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Report prepared for: Bly Developments Ltd

For the Site of: Unit E Nup End Industrial Estate, Nup End, Old Knebworth,
Hertfordshire SG3 6QJ

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Ecological reports are limited in shelf life, usually 12 to 18 months for baseline surveys and for BNG as and when plans change. Information is believed to be accurate at the time of the survey; recommendations are made without bias based on good practice guidelines within the industry. However, species presence and ecological parameters can change over time.

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Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)/Biological Impact Assessment (BIA)

0.0 Non-Technical Summary

0.1 Background

The client commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake a Biodiversity Net gain (BNG)/Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) for the site of Unit E Nup End Industrial Estate, Nup End, Old Knebworth, Hertfordshire SG3 6QJ, to determine the biological impact of the proposed development.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than it was before. The process relies on the mitigation hierarchy, which sets out that everything possible must be done to firstly avoid, secondly, minimise and thirdly restore and rehabilitate losses of biodiversity on site.

This report uses the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (DEFRA 2024), to quantify the biodiversity baseline for the site and calculate the post-development biodiversity unit for the proposed scheme following the best practice guidelines as set down by CIRIA (2019).

0.2 Results and Findings

A summary of the change in Biodiversity Net Gain on site is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Change in Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on site

BIA Units	Total Net Unit Change	Total Net % change
Habitat Units	+0.08	+10.94%
Hedgerow Units	+0.04	+78.96%
River Units	n/a	n/a

A 10% increase for each unit type present is required and the trading rules for each habitat type must be met to meet the minimum statutory requirement.

A 78.96% net gain in Hedgerow Units has been achieved due to the inclusion of a new length of native hedgerow on site, and a 10.94% net gain in Habitat Units has been achieved through the addition of new trees, to be located within the horse paddock. These trees will be protected via appropriate fencing to avoid horse predation.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Aim

The client, Bly Developments Ltd, has commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake a BNG/BIA for the site of Unit E Nup End Industrial Estate, Nup End, Old Knebworth, Hertfordshire SG3 6QJ.

The aim of this report is to determine the Biodiversity Net Gain for the proposed scheme and, where necessary, make recommendations for increasing net gain in order to comply with the statutory requirements.

1.2 Site Information

The baseline habitats on site were assessed via a site walkover on the 17/11/2025 and include developed land; sealed surface, modified grassland, individual trees and non-native and ornamental hedgerow.

Clearance works had previously occurred on a section of grassland and four trees had been removed. Based on client images and Google Street View, the four trees lost are determined to have been small and in good condition. The area of cleared grassland has since regenerated, and currently consists of tall ruderal species, dominated by nettle. Based on the quantity of nettle and the assessment of the adjacent areas of grassland, this is deemed to be modified grassland in poor condition.

The proposed development includes for the construction of a new building with associated parking.

1.3 Study Area

The site is 0.37 Ha in size. The national grid coordinates for the centre of the site are TL 22514 19736.

1.4 Suitably Qualified Ecologist

This report has been completed by Heather Stuckey and checked by Martin O'Connor. Heather and Martin both meet the criteria for a suitably qualified Ecologist as defined in BS 8683:2021.

2.0 Methods

Biodiversity Net Gain is assessed through the use of biodiversity calculators to assess the biodiversity value of habitats pre- and post-development based on habitat type, distinctiveness and condition.

A biodiversity index is derived from the baseline and the proposed development and net gain is achieved where an increase in value is delivered either on-site (or through offsite compensation), where lower value habitat is replaced with one of higher value.

This report uses the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (DEFRA 2024), to quantify the biodiversity baseline for the site and calculate the post-development biodiversity unit for the proposed scheme following the best practice guidelines as set down by CIRIA (2019).

2.2 Limitations

It is important to note that a scheme-wide biodiversity net gain or no net loss cannot be achieved for the scheme as a whole if there are negative impacts on irreplaceable habitats.

Any compensation offered to address impacts on irreplaceable habitats should be agreed directly with Natural England (NE). The baseline habitat which is identified for such compensation and the biodiversity units resulting from this compensation should also be excluded from biodiversity unit calculations.

Following Defra guidance, impacts on irreplaceable habitats and their compensation have been excluded from this biodiversity unit calculation.

Biodiversity Impact Assessment only deals with habitat and as such this report does not cover any of the requirements of the proposed development arising from potential impacts on protected species and designated sites.

3.0 Strategic Significance

Based on MAGIC, there are no statutory designations, nor any priority habitats adjacent to the site.

Based on the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership - HNRP), the site does not fall within any areas of strategic significance.

