



Park House Farm Turbines, Leicester

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Report Ref. ER-8706-01A

27/08/2025

COGEO

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Date			27/08/2025		
Report duration			In accordance with CIEEM (2019), unless otherwise stated the findings of this report remain valid for a period of 18 months. After this period advice should be sought on the scope of any updating work required.		
Revision: A	25/09/2025	Author: SW	Updated to most recent landscape proposals and redline boundary		



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Introduction

1. Brooks Ecological Ltd was commissioned by COGEO to carry out a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment of the proposed development Site at Park House Farm Turbines, Leicester.
2. The assessment applies to the parcels of land shown in Figure 1 opposite.
3. The assessment is informed by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey of the Site undertaken by COGEO in June 2025. These reports should be read in conjunction for full context.
4. The provided PEA has been used to make an assessment of the baseline value of the Site in relation to BNG, as such, the accuracy of the BNG calculations is dependent on the PEA provided by the client. Brooks Ecological have not undertaken a site survey.
5. Biodiversity Accounting metrics are used to quantify the value of a site in Biodiversity Units. This helps in assessing the ecological impacts of the proposed development and can help to inform avoidance, or on-Site mitigation levels required; or as a last resort can translate to a direct monetary value where compensation (off-Site) is required.
6. For the purposes of metric calculations, the Site area has been measured using GIS against the provided red line boundary as 0.97ha
7. Our assessment has made use of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool, and extracts from this have been used throughout the report. The full spreadsheet has been provided digitally as file BM-8706-01A, and should be submitted as part of the application.

Figure 1 Extent of BNG assessment (red line boundary).



Pre-development baseline

Habitats identified

8. Habitats present on-Site are outlined in Table 1, opposite. These are shown in relation to location and extent in Figure 2 overleaf.

Condition Assessment

9. Condition assessment of baseline habitats is taken from the PEA provided by COGEO and have not been made by Brooks Ecological.

Strategic Significance

10. None of the habitats on-Site fall within or close to a Wildlife Habitat Network, and so all are mapped as 'area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy'.

Irreplaceable habitat

11. Irreplaceable habitats have not been found on Site

Habitat Degradation¹

12. No evidence has been provided to suggest that habitats on Site have been deliberately degraded.

Biodiversity Metric

13. Habitat types, conditions, and areas have been entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool, alongside information on their strategic significance.
14. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (published 03/07/2025), is provided alongside this assessment, in Excel spreadsheet BM-8706-01, and may be useful in investigating design options for the Site.

Table 1 Habitat Types.

Habitat	Irreplaceable?	Distinctiveness	Condition	See Condition Assessment sheet
Cereal Crops	No	Low	N/A	N/A -
Modified grassland	No	Low	Moderate	N/A - COGEO report
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	No	Very low	N/A	N/A

¹ See [Appendices](#) for further information on degradation.

Figure 2 The Site's habitats assigned to types used in the Biodiversity Metric.



Trading Rules

15. As part of delivering a Net Gain for biodiversity, the BNG process requires that trading rules are complied with, such that loss of habitats is compensated for in a like-for-like or like-for-better fashion. This is based on habitat distinctiveness.
16. Once trading rules are complied with, the 'gain' component can come from any distinctiveness category.

Habitat Unit Score

17. The Site has been assessed as having a baseline score of 2.16 Habitat Units. These break down as shown in Table 2, below.

Table 2 Habitat Units broken down by distinctiveness at this Site.

Distinctiveness	Units	Approach to compensation if lost
Very Low	0	No compensation required.
Low	2.16	Can be replaced with <u>any</u> habitat of the same distinctiveness (low) or any habitat from a higher distinctiveness (Medium, High or Very High)
Medium	0	<u>Can not</u> be replaced with habitats from a lower distinctiveness. Compensation needs to be like for like, or like for better. This means it can only be replaced by habitat from the same broad categories in Medium distinctiveness, or any habitat from a higher distinctiveness category (High or Very High).
High	0	Can only be replaced with the same habitat.
Very High	0	Can only be replaced with the same habitat; bespoke compensation required.
Irreplaceable	0	Bespoke compensation required, outside of BNG.

Post-development value²

18. This section calculates the Biodiversity Unit value of the post-development Site and quantifies any gain or shortfall in Units.

