



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

**LAND AT GRANGE SCHOOL,
LEVENSHULME, MANCHESTER**

JULY 2025

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Land at Grange School, Levenshulme, Manchester

A report for

Prospere Learning Trust

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Report by



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PENNINE Ecological were commissioned to undertake an ecological assessment of an area of land within Grange School, Levenshulme, Manchester, M12 4GR. The assessment is required to support an application for the erection of an extension joining two school buildings.

The assessment includes the use of Natural England's/Defra's Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (version 1.0.3 published in July 2024) to determine whether the proposals would result in a biodiversity net gain or loss. The assessment was completed using standard methodologies and there was no deviation from the recognised guidance.

The baseline habitats recorded on site are of medium to very low distinctiveness and have a baseline habitat value of 0.75. The total number of habitat units lost (before mitigation) is 0.07.

The proposed habitats include developed land and twelve individual trees. There are several areas of open amenity grassland available for the proposed tree planting.

The current landscape proposals would generate a 10.02% habitat net gain. The habitat trading rules have also been satisfied.

	Habitat Units	Habitat Units % Change	Hedgerow Units	Hedgerow Unit % Change
On-site Baseline	0.75	-	-	-
On-site Post-intervention	0.83	-	-	-
On-site Net Change	+ 0.08	+ 10.02 %	-	
Trading Rules Satisfied	Yes			

The current proposals demonstrate a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

In order for the planning application to be approved, the client will need to provide a Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan, along with supporting figures, which will provide the details of the habitat proposals, planting specifications and future monitoring and management requirements. It is recommended that a HMMP is provided as a planning condition to any granted application.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

PENNINE Ecological were commissioned to undertake an ecological assessment of area of land within Grange School, Levenshulme, Manchester, M12 4GR (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). Appendix A, Figure 1 provides the site's red line application boundary and the results of the UKHabs survey.

To date, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken to support an application for the erection of an extension joining two school buildings.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT AND BNG BACKGROUND

As of 12th February 2024 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory (unless exempt) under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of 10% unless otherwise agreed with the relevant Local Authority.

The PEA identified the requirement for a BNG assessment at this site due to the anticipated loss of very low to medium distinctiveness habitats. The BNG assessment has been undertaken to determine whether or not the proposal demonstrates an overall net gain or loss of biodiversity, in line with the current National Planning Policy Framework, 2021.

Through site selection and layout, applicants should avoid or reduce any negative impact on biodiversity. They must deliver at least 10% BNG (unless agreed otherwise with the Local Authority), as measured by the statutory biodiversity metric. There are three ways an applicant can achieve BNG.

1. They can create biodiversity on-site (within the red line boundary of a proposal site).
2. If the applicant cannot achieve all of their BNG on-site, they can deliver through a mixture of on-site and off-site. Applicants can either make off-site biodiversity gains on their own land outside the proposal site, or buy off-site biodiversity units on the market.

3. If the applicant cannot achieve on or off-site BNG, they must buy statutory biodiversity credits from the government. This should be a last resort. The government will use the revenue to invest in habitat creation in England.

1.3 SITE LOCATION

The site is located along Hand Lane, between Mawdesley to the south and Ecclestone to the north. The address of the site is land at Grange School, Levenshulme, Manchester, M12 4GR and the grid reference is SJ 88095 94939.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION BASELINE SURVEY

For a BNG assessment to be completed a UK Habitat Classification (UKHabs) Survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023) has to be undertaken of the site's baseline habitats. The UKHabs survey, and habitat condition assessments were undertaken by Stuart Macpherson who is a highly proficient botanist, in July 2025. This BNG assessment has also been undertaken by Stuart Macpherson (refer to Section 2.3).

2.2 BIODIVERSITY METRIC CALCULATOR TOOL

All habitats recorded within the footprint of the site during the field survey were included in the Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (version 1.0.3 published in July 2024). The statutory biodiversity metric is a way of measuring biodiversity value for the purposes of BNG.

This metric calculation has been undertaken following the standard methodology (Natural England, 2024) and in accordance with CIEEM good practice guidelines (CIEEM, 2019).

2.3 SURVEYOR EXPERIENCE

The surveys and assessments have been undertaken by Stuart Macpherson, who is an Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and has over 14 years' experience in land management, ecological survey and evaluation.

