



2026

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT



G&G ECOLOGY
CONSULTANTS
ECOLOGY. SURVEYING • PLANNING



G&G ECOLOGY CONSULTANTS

LINTON FARM MERYLEES ROAD THORNTON LE67 1AP

22/04/2026

Limitations and Copyright

Legal

G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd has prepared this report for the sole use of the above-named client and their appointed agents in accordance with our standard Terms and Conditions under which our professional services are provided. This report has been prepared exclusively for the purpose stated within the document and should not be used for any other purpose without the prior written consent of G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd.

No responsibility is accepted to any third party who may seek to rely upon the contents of this report. Any such reliance placed upon this report by third parties shall be entirely at their own risk unless prior written agreement has been obtained from G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd.

The conclusions and recommendations contained within this report are based on the information available at the time of the survey and on data supplied by the client and other third parties where relevant. Information provided by third parties has not been independently verified unless otherwise stated, and G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd cannot be held responsible for inaccuracies or omissions in such information.

G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd shall not be liable for any project delays, management failures, additional costs, or adverse outcomes arising from failure to properly consider or implement the ecological advice and recommendations contained within this report. It is the responsibility of the client and project team to ensure that ecological recommendations are incorporated appropriately throughout the planning, design, and construction stages of the development.

Copyright

© This report and its contents are the copyright of G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd. The report may not be reproduced, copied, or distributed in whole or in part without the prior written permission of G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd, except by the client for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned.

Unauthorised use, reproduction, or distribution of this document by any person other than the named client is strictly prohibited.

Status	Issue Name		Date
Draft	0.1	Andrew Goodwin BSc (Hons), MSc, Consultant Ecologist	11/04/2026
Reviewed	0.2	Andrew Goodwin BSc (Hons), MSc, Consultant Ecologist	15/04/2026
Final	1.0	Andrew Goodwin BSc (Hons), MSc, Consultant Ecologist	22/04/2026

Executive Summary – Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

This report presents the findings of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment prepared in support of a full planning application for development at Linton Farm, Merrylees Road, Thornton (LE67 1AN), within the jurisdiction of North West Leicestershire District Council.

The proposed development forms part of the continued diversification of the existing agricultural enterprise, specifically representing an extension to an established and operational caravan and motorhome storage business. The expansion is required to accommodate increased demand and will be located within the existing farmyard complex, thereby consolidating development within an already modified and actively managed area.

The Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has been undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Version July 2023), in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by the Environment Act 2021), and supported by national policy within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The baseline biodiversity value of the site is calculated as:

- **Baseline habitat units:** 0.8632

The proposed development will result in the loss of the existing modified grassland habitat; however, this loss is offset through on-site habitat creation measures. Specifically, the scheme incorporates the planting of **20 medium-sized trees**, which form the primary mechanism for delivering biodiversity enhancement.

Post-development biodiversity value is calculated as:

- **Post-development habitat units:** 0.9953
- **Net gain:** +0.1321 units
- **Percentage gain:** +15.30%

Site description

The application site comprises a small parcel of land (shown in red) located within an established agricultural holding and farmyard complex. The site lies on relatively flat, open ground and is currently set within a wider landscape dominated by large, intensively managed arable and improved grassland fields. Immediately surrounding the site is a working farmyard containing agricultural buildings, hardstanding, storage areas, and associated infrastructure. The redline area appears to consist of a small section of managed grassland or previously disturbed ground adjacent to built form, likely subject to regular disturbance and influenced by farm operations.

The wider landholding (outlined in blue) comprises a mosaic of large agricultural fields, with evidence of both arable cultivation and improved pasture. Field boundaries are generally defined by linear features including hedgerows, tree lines, and occasional scrub belts, particularly along the site margins and adjacent to access tracks and water features. To the west and south-west, there are areas of more intensive industrial or commercial land use, while to the east and south the landscape remains predominantly rural, with smaller (fields), scattered buildings, and vegetated boundaries.

