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BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN - BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT

At

232-236 Palatine Road

Didsbury

Manchester

Greater Manchester

M20 2WF

NGR: SJ 83560 90980

Prepared for: Marco Living
Written by: Daniel Smith, UES Ecologist
Approved by: Toby Hart, UES Managing Director

Date: 27th November 2024
UES reference: UES04587/04





CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
1 INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Author and qualifications	3
1.2 Proposed development.....	3
1.3 Survey objectives.....	3
2 PLANNING POLICY	4
3 METHODOLOGY	5
4 RESULTS.....	6
4.1 Baseline assessment.....	6
4.2 Post-development assessment	6
5 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	7
5.1 Biodiversity net gain requirements	7
5.2 Recommendations.....	7
6 CONCLUSION.....	9
APPENDICES.....	10
Appendix 1 – Pre Development UKHab Habitat Plan	10
Appendix 2 – Post Development UKHab Habitat Plan.....	11
Appendix 3 – Proposed Landscape Plan	12



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Daniel Smith BSc MScRes, UES Ecologist for United Environmental Services Ltd (UES). Daniel holds a level 3 Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland (BSBI) field identification skills certificate (FISC), which certifies him as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat and UKHab surveys.

It has been verified by Toby Hart BSc MCIEEM PIEMA, UES Managing Director. Toby holds a level 6 Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland (BSBI) field identification skills certificate (FISC). Level 6 is only awarded in exceptional circumstances where the surveyor is a very competent professional field botanist and is of national status.

1.2 Proposed development

The development proposals include the demolition of three detached houses and the construction of residential units including one five-storey apartment block, eight three-storey townhouses and eight semi-detached houses. A podium deck with parking below will also be constructed.

1.3 Survey objectives

This biodiversity statement has been produced for the proposed development at 232-236 Palatine Road, Didsbury. UES was commissioned in July 2024 to prepare the Biodiversity Statement as part of a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of the proposed development. This was completed in order to:

- Establish the baseline value of the site by calculating the number of habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units at the site of the proposed development.
- If detailed or indicative plans are available, establish the post development value of the development by calculating the number of habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units which will be created, retained and / or enhanced as part of the proposals.
- Provide guidance on habitat retention, creation and enhancement measures to inform proposed site layout and landscaping proposals and to maximize potential gains in biodiversity.
- Provide details of how offsite compensation will be used when a 10% biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved on site.



2 PLANNING POLICY

Paragraphs 180(d), 185(b) and 186(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out requirements for the delivery of BNG. In England, BNG is mandatory under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

Under the statutory framework, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitats.

Mandatory BNG only applies for planning permission applications made on or after 12th February 2024. Permissions granted for applications made before this date are not subject to BNG. A temporary exclusion applies for non-major developments whereby mandatory BNG only applies for planning permission applications made on or after 2nd April 2024.

The Environment Act 2021 sets out the following key components to mandatory BNG:

- Minimum 10% gain required calculated using DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric & approval of net gain plan
- Habitat secured for at least 30 years via obligations / conservation covenant
- Habitat can be delivered on-site, off-site or via statutory biodiversity credits
- There is a national register for net gain delivery sites
- The mitigation hierarchy still applies of avoidance, mitigation and compensation for biodiversity loss
- Also applies to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)
- Does not apply to marine development
- Does not change existing legal environmental and wildlife protections



3 METHODOLOGY

The BNG assessment has been undertaken using the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The metric was used to calculate baseline habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units. An extended UKHab survey was undertaken as part of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site, undertaken by Alasdair Grubb and Josh Howard on 9th August 2024. Surveyors present included:

- Alasdair Grubb BSc ACIEEM, UES Sub-contractor. Alasdair holds a level 5 Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland (BSBI) field identification skills certificate (FISC), which certifies him as competent to undertake UKHab and national vegetation classification (NVC) surveys.
- Josh Howard BSc, UES Graduate Field Ecologist. Josh holds a level 3 Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland (BSBI) field identification skills certificate (FISC), which certifies him as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat and UKHab surveys.

Habitats recorded within the proposed development site were mapped on a UKHab plan provided at Appendix 1. Full details of each habitat recorded onsite are provided within the PEA report (reference UES04587/01), which has been submitted as part of this planning application.