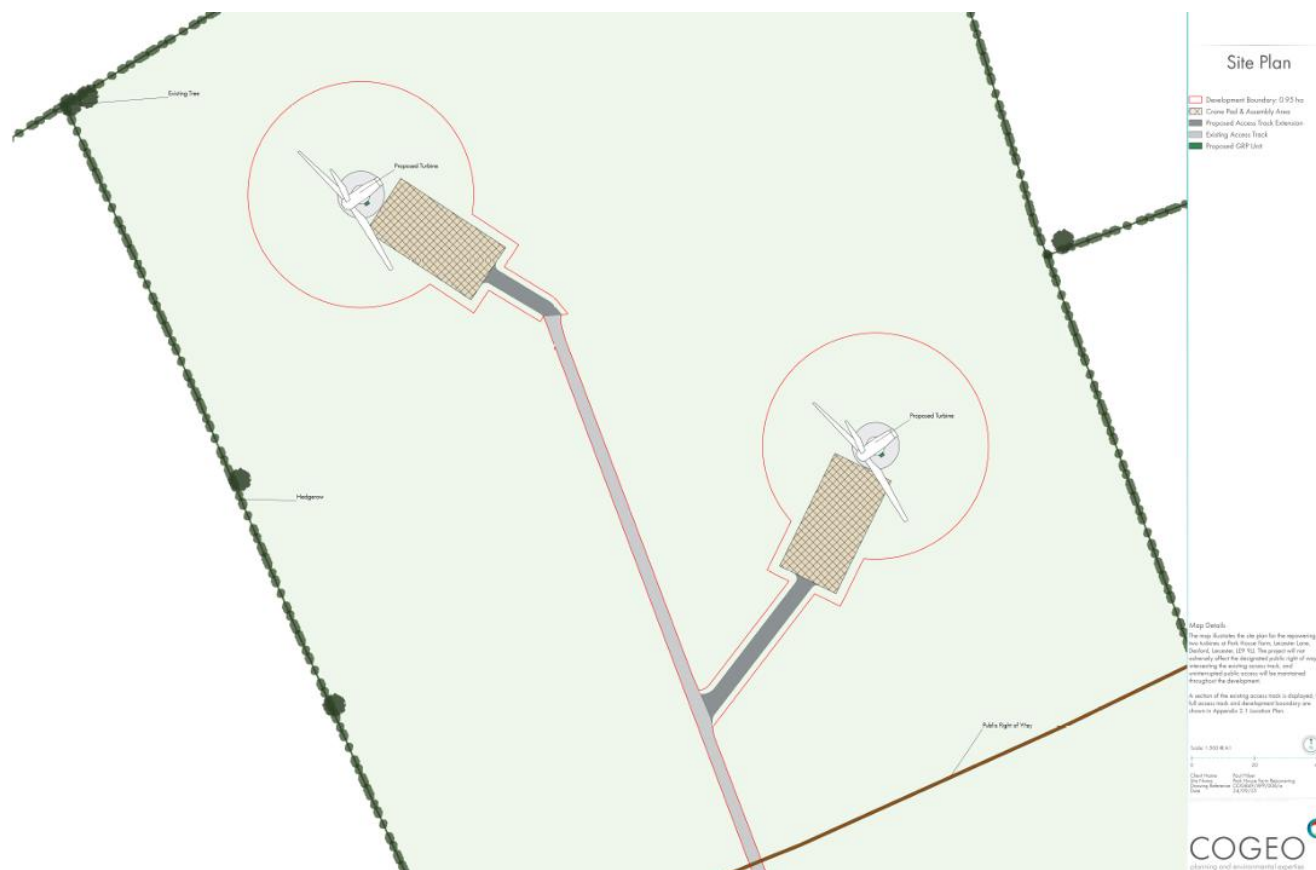
Proposed habitats

19. Habitats present on-Site post-development have been based on the proposed Site Plan produced by COGEO (COG849/APP/006/a, September 2025).
20. Planting types are not specified in this plan, however, based on the existing habitats and their conditions, and the nature of proposals reasonable assumptions can be drawn in terms of post development habitats.
21. Habitats assigned are shown in Figure 4 overleaf.

Condition assessment

22. The condition assessment for each proposed habitat is based on what is realistic and achievable for the Site, based on the proposals plan.
23. Achieving moderate condition modified grassland is a reasonable assumption given that the existing baseline modified grassland is found in this condition. However, the LPA may request a BEMP to demonstrate how this will be achieved.

Figure 3 Site Plan dwg. COG849/APP/006/a (COGEO September 2025).



² Please see assumptions section at end of report

Post-development habitats

Habitat Score

24. The Site has been assessed as having a post-development score of 2.52 Habitat Units.
25. This score is based on our interpretation of the Site Plan, as shown in Figure 4 opposite.
26. Calculations for the change in Habitat Units have been based on the entire Site being cleared of existing habitats, which results in the loss of all 2.16 Habitat Units present pre-development.
27. Post-development calculations include Habitat Units gained through the creation of modified grassland in moderate condition, surrounding the turbines.
28. The loss of Low-distinctiveness cereal crop and modified grassland does not infer the need for trading rules to be met.

