

2026

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT



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MR P MORRIS LITTLE MULBERRY UPTON LANE STOKE

GOLDING CV13 6EU

12/06/2026

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Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Proposed Equestrian Use and Horse Ménage
Little Mulberry Farm, Upton Lane, Stoke Golding, CV13 6EU

Prepared for: Mr P Morris

Prepared by: G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd

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Planning authority: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Planning application reference: 25/00002/FUL

Date of metric completion: 12 June 2026

Executive Summary

G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd were commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment to determine the impact on biodiversity as a result of a proposed development for Mr P Morris at Little Mulberry Farm, Upton Lane, Stoke Golding, CV13 6EU. The proposed development comprises a change to equestrian use and the creation of a horse ménage.

The site is located on the western edge of Stoke Golding, within a predominantly rural landscape of agricultural fields, hedgerows, scattered trees, farm buildings and residential development. The Ashby-de-la-Zouch Canal is present to the east of the site and provides a linear ecological feature within the wider landscape. The proposed development area is located within existing grassland associated with Little Mulberry Farm.

The baseline area habitats recorded within the red line boundary comprise modified grassland. The habitats are not irreplaceable habitats. The baseline area habitat value is 2.51 habitat units across 1.26 hectares. The updated Statutory Biodiversity Metric also records one on-site baseline native hedgerow (H1) measuring 0.078 km, assessed as Low distinctiveness, Good condition and Low Strategic Significance, which provides 0.47 baseline hedgerow units. No baseline watercourse units are recorded within the metric.

The proposed development will result in the retention of 0.8202 ha of modified grassland, the enhancement of 0.1531 ha of modified grassland to other neutral grassland, and the creation of 0.036 ha of developed land/sealed surface and 0.2465 ha of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface. The proposed habitat creation reflects the hardstanding and unsealed surfaces associated with the equestrian use and horse ménage.

An additional 0.100 km native hedgerow (H2) is proposed to be created on site. This has been entered into the metric as a Low distinctiveness native hedgerow, targeting Good condition, with Low Strategic Significance and the standard time to target condition applied. The proposed hedgerow creation delivers 0.39 hedgerow units.

The updated Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation shows a net project biodiversity change of +0.33 area habitat units, equivalent to a +13.23% net gain in area habitat units. The hedgerow calculation shows a net project biodiversity change of +0.39 hedgerow units, equivalent to a +83.61% net gain in hedgerow units. The trading rules are satisfied for both area habitats and hedgerows. No net gain is recorded for watercourse units, as no watercourses are present within the metric.

Opportunities for further biodiversity enhancement include the installation of bat boxes on existing farm buildings, use of low-level and wildlife-sensitive lighting, strengthening of retained boundary habitats, and preparation of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) to secure the long-term management of on-site BNG habitats and the newly created hedgerow.

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1 Introduction

G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd were commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment for land at Little Mulberry Farm, Upton Lane, Stoke Golding, CV13 6EU. The assessment relates to a proposed change to equestrian use and the creation of a horse ménage within part of the landholding.

The site lies in a rural edge-of-settlement location to the west of Stoke Golding. The surrounding landscape is characterised by agricultural fields, hedgerows, scattered trees, farm buildings, residential properties and the Ashby-de-la-Zouch Canal. The proposed development area is located within an existing field parcel associated with Little Mulberry Farm.

The purpose of this report is to describe the baseline biodiversity value of the site, assess the potential impact of the proposed development on existing habitats, and identify opportunities to deliver biodiversity net gain in accordance with relevant planning policy and statutory requirements.

1.1 Scope of Works

G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd were commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment to determine the impact on biodiversity as a result of a proposed development for Mr P Morris at Little Mulberry Farm, Upton Lane, Stoke Golding, CV13 6EU, for a proposed equestrian use and horse ménage.

The scope of works includes the following:

- Review of the proposed development area and surrounding ecological context.
- Identification and classification of habitats present within the site boundary.
- Assessment of habitat condition where required by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- Calculation of baseline biodiversity units for the site.
- Review of the proposed development layout to identify habitat losses, retained habitats, habitat enhancement and habitat creation.
- Calculation of post-development biodiversity units.
- Identification of any measures required to achieve biodiversity net gain.
- Preparation of a Biodiversity Net Gain report suitable to support the planning application.

The assessment considers area habitats within the red line boundary. Hedgerow and watercourse units are recorded as zero within the current metric information provided.

1.2 Biodiversity Net Gain Objectives

1.2.1

Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach whereby changes brought about by development should conclude with biodiversity being left in a measurably better state than before works took place. It replaces the previous policy approach of 'no net loss' and is referenced in the National Planning Policy Framework and the current planning decision-making process.