4 RESULTS

4.1 Baseline assessment

The land parcel has an area of approximately 0.6ha. The land is primarily used for residential purposes with three apartment blocks located onsite. There are modified grasslands present on the eastern site boundary which have scattered trees shading majority of the grasslands. There is also a grassland present on the western section of the site which has tall ruderal vegetation starting to encroach. Further west, the land starts to transition into dense tall ruderal vegetation. After the tall ruderal vegetation bramble scrub has well established. On the western site boundary mixed scrub is present along with a disused building almost entirely cladded with dense vegetation located within the mixed scrub.

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 6.32 habitat units, 0.07 hedgerow units and 0 watercourse units using DEFRA's Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

The DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric used to calculate the baseline value of the site has been submitted with this report and provides full details of the calculations.

4.2 Post-development assessment

The post-development value of the site has been calculated using the proposed landscaping plan produced by DEP Landscape Architecture Ltd. in November 2024 as shown in Appendix 3 – Proposed development plan.

The habitat units onsite will decrease to 3.61 units (a net loss of 2.71 units (42.84%)). The hedgerow units onsite will increase to 0.26 units (a net gain of 0.19 units (265.49%)). Watercourse units remain unchanged at 0 units.

The DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric used to calculate the post-development value of the site has been submitted with this report and provides full details of the calculations.

5 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Biodiversity net gain requirements

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 6.32 habitat units and 0.07 hedgerow units.

In order to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity, the post development value would need to be 6.95 habitat units, and 0.08 hedgerow units. No gain in watercourse units is required due to the baseline value of 0.

In addition to providing the 10% net gain in habitat and hedgerow units required to adhere to national planning policy, the metric's trading rules must also be met to provide an acceptable net gain. This is a function of the metric that has been designed to ensure habitats are compensated for sufficiently.

To adhere to the metric's trading rules, losses must be replaced by habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units of the same broad habitat type and distinctiveness, or by units from any habitat with a higher distinctiveness regardless of the broad habitat type. Based on the details provided to UES at this stage, additional biodiversity units required to meet the trading rules are:

- 0.61 habitat units of medium distinctiveness or higher distinctiveness band from heathland and shrub broad habitat type.
- 2.28 habitat units of medium distinctiveness or higher distinctiveness band from individual trees broad habitat type.

5.2 Recommendations

Where possible, onsite habitat creation and enhancement will be prioritised to maximise net gain within the proposed development site. However, it is considered unlikely that sufficient onsite habitat retention, creation and / or enhancement will be feasible whilst facilitating the proposed development. As such, any deficit in units will be provided through offsite compensation. This will either be secured on land within the developer ownership, or through a payment to a third-party landowner acting as a habitat bank.

All compensatory offsite habitat units secured will need to be registered on the Biodiversity Gain Site Register.

As a last resort and where offsite compensation cannot be secured in the local area, statutory credits will be purchased as compensation.

The information contained within this Biodiversity Statement is considered to be sufficient to allow the local planning authority to grant planning permission, with regards to statutory biodiversity net gain requirements. Following approval of planning permission, the biodiversity gain condition will be applied to the permission, which must be discharged prior to the commencement of works.

A Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) must be prepared to discharge this condition. The BGP must include baseline and post-development Statutory Metric calculations based on the finalised site layout and landscaping proposals. It must also contain full details of secured offsite compensation (where necessary) and a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP),



detailing the proposed establishment, management and monitoring of all offsite compensation and any significant enhancements onsite.

All retained, creation or enhanced habitats that constate offsite compensation or onsite significant enhancements will need to be managed and monitored for a period of at least 30 years. This can be secured through a section 106 agreement or a conservation covenant.

Following submission of the Biodiversity Gain Plan, the local planning authority will have up to eight weeks to discharge the biodiversity gain condition.



6 CONCLUSION

The land parcel has an area of approximately 0.6ha. The land is primarily used for residential purposes with three apartment blocks located onsite. There are modified grasslands present on the eastern site boundary which have scattered trees shading majority of the grasslands. There is also a grassland present on the western section of the site which has tall ruderal vegetation starting to encroach. Further west, the land starts to transition into dense tall ruderal vegetation. After the tall ruderal vegetation bramble scrub has well established. On the western site boundary mixed scrub is present along with a disused building almost entirely cladded with dense vegetation located within the mixed scrub.

