



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

Sunningdale, Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3AA

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Version A – Updated 17.06.26 to display residential curtilage area

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report assesses Biodiversity net gains/Losses estimated at the proposed development site, known as Land adjacent to Sunningdale, Horsham Road.

The proposed development includes the construction of a residential dwelling in the curtilage of the existing property known as Sunningdale.

Habitats within the residential curtilage of the new dwelling have been classified as either developed land, sealed surface or vegetated garden. Habitats proposed outside the residential curtilage, within the wider site, have been assigned habitat types and condition scores considered achievable on land managed by the landowner for example, the establishment of grassland targeting poor condition, which requires minimal management commitment

Key Results:

The proposed development is expected to result in an **16.74% gain in habitat units and 65.31% increase in hedgerow units. No change is proposed to watercourse units.** This is largely due to the planting of 42 trees (outside of the residential curtilage) and species enrichment of the existing hedgerow.

In order to achieve 10% gain in watercourse units, an additional 0.01 units will be required. The key results are shown below.

2. INTRODUCTION

Project Background

This report has been instructed by Atelier de Linde Ltd.

The proposed development includes the construction of a residential dwelling in the curtilage of the existing property known as Sunningdale.

This report has been completed with reference to the following plans and proposals:

Where changes to the below plans are inconsequential to biodiversity within the development, updates to this report may not be required.

- Concept Layout Plan, GA Landscape Plan Rev D, Joe Perkins Space Explorers, (May 2026)

Overall Site Description

The site itself is dominated by close-mown grassland which forms part of the private garden of the existing Sunningdale property and mature trees along the peripheries. A ditch is present along the northern boundary of the site. The wider landscape is dominated by arable land and pasture with pockets of woodland.

The central grid reference for the site is TQ 17485 13203.

Limitations

Biodiversity Net Gain assessments and calculations can only provide a proxy measure for the real long-term biodiversity changes that occur on any given site.

Whilst the Biodiversity Metric tool assesses the numerical losses and gains of habitats affected as part of the development, it does not include certain other important outcomes or benefits which cannot be assessed numerically.

3. METHODOLOGY

This report is based on data collected during a survey undertaken in December 2024 by Brooke Waites MCIEEM, an experienced ecological surveyor.

The vegetation and habitat types within the site were noted during the survey in accordance with the categories specified in the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd 2023¹). As part of the survey, a habitat condition assessment was undertaken of habitats within the site where required.

Where applicable, habitat types shown in Appendix A have been updated to reflect the Biodiversity Net Gain habitat classifications for example, the use of vegetated gardens, therefore the habitat types shown within this report, may vary from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide² where trees occur within a private garden, only medium, large and very large trees have been included within the baseline assessment.

The value of the on-site habitats and post development proposals have been calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (DEFRA, 2023³).

Habitats within the residential curtilage have been classified as either hardstanding or vegetated garden. Habitats proposed outside the residential curtilage, within the wider site, have been assigned habitat types and condition scores considered achievable on land managed by the landowner for example, the establishment of grassland targeting poor condition, which requires minimal management commitment

Good Practice Principals for Development

Good practice principles for biodiversity net gain are set out within Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles For Development⁴. This report has been undertaken with the principles of the metric in mind. The core principals outlined below:

¹ UKHab Ltd, 2023 UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (at <http://www.ukhab.org>).

² DEFRA, 2024 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide.

³ DEFRA (2023). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool at Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool

⁴ Baker et al, 2019. Biodiversity Net Gain. Good Practise Principles for Development. A Practical Guide.