1.2.2

The Environment Act 2021 introduced mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements in England. Under the statutory framework, relevant planning permissions are required to deliver at least a 10% biodiversity net gain, subject to exemptions.

1.2.3

The BNG assessment aims to:

- Determine a habitat baseline value by classifying the type, distinctiveness, condition, connectivity and strategic significance of habitats present prior to development.
- Ensure that baseline habitat conditions are classified in a robust and consistent manner based on the best data available at the time of assessment.
- Determine a post-development habitat value by classifying the type, distinctiveness, condition, connectivity and strategic significance of habitats proposed following development.
- Clearly identify data collection methods and any limitations.
- Calculate baseline and post-development habitat units, hedgerow units and watercourse units for the site based on current development proposals.
- Propose a BNG design that maximises biodiversity net gain through habitat retention, creation, enhancement and natural succession where appropriate.

Aim to achieve BNG on-site wherever possible, with off-site measures being considered only where required.

2 National Legislation and Planning Policy

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out requirements for the delivery of biodiversity net gain. It requires planning policies and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on, and providing net gains for, biodiversity.

2.2 Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act 2021 introduced a statutory requirement for relevant developments in England to deliver a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain. This is measured using the statutory biodiversity metric and is secured through the planning process.

2.3 Local Planning Policy: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

The site falls within the administrative area of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. The Council's local planning policy framework identifies the need to conserve and enhance biodiversity, support green infrastructure and maintain ecological networks across the borough.

The emerging Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan includes policy wording that requires development to demonstrate biodiversity net gain using the recognised biodiversity accounting metric and to provide details of the long-term maintenance and management of the net gain. It also promotes measures to restore and enhance existing features on site, create additional habitats and ecological networks, and link existing habitats where possible.

The Hinckley and Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy also supports the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure assets, with the aim of improving ecological connectivity and supporting multifunctional landscapes. The site is located within a rural setting where retained grassland, hedgerows, field boundaries and the nearby canal corridor contribute to wider landscape permeability for wildlife.

For the purposes of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, the habitats within the application boundary have been assessed as being of Low Strategic Significance, as the habitat compensation is not understood to be specifically identified within a local nature recovery strategy, local ecological network strategy or other mapped strategic biodiversity priority for the site. This should be reviewed if additional local ecological network mapping or Local Nature Recovery Strategy information becomes available.

3 Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles

3.1 Biodiversity Net Gain

BNG has been defined as development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, and as an approach where developers work with local government, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support priorities for nature conservation.

3.2 Good Practice Principles

Good practice principles for BNG are set out within Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development. Key principles include:

- Applying the mitigation hierarchy, in line with CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment, by seeking to avoid, minimise, restore and offset biodiversity impacts in that order.
- Avoiding the loss of biodiversity which cannot be offset elsewhere, including irreplaceable habitats.
- Addressing risk, including the difficulty of achieving habitat creation or enhancement for net gain.
- Making a measurable net gain contribution, calculated using an appropriate metric.
- Ensuring calculations are consistent and transparent, with limitations and assumptions clearly identified.
- Ensuring that the net gain design achieves the best outcome for biodiversity.

Creating a long-term net gain legacy through appropriate habitat management and monitoring.

4 Assessment Methodology

4.1 Condition Assessment Survey

4.1.1

The habitat survey information was collected by Andrew Goodwin MSc, BSc (Hons), Director of Ecology at G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd, on 1st May 2026. Habitats on site were recorded using UKHab habitat classifications, and the data collected was used to inform the calculation of baseline biodiversity units.

4.1.2

The survey was undertaken within the optimum botanical survey period, which is generally considered to be April to October. Surveys undertaken outside of the optimum period may be subject to seasonal limitations, including reduced visibility of some plant species and reduced confidence in the assessment of habitat condition. However, as this assessment was undertaken on 1st May 2026, it was completed during the optimal time of year and seasonal limitations are not considered to represent a significant constraint.

4.1.3

Where there is more than one area of the same habitat type and the habitat parcels differ in condition, management or composition, these have been labelled in sequence. The baseline habitat plan is included as Drawing 1.

4.2 Irreplaceable Habitat

Irreplaceable habitats are habitats which are very difficult, or take a very long time, to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed due to their age, uniqueness, species diversity and rarity. These habitats include some of England's most ecologically valuable terrestrial and intertidal habitats.

No irreplaceable habitats were recorded within the site boundary. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric records irreplaceable habitat present at baseline as No.

4.3 Condition Assessment

Habitat condition was assigned following the relevant Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition assessment guidance. The relevant assessment criteria were followed for each broad habitat type to determine the condition of each habitat parcel.

