hedgerow Units | 00.00         |

This indicates that the required BNG will achieve the required Mandatory minimum 10% net gain in the Environment Act 2021, with Offsite mitigation. The Detailed Results and Analysis are set out below.

## ASSESSMENT RESULTS

| Onsite base line          | Units          | Net gains | Net gain | Notes                                     |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------|----------|-------------------------------------------|
|                           | Habitat units  | 1.05      |          |                                           |
|                           | Hedgerow units | 0.19      |          |                                           |
| Onsite post intervention  |                |           |          |                                           |
|                           | Habitat units  | -0.33     | -31.34%  |                                           |
|                           | Hedgerow units | 0.00      |          |                                           |
| Onsite net change         |                |           |          |                                           |
|                           | Habitat units  | -0.33     | -31.34%  | On site net gain is less than target set  |
|                           | Hedgerow units | 0.00      | 00.00%   | On site net gain is at target set         |
| Offsite base line         |                |           |          |                                           |
|                           | Habitat units  | 0.28      |          |                                           |
|                           | Hedgerow units | 0.48      |          |                                           |
| Offsite post intervention |                |           |          |                                           |
|                           | Habitat units  | 0.45      | 161.53%  | Off-site net gain is above the target set |
|                           | Hedgerow units | 0.17      | 53.64%   | Off-site net gain is above the target set |
| Offsite net change        |                |           |          |                                           |

|                            |                |               |       |                   |
|----------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|
|                            | Habitat units  | 0.12          |       |                   |
|                            | Hedgerow units | 0.17          |       |                   |
| Cumulative net unit change |                |               |       |                   |
|                            | Habitat units  | 0.12          |       |                   |
|                            | Hedgerow units | 0.17          |       |                   |
| Total net unit change      |                |               |       |                   |
|                            | Habitat units  | 0.12          | 11.24 |                   |
|                            | Hedgerow units | 0.17          | 87.17 |                   |
| Total % change             |                |               |       |                   |
|                            | Habitat units  | <b>11.24%</b> |       | Net gain achieved |
|                            | Hedgerow units | <b>87.17%</b> |       | Net gain achieved |
|                            |                |               |       |                   |

## DETAILED RESULTS

| Type          | Target | Baseline Unit | Units Required | Units Deficit | Notes                                 |
|---------------|--------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| Habitat unit  | 10%    | 1.05          | 1.16           | 0.00          | No additional habitat units required  |
| Hedgerow unit | 10%    | 0.19          | 0.22           | 0.00          | No additional hedgerow units required |

## REVIEW

The Biodiversity Metric shows a Total Net % change habitat unit for the scheme of **11.24%** and a Total Net % change hedgerow unit of **53.64%**, with offsite mitigation (of land in the same ownership) , so the overall BNG does gain the minimum 10.00 % required. This therefore meets the Environment Act 2021 Mandatory Requirement for information on biodiversity.

## REVIEW

The following is required:

- **269m<sup>2</sup>** sparsely vegetated to be enhanced to *Other* neutral grassland in Good Condition, in line with **UKHab** condition assessment criteria
- **Minimum 15 wildflower species/m<sup>2</sup>**, including at least **four** grass species, and minimal cover of bare ground or undesirable species.
- **23no small** native trees along edge of Off-site land
- **Species** – All standards 1.8m with 10-12cm girth *Crataegus monogyna*, *Prunus avium*, *Sorbus aucuparia*), container grown, planted with stakes, mulch, and protective guards.
- **Existing native treeline / hedgerow** along the site boundary must be retained
- **5m lin.** native species-rich hedgerow within the off-site compensation land.
- **Species** -all container grown - *Corylus avellana*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Rosa canina*, planted at 5-6/m in double staggered rows
- **Management** should include watering during establishment, replacement of failed specimens within five years, and routine inspections.

A Preliminary Ecological Analysis (PEA) has already been undertaken in a separate Report and found no ecology of significance. The requirement for information on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) has now been undertaken, using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and indicates that the 10% Net Gain can be able to be achieved with additional offsite mitigation measures.

As the required BNG mitigation will be undertaken offsite the proposed tree to be removed to accommodate the new dwelling will be compensated in a landscape design scheme, as set out in this Review. It is recommended this could form of any required Reserve Matter in the Approval. The two Reports and the accompanying Excel Sheet will form a joint proposal of the Ecological Assessment (EA) indicating that the development will have minimal effect on ecology and provide the opportunity to increase the areas biodiversity

## CONCLUSIONS

Coyne Environmental Ltd has been instructed to undertake an Ecology Assessment of Old Foxes, North End, Kelshall, SG8 9SE, to ascertain if there is any wildlife of importance or ecology of significance on the site. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) found no evidence of any ecology of significance on site. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) has also been carried out.

Following the revised BNG, with additional Off -site compensation enhancement, a net gain has been achieved, as required under the Environment Act 2021. The site survey and subsequent desk top study of the site indicates that this is not in an area of high risk for any specific species or sensitive habitats.

The client is considering potentially using to additional land, for new uses in the future. The required mitigation enhancements can be located around the boundary of the site, so that this does not preclude other uses for part of the site, at a later date. A landscape enhancement plan is recommended to illustrate this proposal

Therefore, in my professional opinion I assess that the revised proposal of a new dwelling on the site will have minimal impact on the overall ecology of the area and bats (EPS) in particular. The proposed Offsite mitigation and landscape design scheme will also increase the overall biodiversity of the area. I conclude that, no further environmental studies are required and that the proposal can be determined by North Herts District Council, on this basis.

## **REFERENCES**

Coyne Environmental PEA Report  
Site Survey Map  
Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981  
Environment Act 2021

