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# Biodiversity Impact Calculation

## Site Name

**Land at New Barn School Phase 3**

## Client

**Sussex Educare Ltd**

## Issue Date

**15th July 2026**

## Author

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**Project No: 11439**

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## Document Control

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| Original | **Sam Lunn** BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIEEM, | **Kate Priestman** MCIEEM, CEnv | 15.07.2026 | N/A | |

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## About the Author

This report has been prepared by Sam Lunn, a Principal Ecologist at The Ecology Co-op, with 13 years' experience. As a Full member of the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), he is bound by their code of professional conduct.

## About the Reviewer

This report has been reviewed by Kate Priestman, who is a Principal Ecologist with over twenty years' experience. Kate has undertaken extensive survey work and reporting, encompassing a breadth of deliverables, and prepared European Protected Species licences for numerous schemes. As a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv), she is bound by CIEEM's code of professional conduct.

# Report Summary

| | |
|---|---|
| **Purpose** | The Ecology Co-operation was commissioned by Sussex Educare Ltd to undertake a Biodiversity Impact Calculation of a proposal to build a new 12-classroom teaching block, extend the existing car park and create new footpaths and associated external works on land at New Barn School (phase 3), using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, to quantify net change in biodiversity. |
| **Summary of Losses and Gains** | The proposed development scheme at this site will result in the loss of:<br><br>On-site<br>• 0.21ha of modified grassland (g4) in poor condition<br>• 0.09ha of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c) – condition n/a<br>• 0.03ha of introduced shrub (u1) – condition n/a<br>• 0.11ha of developed land; sealed surface – condition n/a.<br><br>The proposed development scheme at this site will retain:<br><br>On-site<br>• 0.057ha of modified grassland (g4) in poor condition<br>• 0.008 of introduced shrub (u1) – condition n/a<br>• 0.006 of developed land; sealed surface – condition n/a.<br><br>The proposed development scheme at this site will enhance:<br><br>On-site<br>• 0.032ha of modified grassland (g4) in poor condition to 0.032ha of other neutral grassland (g3c) in moderate condition.<br><br>Post intervention the following habitats will be created:<br><br>On-site<br>• 0.018ha of other neutral grassland (g3c) in moderate condition<br>• 0.048ha of introduced shrub (u1) – condition n/a<br>• 0.019ha of artificial grass (u1c) – condition n/a<br>• 0.26ha of developed land; sealed surface (hard-standing, u1b6) – condition n/a<br>• 0.096ha of developed land; sealed surface (buildings, u1b5) – condition n/a<br>• 0.1059ha of individual urban trees (26 small trees) in moderate condition. |
| **Final Metric Results** | The Biodiversity Impact Calculation has demonstrated that the proposed scheme will result in a likely net gain of 0.19 habitat units (+28.39%).<br><br>The current scheme does satisfy the trading rules of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. |
| **Does the scheme meet net gain requirements?** | The current scheme does meet the 10% mandatory net gain value set out within the Environment Act 2021 and achieves the 12% net gain goal detailed by Horsham District Council under strategic policy 17 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity. |

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of the Report

There has been a mandatory requirement for all new developments to demonstrate 'net gains' in biodiversity from the 12th February 2024, following the release of updated National Planning Policy Framework[1] by the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Environment Act 2021[2]. A mandatory value of 10% net gain in biodiversity value for all developments (that do not meet exemption criteria) is required under the Environment Act 2021.

This document includes a baseline 'Biodiversity Impact Calculation' (BIC) for the proposed development at New Barn School (Phase 3). The calculation utilises the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and assigns 'biodiversity units' to the pre-existing habitats contained within a proposed development site and those that are predicted to be lost, restored and/or created once the development has been constructed. This allows an objective comparison to be made between the existing biodiversity value of a given site and the predicted biodiversity value post development, with the net change in biodiversity value subsequently quantified.

The purpose of this document is to present the findings of the BIC based on the most up-to date existing habitat survey information and the most current outline plans for the proposed development of the site. BICs provide an evidence base for discussions between the ecological consultant, developer and the local planning authority regarding on-site avoidance, on-site mitigation and off-site compensation requirements.

This report will be used in relation to a proposal for works which include:

- a new 12-classroom teaching block
- extension of the existing car park
- new footpaths and associated external works.

Given the likelihood of proposed changes in the design scheme, some of the recommendations will potentially be subject to change. The results of the BIC are deemed accurate for the most recent layout plan.

This report was commissioned and produced at the request of Sussex Educare Ltd.

