

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Land Adjacent to Jolesfield Cottages

Jolesfield

Partridge Green

Horsham, RH13 8JT



16th December 2025
V1.2

Sylvatica Ecology Ltd

Company Registration Number: 07705793

<https://se-planning.com>

<i>Limitations and Liabilities</i>	3
1.0 INTRODUCTION	4
<i>Previous Surveys</i>	4
<i>Development Proposal</i>	4
<i>Site Description and Adjacent Habitat</i>	4
2.0 METHODOLOGY	5
<i>Good Practice Principles</i>	5
<i>Habitat Mapping, Condition Assessment and Baseline Calculation Methods</i>	7
<i>Successful Habitat Creation and Condition</i>	7
<i>Competencies</i>	7
3.0 RESULTS	8
<i>Baseline Conditions</i>	8
<i>Post Development Habitats</i>	8
4.0 LONG TERM MANAGEMENT	8
5.0 HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN	9
6.0 NET GAIN SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS	9
7.0 REFERENCES	11
APPENDIX A: BASELINE HABITATS	11
APPENDIX B: HABITATS POST DEVELOPMENT	13
APPENDIX C: HEADLINE RESULTS OF NET GAIN ASSESSMENT	14

Limitations and Liabilities

Sylvatica Ecology Ltd retains the copyright of this report. Copy of this document may only be undertaken in connection to the proposed development works on the property Jolesfield Cottages, Jolesfield, Partridge Green, Horsham RH13 8JT, and only once outstanding fees relating to ecological consultation and surveys have been paid in full. Reproduction of the whole, or any part of the document, without written consent from Sylvatica Ecology Ltd is forbidden. It is not permitted to share this document or any part of this document on any social media platform without permission to do so from Sylvatica Ecology Ltd.

It should be borne in mind that the behaviour of animals can be unpredictable and may not conform to standard patterns recorded in scientific literature. Therefore, this report cannot predict with absolute certainty that animal species will occur in apparently suitable locations or habitats, or that they will not occur in locations or habitats that appear unsuitable.

In order to minimise the likelihood of adverse effects on protected animal species over time, it is accepted good practice, in accordance with Natural England (NE) (formerly English Nature) guidance for ecological surveys to be repeated should works be deferred for over 12 - 18 months from the date of initial survey.

It is the duty of the landowner, developer and operations managers to act responsibly and to comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to, or during works.

The recommendations and information contained within this report are based on the information provided on the development works prior to the surveys being carried out. Should the development proposals change then the findings and recommendations contained within would potentially require revision.

The findings within this report do not constitute legal advice. Should this be required, then a suitably qualified professional practitioner should be contacted.

Author	Signed	Contact
Richard Law BSc (Hons) MRes CEnv MCIEEM FLS		info@se-planning.com

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document presents the small sites biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment relating to Jolesfield Cottages, Jolesfield, Partridge Green, Horsham RH13 8JT. This assessment aims to quantify the predicted change in ecological value of the site following the proposed development works to be carried out at this location. The site area was approximately 8705 m².
- 1.2 BNG became effective in January 2024 (April 2024 for smaller sites) following the Environmental Act 2021, which states that a target of 10% net gain in biodiversity should be achieved, with biodiversity value being maximised on site whenever possible.
- 1.3 Should any changes to the design of the development be made then the BNG score and metric would need to be updated in-line with any such changes. The measures would be carried forward for a period of 30 years after planning permission has been granted and also during the construction phase.

Previous Surveys

- 1.4 A site walkover to map the habitats was conducted in accordance with guidance on the UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab) and the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, in accordance with BS42020:2013 Biodiversity.
- 1.5 A walkover was conducted by Sylvatica Ecology on the 24th October 2025.

Development Proposal

- 1.6 An outline application is to be submitted. It is proposed to build nine new dwellings, with individual gardens and parking spaces, as well as a common paved access path. This would require building over part of the existing modified grassland and removing three medium-sized native species trees. Existing scrub habitat, native hedgerow, deciduous woodland and pond will be retained, and 19 new trees and a length of native hedgerow will be planted.

Site Description and Adjacent Habitat

- 1.7 The site was positioned on the southern edge of a village within a semi-rural landscape composed of pasture, gardens and small woodland blocks. It lay just east of a main local road that formed a clear north–south corridor through the settlement, with residential properties and their associated private gardens arranged along both sides of the road. Immediately north of the site, the land was characterised by small fields, tree belts and an area of managed

ground likely associated with community or recreational use, while the wider village extended further east with a mixture of detached housing, amenity grassland and scattered mature trees. To the west and south, the landscape opened into larger pastoral fields divided by hedgerows and treelines, creating a patchwork of agricultural land surrounding the settlement.