Principle 1	This metric does not change existing biodiversity protections, statutory obligations, or policy requirements. The use of this metric does not override the ecological mitigation hierarchy and other requirements (such as consenting or licensing processes, for example woodlands).
Principle 2	This metric should be used in accordance with established good practice guidance and professional codes.
Principle 3	This metric is not a complex or comprehensive ecological model and is not a substitute for expert ecological advice.
Principle 4	Biodiversity units are a proxy for biodiversity and should be treated as relative values.
Principle 5	This metric is designed to inform decisions in conjunction with locally relevant evidence, expert input, or guidance.
Principle 6	Habitat interventions need to be realistic and deliverable within a relevant project timeframe.
Principle 7	Created and enhanced habitats should seek, where practical and reasonable, to be local to any impact and deliver strategically important outcomes for nature conservation.
Principle 8	The metric does not enforce a minimum habitat size ratio for compensation of losses. However, proposals should aim to: maintain habitat extent (supporting more, bigger, better and more joined up ecological networks) and ensure that proposed or retained habitat parcels are of sufficient size for ecological function

Mitigation Hierarchy

The table below outlines how the Mitigation Hierarchy' will be followed in relation to the site proposals.

Avoidance	The site has been chosen to minimise loss of habitats, with the proposed development situated on an area of garden habitat, associated with the neighbouring Sunningdale property. The position of the property has been designed to minimise impact on trees within the site.
Mitigation and Compensation	Where hedgerow pruning and removal is required, enhancements to the retained areas of hedgerow are proposed.
Enhancement	The proposed development will result in significant ecological enhancements within the site, including the planting of approximately 49 new trees (42 of which are outside of the proposed residential curtilage area) and the planting of species rich grasslands, particularly along the boundaries of the site.

4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

Baseline Habitats

The site is dominated by a large expanse of close-mown grassland, which forms part of the garden for neighbouring Sunningdale. The site also includes a native hedge along the western boundary and an area of scrub.

Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Condition	Notes
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0008	N/A	
Vegetated garden	1.018	N/A	
Rural Trees	0.4402	Good	4 Very large, 2 large and 2 medium trees. Note 7 small trees included, despite allowances for gardens to provide equality with post development including tree planting outside of the residential curtilage
Mixed Scrub	0.0918	Poor	
Native Hedgerow	0.1 km	Good	
Ditch	0.03 km	Poor	

A map showing the baseline habitats is shown in Appendix A.

Proposed Habitats

The proposed development is due to result in a small increase in developed land and sealed surfaces, due to the construction of a new dwelling and associated parking and access. The assessment below includes the provision of vegetated gardens within the residential curtilage. As well as extensive planting and relandscaping outside of the curtilage.

Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Condition	Notes
Developed land; sealed surface	0.084	N/A - Other	New dwelling and access road
Modified grassland	0.4382	Poor	Proposed areas of planting, including various meadow mixes
Vegetated garden	0.3346	Condition Assessment N/A	Areas of lawn grassland
Rural tree	0.171	Moderate	Newly planted 42 trees outside of the residential curtilage
Mixed Scrub	0.2503	Moderate	Proposed area of woodland mix planting, which includes buffer whips of hazel, holly, hawthorn, dog rose and an understorey of woodland tolerant grass and flower mix

Species Rich Hedgerow	0.09	Good	Planting of additional whips in retained areas of hedge to bolster species richness and improve quality.
Ditch	0.03	Moderate	Retained.

Habitats within the residential curtilage have been classified as either hardstanding or vegetated garden. Habitats proposed outside the residential curtilage, within the wider site, have been assigned habitat types and condition scores considered achievable on land managed by the landowner for example, the establishment of grassland targeting poor condition, which requires minimal management commitment.

Enhancements within the wider site, including the proposed tree planting which represents a significant proportion of the overall biodiversity uplift, are capable of being secured through a standard landscaping condition, providing a robust and enforceable basis for the secured BNG position

5. RESULTS

The proposed development is expected to result in an **16.74% gain in habitat units and 65.31% increase in hedgerow units. No change is proposed to watercourse units.** This is largely due to the planting of 42 trees (outside of the residential curtilage) and species enrichment of the existing hedgerow.

In order to achieve 10% gain in watercourse units, an additional 0.01 units will be required. The key results are shown below.