The baseline modified grassland parcels were recorded as being in **Poor** condition.

4.4 Strategic Significance

Strategic significance was assessed by considering whether habitat areas within the site occur within strategic locations for biodiversity, form part of a designated site for nature conservation, or are identified within local plans or strategies as ecological networks, stepping-stone habitats or other features of strategic biodiversity importance.

The metric information records the baseline and post-development habitats as Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy and therefore as Low Strategic Significance, with a strategic significance multiplier of 1. This is considered appropriate based on the information currently available. However, this should be reviewed if the site is subsequently identified within a Local Nature Recovery Strategy, local ecological network map, green infrastructure priority area or other relevant local biodiversity strategy.

4.5 Measurement of Habitat Areas

Baseline and proposed habitat areas were measured as distinct habitat parcels. The red line boundary has a total site area of **1.26 ha**. The habitat areas used within this report are taken from the Statutory Biodiversity Metric information provided for the proposed development.

4.6 Calculation of Biodiversity Units

The BNG calculations for the proposed development have been assessed using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric produced by Natural England and Defra. The baseline habitat information was informed by the habitat survey and condition assessment undertaken by Andrew Goodwin MSc, BSc (Hons), Director of Ecology at G&G Ecology Consultants Ltd, on 1st May 2026.

The metric was used to calculate the change in biodiversity units, including habitat units, hedgerow units and watercourse units where relevant, and the overall percentage of gain or loss achieved by the proposed development within the red line boundary.

4.7 Limitations

The assessment has been prepared using the information available at the time of writing, including the supplied aerial imagery, habitat survey information, proposed development information and Statutory Biodiversity Metric outputs. Any changes to the red line boundary, proposed site layout, construction methodology or proposed landscaping may alter the BNG calculation and should be reviewed by the project ecologist.

The condition assessment survey was undertaken during the optimal survey season and is therefore not considered to be subject to significant seasonal limitation. Notwithstanding this, ecological surveys provide a snapshot of site conditions at the time of survey, and habitats may change over time as a result of management, natural succession, disturbance or seasonal variation.

Modified Grassland Condition Assessment Sheet

Site / parcel reference: Grassland parcel G1

Habitat type: Modified grassland

UKHab / Metric category: Grassland – Modified grassland

Distinctiveness: Low

Survey evidence: Site walkover undertaken by surveyor, supported by field photographs taken during the visit.

Management context: Short-grazed / recently disturbed grassland with localised bare ground, poaching and trampling. Adjacent boundary scrub / hedgerow habitat assessed separately and not included within this grassland parcel.

Overall condition assigned: Poor condition

Criterion	Condition assessment criterion	Pass / Fail	Justification
A	There are 6–8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. This is essential for Moderate or Good condition.	Fail	The sward appears species-poor and grass-dominated, with limited visible forb diversity. From the photographs and site context, the parcel is not considered likely to support 6–8 vascular plant species per m ² across representative areas.
B	Sward height is varied, with at least 20% of the sward less than 7 cm and at least 20% above 7 cm.	Fail	The grassland appears largely short and uniform, consistent with grazing / close management. There is no clear, well-developed structural variation across the parcel.
C	Scrub accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area.	Pass	Scrub is largely associated with the boundary habitats and does not dominate the assessed grassland parcel. The main grassland area remains open.
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of the total grassland area.	Fail	The parcel shows visible poaching, trampling, ground disturbance and bare patches, particularly around the grazed / fenced areas. Physical disturbance is above a minor incidental level.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%.	Fail	Bare ground is frequent and locally extensive, particularly in the central and foreground areas of the parcel. In places, bare ground appears to exceed 10%.
F	Cover of bracken is less than 20%.	Pass	No significant bracken cover is visible within the assessed grassland parcel.
G	Invasive non-native species are absent, and species indicative of suboptimal condition are collectively less than 5% cover.	Pass, with caveat	No invasive non-native plant species are visible from the photographs. No substantial cover of nettle, dock, thistle or similar negative indicator species is apparent within the visible grassland, although this should be confirmed from the field species list.