## 1.2 Background

The site measures 0.54ha in area, and comprises an area of modified grassland, bare earth, hard-standing and some introduced shrubs. Tree lines that lie outside the red line plan, form the eastern and southern boundaries with a newly created hard-standing car park to the west and modified grassland and artificial pitch to the north.

[1] HM Government (2024). National Planning Policy Framework. Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government. Available online at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf.
[2] HM Government (2021). Environment Act 2021 Available online at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted

The site was subject to an ecological assessment[3] (PEA) on the 27th May 2026 with no further surveys recommended, only mitigation measures.

Habitats (UKHAB) within the site are shown in (Figure 1), these include:

- modified grassland (g4)
- artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)
- introduced shrub (u1)
- developed land, sealed surface (u1b6).

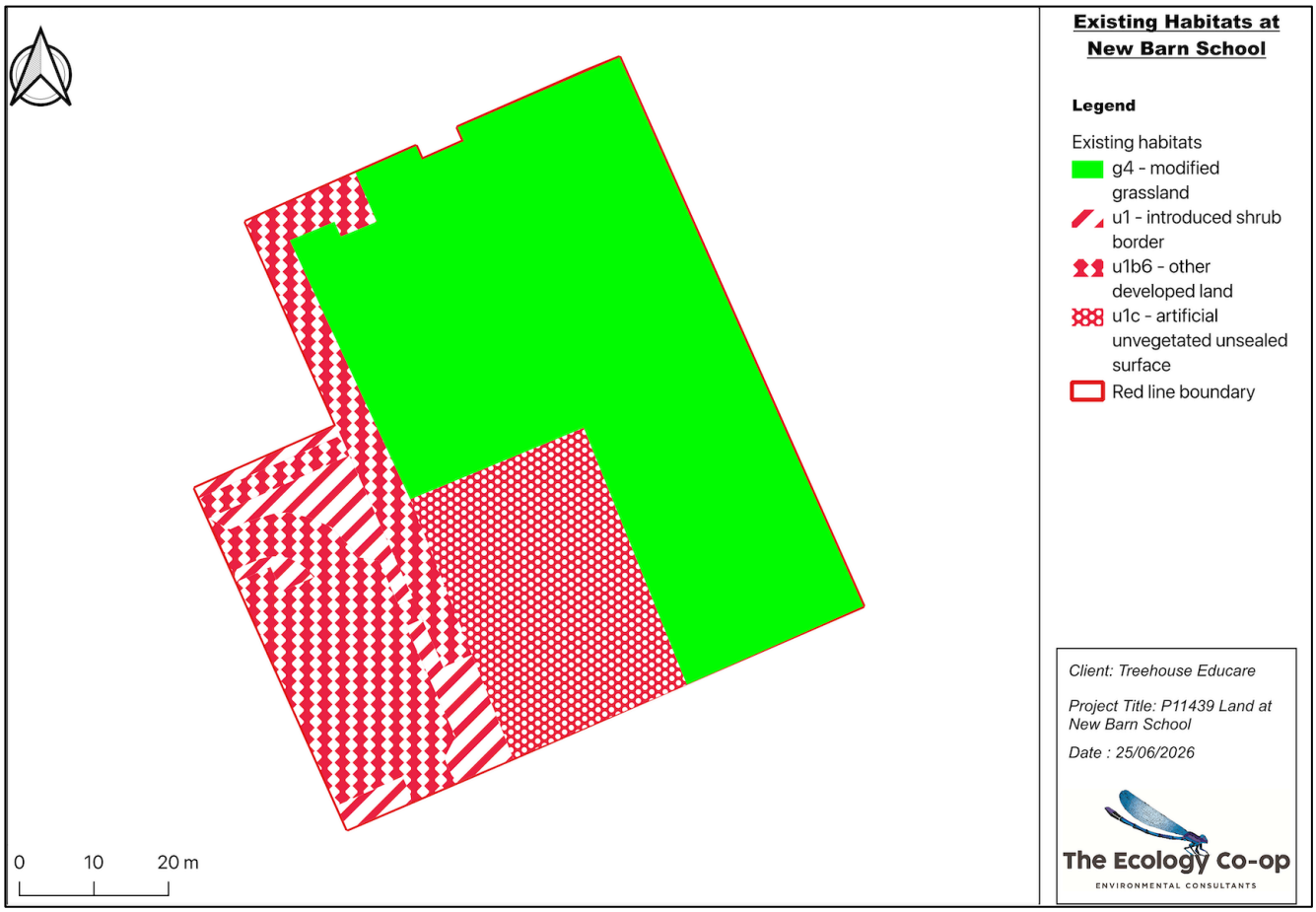


**Figure 1**. UKHAB map showing existing habitats within the site. The site boundary is indicated with a black line. Produced using QGIS software, version 4.06.3 – Hannover.