Connectivity to surrounding habitats is primarily via hedgerows, tree belts, and boundary vegetation, although the central farmyard and intensively managed fields reduce overall habitat distinctiveness. The development parcel itself is of low ecological value in the context of the wider holding, being closely associated with existing built infrastructure and subject to ongoing anthropogenic disturbance.



Habitat Degradation and Irreplaceable Habitat Statement

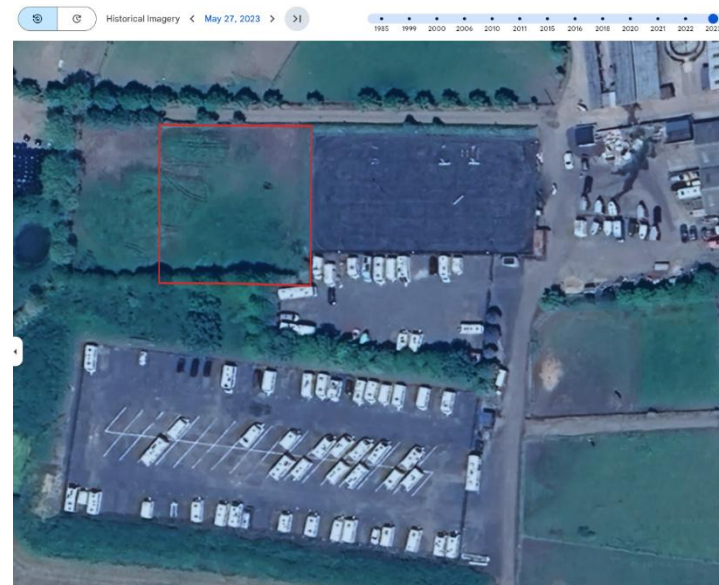
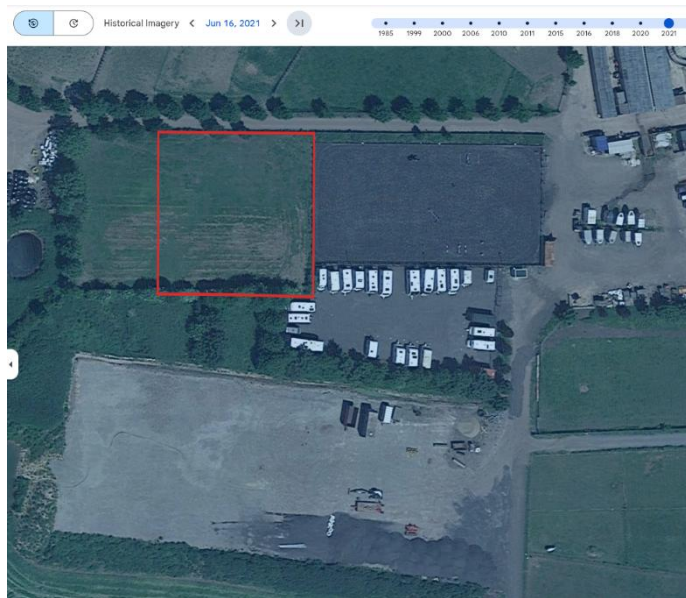
The baseline habitat condition and extent for the purposes of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment have been derived from direct observations made during a site walkover / Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) field survey undertaken by G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd on 27 February 2026.

In accordance with BNG guidance relating to habitat degradation, a review of historical aerial imagery was undertaken to determine whether any intentional habitat degradation had occurred within the relevant assessment period. Google Earth imagery dated 16 June 2021 and 27 May 2023 was reviewed and compared with the current site condition observed during the field survey. This review confirmed that the habitats present on site have remained consistent over the previous five years and that no evidence of habitat degradation or habitat clearance has occurred during this period.

Based on this assessment, the habitats recorded during the 2026 field survey are considered to accurately represent the true baseline conditions for the purposes of the Biodiversity Net Gain calculation.

