

Supporting Statement: Small Sites Metric Application – 1 Pathfield Cottage

The Small Sites Metric represents an essential tool for achieving mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on residential developments between 1 and 9 dwellings on sites under 1 hectare. This simplified version of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric enables developers to streamline BNG assessment whilst maintaining environmental accountability.

This assessment is based on a site walkover undertaken on 12 October 2025, desktop data was reviewed from magic.gov.uk. Photographs of each habitat parcel are included in the completed metric tool. The walkover remains valid until May 2026.

The site has been assessed against the eligibility criteria for use of the Small Sites Metric. The site contains no priority habitats, no statutory designated sites within or adjacent to the boundary, no European Protected Species, and no irreplaceable habitats. No habitats of high or very high distinctiveness are present. The site area is under 1 hectare with fewer than 10 dwellings proposed, therefore the Small Sites Metric is the appropriate tool.

At 1 Pathfield Cottage (650m² site), the Small Sites Metric has been applied to calculate biodiversity value in accordance with Government guidance effective from 2 April 2024. The metric assesses the baseline condition of existing habitats, including vegetated garden, sealed surfaces, retained trees, and native hedgerows, against proposed enhancements and new tree planting.

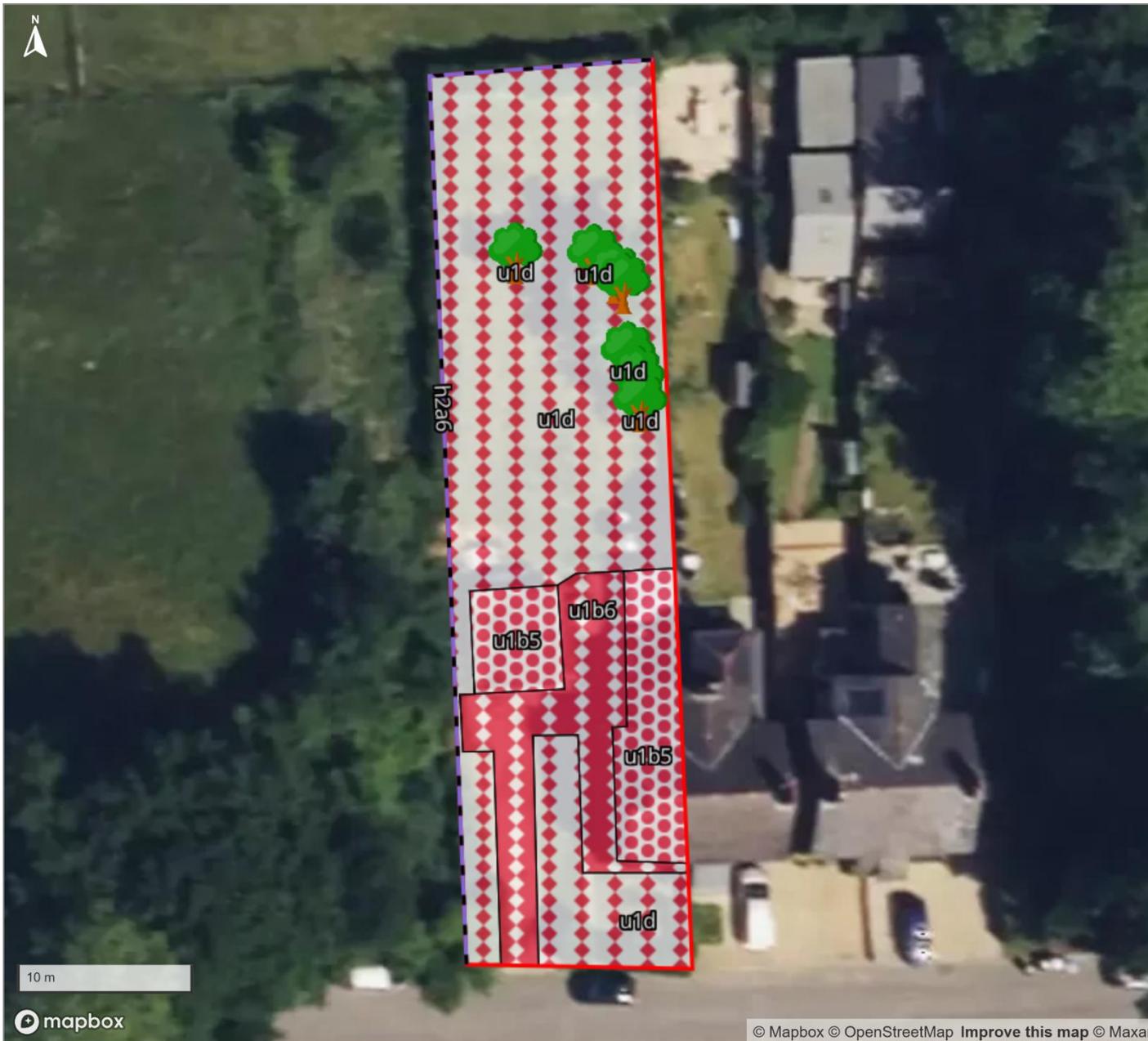
The project demonstrates that small sites can meaningfully contribute to biodiversity objectives. The development achieves 10.73% net gain in area habitat units and 16.56% net gain in hedgerow units, exceeding the mandatory 10% requirement. Key enhancements include retention of 7 existing trees, addition of 5 new urban trees, and upgrading of 8m of native hedgerow to a higher distinctiveness classification.

All proposed biodiversity gains are additional to baseline management and do not include measures required to mitigate direct ecological impacts or comply with existing legal obligations. No double-counting of mitigation or compensation has occurred. The gains represent a genuine enhancement above business-as-usual land management.

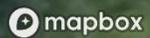
The Small Sites Metric's fixed habitat values eliminate the need for condition assessments by qualified ecologists, reducing complexity and cost whilst ensuring consistent, transparent calculations across comparable developments. This approach is particularly suited to modest residential schemes where proportionate assessment is appropriate, permitting delivery by competent practitioners rather than mandating specialist ecology expertise.

This application exemplifies how the Small Sites Metric enables smaller developments to deliver measurable environmental benefits whilst maintaining regulatory compliance and planning certainty.

Habitats on the site were mapped and are displayed in the below figure.



10 m



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1 Pathfield Cottage

Red Line Boundary Area: **0.0652 ha**

-  Redline boundary
-  **h2a6** Other native hedgerow
-  **u1b5** Buildings
-  **u1b6** Other developed land
-  **u1d** Suburban mosaic of developed and natural surface
-  Trees

Leith Ecology Consulting

Drawn by: RJ
Survey date: 12/10/25
Version Date: 10/11/25
Reviewer: KO

