



Crossland
Ecology

Biodiversity Gain Plan

Site: East Hall Farmhouse, Hitchin

Client: Joanne Richardson

Date: August 2025



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Quality Assurance

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A	Issue	20/08/2025	First issue	LR	SC
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Site assessments / surveys (where required) have been restricted to a level of detail required to achieve the stated objectives of the work.

Due to the temporal nature of ecology, the findings of this report should not be relied upon if a significant amount of time has passed, as defined by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidelines.

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1.0 Summary

- 1.1** This Biodiversity Gain Plan incorporates the findings and recommendations of a habitat condition assessment survey carried out at the East Hall Farmhouse, Hitchin, SG4 8DJ (the Site). The Site survey was undertaken to inform a planning application with respect to delivering biodiversity net gain (BNG), based on the proposed designs provided.
- 1.2** The wider land ownership covered approximately 1.5 ha and comprised of the existing buildings and hard standing, scrub, and a grassland field. The Site is bordered by grassland to the north, east and south and residential buildings to the west. Within this the Site (red line boundary for the planning application) is approximately 0.3 ha, for the development of a menage on the grassland with an access track from the north-west (proposed development).
- 1.3** Based on the current calculations, with the inclusion of the on-site habitat measures set out in section 6.0 the on-site proposals result in a net gain of 17.67% (0.09) habitat units and the trading rules are satisfied. It is considered a net gain of 10% is achievable for the proposed development.
- 1.4** There will be a requirement for a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) to be in place to facilitate delivery of the significant on-site creation and enhancements. This will be detailed within an appropriate planning condition.
- 1.5** It is considered that if the on-site measures are implemented, the Site can deliver a BNG gain and adhere to both local and national current planning policy and the Environment Act (2021).

2.0 Introduction

Purpose of this Report

- 2.1** Crossland Ecology Ltd. was commissioned by Learning to Listen/East Hall School to undertake a biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment for land at the East Hall Farmhouse, Hitchin, SG4 8DL (the Site). A plan showing the application boundary and survey area is provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.2** A habitat condition assessment was undertaken with findings used to feed into the BNG calculations for the Site to determine the baseline value of both habitat and hedgerow features. Calculations of the proposed development were based on the proposed scheme shown in Appendix 1. These calculations have been used to guide the proposal's design and determine the level of potential BNG change as a result of the development and to identify any necessary mitigation measures.

Aims and Objectives

- 2.3** The aims of this report are to:
- Calculate the baseline conditions as biodiversity units;
 - Inform the proposed development design;
 - Calculate changes to biodiversity units as a result of the proposed development; and
 - Calculate proposed mitigation measures (as far as possible) and enhancement opportunities where appropriate to demonstrate a net gain for biodiversity.

Site Description

- 2.4** The Site covered approximately 0.3 ha and comprised the existing hard standing, scrub, and a grassland field. The Site is bordered by grassland to the north, east and south and residential buildings to the west.

Condition Assessment Limitations

- 2.5** The condition assessment was undertaken in July which is considered within the optimal time of year for botanical surveys. As such there were no significant limitations to the survey.

Proposed Project Description

- 2.6** Within the wider land ownership, the red line boundary for the outlined planning application approximately 0.3 ha, for the development of a menage on the grassland with an access track from the north-west (Proposed development). The proposed development is shown in Appendix 1.

Planning Policy and Legislation

2.7 This BNG assessment has been compiled with reference to the following relevant nature conservation legislation, planning policy and the UK Biodiversity Framework from which the protection of sites, habitats and species is derived in England including:

- The Environment Act (2021);
- UK Government's 25 Year Environmental Plan (DEFRA, 2018);
- Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (DEFRA, 2011);
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [MHCLG], 2024);
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (HMSO, 2006); and;
- North Herts Council (2025) *Policy NE4 of the North Herts Local Plan*.