Result

Criteria passed: C, F, G = 3 passes

Criteria failed: A, B, D, E = 4 fails

Essential criterion A: Failed

Because the essential floristic criterion is failed, and only three criteria are passed overall, the parcel should be entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric as:

Modified grassland – Poor condition

The grassland parcel was assessed during a site walkover, supported by representative field photographs. The habitat comprises short, species-poor modified grassland subject to grazing / close management, with visible localised poaching, trampling and bare ground. The sward is relatively uniform in structure and lacks the floristic diversity required to satisfy the essential modified grassland criterion of 6–8 vascular plant species per m², including at least two forb species. Bare ground and physical disturbance are locally frequent, and the parcel does not display the structural or botanical diversity required for Moderate condition. Scrub is largely restricted to boundary habitats and was not considered to form part of the grassland parcel. No significant bracken cover or visible invasive non-native plant species were recorded. On this basis, the parcel is assessed as **Modified grassland in Poor condition** for the purposes of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Native Hedgerow Condition Assessment Sheet

Habitat type: Native hedgerow

Distinctiveness: Low

Condition: Good

Strategic significance: Low Strategic Significance, unless the hedge is identified in a local strategy / LNRS / ecological network mapping

Recommended metric entry: Native hedgerow – Good condition

Hedgerow reference: H1

Habitat type: Native hedgerow

Survey basis: Photograph-based assessment supported by visible first-hand site observations from the supplied images.

Overall condition assigned: Good condition

Criteria	Condition assessment criterion	Pass / Fail	Justification
A1	Height: average height greater than 1.5 m	Pass	The hedgerow is clearly mature and tall, appearing well above 1.5 m throughout the visible length.
A2	Width: average width greater than 1.5 m	Pass	The hedge appears broad, dense and well-developed, with substantial lateral structure and width exceeding 1.5 m.

Criteria	Condition assessment criterion	Pass / Fail	Justification
B1	Gaps between ground and base of canopy are less than 0.5 m for more than 90% of length	Pass	The base appears largely continuous and dense, with no substantial basal gaps visible along the photographed section.
B2	Gaps make up less than 10% of total hedgerow length and there are no gaps greater than 5 m	Pass	The hedgerow appears continuous, with no obvious large breaks or gaps visible in the photographed length.
C1	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation present for at least 1 m from the centre line of the hedge on each side	Pass, with caveat	A grass/herb margin is visible along the hedge base. Some localised poaching or bare ground is present adjacent to the field edge, but not enough from the photos to fail the criterion.
C2	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation is less than 20% cover within 1 m of the hedge	Pass, with caveat	Bramble and rank grass/herb vegetation are visible, but obvious nutrient-enriched species such as nettle, dock or cleavers do not appear to dominate the hedge base from the photographs.
D1	Invasive and neophyte species are absent or less than 10% cover	Pass	No invasive non-native species are clearly visible in the supplied images.
D2	More than 90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free from damage caused by human activity	Pass	The hedge appears recently managed/flail-trimmed in places, but there is no obvious severe damage, major fragmentation, excessive cutting, herbicide damage or repeated vehicle encroachment visible.

Result

Criteria passed: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2, D1, D2

Criteria failed: None clearly identified from the photographs

On this basis, the hedgerow should be entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric as:

Native hedgerow – Good condition

The hedgerow comprises a mature, dense and continuous native hedgerow, appearing to be dominated by hawthorn with associated woody and climbing vegetation including bramble. The structure is well-developed, with the hedge exceeding 1.5 m in both height and width across the photographed section. No significant gaps, basal discontinuity or large breaks are visible. The hedge base supports a grass and herb margin, with some localised ground disturbance/poaching adjacent to the field edge; however, this does not appear sufficient to materially reduce the condition assessment based on the available evidence. No invasive non-native plant species were visible, and no substantial damage from human activity, excessive cutting, herbicide use or vehicle encroachment was apparent. The hedgerow is therefore assessed as Native hedgerow in Good condition for the purposes of the Biodiversity Net Gain metric.

5 Description of the Habitats Pre and Post Development

The baseline and post-development habitat descriptions below are structured to distinguish between habitats present before development, habitats to be retained, habitats to be enhanced and habitats to be created. This approach reflects standard BNG reporting practice by clearly identifying the source of baseline habitat units, the extent of habitat loss, and the contribution of retained, enhanced and created habitats to the post-development biodiversity value.

5.1 Baseline Habitat Areas

The baseline habitats within the red line boundary comprise two parcels of modified grassland. Modified grassland is generally a low distinctiveness habitat type which is typically subject to regular management, grazing, mowing, nutrient enrichment or disturbance. The habitat was recorded as being in poor condition.

Table 1: Baseline habitat areas

Ref	Broad habitat	Habitat type	Irreplaceable habitat	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Baseline habitat units
1	Grassland	Modified grassland	No	1.1027	Low	Poor	Low Strategic Significance	2.21
2	Grassland	Modified grassland	No	0.1531	Low	Poor	Low Strategic Significance	0.31
Total				1.2558				2.51

The total site area within the metric is recorded as **1.26 ha**, with minor differences attributable to rounding.