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	1.29	
		Hedgerow units	0.39	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	16.74%	
		Hedgerow units	65.31%	
		Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?		Yes ✓		
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	7.69	8.45	0.00
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.60	0.66	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.10	0.11	0.01

6. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Existing Habitat Plan (BNG Classifications)

Appendix B – Proposed Layout

Appendix C – Habitat Condition Assessments

Appendix A – Existing Habitat Plan (BNG Classifications)



Legend

Red Line Boundary

Target notes

Potential Roost Assessment (Buildings)

Negligible

Potential Roost Assessment (Trees)

Further Assessment Required
if impacted

Negligible

Baseline Habitats

Mixed Scrub

Buildings

Vegetated Garden

Ditches

Native hedgerow



Site name:

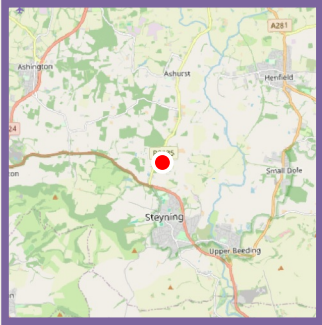
Land Adjacent to Sunningdale, Horsham Road.

Plan title:

Habitat Map

Date: 30/04/2026

Appendix B – Proposed Layout



Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Residential Curtilage Area
- Proposed Habitats**
 - Developed land; sealed surface
 - Other Natural Grassland Wetland Meadow Mix
 - Other neutral grassland Meadow Mixture for Clay Soil
 - Other Natural Grassland Hedgerow Mix
 - Other Natural Grassland Woodland Mix
 - Vegetated garden
 - Ditches
 - Native hedgerow
 - Retained Trees
 - Proposed Trees (Indicative locations only)



Site name:
Land Adjacent to Sunningdale, Horsham Road.

Plan title:
Proposed Habitats Plan

Date: 17/06/2026

Appendix C – Habitat Condition Assessments

Habitat Type: Mixed Scrub	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range).¹ - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species², - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i>, common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i>, sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> (only in its restricted native range), or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i>, which can be up to 100% cover).	Yes	Native scrub including holly, hazel, bramble and hawthorn.
Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ³) shrubs are all present.	No	No mature or veterans present, generally similar age class.
There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) and species indicative of suboptimal condition ⁶ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Yes	No invasives noted.
The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	No	Close mown grassland bordering scrub.
There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	No	Linear area of scrub.
Condition	2 out of 5	Poor

Habitat Type: Ditch			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The ditch is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution.	Yes	No evidence of poor water quality.
B	A range of emergent, submerged and floating-leaved plants are present. As a guide >10 species of emergent, floating or submerged plants present in a 20 m ditch length.	No	No aquatic vegetation present.
C	There is less than 10% cover of filamentous algae and or duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. (these are signs of eutrophication).	Yes	No duckweed present.
D	A fringe of aquatic marginal vegetation is present along more than 75% of the ditch.	No	Close mown up to edge
E	Physical damage is evident along less than 5% of the ditch, with examples of damage including: excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, or any other damaging management activities.	Yes	No damage evident
F	Sufficient water levels are maintained - as a guide a minimum summer depth of approximately 50 cm in minor ditches and 1 m in main drains.	No	Water levels <10 cm even during winter survey. May increase during prolonged rainfall but not sustained.
G	Less than 10% of the ditch is heavily shaded.	No	Heavily shaded by mature trees along ditch
H	There is an absence of non-native plant and animal species ¹ .	Yes	No non-natives present.
Condition	4 out of 8	Poor	

Habitat Type: Native Hedgerow					
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types					
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height).	Yes	
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good	Yes	

			management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).		
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).	Yes	Generally low to the ground, with scrub layer on eastern side.
B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m	This is the horizontal 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).	Yes	No notable gaps.

C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: • Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and • Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least).	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow. This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.	Yes	Present on eastern edge which is bordered by scrub. Western edge is road.
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	Yes	
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ³) and recently introduced species.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website ⁵ where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive	Yes	No non-natives recorded.

			non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website ⁷ .		
D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	Yes	