2.8 Relevant local policies are outlined in Appendix 2. The North Herts Council (2025) Policy NE4 of the North Herts Local Plan stated that:

"Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%, unless they are exempt. Exemptions include small projects to improve your property such as extensions, conservatories or loft conversions (known as householder applications).

Most other types of development that require planning permission will require BNG. This means a development will result in more or better-quality natural habitat than there was before development.

BNG does not change the existing legal protections for important habitats and wildlife species which must still be considered as part of the planning process."

2.9 This accords with the minimum BNG requirement set by that outlined within the Environment Act (2021).

3.0 Methods

General

- 3.1** BNG is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, whereby the development attempts to achieve a positive net outcome for biodiversity on the Site, post development. This assessment identifies opportunities for ecological enhancement at the site, aiming to provide a net gain for biodiversity, based upon enhancing the current ecological resource, and creating new habitat where habitat losses have occurred.

Data Sources

- 3.2** Several data sources informed the BNG assessment:

- A UKHab and habitat condition assessment was undertaken in July 2025 by Lucy Robertson;
- Publicly available Open-Source Natural England datasets for Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI), ancient woodland (classed as irreplaceable habitat), and statutory designated sites for nature conservation;
- Publicly available Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership (HNRP) and;
- The proposed scheme (Appendix 1) and digitised into GIS for use in BNG calculations.

BNG Assessment

- 3.3** Data for habitats were entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (an Excel workbook) (DEFRA, 2025) to calculate the ecological baseline for the Site. This information creates the numerical parameters by which the number of Biodiversity Units are calculated. A brief explanation of these factors is provided below.

Area / length

- 3.4** The metric assesses linear habitats, such as watercourses or hedgerows separately from other habitat parcels. Linear habitats are measured in kilometers (km), non-linear habitats are measured in hectares (ha). Areas and lengths were all calculated using measurement tools within QGIS.

Distinctiveness

- 3.5** Each habitat in the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab Ltd., 2023) is automatically assigned a score for distinctiveness within the metric. Distinctiveness recognises the different characteristics of habitats in relation to their capacity for supporting species richness, their tendency to support species found rarely in other habitats, and the rarity of the habitat itself.
- 3.6** It should be noted that irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland) are not adequately measured by the metric and will require separate consideration which

must comply with existing national and local policy and legislation. Data relating to these can be entered into the metric, so as to give an indicative picture of the biodiversity value of the habitats present on a site, but this should be supported by bespoke advice.

Condition

- 3.7** The condition of each habitat is assessed separately using the methods set out in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2024). This approach details condition criteria for each habitat type, and then applies thresholds for how many of these criteria are met to establish the condition score of the habitat. This requires detailed assessment of the habitat prior to completing the metric. Habitats at the bottom end of distinctiveness do not have a specific approach to condition assessment and are instead given a standard condition score. Scores assigned to condition are given as Good = 3; Moderate = 2; Poor = 1; Not Applicable = 0.

Strategic significance

- 3.8** This element is to assess the habitats on-site in relation to the geographical location in which they are found. Information to determine the significance of a habitat within a specific landscape can be found in a variety of sources that include: local plans, local biodiversity records and National Character Areas. The strategic significance is based on three categories which equates to a different score, which are as follows: High = 1.15; Medium = 1.1 and Low = 1.

Risk factors

- 3.9** The metric includes two risk factor multipliers that reflect the difficulties in creating certain habitat types in a way that achieves significant biodiversity benefits. These are “Time to target condition” and “Difficulty of creation”. These recognise that different habitats attain degrees of maturity at different rates and that the successful creation of some habitats is not certain, due to various environmental and human factors.
- 3.10** Thus, the planned creation of a habitat that will take a substantial amount of time to reach target condition, such as woodland, or that is considered difficult to achieve, such as lowland fen, would equate to fewer Habitat Units than an existing area of the same habitat. The metric contains standard multipliers for each habitat class.

