

Wellbury House, Hitchin Yeshiva. SG5 3BP

Biodiversity Net Gain Statement

November 2025

Full planning application for a new multipurpose building on a derelict swimming pool site.

1. INTRODUCTION

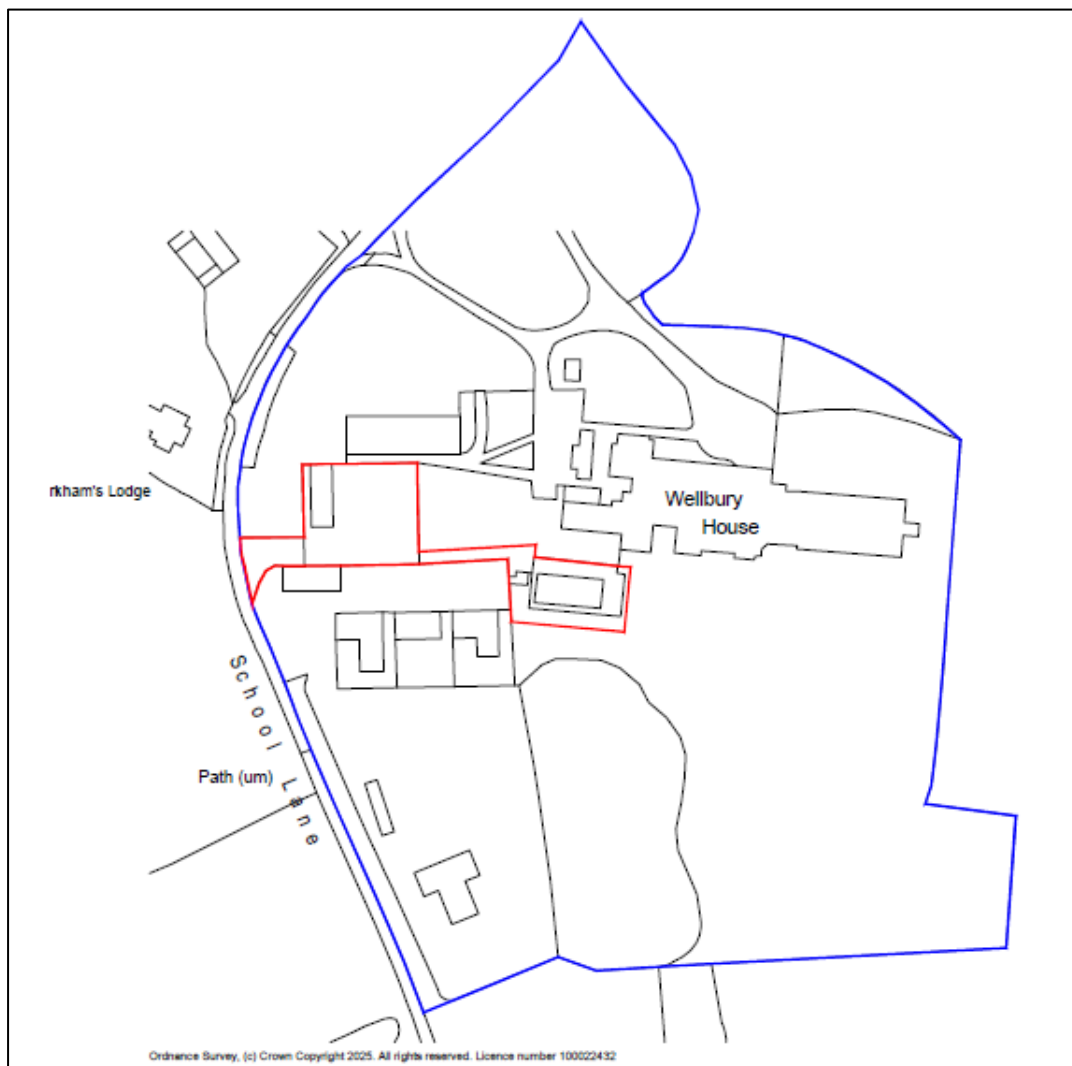
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than it was before.

Wellbury House is a Victorian mansion, originally within a 300-acre landscaped parkland, situated in a rural area near to Little Offley.

In the 1970's the House was used as a Catholic preparatory school for boys, which closed in 2013, to be temporarily used as a care home for boys.

The house and gardens (6 acres) are now owned by the Jewish Yeshiva School.

Site Location Plan



BNG Submission Requirements (Planning Application Stage)

This application is accompanied by the following documents in accordance with the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended):

1. A completed Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tool showing the calculation of the pre-development biodiversity value of the site, based on the habitat conditions as assessed in August 2025
2. An Existing Habitat plan identifying the onsite habitats present on the date of assessment, consistent with the metric inputs.
3. A Proposed Habitat plan identifying the impact of the proposed development on the site

There are no irreplaceable habitats present onsite; therefore this item is not applicable.

