



**Kent Sussex
Ecology**

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Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Nuthurst Cricket Club

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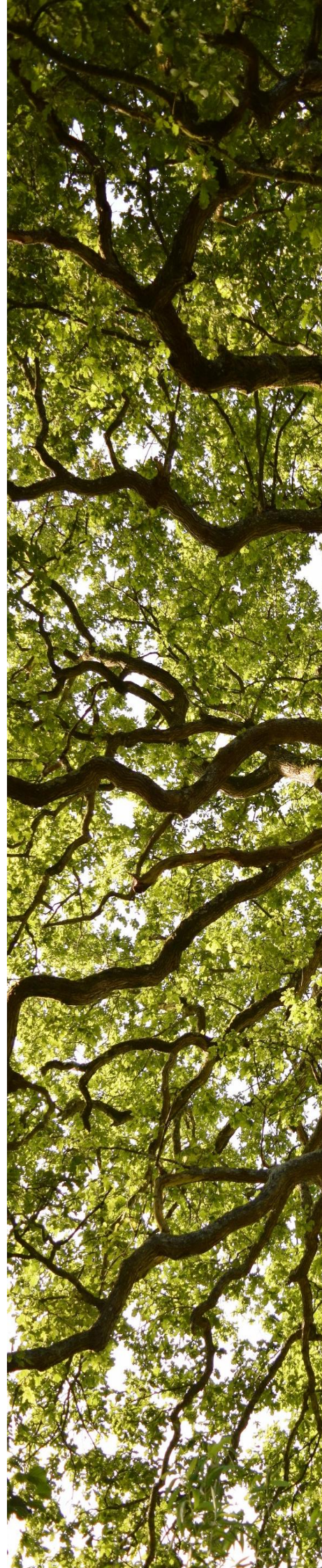
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1.0. INTRODUCTION

Kent Sussex Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment at Nuthurst Cricket Club, Golding Lane, Mannings Heath, West Sussex, RH13 6JX (see location plan below). The site is centred on grid reference TQ20642896.

The BNG assessment pertains to the proposed new 30m² astroturf surface, replacing an existing concrete base, upon which to site a new transportable cricket practice net. At present the site consists of maintained grassland, with the concrete base of the existing practice net.

Developments are required to deliver a BNG uplift of 10%, in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). As such, BNG calculations have been produced for the proposed development and summarised in this report.

The primary aim of this report is to objectively assess whether a biodiversity net gain can be achieved by the proposed development, using Natural England's net gain metric and the standardised approach in alignment with the Environment Act (2021).



Location plan.



2.0. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1. The redline boundary used for this BNG assessment was the footprint only, comprising 48m². Although the site inherently meets the spatial criteria for the Small Sites Metric (SSM), the main Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been utilised for this assessment as this development is securing off-site biodiversity units to achieve the mandatory net gain.
- 2.2. At the project's inception, the proposed mitigation strategy involved the purchase of statutory biodiversity credits, a pathway under which the use of the SSM is fully permitted. Accordingly, the initial UKHab baseline site survey was undertaken by a designated "competent person," satisfying the specific competency requirements for the SSM. When the strategy was subsequently revised to utilise registered off-site units rather than credits, transitioning to the main Statutory Biodiversity Metric became a procedural requirement. Despite this change in the reporting tool, the baseline habitat data collected during the original survey remains robust, fit for purpose, and fully valid for populating the main metric without the need for a secondary survey.
- 2.3. To guarantee the validity and compliance of the final results, this assessment strictly adheres to the four fundamental rules of the statutory metric:
 - Rule 1: The trading rules must be followed to ensure habitat losses are compensated on a like-for-like or like-for-better basis.
 - Rule 2: Biodiversity unit outputs must not be summed, traded, or converted between the separate area, hedgerow, and watercourse unit types.
 - Rule 3: The accurate application of the statutory biodiversity metric formula must be achieved via the official calculation tool.
 - Rule 4: Any deviation from the standard metric methodology may only be permitted by the local planning authority under exceptional, evidenced ecological circumstances.
- 2.4. The survey was carried out on the 21st August 2025 by Giulio Vezzo and David Campion. Mr Vezzo is the Head Greenkeeper at Mannings Heath Golf Club, which adjoins the application site, and has worked at the Golf Club for 30 years. He holds Levels 2 and 3 qualifications in greenkeeping and sports turf management. Mr Campion graduated from the Royal Agricultural College in 1973 and is a Fellow of the British Institute of Agricultural Consultants. The survey consisted of a species list and a condition assessment of the grassland habitat using the BNG condition assessment criteria.
- 2.5. The report was written by Luke Wallace; a qualified (BSc) and CIEEM-accredited ecologist with over 15 years of experience in the field of ecology. The maps produced for this report use the colour coding as depicted within the latest UKHab 'Category Definitions' document. There were no limitations regarding access to the site. However, not all flowering annuals will have been observable at the time of the survey.