Application of the metric

- 3.11** The Proposed Site Layout Plan which illustrates the footprint of proposed landscape and development works as well as information from the client has been used to assess and quantify the loss of habitat and calculate the areas of habitat to be retained. These were entered into the metric to provide a value for the habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units to be lost as a result of the development.
- 3.12** The Proposed Site Layout Plan was then used to calculate the extent of each habitat type that is to be created and this information was entered into the Site Habitat Creation section of the tool, along with values for the equivalent parameters as

described above, to give a post-intervention value. Where detailed plantings schemes have not been provided, an informed assumption on likely habitat to be created has been made, suitable for the location and use of the land.

- 3.13** A comparison of the baseline and the post-intervention unit figures then provides the percentage net change in Biodiversity Units, positive or negative.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 3.14** The designs used to interpret landscapes have not been provided due to the small scale of development. However, it is considered that the degree of accuracy of the assessment is acceptable to be able to demonstrate the proposals loss or gain of biodiversity value as put forward within the current Site plans.
- 3.15** It should be noted that the metric does not use species explicitly. Instead, it uses broad habitat categories as a proxy for the biodiversity 'value' of the species communities that make up different habitats. The metric does not affect the legal obligations associated with protected species and this is beyond the scope of metric.
- 3.16** The Statutory DEFRA Biodiversity Metric has been used in this report to demonstrate BNG. It is a useful tool to help inform plans and decisions to benefit biodiversity. However, it is important to be aware of its limitations. For BNG to be used appropriately and to be successfully implemented (i.e. achieving a BNG), the Good Practice Principles for Development established by Baker *et al.* (2019) must be adhered to. These principles have been developed by the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA), the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).
- 3.17** The metric does not override existing planning policy or legislation, including the mitigation hierarchy, which should always be considered as the metric is applied. The mitigation hierarchy states that action must first be taken to avoid any adverse impact to biodiversity, to mitigate (on-site) any impacts that cannot be avoided and, only as a last resort, to compensate (off-site) for any remaining impacts.
- 3.18** The outputs of the metric are not absolute values but, instead, they provide proxy for the relative biodiversity worth of the Site before and after intervention. The quality and reliability of outputs will depend on the quality of the inputs. Like for like habitat or better should be the aim and one habitat should not be replaced with another where possible.
- 3.19** It is important to emphasise that, while the metric provides a useful tool to demonstrate BNG, it does not remove the need for professional judgement by a suitably competent ecologist. Ecological functionality is important to underpin the assessment and the Site's design should ultimately be based upon the Good Practice Principles. The metric should also not be a reason to miss opportunities to benefit key species through BNG where they are not directly accounted for within the metric.

4.0 **BNG Good Practice Principles for Development**

- 4.1** The metric is a tool that can be used to help inform plans and decisions. It is important, however, to be aware of its limitations and to conduct assessments in accordance with the following principles and rules. The key principles and rules (as set out below) have therefore been considered as part of this assessment with justification provided as to how each BNG principle has been applied.
- 4.2** Table 1 outlines the BNG principles and provides a statement of how these were each considered during the assessment.

Table 1: BNG Good Practice Principles for Development (Baker et al., 2019)

Principle No.	Description	Statement of consideration
1	Apply the mitigation hierarchy.	The mitigation hierarchy has been applied. There will be a loss of areas of grassland, scrub and tall forbs, however, the proposed scheme has sought to compensate by creating mixed scrub and other neutral grassland (wildflower meadows) within the red line boundary. The habitat creation proposals within the site will ensure there is an overall net gain in biodiversity units.
2	Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere.	Loss of the grassland, tall forbs and bramble scrub habitats will be compensated for through the creation of grassland and mixed scrub habitat on-site.
3	Be inclusive and equitable.	Every effort has been made to record accurately and map to a scale that is appropriate for the site. A precautionary approach has been considered to the value of the habitats to ensure the most accurate number of biodiversity units are afforded to each habitat type recorded onsite. This is further supported by undertaking habitat condition assessments to detail the decision-making process. Based on this approach it is considered that although the values are only relative, the best outcome for each habitat onsite has been calculated.
4	Address risk	Adequate information has been recorded on-site to determine the associated 'typical' habitats on-site.
5	Make a measurable net gain contribution	The current proposals includes compensation for the grassland, tall forbs and bramble scrub habitat losses within the red line boundary.
6	Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	The ecological principles – such as the mitigation hierarchy will be considered throughout the stages of development from design – implementation and operational phases.