In addition, the site was assessed for the presence of irreplaceable habitats as defined within the Biodiversity Metric guidance. No irreplaceable habitats are present within the site boundary, and therefore the proposed development does not affect any habitat types classified as irreversible or irreplaceable.

The Biodiversity Net Gain calculations presented within this report have been undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Version dated 3 July 2025).



Statutory Biodiversity Metric Statement

The Biodiversity Net Gain assessment for the proposed development has been undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Version dated 3 July 2025), published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The metric has been used to calculate the biodiversity value of the site in its baseline condition and to assess the biodiversity value of the site following the implementation of the proposed development and associated landscaping.

The assessment considers the extent, distinctiveness, condition, and strategic significance of habitats present within the site boundary. Baseline habitat units were calculated based on field survey observations, and post-development habitat units were calculated based on the proposed landscape design and habitat creation measures incorporated within the development proposals.

The metric calculations demonstrate that the proposed development delivers a measurable biodiversity net gain in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

Strategic Significance and Assessment Limitations

The assessment of strategic significance within the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric has been undertaken with reference to the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LLR LNRS). The strategy provides a landscape-scale framework identifying priorities and opportunities for the protection, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity across the region. Local Nature Recovery Strategies are intended to guide habitat creation, restoration and ecological connectivity in accordance with the objectives of the Environment Act 2021. ()

The full strategy document can be accessed at the following address:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-01/LLR-Local-Nature-Recovery-Strategy.pdf>

Where applicable, habitats within the metric have been assessed against the priorities outlined within this strategy when determining their strategic significance.

There are no specific limitations associated with the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment undertaken for this site. The habitat baseline was established through a site survey undertaken by a qualified ecologist and supported by desk-based review of relevant spatial and environmental data. The information available is considered sufficient to inform the BNG assessment and metric calculations presented within this report.

1. Baseline Biodiversity (Pre-Development)

Habitat Baseline Table

Habitat Type	Description	Area (m ²)	Baseline Units	Units Lost
Grassland	Modified grassland	1,690	0.6760	0.6760
Individual Trees	Urban/rural trees	203.47	0.1872	0.1872
Total	—	1,690 (excl. trees)	0.8632	0.8632

Key Points:

- Entire baseline habitat is lost due to development.
- No habitat is retained or enhanced.
- Total baseline biodiversity value = 0.8632 units

2. Post-Development Biodiversity (Onsite Habitat Creation)

Habitat Creation Table

Habitat Type	Description	Area (m ²)	Units Created
Urban	Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	1,690	0.0000
Individual Trees	20 new trees (moderate condition)	3,255.55 (metric equivalent)	0.9953
Total	—	—	0.9953

Key Points:

- No meaningful habitat units from hardstanding (urban surface).

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT

- All biodiversity gain comes from new tree planting.
- No habitat enhancement proposed.

3. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Unit Comparison)

Biodiversity Units Comparison

Metric	Baseline	Post-Development	Net Change
Area Habitat Units	0.8632	0.9953	+0.1321
Hedgerow Units	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Watercourse Units	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

Percentage Change

Metric	Net % Change	Target	Meets Target?
Area Habitat Units	+15.30%	10%	✓ Yes
Hedgerow Units	N/A	10%	N/A
Watercourse Units	N/A	10%	N/A

Trading Rules Check

Category	Result
Habitat Trading Rules	✓ Satisfied
Medium Distinctiveness	✓ Satisfied
Low Distinctiveness	✓ Satisfied
Overall Metric Rules	✓ All Key Rules Satisfied

4. Overall Biodiversity Net Gain Summary

Headline Summary

- Baseline Biodiversity: 0.8632 units
- Post-development Biodiversity: 0.9953 units
- Net Gain: +0.1321 units
- Net Percentage Gain: +15.30%





Grassland Condition Assessment

Ref	Criterion	Result
A	There are 6–8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note – this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	Fail
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Pass
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present).	Fail
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Fail
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Fail
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Pass
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Pass

POOR 3/7