[3] The Ecology Co-op (2026) Ecological Assessment

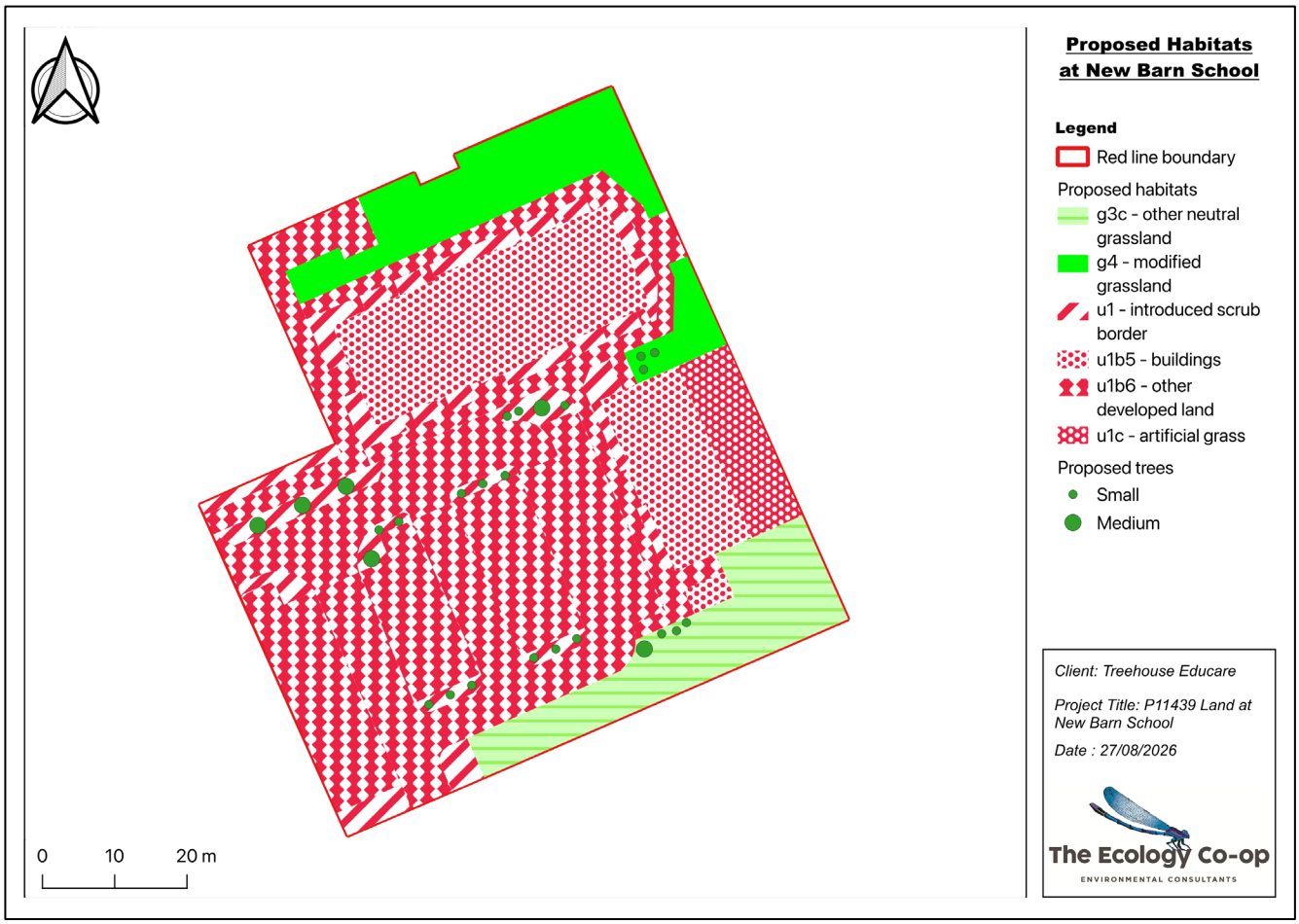


**Figure 2**. Proposed scheme layout for the development at New Barn School Phase 3, reproduced from the proposed site plan by Lytle Associates Architects, drawing number 2267_006, Revision p2 (Figure 4).




**Figure 3.** An aerial image showing the location of the site. The approximate site boundary is outlined in red. Image produced courtesy of Google maps (map data ©2026 Google).