Principle No.	Description	Statement of consideration
7	Be additional.	The current proposals provide details on how the compensation for the loss of habitat are to be provided on-site in the first instance, thus being local to the impact. For example, through the enhancement of modified grassland and mixed scrub habitat creation.
8	Create a net gain legacy	The development will lead to an overall net gain in biodiversity despite areas of habitat loss.
9	Optimise sustainability	The scheme has been designed to provide opportunities for biodiversity.
10	Be transparent	The commitment to BNG delivery is stated within this report. Through the operational lifetime of the Site, where required, monitoring/auditing reports will be made available to the Local Planning Authority to evidence delivery in accordance with the approved scheme.

5.0 Baseline Conditions

- 5.1** In total, four broad habitat types were identified, mapped, classified and measured by area (hectares). Each habitat was recorded in accordance with the UKHab classification (UKHab Ltd., 2023), mapped using GIS (Appendix 3) and subject to a condition assessment (Appendix 4).
- 5.2** The UKHab classifications was utilised as this is deemed compatible with the Biodiversity Metric. Each of the additional factors has also been assessed and included within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric workbook.
- 5.3** Detailed calculations are displayed within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric workbook (East Hall Farmhouse, Hitchin, 21/08/2025). The baseline results are summarised in **Error! Reference source not found.** below.

6.0 **Proposed Design**

Impact Assessment

- 6.1** The Proposed Site Layout Plan used to assess the impact of the proposals and calculate the elements of habitat creation and enhancement is shown in Appendix 1.
- 6.2** Based on the information provided in the Proposed Site Layout Plan, the following assumed habitats (classified using DEFRA 2024) have been made. This information was used to input into the calculator to assess the post development biodiversity net gain calculations.

Table 2: Translation between Proposals Plan and BNG Habitats

Site Plan Habitats	BNG Habitats
Road (Access Track)	Developed land; sealed surface
Menage	Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface
Horse grazed grassland	Modified grassland

On-site Habitat Creation and Enhancement

- 6.3** The proposed habitats have been mapped as per Table 2, as per best practice requirements (DEFRA, 2024). To achieve a 10% net gain in habitat units, a proportion of modified grassland will be used for habitat creation and enhancement on-site show in Appendix 5.
- 6.4** It is recommended that the following habitat enhancement and creation on-site is followed to achieve a 10% net gain and satisfy the trading rules within the expanded red line boundary:
- Using 0.1 ha of modified grassland for the two measures recommended below;
 - Creation of mixed scrub (0.0032 ha) on current modified grassland, managed to moderate condition on-site; and
 - Enhancement of an area of the modified grassland (0.0968 ha) to other neutral grassland in moderate condition.
- 6.5** This will be subject to long-term management and maintenance via a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) to be in place to facilitate delivery of the significant on-site creation and enhancements. The habitats are required to achieve certain criteria to achieve the appropriate condition.

Mixed scrub

- 6.6** Additional scrub planting to compensate for habitat loss and satisfy trading rules. Through appropriate management, it is expected that these habitat areas can reach

‘moderate’ condition. The following specific condition criteria are expected/required to be met:

- The scrub represents a good example of its habitat type where at least 80% of the scrub is native, there are at least three woody species and no single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel *Corylus avellana* or juniper *Juniperus communis*);
- Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature shrubs are all present;
- There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA [1981, as amended]), and species indicative of suboptimal condition make up less than 5% of ground cover;
- The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and/or forbs presence between the scrub and adjacent habitat;
- There are clearings present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.