Stuart's key skills include the following:

- Completing Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey / UKHabs Survey on both small planning applications and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
- Licensed bat surveyor (2021-10079-CL18-BAT) and Named Ecologist on bat mitigation licences. Formerly an accredited agent from 2016 and an active bat carer.
- Licensed barn owl surveyor (CL29/0477) and active/committee member of Cheshire Barn Owl Group.
- Licensed great crested newt surveyor (2015-16213-CLS-CLS).
- NPTC qualified tree climber (Units 206 and 306 Tree climbing and Aerial Rescue).
- Proficient field botanist.
- Breeding and wintering bird surveyor on a range of habitats including coastal, farmland and moorland habitats.

- Mammal surveys including badger including being an accredited agent on mitigation licences.
- Riparian corridor and mammal surveys for numerous flood alleviation schemes across northwest England.
- Ecological Evaluation and Impact Assessments in association with large scale infrastructure projects.

2.4 LIMITATIONS

No limitations to the survey or BNG assessment.

3. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The following section details the baseline habitats, along with habitats to be created, enhanced and retained within the site (where applicable).

3.1 ON-SITE HABITAT BASELINE RESULTS

The habitats recorded on site were of the following distinctiveness’;

- Medium – Urban tree
- Low – Introduced shrub, modified grassland.
- Very low – Developed land (building and artificial surfaces).

In total, the baseline habitats surveyed have a total habitat value of 0.75 habitat units.

A summary of the baseline habitat information is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3-1: Summary of the Baseline Habitats and Habitat Value

Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Habitat Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Total Habitat Units (Ecological Baseline)	Area Retained – ha / units	Area Enhanced – ha / units	Habitat Area (ha) Lost	Units Lost (before mitigation)
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.6042	V. Low	N/A	0.00	0.5867	0.00	0.02	0.00
Urban	Introduced shrub	0.02	Low	N/A	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grassland	Modified grassland	0.0626	Low	Poor	0.13	0.0583	0.00	0.00	0.01
Individual trees	Urban tree	0.0733	Medium	Moderate	0.59	0.0651	0.00	0.01	0.07

3.2 ON-SITE HABITAT ENHANCED AND CREATED RESULTS

The habitats to be created on site (Table 3.2) are of the following distinctiveness’:

- Medium – Urban tree
- Very low; Developed land; sealed surface.

The total number of habitat units delivered is 0.15.

The habitats and their respective areas, distinctiveness, condition etc. are included in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3-2: Summary of the On-Site Habitat Creation and Habitat Value

Broad Habitat	Habitat	Habitat Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Habitat Units Delivered
Created Habitats					
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.0218	V. Low	N/A	0.00
Individual trees	Urban tree	0.0489	Medium	Moderate	0.15

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 CONCLUSION AND BNG ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The following section summarises the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment results.

Baseline habitats of very low, low and medium distinctiveness were assessed as being present within the site in July 2025.

The proposal design has ensured the mitigation hierarchy has been followed. Consultation with Pennine ecological has been ongoing throughout the design stage to minimise impacts to biodiversity.

- Avoiding impacts on notable habitats: Several trees close to the works have been retained in accordance with the tree root protection areas.
- Minimise impacts on site: As above. The extension design has minimised the amount of grassland and individual trees being removed.
- Restoring habitats on site: Several areas of amenity grassland within the site is being used to plant a total of twelve individual urban trees to compensate for the loss of trees and grassland in the proposed works.

The current landscape proposals would generate a 10.02% habitat net gain. The habitat trading rules have also been satisfied (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below).

Table 4.1: Summary of the Biodiversity Net Gain Results

	Habitat Units	Habitat Units % Change	Hedgerow Units	Hedgerow Unit % Change
On-site Baseline	0.75	-	-	-
On-site Post-intervention	0.83	-	-	-
On-site Net Change	+ 0.08	+ 10.02 %	-	-
Trading Rules Satisfied	Yes			

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Table 4.2: Extract of BNG Headline Results

On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.75			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site post-intervention (including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.83			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.08	10.02%		
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%		
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Off-site post-intervention (including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.00	0.00%		
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%		
Combined net unit change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.08			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
FINAL RESULTS					
Total net unit change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.08			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Total net % change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	10.02%			
	Hedgerow units	0.00%			
	Watercourse units	0.00%			
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓				
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓ No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓ No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.75	0.83	0.00	
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	

5. BNG PROPOSALS

This report and supporting documentation provides the LPA with sufficient evidence that this proposal can achieve the required 10% net gain in line with local and national policies.