Table 1a: Baseline hedgerow habitats

Ref	Hedge number	Habitat type	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Baseline hedgerow units
1	H1	Native hedgerow	0.078	Low	Good	Low Strategic Significance	0.47
Total			0.078				0.47

The baseline hedgerow comprises a native hedgerow in good condition. The hedgerow is mature, dense and continuous, with a well-developed structure. The hedgerow exceeds 1.5 m in both height and width, has limited visible gaps, and supports associated grass and herb vegetation at the hedge base. No invasive non-native species or substantial damage from human activity were recorded from the available survey evidence.

5.2 Proposed Habitat Areas Set to be Retained

A total of **0.8202 ha** of modified grassland is to be retained without enhancement. This retained habitat contributes **1.64 baseline habitat units** to the post-development position. Retained habitat should be protected during works to prevent unnecessary disturbance, compaction, tracking or storage of materials.

Table 2: Proposed habitat areas set to be retained

Baseline ref	Habitat retained	Area retained (ha)	Baseline units retained	Enhancement proposed?
1	Modified grassland	0.8202	1.64	No
Total		0.8202	1.64	

Table 2a: Proposed hedgerow habitats set to be retained

Baseline ref	Hedgerow retained	Length retained (km)	Baseline hedgerow units retained	Enhancement proposed?
1	Native hedgerow	0.078	0.47	No
Total		0.078	0.47	

5.3 Proposed Habitat Areas Set to be Enhanced

A total of **0.1531 ha** of modified grassland is proposed for enhancement to other neutral grassland. This represents an increase in habitat distinctiveness from low to medium and a proposed condition change to good condition. The enhancement is subject to a standard time to target condition of 15 years within the metric.

The enhanced grassland should be managed to establish a more species-rich sward, reduce nutrient enrichment and provide improved value for pollinators, invertebrates and other wildlife. Suitable management may include reduced mowing frequency, removal of arisings, avoidance of fertiliser, and use of an appropriate native grassland seed mix if required.

Table 3: Proposed habitat areas set to be enhanced

Baseline ref	Baseline habitat	Proposed habitat	Area enhanced (ha)	Baseline condition	Proposed condition	Baseline units proposed for enhancement
2	Modified grassland	Other neutral grassland	0.1531	Poor	Good	0.31

Baseline ref	Baseline habitat	Proposed habitat	Area enhanced (ha)	Baseline condition	Proposed condition	Baseline units proposed for enhancement
Total			0.1531			0.31

5.4 Proposed Habitat Areas Set to be Created

The proposed habitat creation comprises developed land/sealed surface and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface. These habitat types are associated with the proposed equestrian use and horse ménage. Both habitat types are of very low distinctiveness and do not deliver habitat units within the metric.

Table 4: Proposed habitat areas set to be created

Ref	Broad habitat	Proposed habitat	Area created (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Habitat units delivered
1	Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.0360	Very Low	N/A - Other	Low Strategic Significance	0.00
2	Urban	Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.2465	Very Low	N/A - Other	Low Strategic Significance	0.00
Total			0.2825				0.00

Table 4a: Proposed hedgerow habitats set to be created

Ref	New hedge number	Proposed habitat	Length created (km)	Distinctiveness	Target condition	Strategic significance	Hedgerow units delivered
1	H2	Native hedgerow	0.100	Low	Good	Low Strategic Significance	0.39
Total			0.100				0.39

The proposed native hedgerow should be planted using an appropriate native species mix suitable for the local landscape. Species should include a high proportion of hawthorn, with other locally appropriate native woody species such as blackthorn, field maple, hazel, dog rose, holly and/or guelder rose where suitable. The hedge should be protected from grazing or browsing during establishment, maintained with appropriate formative pruning, and managed on a sympathetic cutting cycle to allow the hedge to develop height, width, flowering and fruiting value.

The updated metric therefore records a net project change of +0.33 area habitat units and +0.39 hedgerow units. This equates to a +13.23% gain in area habitat units and an +83.61% gain in hedgerow units. The trading rules are satisfied.

6 Results

6.1 Irreplaceable Habitats

No irreplaceable habitats were recorded within the site boundary. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric records irreplaceable habitat present at baseline as No and records an irreplaceable habitat site area of 0.00 ha.

6.2 Strategic Significance

The habitats within the metric have been assessed as being of Low Strategic Significance. This is because the habitat areas are recorded as Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy. No uplift for strategic significance has therefore been applied.

The site is located within the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council administrative area. The Council's planning strategy supports the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, green infrastructure and ecological networks. The proposed on-site habitat enhancement to other neutral grassland is consistent with the broad aims of improving biodiversity value and providing measurable habitat gains, although the site is not currently understood to fall within a mapped strategic biodiversity priority area.