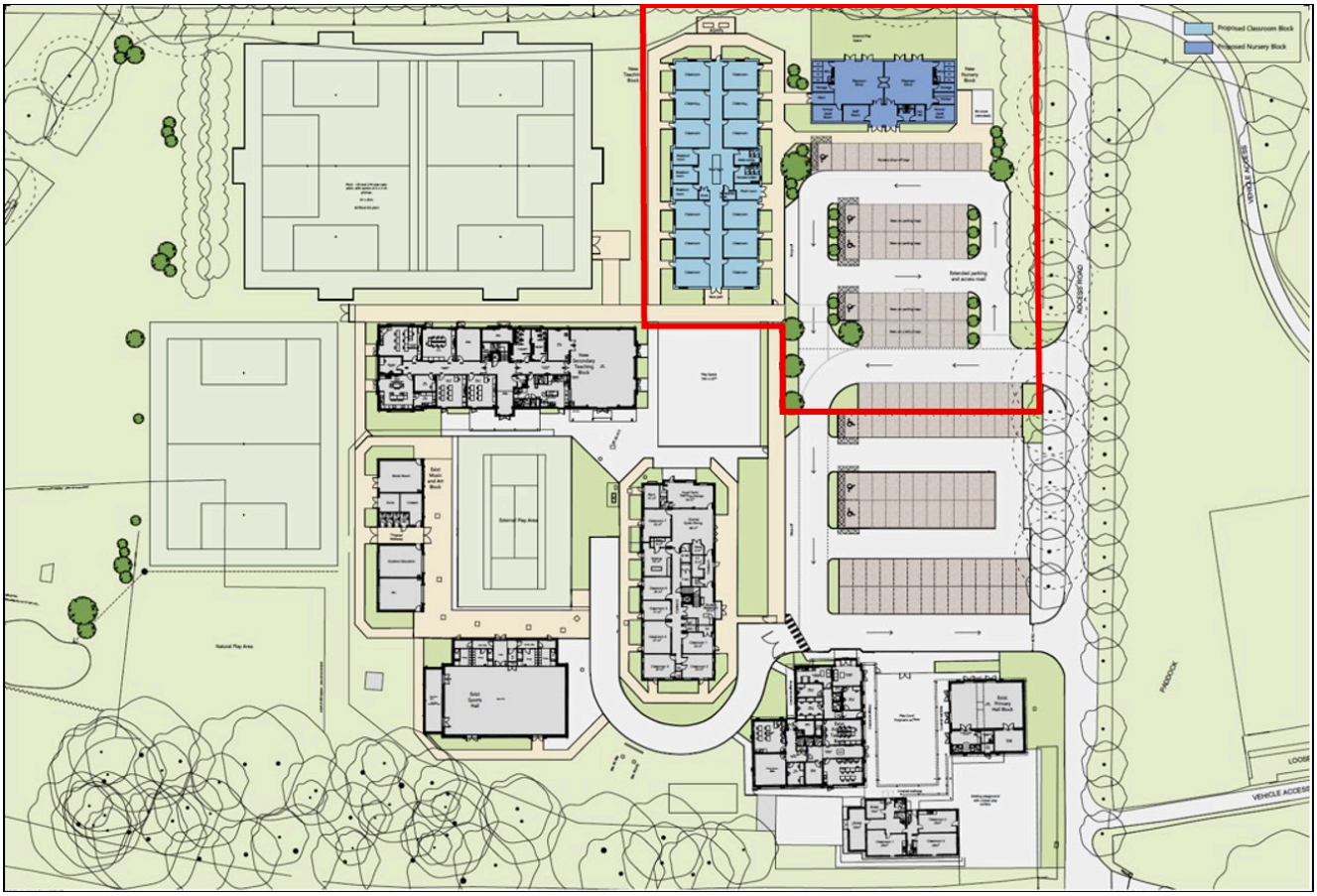


**Figure 4.** Proposed plan for Phase 3 New Barn School produced by Lytle Associates. Drawing no. 2267_006. P2. 26.03.2026.

## 1.3 Summary of Previous Survey Work

An Ecological Assessment with UKHab, completed by The Ecology Co-op in May 2026, identified that the land at New Barn School within the red line boundary shown on Figure 3 does not include any semi-natural habitats and is dominated by the presence of newly established modified grassland and bare ground. The potential for protected species to be present is very limited as the site remains surrounded by amphibian proof fencing installed during the previous application at the school.

## 1.4 Policy and Legislation

**NPPF (2024)**

The NPPF sets out the Government's view on how planners should balance nature conservation with development and helps ensure that Government meets its biodiversity commitments with regards to the operation of the planning system.

Paragraph 187d, states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the local environment by:

- "*minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*."

Paragraph 192b, states that to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should;

- "*promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity*."