Other neutral grassland

6.7 An area of the modified grassland can be enhanced to other neutral grassland. Through appropriate management, it is expected that these habitat areas can reach ‘moderate’ condition, targeting the below condition criteria:

- Consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type;
- 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type;
- Cover of bracken is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is less than 5%.
- Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA [1981, as amended]) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.

6.8 Table 6 provides a summary for the post development biodiversity values for the site with the habitat creation and enhancements implemented.

Table 6: On-site change by broad habitat type

	Baseline		Post-development on-site		On-site change	
Habitat group	On-site existing area	On-site existing value	On-site proposed area	On-site proposed value	On-site area change	On-site unit change
Grassland	0.23	0.46	0.10	0.6	-0.13	0.14
Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.01
Sparsely vegetated land	0.01	0.06	0.00	0.00	-0.01	-0.06
Urban	0.06	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.14	0.00

6.9 With the above additional measures set out, the on-site proposals result in a net gain of 17.67% (0.09) habitat units and the trading rules are satisfied. With the inclusion of all of the measures set out above, it is considered a net gain of 10% is achievable for the proposed development.

Table 7 -Summary of BNG results after habitat enhancement and creation.

East Hall Farmhouse, Hitchin

Headline Results

Scroll down for final results ▲

Return to results menu

On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.53	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.62	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.09	17.67%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.09	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
FINAL RESULTS			
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.09	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	17.67%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓		

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.53	0.58	0.00	No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

7.0 Implementation, Construction, Management and Monitoring Plans

- 7.1** A HMMP is being produced in conjunction with this report (HMMP, Crossland Ecology 2025) for significant on-site habitats, which will detail habitat implementation and management. The HMMP should be prepared over a 30-year period with more detail provided for the 1-3 year implementation and 3-5 year maintenance period. The HMMP will also contain proposals for monitoring visits and frequency of visits and scope for remedial works / changes to management prescriptions. All drawings and maps will be produced using QGIS to allow accurate monitoring.
- 7.2** Implementation of the recommendations within any Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP): Biodiversity and HMMP should be managed by the site Biodiversity Champion who will be the lead to ensure compliance with all ecological strategies for the Site.
- 7.3** The audit report should include information in the “as built” metric compared to the original baseline plans and the “as built” habitat plan. Where the “as built” habitat plan differs from the original designs, more detailed information may be required, to ensure transparency about what has been delivered. Where differences occur, a copy of the same metric version, e.g. a completed workbook including the full calculations that lead to the final biodiversity unit scores, should be submitted. Summary results of metric calculations would not be sufficient. Where appropriate, detailed justifications for the choice of habitat types, distinctiveness and condition should be added to the comments column or provided separately in a report.
- 7.4** The audit report should also demonstrate compliance with the BNG good practice principles (Baker *et al*, 2019).

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1** The site at East Hall Farmhouse, Hitchin covered approximately 0.3 ha and comprised of the existing hard standing, scrub, and a grassland field. The Site is bordered by grassland to the north, east and south and residential buildings to the west.
- 8.2** Based on the current calculations, with the inclusion of the on-site habitat measures set out in section 6.0 the on-site proposals result in a net gain of 17.67% (0.09) habitat units and the trading rules are satisfied. It is considered a net gain of 10% is achievable for the proposed development.
- 8.3** There will be a requirement for an HMMP to be in place to facilitate delivery of the significant on-site enhancements and also for the off-site strategy. This will be detailed within an appropriate planning condition.
- 8.4** It is considered that if the on-site measures are implemented, the Site can deliver a net gain and adhere to both local and national current planning policy and the Environment Act (2021).

9.0 **References**

North Herts Council (2025) *Policy NE4 of the North Herts Local Plan*.