6.3 Biodiversity Unit Calculations

Figure 1: Biodiversity net gain headline results

Metric output	Area habitat units	Hedgerow units	Watercourse units
Net project biodiversity units	0.33	0.39	0.00
Total project biodiversity percentage change	13.23%	83.61%	0.00%

Figure 2: Combined habitat retention and enhancement

Result	Area habitats	Hedgerows	Watercourses
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Total on-site and off-site baseline area / length	1.26	0.08	0.00
Total on-site and off-site baseline units	2.51	0.47	0.00
Total on-site and off-site baseline area / length retained	0.82	0.08	0.00
Total on-site and off-site baseline units retained	1.64	0.47	0.00
Total on-site and off-site area / length proposed for enhancement	0.15	0.00	0.00
Total on-site and off-site baseline units proposed for enhancement	0.31	0.00	0.00
Total on-site and off-site baseline area / length lost	0.28	0.00	0.00
Total on-site and off-site baseline units lost	0.57	0.00	0.00

Figure 3: Hedgerow baseline and creation summary

Hedgerow result	Length / units
Baseline native hedgerow length	0.078 km
Baseline hedgerow units	0.47
Hedgerow length retained	0.078 km
Hedgerow units retained	0.47
New native hedgerow proposed for creation	0.100 km
Hedgerow units delivered through creation	0.39
Net hedgerow unit change	0.39
Net hedgerow percentage change	83.61%

The proposed development achieves a net gain of +0.33 area habitat units, equivalent to a +13.23% net gain in area habitat units. The proposed development also achieves a net gain of +0.39 hedgerow units, equivalent to a +83.61% net gain in hedgerow units.

The existing native hedgerow is retained in full, and an additional 0.100 km of new native hedgerow is proposed. The proposed hedgerow creation strengthens the linear habitat resource within the site and contributes positively to ecological connectivity within the wider rural landscape.

No watercourse habitats are present within the metric, and therefore the watercourse unit change remains 0.00 units and 0.00%.

The proposed development therefore exceeds the statutory minimum 10% biodiversity net gain requirement for area habitat units and also delivers a substantial positive gain in hedgerow units. The trading rules are recorded as satisfied.

7 Discussion and Recommendations

7.1 Habitat Retention and Protection

Retained grassland and any boundary vegetation should be protected during construction and site preparation works. Storage of materials, vehicle tracking and soil compaction should be avoided within retained habitat areas where possible. Any retained boundary trees, hedgerows or scrub should be protected in accordance with good construction practice.

7.2 Habitat Enhancement

The proposed enhancement of modified grassland to other neutral grassland will be the principal BNG enhancement measure on site. To achieve the proposed target condition, the grassland should be managed in accordance with a suitable long-term management regime. This may include:

- Appropriate native grassland seed mix selection where seeding is required.
- Reduction in nutrient input.
- No use of fertilisers or herbicides, unless specifically required for targeted invasive or injurious weed control.
- Cutting or grazing management to encourage a more diverse sward.
- Removal of cuttings where mowing is undertaken.
- Monitoring of species composition and sward structure.

7.3 Bat Boxes and Building Enhancements

As an additional ecological enhancement, bat boxes could be installed, or retrospectively added, to suitable farm buildings within the landholding. Boxes should be positioned in sheltered locations, preferably facing south, south-east or south-west, and should be located away from direct artificial lighting.

The provision of bat boxes would provide additional roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling and building-associated bat species. The exact type, number and location of bat boxes should be confirmed by the project ecologist and should take account of building structure, aspect, lighting and disturbance.

7.4 Lighting

A low-lighting strategy should be adopted to minimise potential impacts on bats, nocturnal wildlife and the wider rural landscape. Any external lighting should be designed to:

- Avoid illumination of retained boundary vegetation, trees, hedgerows and grassland enhancement areas.
- Use low-level, directional and hooded lighting where lighting is required for safety or operational reasons.
- Avoid unnecessary lighting of the farm buildings and surrounding field margins.
- Use warm-spectrum lighting where practicable.
- Operate on timers or motion sensors to minimise the duration of illumination.

7.5 Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

A Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan should be prepared to secure the long-term delivery of the on-site BNG measures. The HMMP should set out:

- The location and extent of retained, enhanced and created habitats.
- The target habitat type and target condition for the other neutral grassland.
- Management prescriptions for each habitat type.
- Monitoring intervals and reporting requirements.
- Remedial measures if target condition is not being achieved.
- Responsibilities for implementation, management and monitoring.