Paragraph 193d, states that when determining planning applications, authorities should apply the following principle:

- *"development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*

**Environment Act (2021)**

The Environment Act sets a target of halting the decline in species through the inclusion of a legally binding 2030 species abundance target. Aiming to restore natural habitats and enhance biodiversity, the Act requires new developments to improve or create habitats for nature (through mechanisms such as mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain), and tackle deforestation. Going forwards, UK businesses will need to look closely at their supply chains as amongst other measures they will be prohibited from using commodities associated with wide-scale deforestation. Woodland protection measures are also strengthened through the Act.

**Local Policy – Horsham District Council**

The Strategic policy 17 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity can be found in Appendix 2. Point 5 within biodiversity states that "The council will support new development which delivers at least 12% biodiversity net gain and:

a) Retains and enhances significant features of nature conservation value on development sites;
b) Makes a positive contribution to biodiversity and accords with the aims and objectives of the Green Infrastructure and Local Nature Recovery Strategies, through the creation of appropriate green spaces, that provide linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks that enable the movement of wildlife through development sites; and / or
c) Following the principle of 'right habitat in the right place', significantly increases woodland or other habitats for the purpose of appropriately enhancing biodiversity, carbon sequestration, pollution control, and / or flood mitigation.

# 2 METHODOLOGY

This Biodiversity Impact Calculation uses the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool published by Natural England[4]. This is used to calculate 'habitat units' and 'hedgerow units' by multiplying the area (ha) or lengths (km), 'distinctiveness' (habitat type), 'condition' (quality), and strategic significance (location in relation to the authority's local strategy) of each habitat parcel.

The calculation provides a negative value to the biodiversity units where habitat is being directly lost to development. Where habitats are enhanced or created on-site, or off-site, the calculation gives a positive value but adds risk factors that account for uncertainty - difficulty in creating new habitats and time delays while they establish; habitats that are more difficult to restore or that will take a long time to reach a set target condition will

[4] Natural England (2023) *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Calculation Tool*. Available online at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides

score lower and therefore make a smaller positive contribution.

Where on-site gains are equal to or larger than the losses, the project is deemed to have neutral biodiversity impact or biodiversity 'net gain' respectively.

Where on-site gains do not outweigh on-site losses and a biodiversity 'net loss' is calculated, this becomes an 'offset requirement'. Offsets can be provided by further habitat creation or enhancement in-situ or elsewhere and are assessed using the same metric to balance the predicted gains against the losses to ensure no net loss will be achieved. It follows that a biodiversity net gain can still be achieved by providing higher biodiversity gains through the offset than the net loss resulting from the development.

Note that the metric does not allow for 'trading down'; one of the key principles in measuring biodiversity net losses or gains is that habitats of high ecological importance cannot be offset by the creation of larger areas of habitats with lower value. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool includes a 'trading down correction' that deducts the number of biodiversity units that are not accounted for through the creation of equivalent high distinctive habitats than that lost. For example, the loss of a small area of lowland meadow priority habitat (high distinctiveness) will not be offset by a larger area of modified grassland (medium distinctiveness) and will only be offset by an equivalent area of habitat of the same distinctiveness or higher.

## 2.1 Data Sources

This calculation uses the most up to date survey information, using botanical data gathered during the site visit on 28th May 2026 and specific condition assessments which were undertaken at the same time. The areas of each habitat category were measured using GIS mapping tools (QGIS). Condition assessments were made in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition assessments document[5] and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric: draft user guide[6]. Applying the precautionary principle, a presumption for the higher condition was used where there was any uncertainty in the condition of existing habitats.

To predict habitat/hedgerow units supported after by the site after completion of the development, the aerial imagery was overlaid by the proposed scheme layout (see Figure 4). This allowed direct losses of habitats to be measured where the built environment overlaps with pre-existing habitat, with gardens and amenity areas treated separately. The habitats that are 'created' after development are assumed to achieve the highest level of condition as appropriate; a separate landscape and enhancement plan should be produced to ensure this condition is achieved.

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool uses a separate calculator spreadsheet for linear features. This works under the same principles as above but replaces areas of habitat with linear length of a feature. It should be noted that because linear features often have higher ecological importance, linear habitats are assigned higher distinctiveness and must be offset with other linear features. The hedgerow units generated for linear features are not equivalent or interchangeable with biodiversity calculations for areas of habitat.