In order for the planning application to be approved, the client will need to provide a Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP), along with supporting figures, which will provide the details of the habitat proposals, planting specifications and future monitoring and management requirements. The HMMP will cover areas shown in Appendix A, Figure 2.

It is recommended that a HMMP is provided as a planning conditions to any granted application.

REFERENCES

CIEEM (2019). *Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development; a practical guide*. CIRIA publications

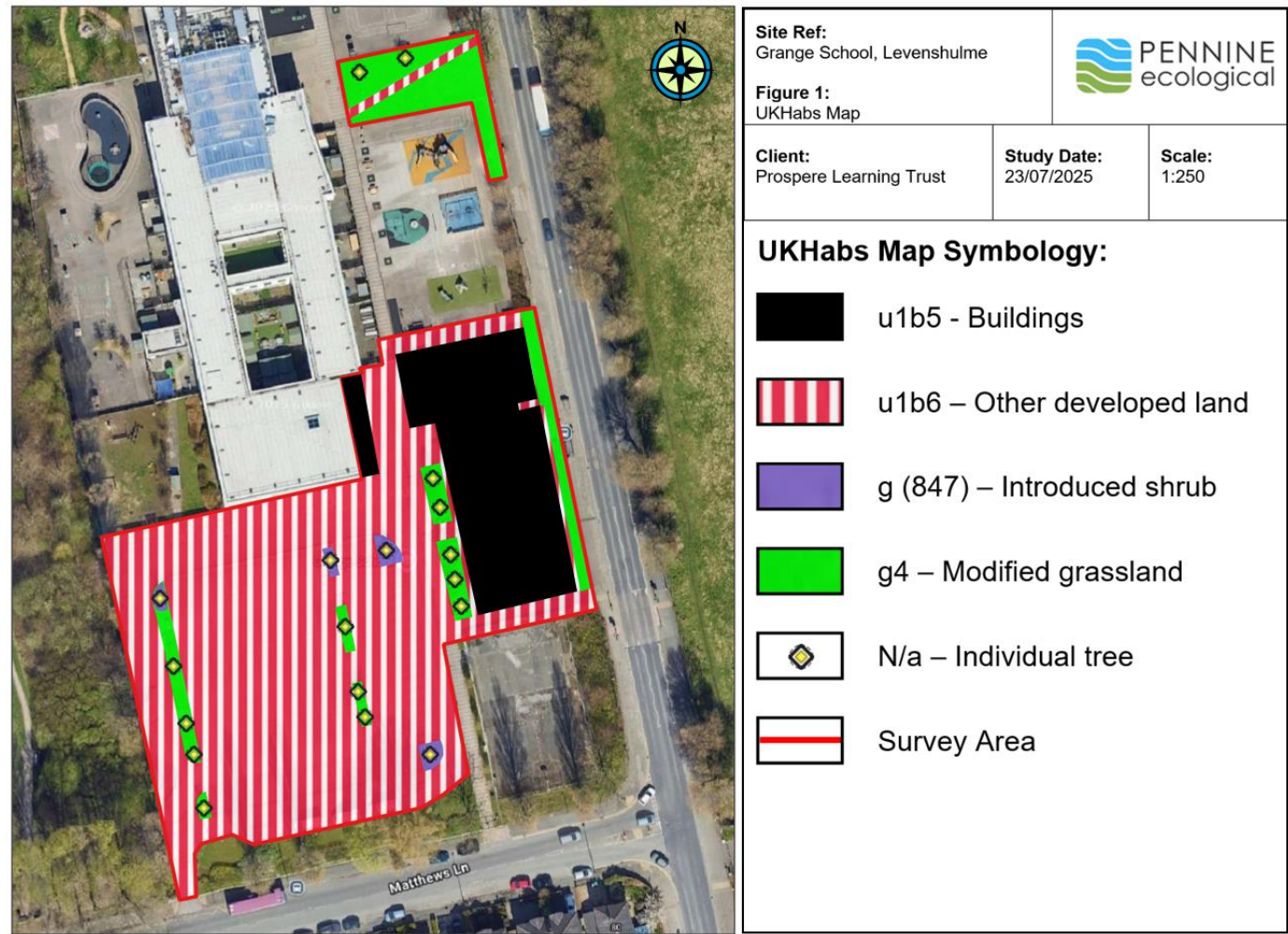
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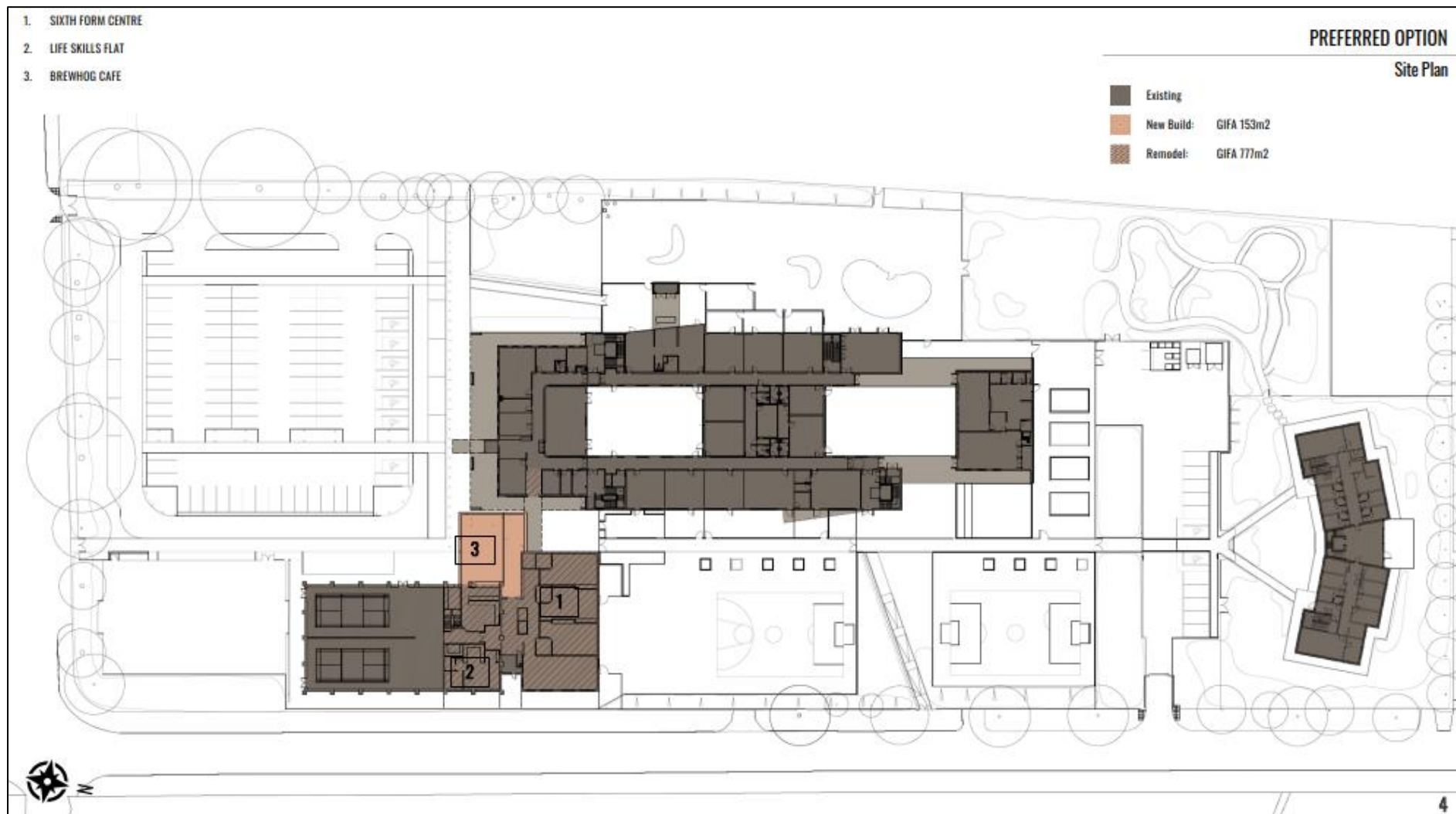
Appendix A - Figures

Figure 1: Baseline Habitats Map



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Grange School, Levenshulme, Manchester

Figure 2: Grange School Site Plan



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Grange School, Levenshulme, Manchester

Figure 3: Proposed tree planting areas