The HMMP should cover the required long-term management period and should be consistent with the assumptions entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

8 Conclusion

The proposed equestrian use and horse ménage at Little Mulberry Farm, Upton Lane, Stoke Golding, CV13 6EU has been assessed using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The baseline habitats within the red line boundary comprise modified grassland in poor condition and a native hedgerow in good condition. No irreplaceable habitats are present.

The proposed development will retain 0.8202 ha of modified grassland, enhance 0.1531 ha of modified grassland to other neutral grassland, and create 0.2825 ha of urban habitat comprising sealed and unsealed unvegetated surfaces associated with the proposed equestrian use.

The updated metric also includes the retention of 0.078 km of existing native hedgerow and the creation of 0.100 km of new native hedgerow. The retained hedgerow will continue to provide linear habitat value within the site, while the proposed new native hedgerow will strengthen ecological connectivity and contribute positively to the site's overall biodiversity net gain position.

The metric calculation demonstrates a net gain of +0.33 area habitat units, equivalent to +13.23%. The updated hedgerow calculation demonstrates a net gain of +0.39 hedgerow units, equivalent to +83.61%. No watercourse units are present or affected by the proposed development.

The proposed development therefore exceeds the statutory 10% BNG requirement for area habitat units and delivers a substantial positive gain in hedgerow units. The trading rules are recorded as satisfied.

The BNG outcome should be secured through appropriate habitat protection, grassland enhancement, hedgerow protection and establishment, sensitive lighting, additional ecological enhancements such as bat boxes, and a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan to ensure the long-term delivery of the proposed biodiversity gains.