[5] Natural England (2023) *Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments* Available online at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides

[6] Natural England (2023). *Statutory Biodiversity Metric draft user guide.* Available online at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides

# 3 RESULTS

## 3.1 Existing Habitats Assessment

A summary of habitats and condition assessments is provided in Table 1. Full results of condition assessments for habitats which require it (using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition assessment document) are provided in Appendix 1.

**Overall, the on-site calculated baseline is 0.67 habitat units and there are no hedgerow units.**

**Table 1.** Existing habitat conditions for New Barn School, Phase 3.

| Habitats | | Condition Assessments |
|---|---|---|
| **UK Habitat (UKHAB) Classification System** | **Location/Reference (habitat parcels split if multiple areas with different condition assessments)** | **Condition** |
| Modified grassland (g4) | This habitat dominates the site and has only recently established comprising the following species: Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, annual meadow grass *Poa annua*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, scentless mayweed *Tripleurospermum inodorum*, creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, smooth sow-thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, cut-leaved crane's bill *Geranium dissectum* and common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* | Poor |
| Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface (u1c) | Bare ground in the southwest corner that forms a quarter of the site with no vegetation present. | N/A |
| Introduced shrub (u1) | Created as part of the previous application along the edges of the new car park. Contains some ornamental species, dominated by redclaws *Escallonia rubra* as well as containing broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, bristly oxtongue *Helminthotheca echioides*, bird's-foot-trefoil, white clover *Trifolium repens*, creeping buttercup, Yorkshire fog, hoary ragwort *Jacobaea erucifolia*, and creeping thistle. | N/A |
| Developed land; sealed surface (u1b6) | Hard-standing pathway and bike storage unit. | N/A |

## 3.2 Habitat Losses and Gains

The proposed development scheme at this site will result in the loss of:

On-site

- 0.21ha of modified grassland (g4) in poor condition
- 0.09ha of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c) – condition n/a
- 0.03ha of introduced shrub (u1) – condition n/a
- 0.11ha of developed land; sealed surface – condition n/a.

The proposed development scheme at this site will retain:

On-site

- 0.057ha of modified grassland (g4) in poor condition
- 0.008 of introduced shrub (u1) – condition n/a
- 0.006 of developed land; sealed surface – condition n/a.

The proposed development scheme at this site will enhance:

On-site

- 0.032ha of modified grassland (g4) in poor condition to 0.032ha of other neutral grassland (g3c) in moderate condition.

Post intervention the following habitats will be created:

On-site

- 0.018ha of other neutral grassland (g3c) in moderate condition
- 0.048ha of introduced shrub (u1) – condition n/a
- 0.019ha of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (artificial grass, u1c) – condition n/a
- 0.26ha of developed land; sealed surface (hard-standing, u1b6) – condition n/a
- 0.096ha of developed land; sealed surface (buildings, u1b5) – condition n/a
- 0.1059ha of individual urban trees (26 small trees) in moderate condition.

The overall results of the calculations are presented in Table 2. Please refer to the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool supplied with this document (submitted separately) for full details of the calculation.

**Table 2.** Headline results of the Biodiversity Impact Calculation for the proposed development at New Barn School (Phase 3).

| FINAL RESULTS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Total net unit change** (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement) | *Area habitat units* | 0.19 |
| | *Hedgerow units* | 0.00 |
| | *Watercourse units* | 0.00 |
| **Total net % change** (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement) | *Area habitat units* | 28.39% |
| | *Hedgerow units* | 0.00% |
| | *Watercourse units* | 0.00% |
| **Trading rules satisfied?** | Yes ✓ | |

# 4 CONCLUSIONS

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation has demonstrated that the proposed scheme will result in a likely net gain of **0.19 habitat units (+28.39%).**

The current scheme does satisfy the trading rules within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

**Should you need any further advice on the information provided above, please do not hesitate to contact The Ecology Co-op.**

# APPENDIX 1 – Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets

| CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR USE WITH STATUTORY BIODIVERSITY METRIC (SBM)- AREA BASED HABITATS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Date | 28/05/2026 | Unique polygon reference | | G4 |
| Surveyor name(s) | Sam Lunn | SBM habitat type | Modified grassland | |
| Condition assessment required? (Y/N) | | | | Yes |
| Onsite or offsite? | Onsite | Condition sheet used | Yes | |
| Limitations (if applicable) | N/A | | | |

**Habitat description**

Recently established modified grassland dominated by Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus* and annual meadow grass *Poa annua*, with occasional broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, scentless mayweed *Tripleurospermum*, creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, smooth sow-thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, cut-leaved Crane's bill *Geranium dissectum* and common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*

**Condition assessment results**

A. There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m2 present, including at least 2 forbs (this may include those listed in Footnote 1).

FALSE

B. Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.