3.0. METRIC INPUTS AND DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

- 3.1. The primary habitat type within the redline boundary is 'modified grassland', consisting of common grassland species (see habitat plan on page 6) in moderate condition. The grassland comprises predominantly perennial ryegrass, with a mixture of forbs, such as greater plantain, lawn daisy, dandelion and yarrow. The area is mown to a height consistent with cricket outfields (c.20mm). The remainder of the redline boundary site consists of sealed surface hardstanding.
- 3.2. The development would entail the removal of the existing hardstanding, with a new c.30m² area of the grassland being used for the new hardstanding base. The removed hardstanding will be subject to grassland creation (modified grassland). As BNG cannot be easily secured within the wider cricket field site, offsite options were utilised instead.
- 3.3. To secure the requisite off-site biodiversity mitigation for the proposed development at Mannings Heath Village Green (Planning Reference: DC/25/0740), Nuthurst Cricket Club has entered into a formal Biodiversity Net Gain Unit Purchase Agreement with Julian John Lindsay Young, dated 18 December 2025. This agreement facilitates the allocation of 0.02 units of medium distinctiveness 'Grassland - Other Neutral Grassland' to the development project. These units originate from the designated BNG Land at Darsham Old Hall, which is formally recorded on the Biodiversity Gain Sites Register under reference BGS-140125001. The acquisition of these specific habitat units explicitly offsets the ecological impacts identified at the development site, enabling the project to achieve the required 10% biodiversity uplift.



-  Redline boundary
-  Developed land; sealed surface
-  Modified grassland
-  Existing oak tree
-  Tree RPA

0 5 10 m



Nuthurst Cricket Club BNG Habitat Plan Rev D

Scale 1:200

11/07/2026

Reproduced with Google Satellite and QGIS



4.0. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

- 4.1. The result of the metric calculations is a net gain of 22.06% of 'area' habitat (see the headline results table below), meaning the development adheres to the mandatory net gain obligations. This is achieved via off site habitat gains, secured with a legal agreement (see accompanying documentation).

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		<i>Area habitat units</i>	0.00	
		<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00	
		<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		<i>Area habitat units</i>	22.06%	
		<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%	
		<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?			Yes ✓	
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
<i>Area habitat units</i>	10.00%	0.01	0.01	0.00
<i>Hedgerow units</i>	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Watercourse units</i>	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

Headline result.



APPENDIX A: PHOTOGRAPHS



The grassland within the redline boundary.



APPENDIX B: LEGISLATION

Biodiversity Net Gain Legislation Summary

The Environment Act 2021 introduced mandatory BNG requirements in England, amending the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Schedule 7A). As such, most new developments requiring planning permission must achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of at least 10%. This is assessed using a standardised metric that assigns values to different habitat types. Developers must demonstrate how they will achieve BNG through habitat creation, enhancement, or compensation measures, and the plans must consider a minimum 30-year management period to ensure biodiversity gains are sustained.

A BNG assessment involves making a comparison between the biodiversity value of habitats present within the site prior to development (the 'baseline') and the predicted biodiversity value of habitats following the completion of the development (i.e., 'post-development'). The comparison is made in terms of 'biodiversity units', with a 'biodiversity metric' providing the mechanism to allow biodiversity values to be calculated and compared.

The metric calculates the overall loss or gains of biodiversity for development projects by assessing the distinctiveness (type of habitat and its value), condition, extent, and strategic significance of habitats on site pre- and post-development. To achieve biodiversity net gain, the biodiversity unit score must have a post-development score higher than the baseline score. When calculating the post-development biodiversity units, the metric includes a series of standard 'risk multipliers' to account for the inherent risk of creating and restoring habitats, the time taken to establish habitats and the location of the mitigation in relation to the habitats lost on site. The risk multipliers have the effect of reducing the value of the proposed habitats, which means larger areas, habitats of higher distinctiveness, and/or condition are required to achieve net gain.

The metric assesses and generates separate outputs for area-based habitats (measured in habitat units) and linear based habitats, including hedgerows (measured in hedgerow units) and rivers (measured in river units). For the purpose of the BNG assessment, the output with the lowest value is used to determine whether following development there has been a net gain in biodiversity.

Distinctiveness

Each habitat is assigned a score for distinctiveness. Distinctiveness includes parameters such as species richness, diversity, rarity (at local, regional, national, and international scales) and the degree to which a habitat supports species rarely found in other habitats (Treweek et al., 2010). The categories for distinctiveness within the metric are shown within the Natural England guidance.

Condition

The condition of each habitat is assessed using the methods set out in the Auditing and accounting for biodiversity value: technical supplement. This approach determines how many of the condition criteria descriptions for each habitat type are met or are not met. This is used as a guide but may be superseded where appropriate by other evidence and best ecological judgement. Where this is the case, additional information is provided in the tables used to the condition assessment. Certain habitats are allocated a fixed condition score and do not need their condition to be assessed.

Strategic Significance

The metric requires that the strategic significance of all baseline and post-development habitats be defined. Strategic significance refers to areas of local priority for biodiversity and nature improvement, identified within local planning policies. As part of this assessment, the relevant local planning policy documents were reviewed to determine the strategic significance of the habitats on site.