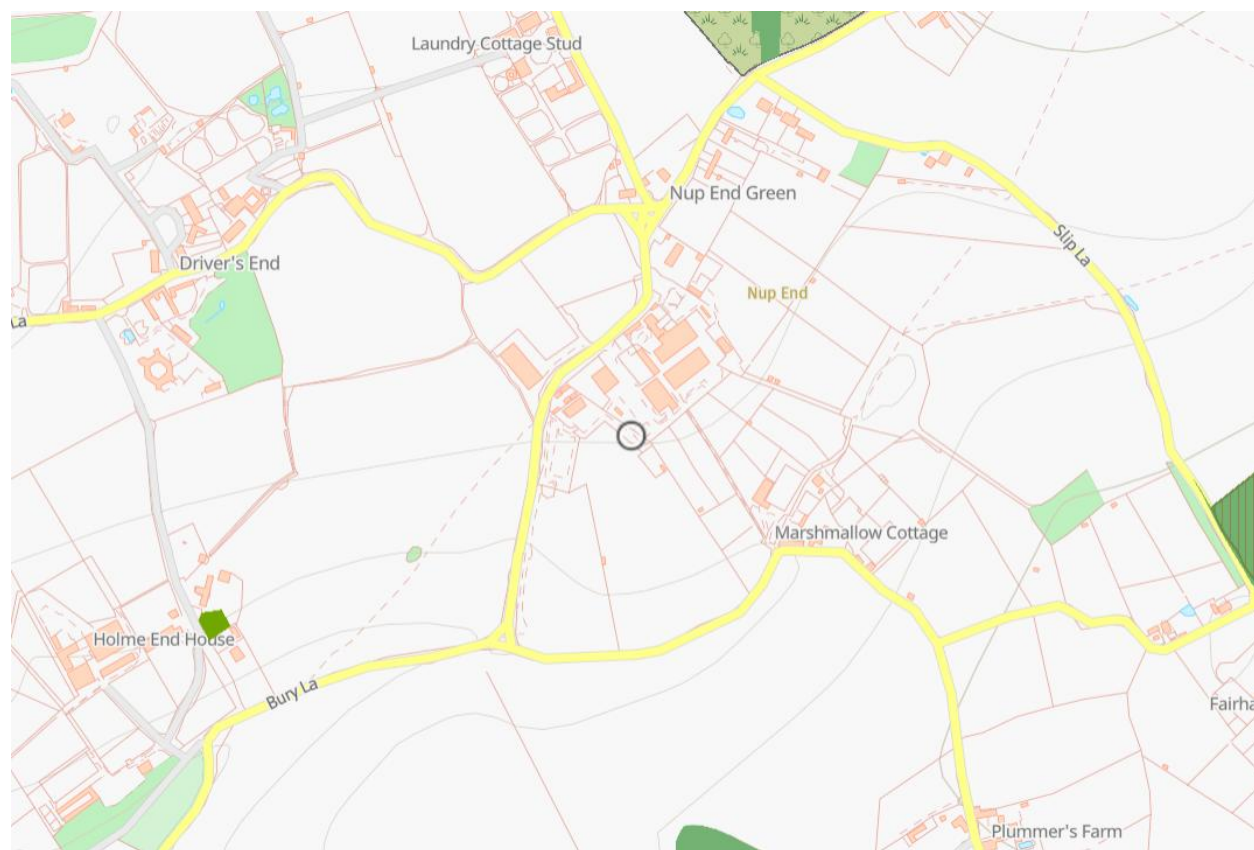


Figure 1: Site location and surrounds (Magic, 2025)

4.0 Baseline Units

The baseline habitats on site were assessed via a site walkover on the 17/11/2025 and include developed land; sealed surface, modified grassland, individual trees and non-native and ornamental hedgerow.

Clearance works had previously occurred on a section of grassland and four trees had been removed.

The area of cleared grassland has since regenerated, and currently consists of tall ruderal species, dominated by nettle. Based on the quantity of nettle and the assessment of the adjacent areas of grassland, this is deemed to be modified grassland in poor condition. Across all areas of grassland, the max count of species per m² was 5, with the average being 4.

Based on the client image (Figure 2) the four trees are deemed to have been ‘small’ (with a DBH of less than 30cm) and are assumed to have been in good condition.



Figure 2: Client image, showing the four trees to the right, and the topped hedgerow behind

The following table summarises the baseline habitat and linear value on-site. There are no watercourse features present.