TRUE

C. Scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area.

TRUE

D. Physical damage evident in less than 5% of total grassland area,

FALSE

E. Cover of bare ground between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).

FALSE

F. Cover of bracken is <20%.

TRUE

G. There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981)

TRUE

| | |
|---|---|
| Photo ref | <br> |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Are any criteria non-negotiable? (Y/N)<br>If Yes are they passed? | Yes – Did not pass A | Condition (Good/Moderate/Poor): | Poor |

# **APPENDIX 2 –** Horsham District Council – Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 (December 2023)

| Policy Number/Title | Policy Summary |
|---|---|
| Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape character | The Natural Environment and landscape character of the District, including the landscape, landform and development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats, will be protected against inappropriate development. The Council will expect development proposals to be landscape-led from the outset so that they clearly inform the design and layout. Proposals will also be required to:<br><br>1. Protect, conserve and enhance the landscape and townscape character, taking into account features / areas identified as being of landscape importance and the individual settlement characteristics, and maintain settlement separation;<br><br>2. Maintain and enhance the Green Infrastructure Network, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and national Nature Recovery Network and, where practicable, help to address any identified needs and deficiencies in these networks across the District;<br><br>3. Maintain and enhance the existing network of geological sites and biodiversity, including safeguarding existing designated sites and species, and secure measurable net gains in biodiversity; and<br><br>4. Incorporate SuDS into a scheme in an optimal location for their purpose whilst also securing landscape and biodiversity enhancements and delivering high-quality green spaces. Proposals will be expected to provide details to demonstrate that the 62 whole life management and maintenance of the SuDS are appropriate, deliverable and will not cause harm to the natural environment and/or landscape. |
| Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection | 1. Outside built-up area boundaries and secondary settlements, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to, and justify, its countryside location, and must meet one of the following criteria:<br>a) Support the needs of agriculture or forestry<br>b) Enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;<br>c) Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or<br>d) Enable the sustainable development of rural areas.<br><br>2. In addition, all proposals must be appropriately integrated within the landscape and be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, conserves, and seeks to enhance, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located, including;<br>a) The development pattern of the area, its historical and ecological qualities, tranquillity and sensitivity to change;<br>b) The pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows, trees, waterbodies and other features;<br>c) The landform of the area; and<br>d) The protection of dark skies, in particular where it may impact on a designated International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR), Neighbourhood Plan designations and High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. |

| Policy Number/Title | Policy Summary |
|---|---|
| Strategic Policy 16: Protected Landscapes | 1. Development proposals within and adjacent to the High Weald AONB must demonstrate how their development proposals conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB, having appropriate regard to the setting and views into and out of the AONB, the High Weald AONB Management Plan, any updates and any other relevant documents. Proposals will be required to set out any proposed mitigation or compensation measures needed to address any harm. 66<br><br>2. Small scale development that helps to support the social and economic well-being of the AONB will be supported, provided that the scheme is compatible with the purpose of the designation.<br><br>3. Major development within the AONB will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Applicants will be required to demonstrate why the proposal is in the public interest and what alternatives to the proposal have been considered.<br><br>4. Proposals within land that contributes to the setting of the South Downs National Park should be consistent with National Park purposes and have regard to the South Downs Local Plan, the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment, the South Downs Partnership Management Plan and any other relevant document and updates. In particular, proposals should not cause harm to the special qualities (including dark skies), local distinctiveness or sense of place, by negatively affecting views into and out of the National Park. Proposals will be required to set out any proposed mitigation or compensation measures needed to address any harm. |
| Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity | Green Infrastructure<br><br>1. Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains and enhances the existing network of green infrastructure and contributes to the delivery of public open space, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Nature Recovery Network, natural capital, ecosystem services and / or biodiversity. Green Infrastructure should be integral to the design and layout of development, and new provision, including green linkages, should be provided taking into account Natural England's green infrastructure guidance and the council's green infrastructure strategy. Provision should seek to optimise public access to open space and nature via foot, bicycle, wheeling, and also horse as appropriate.<br><br>2. Proposals that would result in any loss, degradation or harmful impacts to green infrastructure, or core areas of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Nature Recovery Network will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that appropriately mitigates and / or compensates for the respective harm and ensures that the ecosystem services of the area are retained and enhanced. Development proposals will be expected to remove invasive species.<br><br>3. Proposals will be expected to retain and enhance existing priority habitats and trees, and accord with the aims and objectives of the Green Infrastructure and Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Habitat enhancement including additional hedgerow and tree planting must take account of the local landscape and habitat context. It should seek to optimise biodiversity, ecological connectivity and function, and climate change resilience. |