1.8 There were no designated sites within the search radius.

1.9 **Figure 1: Site Survey Location (Red Line Boundary)**



2.0 METHODOLOGY

Good Practice Principles

- 2.1 To calculate the ecological value of the pre and post development site, the Department for Environmental, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric (4.0) was used, following best practice from DEFRA and Natural England. The completed statutory biodiversity metric is provided as a separate document and this report provides additional information on how the calculations have been undertaken.
- 2.2 Good practice guidance from the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) provides a framework that helps to improve the UK's biodiversity by contributing towards strategic principles to conserve and enhance nature while progressing

with sustainable development. **Table 1** provides additional information on each of these principles and how the development has or can achieve these requirements.

2.3 **Table 1: Good Practice Principles and Discussion**

Good Practice Principle	Discussion
<i>1: Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy</i>	The habitats present on site are common and widespread. They comprised of modified grassland, mixed shrub, deciduous woodland, native hedgerow, and a semi-natural pond
<i>2: Avoid Losing Biodiversity that Cannot be Offset by Gains Elsewhere</i>	There were not any irreplaceable habitats affected by the proposed development.
<i>3: Be Inclusive and Equitable</i>	Sylvatica Ecology has provided advice on measures to achieve the 10% net gain target.
<i>4: Address Risks</i>	The ecologists at Sylvatica Ecology have provided input to both protect and improve biodiversity. The statutory biodiversity metric also included inbuilt risk factors which contribute towards calculating overall biodiversity value.
<i>5: Make a Measurable Net Gain Contribution</i>	The development is likely to achieve a net gain in biodiversity through on-site provision.
<i>6: Achieve the Best Outcomes for Biodiversity</i>	The proposed planting of native trees and hedgerow will make a significant increase to biodiversity.
<i>7: Be Additional</i>	The proposals will look to meet a minimum of 10% BNG. Ecological enhancement can be achieved by additional planting of native species. The site has a high potential for bat roosting, so additional features to protect bats can help support species, in addition to the BNG parameters. Areas with potential for Great Crested Newt will be left undisturbed.
<i>8: Create a Net Gain Legacy</i>	The detail relating to the project will be secured within the planning condition.
<i>9: Optimise Sustainability</i>	The design is being developed with biodiversity in mind.
<i>10: Be Transparent</i>	Advice on enhancing the ecological value of the site was provided during the design process and will be used as part of the development of the detailed design should outline planning permission be granted.

Habitat Mapping, Condition Assessment and Baseline Calculation Methods

- 2.4 Condition assessment were not required as part of this Small Sites calculation and the habitat mapping was carried out using QGIS
- 2.5 The tree helper within the statutory metric was used to determine the area of the trees based on their size at diameter at breast height (dbh). Trees smaller than 7.5cm dbh were not included in the calculations.
- 2.6 The site survey data used for the calculations was 24th October 2025.

Successful Habitat Creation and Condition

- 2.7 The time that will elapse between site habitat clearance and habitat re-creation is, as yet, unknown. This time is recorded within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric as a temporal multiplier called 'delay in starting habitat', which is added to each post development habitat type, and increases 'time to target condition'. As a general pattern, the longer the time elapsed between habitat clearance and creation, the longer it takes to achieve the targeted habitat condition, which can lower the metric score.
- 2.8 Currently it is assumed that a 0-year delay has currently been used for each post-development habitat type. The target habitat conditions for the created habitats post development are given as moderate/ good.

Competencies

- 2.9 The survey work and reporting has been led by Richard Law BSc MRes CEnv MCIEEM FLS. Richard has been undertaking ecological survey work within the last 18 years on many different locations throughout the United Kingdom, for a variety of protected species, including bats (Class 2 2015-12576), reptiles, amphibians including great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) (Class 1 2016-20290) and terrestrial mammals including dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) (Class 1 2015-13188) and birds including barn owl (*Tyto alba*) licence (CL29/00236). Richard is also qualified in track and sign and trailing *via* an international system of assessment (www.trackercertification.com).

3.0 RESULTS

- 3.1 This section presents the findings of the biodiversity net gain calculation, the units present onsite prior to development (baseline), the units present post development and the total biodiversity net gain change in units as a percentage calculation.

Baseline Conditions

3.2 **Table 2: Onsite Baseline Conditions**

Onsite Baseline	Habitat Units	3.9333
	Hedgerow Units	0.7800

- 3.3 The size and condition of habitats present onsite at the time of the survey gives a total of 3.9333 habitat units. This comprised of modified grassland, mixed scrub, deciduous woodland, scattered native trees, native hedgerow and a semi natural pond. There were also 0.7800 hedgerow units present within the site survey area.