Baker, J., Hoskin, R. and Butterworth, T. (2019). *Biodiversity net gain. Good practise principles for development A practical guide*. CIRIA. London

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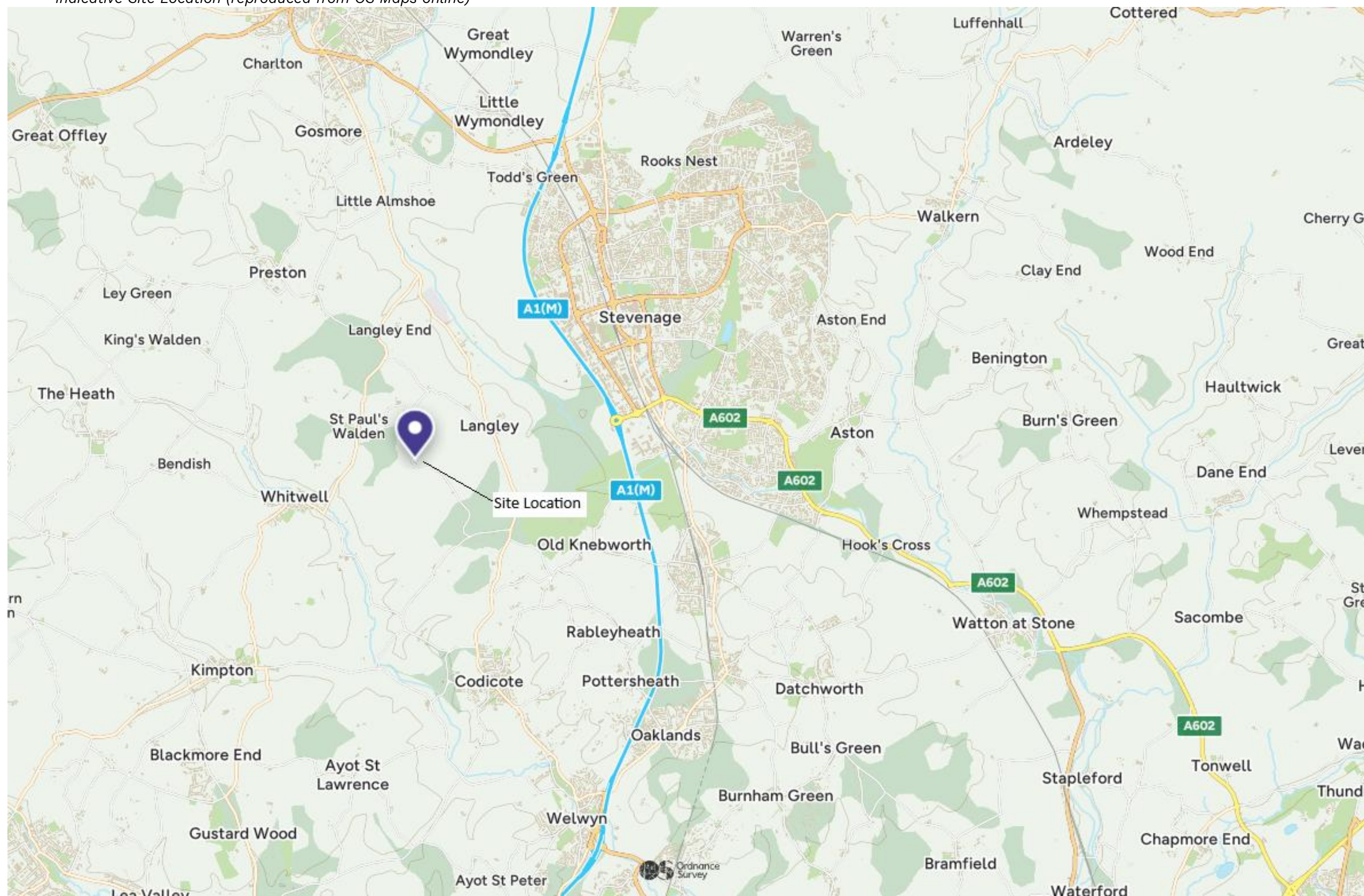