Table 3: Baseline Habitat Value

Baseline Units	Total Net Unit
Habitat Units	0.73
Hedgerow Units	0.06
River Units	n/a

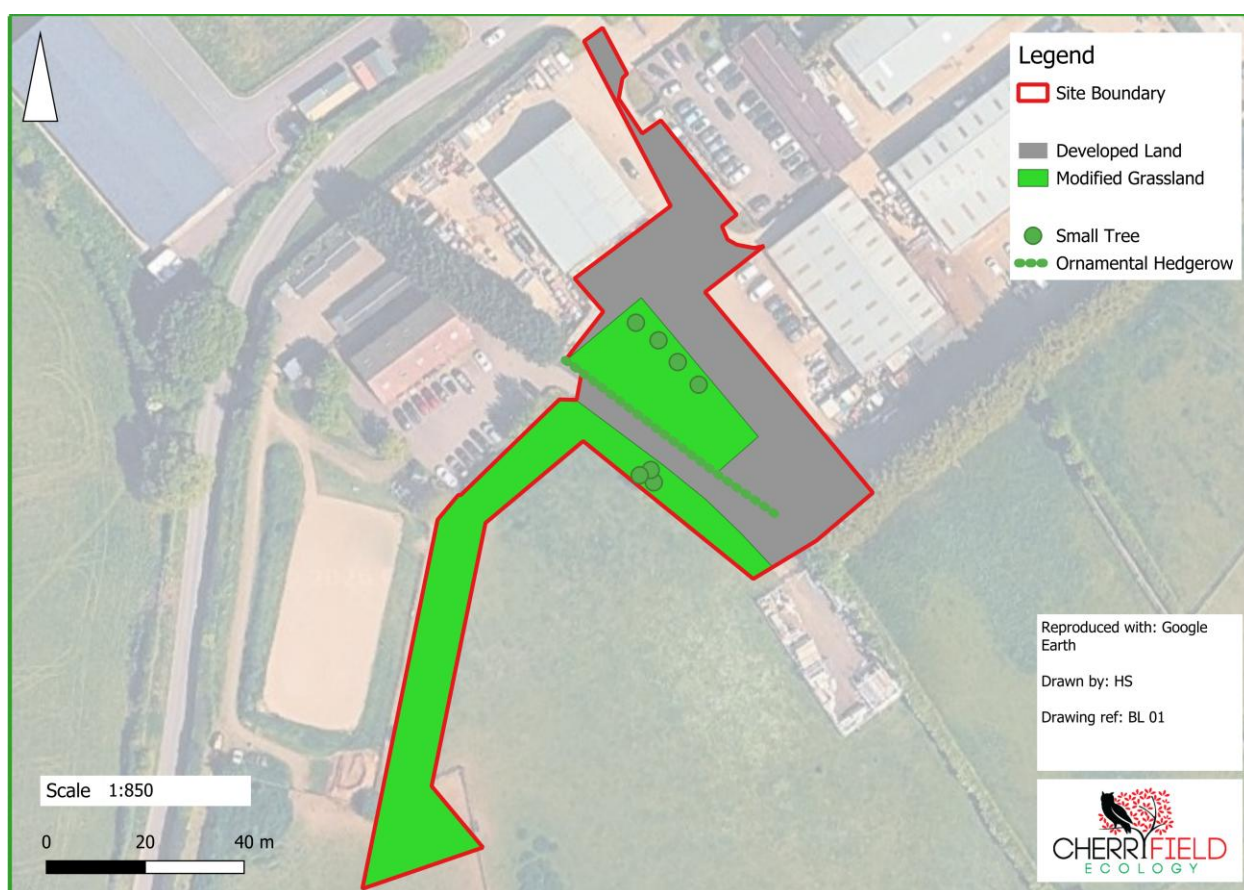


Figure 3: Baseline Habitats Site Plan

5.0 Post-Development Units

Proposed site plans “25023-010 - Proposed site plan” were provided by the Client and used to calculate the Biodiversity Units post-development. Please see the separate Excel sheet for the assumed post development condition assessments.

The following table summarises the post development habitat and linear value on-site. There are no watercourse features present.

Table 4: Post Development Habitat Value

Post Development Units	Total Net Unit
Habitat Units	0.81
Hedgerow Units	0.10
River Units	n/a