- 3.4 No irreplaceable habitats are present within the development footprint.

Post Development Habitats

3.5 **Table 3: Post Development Habitats**

Onsite Post Intervention	Habitat Units	4.3509
	Hedgerow Units	0.8583

- 3.6 The post development habitats forecast will achieve the associated target conditions, creating an increase to 4.3709 habitat units and an increase to 0.8583 hedgerow units.
- 3.7 Post development the site is proposed to contain the following habitats: Developed land/ sealed surface, modified grassland, mixed scrub, deciduous woodland, native hedgerow, semi natural pond, and 19 newly planted native trees.

4.0 NET GAIN SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The baseline habitats present on sites provide 3.9333 habitat units and 0.7800 hedgerow units. At the post development stage, it is anticipated that there will be 4.3509 habitat units and 0.8583 hedgerow units following implementation of the scheme. **Table 4** below is a summary of the change in habitat and hedgerow units present on site. Full headline results are also shown in **Appendix C**.

4.2 **Table 4: Total Net Unit Change and Percentage Change**

Total Net % Change	Habitat Units	+0.4175 (10.62%)
	Hedgerow Units	+0.0783 (+10.03%)
	Total Increase for Hedgerow and Habitat Units	+0.4959

- 4.3 The post development habitat loss within the design of the scheme has resulted in an increase of habitat units, totalling 0.4176, giving a Biodiversity Net Gain of +10.62% and a gain of +0.0783 hedgerow units giving a net gain of +10.03. The total hedgerow and habitat unit increase of +0.4959.

5.0 HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

- 5.1 The BNG calculation reported in Section 6.0 depends on the successful creation, enhancement and long-term management of the on-site habitats described in Section 3.0. This section provides a summary Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), setting out how the retained and newly created habitats will be managed and monitored to secure the reported net gain of +0.4176 habitat units (+10.62%) and +0.0783 hedgerow units (+10.03%) over the standard 30-year post-development management period required under the Environment Act 2021 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). A full HMMP, agreed with the Local Planning Authority, would be required to discharge any relevant planning condition prior to commencement of the development.

Management Objectives and Prescriptions

- 5.2 The retained mixed scrub, native hedgerow, deciduous woodland and semi-natural pond will be managed to maintain their existing (or better) condition, while the newly planted native hedgerow and the 19 new native trees will require a period of establishment aftercare. Mixed

scrub and deciduous woodland will be subject to light, rotational management only, retaining structural diversity and controlling any invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The new and retained hedgerow will be watered and maintained through establishment (Years 1-3), with any failed sections gapped-up using the same native species, before entering a long-term rotational cutting cycle of no more than once every two to three years, outside the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive). The 19 new trees will be watered, staked/guarded and maintained through establishment (the first two to three growing seasons), with any tree that fails replaced with one of the same species and comparable size; thereafter, only formative pruning will be undertaken as necessary. The retained modified grassland will be maintained via a regular but not intensive mowing regime, and the semi-natural pond will be retained with an undisturbed buffer, with any encroaching bankside vegetation managed on rotation to prevent over-shading.

Monitoring

- 5.3 The condition of each retained and created habitat will be monitored by a suitably competent ecologist, by walkover condition assessment supported by fixed-point photography, in Years 1, 2, 3 and 5 following completion of the development, and thereafter at five-yearly intervals to Year 30 (i.e. Years 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30). A short monitoring report will be produced following each visit.
- 5.4 Where monitoring identifies that a habitat is failing to establish or is declining in condition (for example, greater than 10-20% mortality of new planting, encroachment of invasive or injurious species, or damage to or loss of habitat area), remedial action will be undertaken as soon as practicable. This may include gapping-up or replacement planting, targeted weed control, or a review of the management regime, with the issue and remedial action taken recorded in the following monitoring report.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.5 Overall responsibility for funding, delivering and maintaining this HMMP will rest with the landowner (or their appointed managing agent/contractor) for the full 30-year management period from first occupation/completion of the development. A suitably competent ecologist should be appointed to undertake the monitoring visits and reporting set out above, with monitoring reports made available to the Local Planning Authority on request.

7.0 REFERENCES

CIEEM (2016) Biodiversity Net Gain – Good Practice Principles for Development

DEFRA (2023) Statutory Biodiversity Metric Draft User Guide

HM Government (2021) Environment Act 2021

HM Government (1990) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

HM Government (1981) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Natural England (2023) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric and Small Sites Metric – QGIS Template and QGIS Import Tool User

APPENDIX A: BASELINE HABITATS



APPENDIX B: HABITATS POST DEVELOPMENT



APPENDIX C: HEADLINE RESULTS OF NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