| Policy Number/Title | Policy Summary |
|---|---|
| | a) Development likely to affect a watercourse and its associated corridor should seek to conserve and enhance its ecological, landscape and recreational value. This should include providing adequate natural buffer zones to the watercourse.<br><br>Biodiversity<br><br>5. The Council will support appropriate new development which delivers at least 12% biodiversity net gain and:<br>d) Retains and enhances significant features of nature conservation value on development sites;<br>e) Makes a positive contribution to biodiversity and accords with the aims and objectives of the Green Infrastructure and Local Nature Recovery Strategies, through the creation of appropriate green spaces, that provide linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks that enable the movement of wildlife through development sites; and / or<br>f) Following the principle of 'right habitat in the right place', significantly increases woodland or other habitats for the purpose of appropriately enhancing biodiversity, carbon sequestration, pollution control, and / or flood mitigation.<br><br>6. Relevant development proposals will be expected to deliver 12% biodiversity net gain and must submit Biodiversity Net Gain information to show how this will be achieved using the mandated Biodiversity Metric or the Small Sites Metric as appropriate and must abide by the metric trading rules. Submissions must make clear what will be provided to meet no net loss and what will deliver net gains. The net gain must be achieved through the delivery of appropriate on-site biodiversity net gain or, where this is not practicable, through off-site net gain within the District especially areas, as suitable to the habitats subject to gain, identified in the District's Green Infrastructure Strategy or the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, or as agreed by the Council. All such schemes, excluding any respective element using statutory biodiversity credits, must submit for approval by the Council a funded maintenance and management plan, including monitoring / reporting and appropriate enforcement processes, that secures the biodiversity net gains for at least 30 years.<br><br>7. All other development proposals must seek to demonstrate how measurable biodiversity net gains will be delivered.<br><br>Protected Sites and Species<br><br>8. Proposals must give appropriate consideration to protected and notable species. They will be expected to protect priority species and seek to aid their recovery, and must conserve, restore and enhance priority habitats, and should create and manage appropriate new habitats, taking into account pollination, where practicable.<br><br>9. Particular consideration will be given to the hierarchy of sites and habitats, including buffer areas, within the District, or functionally linked to, as follows:<br>a) Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites;<br>b) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Veteran Trees, Ancient Woodland and other irreplaceable habitats; 75<br>c) Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and any areas of priority habitats including traditional orchards, local geodiversity, Core Sites in the emerging NRN and other irreplaceable habitats not already identified in a & b above. |

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| | 10. An appropriate buffer around woodland will be required, this will be at least 15m around Ancient Woodland or greater in accordance with good practice, and consideration should be given to the potential for protected species, such as bats, and impacts on hydrology. Around ancient and veteran trees a minimum buffer zone of at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree, or 5 metres from the edge of the tree's canopy whichever is the larger, will be required.<br><br>11. Where the felling of a tree is necessary, for example due to disease, replacement planting with a suitable tree species, age and location to retain and enhance the link with the wider network of habitats and Green Infrastructure, will be required.<br><br>12. Where development is anticipated to have a direct or indirect adverse impact on sites or features of importance to nature conservation, development will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that:<br>a) The mitigation hierarchy has been applied and the objectives of a site's designation, where applicable, and integrity of the area will not be undermined;<br>b) The reason for the development clearly outweighs the likely impact to notified features and / or the need to protect the value of the site; and<br>c) Appropriate mitigation and compensation measures will be provided alongside the delivery of measurable biodiversity net gain as relevant.<br><br>13. Any development with the potential to impact the Arun Valley SPA / SAC / Ramsar site, The Mens SAC and / or Ebernoe Common SAC will be subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment to determine the need for an Appropriate Assessment. In addition, development will be required to be in accordance with the necessary mitigation measures for development set out in the Habitat Regulation Assessment of this Plan. |
| Policy 18: Local Green Space | 1. Local green and open spaces should be protected. Areas designated as Local Green Space, as identified on the Policies Map, will be safeguarded from development unless it can be demonstrated that:<br>a) Development is proposed to enhance Local Green Space functions, for example through improvements to access, recreation and wildlife; or<br>b) It is required for a statutory utility infrastructure purpose, for example water, gas, electricity or telecommunications provision.<br><br>2. Within Neighbourhood Plans, the creation of new areas of Local Green Space will be supported providing it is within reasonably close proximity to the community it serves, is local in character and is not an extensive track of land. It must also meet the relevant criteria, as set out in any relevant national planning guidance documents, in relation to scale, beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity and ecological value, and does not conflict with the strategic policies of this Local Plan. |