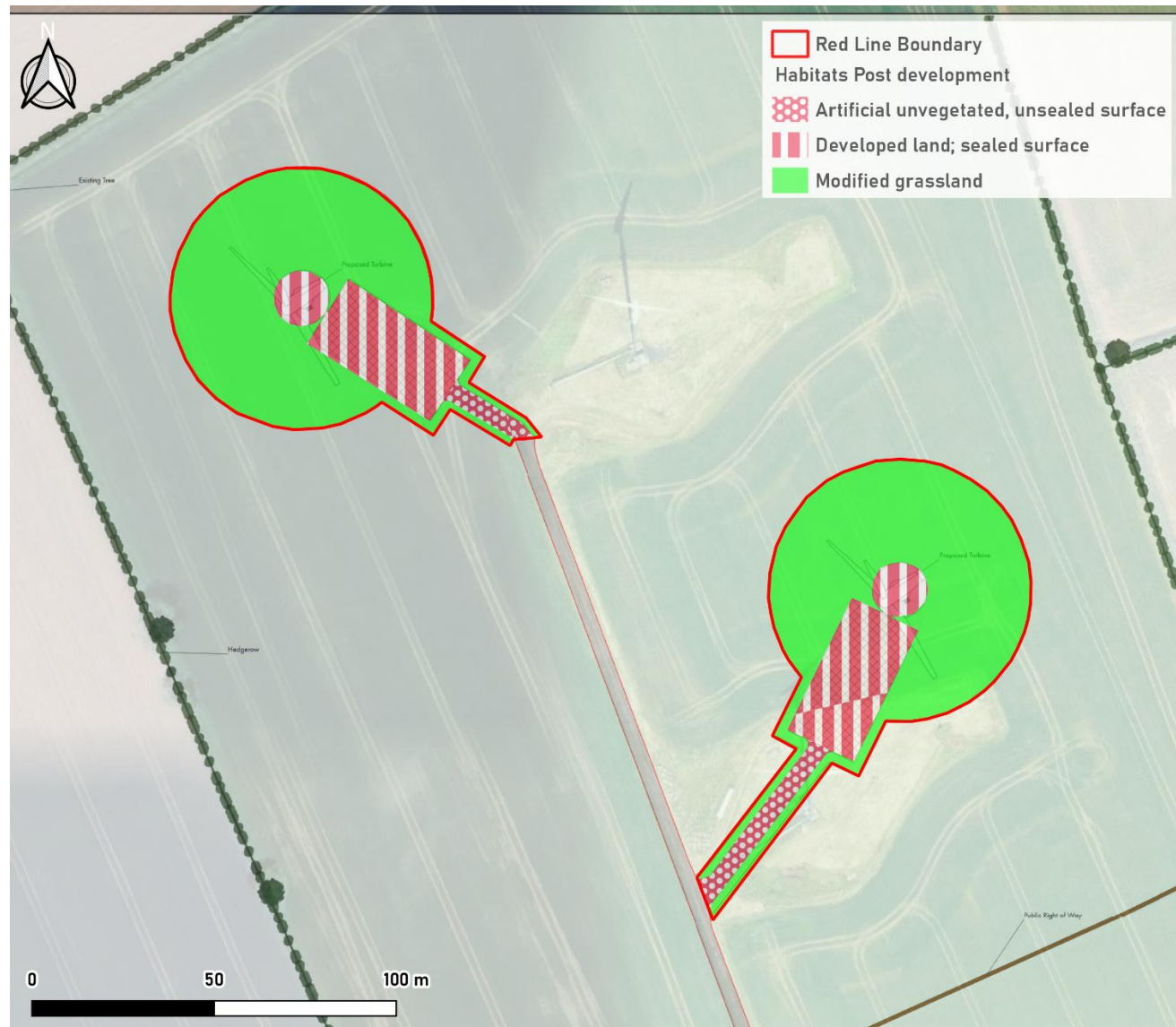
Habitat Retention

29. The development boundary is limited to the area directly impacted by the installation of the turbines and as such, it is assumed that there will be no habitat retention.

The BNG Hierarchy

30. There will be no impact on any habitats of medium or higher distinctiveness. Additionally, impacts are mitigated onsite through the provision of appropriate habitat. As such, the project can demonstrate compliance with the mitigation hierarchy.

Figure 4 Post-development habitats.



Change in Unit Value

- 31. The Statutory Metric has been used to calculate the net unit change for the Site; this has been predicted an overall net gain of 0.36 Habitat Units (16.55%).
- 32. A copy of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool Excel spreadsheet (ref. BM-8706-01A) has been provided with this report and should be submitted digitally as part of the application.

Trading Rules

- 33. Habitat types are separated out into distinctiveness categories (Very Low to Very High) which dictate what mitigation/compensation is required for their loss. This is assessment is separate to the 'net unit change' score quoted above.
- 34. Trading rules have been satisfied.