A screen shot of the relevant part of the submitted metric is shown below;

Site Name		Wellbury House Hitchin Yeshiva
Sheet Name		Headline Results
Headline Results		
Headline		BNG Targets Not Met ▲
Trading Rules		Trading Rules Not Satisfied ▲
Next steps		Scheme alterations or offsite units required
Baseline Units	Area habitat units	1.3120
	Hedgerow units	Zero Units Baseline
	Watercourse units	Zero Units Baseline
Post-development Units	Area habitat units	0.9509
	Hedgerow units	0.0000
	Watercourse units	0.0000
Total net unit change	Area habitat units	-0.3612
	Hedgerow units	0.0000
	Watercourse units	0.0000
Total net % change	Area habitat units	-27.53%
	Hedgerow units	% target not appropriate
	Watercourse units	% target not appropriate
Area habitat units required to meet target		0.4924
Hedgerow units required to meet target		0.0000
Watercourse units required to meet target		0.0000

The metric advises that 0.3612 Area habitat units are required to meet the BNG target.

This planning application acknowledges the statutory requirement to deliver a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
The applicant is likely to meet this requirement through offsite provision.

Should approval of the current planning application be granted, the following advice should apply

Biodiversity net gain (BNG) condition

What is the BNG condition?

The biodiversity gain condition has its own separate statutory basis, as a planning condition under **paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990**. The condition applies to every planning permission granted for the development of land in England (unless exemptions or transitional provisions apply), and there are separate provisions governing the Biodiversity Gain Plan.

It will not be included as a separate condition in the list of conditions. It will be provided separately to the conditions and will include the following:

- information relating to the biodiversity gain condition including the exemptions to the condition, and transitional provisions in relation to that condition
- information to note the effect that section 73(2D) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 applies (that an earlier biodiversity gain plan in relation to a previous planning permission is regarded as approved)
- the planning authority for the purposes of the Biodiversity Gain Plan
- requirements relating to **irreplaceable habitats**
- where **development is to proceed in phases**, a statement to that effect, and that the development cannot begin before an **Overall Biodiversity Gain Plan** and **Phase Biodiversity Gain Plan** have been submitted to, and approved by the planning

Discharge of the BNG condition?

A Biodiversity Gain plan is required to be submitted to and approved in writing before any development starts on site.

The plan will set out how the biodiversity gain objective of at least 10% will be met.

The plan must be submitted in writing, no earlier than the day after planning permission has been granted.

There is a standard **biodiversity gain plan template** available to assist.

A biodiversity gain plan must include the following:

- information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat
- the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat
- the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat
- any registered off-site biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity
- any biodiversity credits purchased for the development

In addition, the following information is required, where development is not to proceed in phases:

- name and address of the person completing the plan, and (if different) the person submitting the plan
- a description of the development and planning permission reference number (to which the plan relates)
- the **relevant date**, for the purposes of calculating the pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitats and if proposing an earlier date, the reasons for using this earlier date
- the completed **biodiversity metric calculation tool(s)**, stating the publication date of the tool(s), and showing the calculation of the pre-development onsite value on the **relevant date**, and post-development biodiversity value
- a description of arrangements for maintenance and monitoring of habitat enhancement to which paragraph 9(3) of Schedule 7A to the 1990 Act applies (habitat enhancement which must be maintained for at least 30 years after the development is completed)
- (except for onsite irreplaceable habitats) a description of how the biodiversity gain hierarchy will be followed and where to the extent any actions (in order of priority) in that hierarchy are not followed and the reason for that
- pre-development and post-development plans showing the location of onsite habitat (including any irreplaceable habitat) on the **relevant date**, and drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of north
- a description of any irreplaceable habitat on the land to which the plan relates which exist on the relevant date, and any part of the development for which planning permission is granted where the onsite habitat of that part is irreplaceable habitat arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat
- if **habitat degradation** has taken place:
 - a statement to this effect
 - the date immediately before the degradation activity
 - the completed biodiversity tool showing the calculation of the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on that date
 - any available supporting evidence for the value

Monitoring of BNG

There is a requirement for all BNG to be in place for 30 years with a requirement for local authorities to monitor sites that they consider to be “significant” BNG areas.

Information should be provided to demonstrate:

- the required aftercare maintenance and long-term habitat management of created and enhanced features
- how management will be implemented for a minimum period of 30 years
- what monitoring will be implemented during and after construction to ensure that all on and/or off-site BNG is delivered to the required condition

To monitor sites that are considered to be “significant” biodiversity net gain areas, a monitoring charge will be required from the developer. Following the receipt of the Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan, monitoring will be carried out at years 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30.

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