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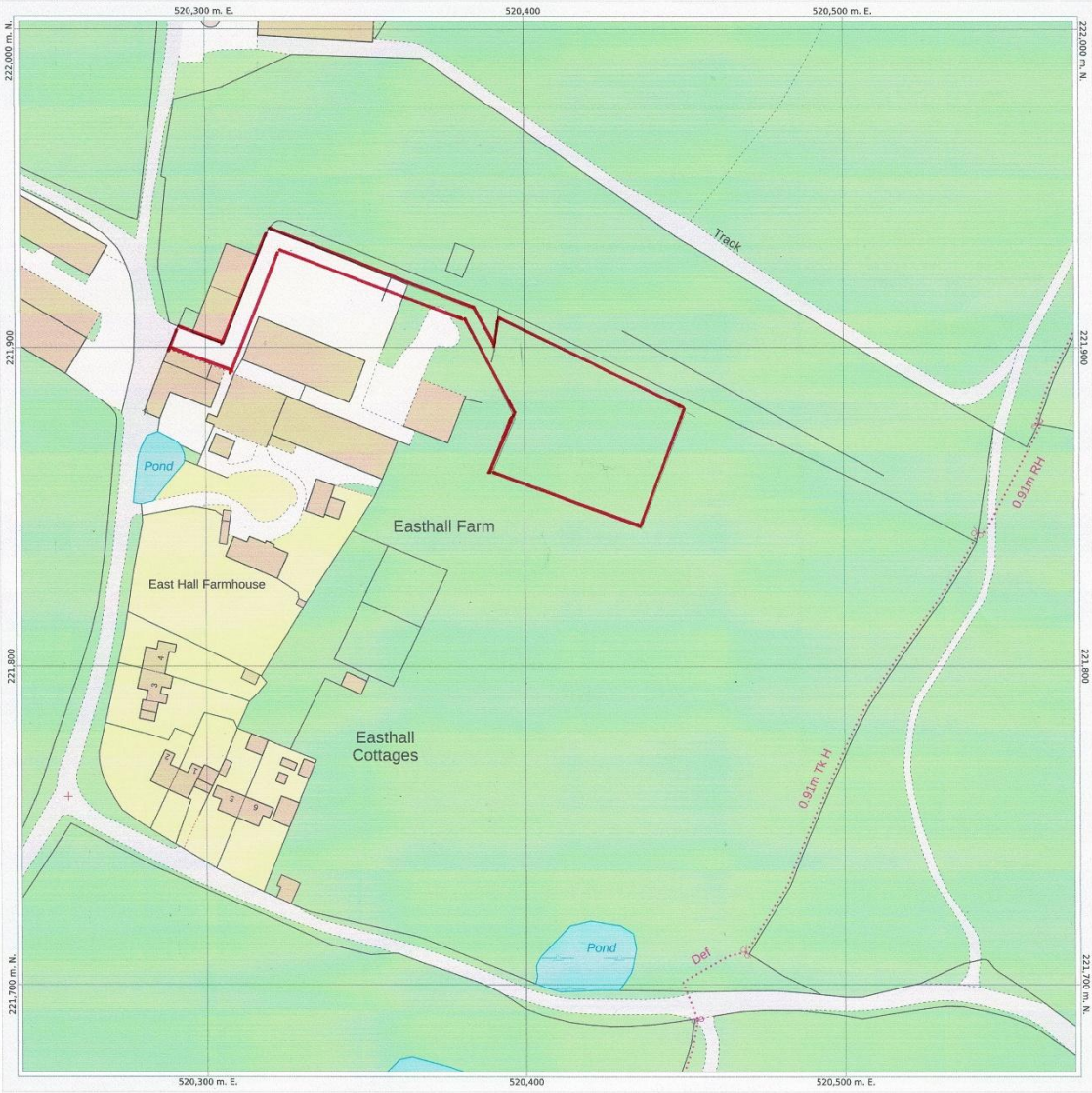
UKHab Ltd. (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* [Online]. Available at <https://ukhab.org/>