Requirements for Planning

- 35. There is mandatory requirement for all developments to demonstrate at least a 10% net gain in each unit measurement, as well as to satisfy Trading rules. A standard planning condition will be imposed on all decision notices to ensure this is met.
- 36. The proposed development is able to demonstrate a 10% net gain and satisfies Trading Rules.
- 37. A Net Gain Plan and Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan are likely to be required to discharge relevant pre-start planning conditions.

- 38. Provision should be made by the LPA and developer to secure the necessary gains through legal agreement - planning condition (for on Site gains), planning obligation or conservation covenant (for off-Site gains) - see further information section at the end of the report for more information on this.

Figure 5 Biodiversity Metric Summary.

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.36
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	16.55%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Assumptions

39. Establishment of the post development value of the Site at this stage is necessarily based on several assumptions which we have set out below, please provide the additional information required against each if this is available:

	Factor	Information Required
1	<u>Timing</u> The BNG metric includes options to identify habitat creation which is deferred (by x years after it is lost) or habitat which is created in advance (elsewhere prior to its loss from Site). These are subject to multipliers and will affect your ultimate BNG score. We have assumed a 1-year build programme and a delay of 1 years between loss of habitat and creation of new. Calculations will need to be re-run if changes to the project plan result in a change to this figure.	Please provide a realistic timescale for the period between loss of habitat (Site clearance) and the completion of new on-Site habitat areas.
2	<u>Phasing</u> Unless you have told us otherwise, we have assumed that development will not be phased (in planning terms) and that habitat will be lost and created in a single phase.	Please confirm whether development will be phased.
3	<u>Habitat Retention</u> Unless you have provided a habitat retention plan showing areas where habitat can be retained undisturbed, we have assumed that all mapped habitat will be lost from the Site and then replaced.	Please provide a habitat retention plan showing area which can be retained unaffected by clearance, excavation, storage, compounds etc. Identify also any areas of temporary impacts - these may be impacted by the above but can be returned to the same habitat within 2 years.
4	<u>Other limiting factors</u> Ecological conditions are likely to be the primary factors determining the potential of the site to deliver Biodiversity Units, these would normally be established through a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA). Where a PEA has not been carried out, we have assumed that ecological factors are not limiting. Where a PEA has been carried out by a third party, we have assumed that the information provided is suitable and accurate. There are other limiting factors falling outside of the remit of ecological assessment which could also affect delivery, these may not be apparent to us at this stage. As part of any future management plans produced to deliver Biodiversity Units it will be necessary to assess information on (though not limited to) the following factors - any of which could have a bearing on the site's potential: • Designated Sites (these may have been considered if desk-study has been part of the scope) • Protected and Notable Species (these may have been considered if desk-study has been part of the scope) • Invasive and Non-native Species	Provide information and reports or references any of the factors which you know will be, or could be, limiting in terms of habitat creation.

	Factor	Information Required
	• Land tenure and public access • Climate • Geology / topography • Agricultural land status • Soils and substrates • Contaminated Land • Hydrology and Drainage • Flood Risk • Landscape Character and Designations • Historic Environment and Earth Heritage • Services and Infrastructure • Land ownership These factors may be outside of the remit of this report (especially where a PEA has not been produced) and the expertise of an ecologist. We cannot be responsible for the impact of any of these factors on the potential of the site to deliver Biodiversity Units. Where other information is not made available, we have assumed they are not limiting	

References

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). 2019. *Advice note: on the lifespan of ecological reports and surveys*. Winchester: Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. [Online]. Available from: <https://cieem.net/resource/advice-note-on-the-lifespan-of-ecological-reports-and-surveys/>

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2024. *National Planning and Policy Framework*. London: Her Majesty's Government. [Online]. Available from: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf>

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide. 2025. London: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). [Online]. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

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Appendices

The following reports/digital documents have been provided alongside this report and should be read in conjunction with it:

- BM-8706-01A – Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool

Habitat degradation

Within Schedule 14 of the Environment Act, which sets out the biodiversity gain condition for development, measures are included that allow planning authorities to recognise any habitat degradation since **30th January 2020** and to take the earlier habitat state as the baseline for the purposes of biodiversity net gain. In order to ascertain the habitats present and their condition on 30th January 2020, aerial imagery or data sets from that time could be used. 30th January 2020 is the relevant date as it was the day the Bill entered Parliament.

In 2023, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA), introduced additional wording further tightening the law regarding degradation by extending the circumstances in which degradation can be addressed. This wording covered both authorised and unauthorised activity on onsite and offsite habitats, on or after **25th August 2023**.

Further information

Further useful information is available on legal agreements to secure Biodiversity Gains at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/legal-agreements-to-secure-your-biodiversity-net-gain>
- <https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2024/03/04/securing-off-site-biodiversity-net-gain-expert-legal-perspectives/>