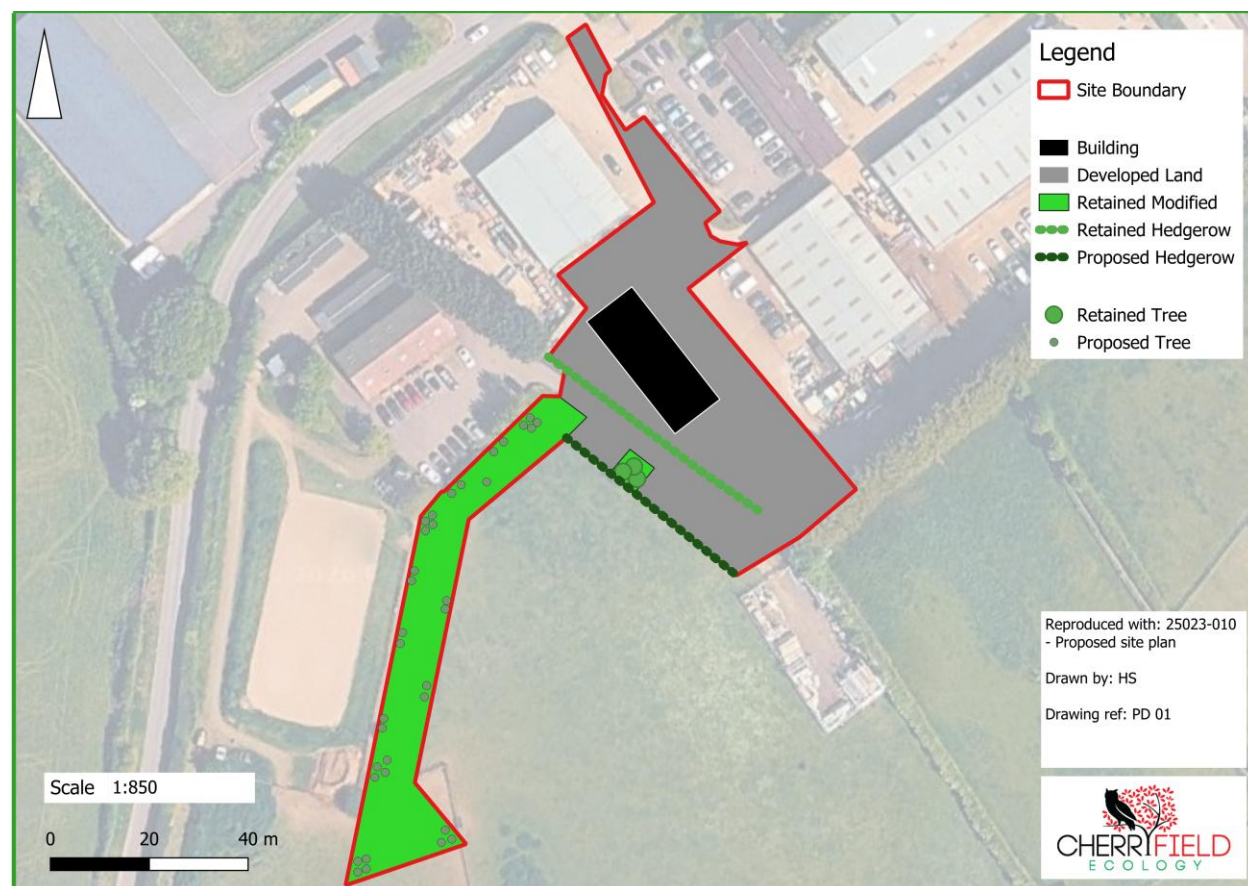


Figure 4: Proposed Habitats Site Plan

6.0 Results

Table 5: Change in Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on site

BIA Units	Total Net Unit Change	Total Net % change
Habitat Units	+0.08	+10.94%
Hedgerow Units	+0.04	+78.96%
River Units	n/a	n/a

6.1 Discussion

The mitigation hierarchy is the cornerstone of achieving net gain. It is a sequence of mitigation actions as described in Table 6.

Table 6: Mitigation hierarchy

Stage	In practice
Avoidance	This first stage is to avoid harm to biodiversity, for example locating to an alternative site. It is the most important stage and can ease the consent process, whereas missing this stage can lead to objections and refusal of permission to the development.
Minimise	If avoiding all adverse impacts is not possible, action is taken to minimize these effects.
Compensation	Addresses residual adverse effects, only considered after all possibilities for avoidance and minimising the effects have been implemented. Offsetting is a form of compensation that trades losses of biodiversity in one location with measurable gains in another. Offsetting losses of biodiversity with gains elsewhere can be within or outside of the development footprint.

Table 7 outlines how the mitigation hierarchy has been applied to this site.

Table 7: Application of the mitigation hierarchy

Hierarchy Level	Action	Habitat on site
Avoidance	Avoid	There are no priority habitats on site that would make avoidance necessary.
Minimise	Retain	The ornamental hedgerow running through the site consists of a line of leylandii trees. These have been topped, however, remains present on site and will be retained within the development. Three small trees are present, which will also be retained, with car parking space designed to accommodate their retention.
	Enhance	No habitats will be enhanced.
Compensation	On-site creation	A larger area of developed land; sealed surface will be created on site, with a new length of native hedgerow. New trees will be planted within the adjacent horse paddock. These trees will be protected from horse predation via appropriate fencing.
	Off-site creation	N/A

7.0 Conclusion

A 10% increase for each unit type present is required and the trading rules for each habitat type must be met to meet the minimum statutory requirement.

A 78.96% net gain in Hedgerow Units has been achieved due to the inclusion of a new length of native hedgerow on site, and a 10.94% net gain in Habitat Units has been achieved through the addition of new trees, to be located within the horse paddock. These trees will be protected via appropriate fencing to avoid horse predation.

8.0 References

CIRIA (2020), Biodiversity Net Gain: good practice principles for development.

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