Appendix 1: Site Location and Proposals Plans

Indicative Site Location (reproduced from OS Maps online)



Red Line Boundary and Proposed Site Layout



Date of Production: June 18th, 2025
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The representation of a road, track or path is no evidence of a right of way.
The representation of features and lines is no evidence of a property boundary.
Order Licence Reference: SP112302



0 m 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 m

Ground Scale: 1:1250
Bottom Left: 520242 221673 Top Right: 520572 222003
Center: 520407 221838
Area: 330m x 330m

EAST HALL FARMHOUSE, ST. PAULS
WALDEN, HITCHIN, SG4 8DL

Stanfords
EST. 1853



Appendix 2: Relevant Local Planning Policies

This document has not been prepared by a legal or planning professional and should be read as an interpretation of relevant statutes and planning policy guidance only. The information presented within this document has been reported in good faith and are the genuine opinion of Crossland Ecology on such matters. Crossland Ecology does not accept any liability resulting from outcomes relating to the use of this information or its interpretation within this document.

North Herts Council (2025) *Policy NE4 of the North Herts Local Plan* stated:

“Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%, unless they are exempt. Exemptions include small projects to improve your property such as extensions, conservatories or loft conversions (known as householder applications).

Most other types of development that require planning permission will require BNG. This means a development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development.

BNG does not change the existing legal protections for important habitats and wildlife species which must still be considered as part of the planning process.”

The adopted local plan (North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (2022)) includes Policy SP12 – Green Infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity, which states that:

Policy SP12: Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity

We will accommodate significant growth during the plan period whilst ensuring the natural environment is protected and enhanced. We will:

- a) Protect, identify, manage and where possible enhance a strategic multi-functional network of green infrastructure;
- b) Consider and respect landscape character, scenic beauty and locally sensitive features, particularly in relation to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- c) Protect, enhance and manage designated sites in accordance with the following hierarchy of designations and features:
 - Internationally designated sites
 - Nationally designated sites
 - Locally designated sites;
 - Non-designated sites that include important habitats and species
- d) Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity networks including wildlife corridors, ancient woodlands and hedgerows, wetland and riverine habitats, Local Geological Sites, protected species, priority species and habitats, and non-designated sites of ecological value and ensure measurable net gains for biodiversity; and
- e) Protect other open spaces and support provision of new and improved open space.

Appendix 3: Baseline Habitat Plan



Appendix 4: UKHab Baseline Habitat Condition Assessments

Modified Grassland

UKHab Classification	Modified Grassland	Distinctiveness	Low	
		Strategic Significance	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	
Condition Sheet	Grassland Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)	Area (ha)	0.13	
Limitations	None	Reference	G1	
Habitat Description	Grassland to the east of residential building on site.			
Criterion	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion Passed	Photos	Notes
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	N		Average of 5 species per m ²
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Y		
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	Y		

	classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.			
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.	N		
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y		
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y		
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA4).	Y		
Are any criteria essential? (Y/N)	Yes	Total	5	
If Yes, are they passed?	No	Condition	Poor	

Sparsely vegetated land – Tall Forbs

UKHab Classification	Tall forbs	Distinctiveness	Low
		Strategic Significance	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy
Condition Sheet	Grassland Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)	Area (ha)	0.0139
Limitations	None	Reference	n/a
Habitat Description	Tall forbs in the west of the site alongside the modified grassland and bramble scrub.		

Criterion	Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion Passed	Photos	Notes
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.		Y		
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.		Y		
C	"Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA1) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover)."		N		
Are any criteria essential? (Y/N)		Yes	Total	2	
If Yes, are they passed?		No	Condition	Moderate	

Appendix 5: Post-Development Habitat Plan

