

Technical Note

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Project: Holywell Farm, Desford Lane, Ratby,
Leicestershire LE6 0LE

Our Reference: 250227.BNGExempt

To: Mr. Michael Watts

Date: 9 October 2025

Subject: Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption
Statement

Prepared by: Jeff Grant MCIEEM CEnv

Introduction and Methodology

Croft Ecology was commissioned by Mr Michael Watts to provide the necessary supporting information on Biodiversity Net Gain for a forthcoming planning permission in relation to the proposed construction of a single new dwelling at the Site. The land edged red in Figure 1 is hereafter referred to as 'the Site'. The red line boundary for the application extends south and then east from that shown in Figure 1, encompassing the access road to the Site. The access road comprised a track of packed earth and stone and has been omitted from this report as it will not be impacted by the proposals.

This report was based on the proposed Site plans as detailed in Figure 2 below.

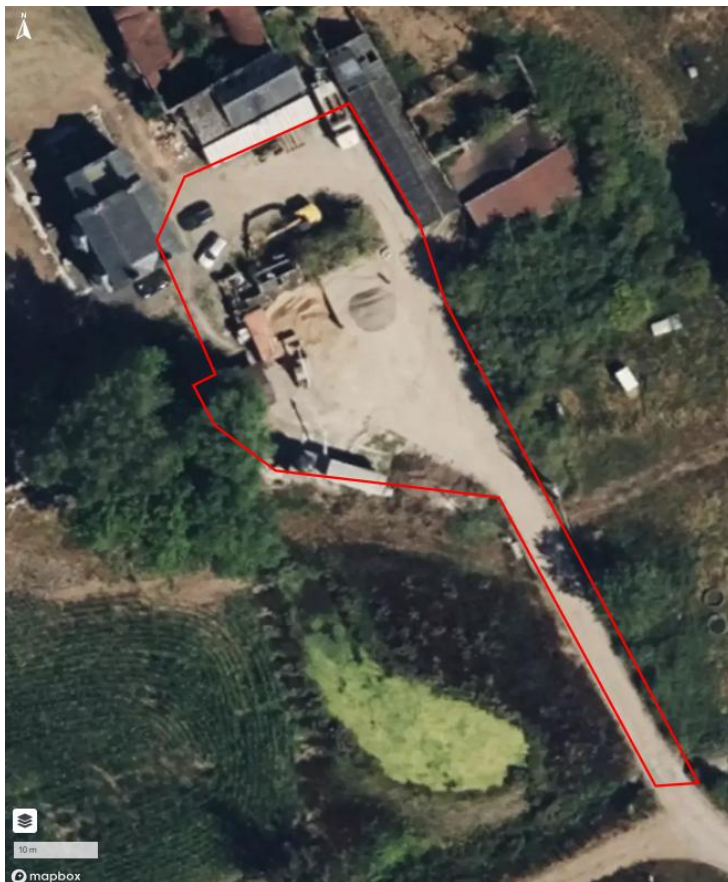


Figure 1. Site Location Plan (as demarcated by red line boundary)



Figure 2. Proposed site plan (Drawing no 25.335.BP_1:500 dated August 2025 by R3Design Developments Ltd)

Survey Date and Conditions

The Site was surveyed by Jeff Grant MCIEEM CEnv on 28 April 2025, and the weather conditions at the time of the survey were clear with 10% cloud, a light breeze and a temperature of 20°C. A UK Hab Baseline Habitats Map of the Site can be found at Appendix A.

Results

Red line boundary

The habitats present within the red line boundary of the Site consisted of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface and two buildings.

Parcel Reference: 27588352 and 27588351 – Buildings, 29836270 – Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface; and 29836441 - Developed land; sealed surface

Two buildings were present within the red line boundary: A derelict stable block (Photos 1 and 2) and a shed (Photo 3).

The stable block comprised solid stone and brick walls, with timber purlins supporting what remained of the corrugated asbestos roof panels. The building appeared to have been disused for some time, with a number of elder *Sambucus nigra* growing in the eastern sections. All were under 7.5cm in diameter at breast height and covered a total area of <25m² therefore too small to be included within Biodiversity Net Gain Metric calculations. Common nettle *Urtica dioica* was recorded growing in the rubble and debris within the rooms, with a narrow strip of perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* colonising the land immediately north of the built structure.

The shed was a wooden framed structure with a felted shallow pitched roof (Photo 3).



Photo 1. Former stable block in dilapidated condition with scrub colonising the eastern sections



Photo 2. Western cell of the former stable block, with roof still partly intact.



Photo 3. Garden shed in the west of the red line boundary

The remainder of the red line boundary comprised a concrete slab (Photo 4, developed land; sealed surface) and the packed stone and gravel of the access track and farmyard (Photos 1 and 4, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface).



Photo 4. Concrete slab and packed stone and gravel typical of the Site. The encroaching vegetation on the left of the photo is outside of the red line boundary.

Discussion and Conclusion

The buildings and artificial, unsealed surface at the Site would score 'zero' on the BNG metric with no compensation required.

While there is some vegetation within the former stables, this is less than 25m² (~15-20m² of vegetation) and this constitutes <10% of the Site. In addition, there would be no way to retain this vegetation while removing the remaining stable walls, and none of the habitats are priority or irreplaceable habitats.

The planning application is therefore considered to be exempt from the requirement for a 10% gain in biodiversity as it meets the 'de minimis' exemption:

- **The proposed application impacts habitat <25m²**
- **The proposed application does not impact priority or irreplaceable habitat**

Consequently, the biodiversity gain condition is not considered to apply in this instance, although additional recommendations, mitigation and compensation measures set out within the accompanying Croft Ecology Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Croft Ecology, October 2025) should be followed and can provide an overall biodiversity net gain at the Site in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

References

Croft Ecology, October 2025. *HolywellFarmRatby.PEA.eDNA.V1*

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APPENDIX A – UKHab Baseline Habitats Map