9 References

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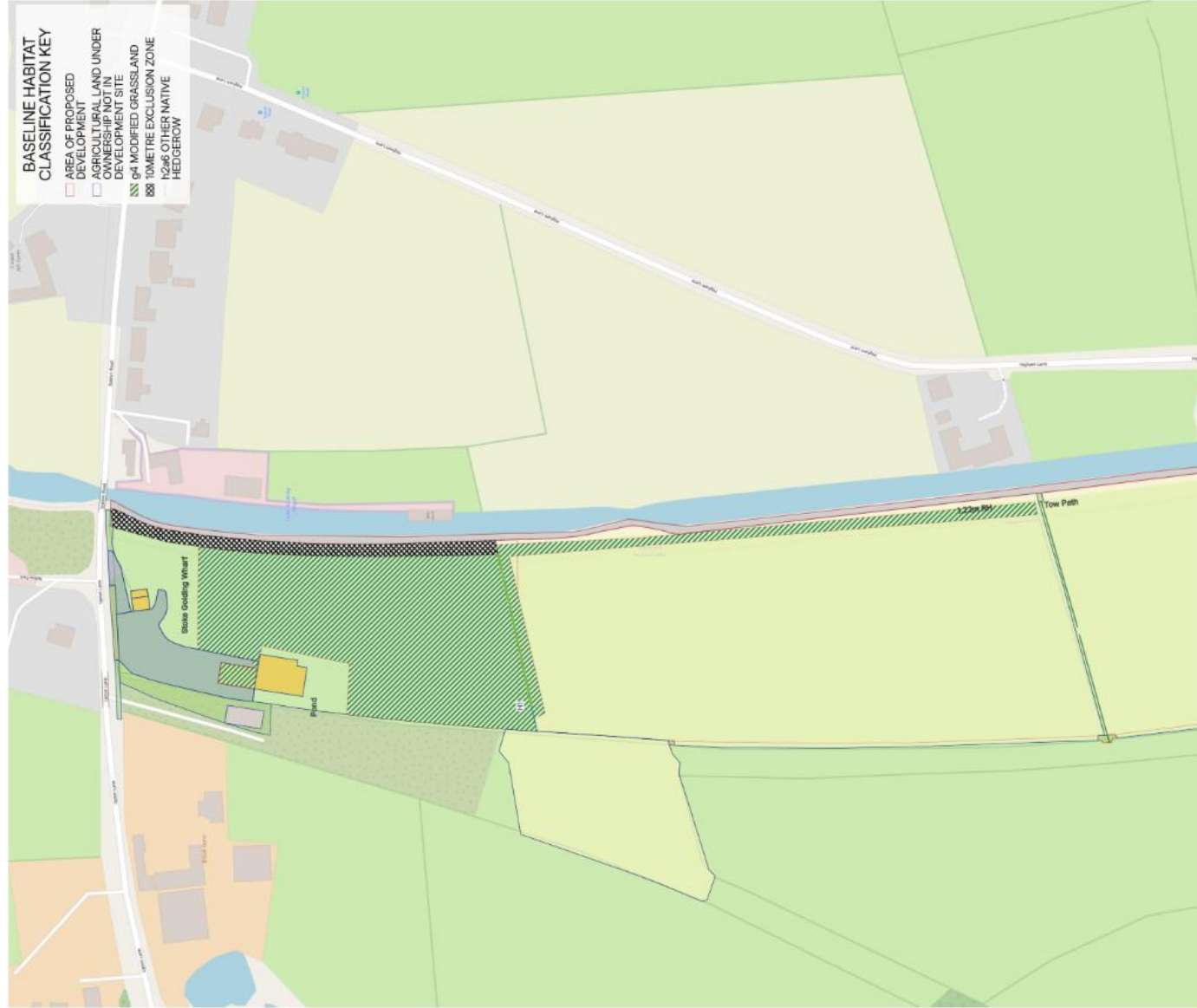
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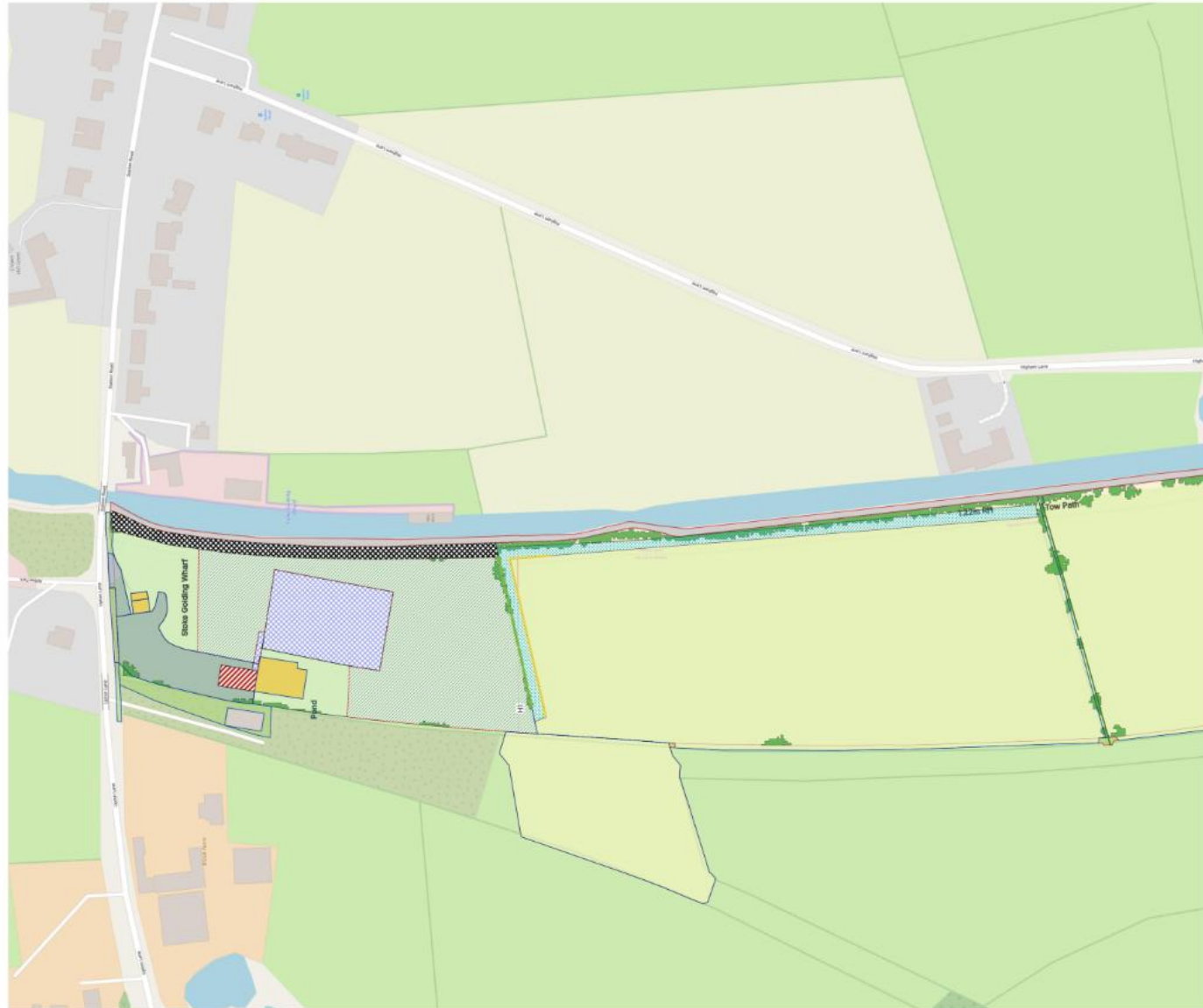
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