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 6.32 habitat units and 0.07 hedgerow units. In order to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity, the post development value would need to be 6.95 habitat units, and 0.08 hedgerow units, no gain in watercourse units is required due to the baseline value of 0.

To satisfy the trading rules within the metric, any habitats that are to be lost as part of the proposed development must be compensated for with habitats of the same distinctiveness and same broad habitat type, or any habitat of higher distinctiveness.

Where possible, onsite habitat creation and enhancement will be prioritised to maximise net gain within the proposed development site. It is considered unlikely that sufficient onsite habitat retention, creation and / or enhancement will be feasible whilst facilitating the proposed development. As such, any deficit in units will be provided through offsite compensation.



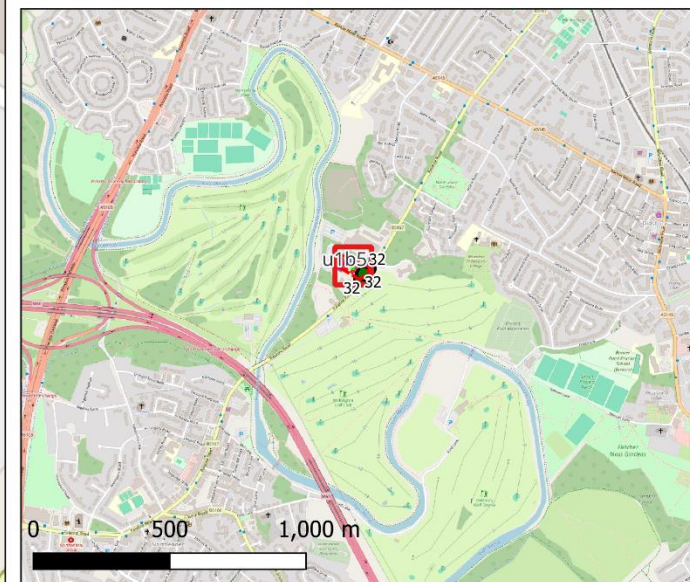
APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Pre Development UKHab Habitat Plan



Pre Development Site Plan

Site: 232 - 236 Palatine Road, Didsbury
NGR: SJ 83560 90980
Author: Daniel Smith
Date: 27/11/2024



- g3c - other neutral grassland
- g4 - modified grassland
- h2b - non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- h3d - bramble scrub
- h3h - mixed scrub
- u1b - developed land, sealed surface
- u1b5 - buildings
- Survey boundary
- 32 - scattered trees

MAP DATA FROM © [OpenStreetMap](#)

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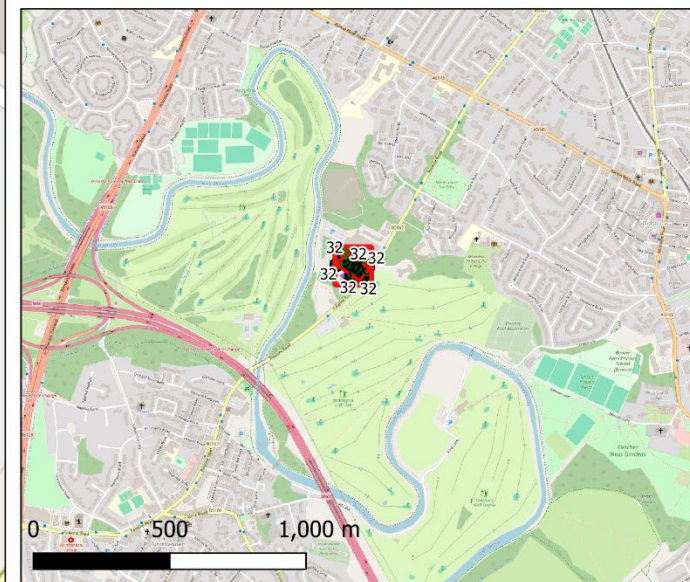


Appendix 2 – Post Development UKHab Habitat Plan



Post Development Site Plan

Site: 232 - 236 Palatine Road, Didsbury
NGR: SJ 83560 90980
Author: Daniel Smith
Date: 27/11/2024



- g3c - other neutral grassland
- g4 - modified grassland
- h2a6 - other native hedgerow
- h2b - non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- h3h - mixed scrub
- u1 - built-up areas and gardens
- u1b - developed land, sealed surface
- u1b5 - buildings
- Survey boundary

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Appendix 3 – Proposed Landscape Plan

