Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

For

White Planning

Three Mile Cross

Great Lea

RG7 1NP

Reference: Q20488

Date of survey: 1st June 2026

Baseline area units: 2.30

Publication date of metric used: 3rd July 2025

Prepared by
ProHort Limited
Waterbridge Farm
Yarnfield Lane
Stone
Staffordshire
ST15 0NE
Telephone: 01782 479479
Email: info@prohort.co.uk
Website: www.prohort.co.uk

Date: October 2026

Quality Assurance

Client	White Planning Three Mile Cross, Great Lea, RG7 1NP
Remarks	Version 2
Reference	Q20488
Date	7th October 2026
Principle Author	Eleanor Blackham
Qualifications	MSc, Qualifying Member of CIEEM
Secondary Author	Lydia Shabong
Qualifications	MSci (Hons), Qualifying Member of CIEEM
Surveyor	Owen Brown
Qualifications	BSc (Hons)
Reviewed By	Owen Brown
Qualifications	BSc (Hons)

Disclaimers

All information contained within this Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment is true and based on the professional opinions and knowledge of ProHort at the time of writing. This report has been prepared solely for the use of the client and for the specific purpose outlined within this document. No responsibility is accepted for use of this report or its contents by any third party.

This assessment is based on conditions observed at the time of the site visit and on data available at the time of preparation. Biodiversity values and habitat conditions may change over time due to natural processes, management practices, or development activities. As such, the findings and calculations presented represent a snapshot of the site's condition at the date of assessment only.

The results of this BNG Assessment rely on the accuracy of baseline data, habitat mapping, and measurements used in the Defra Biodiversity Metric (or other applicable metric). Any subsequent changes to the metric, survey data, or development proposals may alter the calculated Biodiversity Net Gain outcome.

This report should be read in full and not in part, as sections may be misinterpreted when taken out of context. Recommendations provided are based on current best practice and guidance available at the time of writing.

This report has been produced in accordance with the standards and principles set out in the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct. In line with current guidance, this report is considered valid for a period of 12 months from the date of the site visit, after which the baseline conditions may no longer reflect the true state of the site.

Contents

1. Introduction 4
2. Site and Surroundings 5
3. Methodology 6
3.1. Site Boundary 6
3.2. Baseline Habitats: 7
4. Habitat Baseline 8
4.1. Habitat descriptions 8
4.2. Baseline Metric 8
5. Proposed Habitats 9
5.1. Developed land; sealed surface 9
5.2. Vegetated garden 9
5.3. Proposed habitats metric 10
6. Conclusion 11
7. Other recommended enhancements 11
Appendix 1 Baseline Habitat Maps 12
Appendix 2 Habitat Proposals 13
Appendix 3 Additional Photographs 14

1. Introduction

ProHort Limited have been commissioned by Anna White to conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment for Three Mile Cross, Great Lea, RG7 1NP. A site survey was undertaken on the 1st of June and a desktop study was undertaken in June 2026.

The Local Planning Authority has requested that a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment is completed to support the planning application. The development includes the erection of 4 dwellings and associated parking and landscaping.

Wokingham Borough Council requires developments in the area to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, with a minimum of a 10% gain compared to the pre-development value of the site. A quantitative measure of the base value of a Site for biodiversity, and the value of a Site post-development, is arrived at by using a recognised Biodiversity metric. Biodiversity metrics measure the value of a Site in terms of Biodiversity Units. Biodiversity Units are a proxy measure of biodiversity, arrived at by assessing the type, area and condition of semi-natural habitats on site. A limitation of the use of metrics is that they only measure habitat areas, and do not consider species-specific measures which may nevertheless make meaningful contributions to gains in local biodiversity.

2. Site and Surroundings

The area surveyed is a short sward modified grassland with a line of trees and scrub present along the western border. It is located at Three Mile Cross, Great Lea, RG7 1NP (SU71046852), (Figure 1), hereafter referred to as the 'Site'. The site is to the south of Reading and to the west of Wokingham. The surrounding area is characterised by a predominately rural and suburban landscape, with arable fields, scattered areas of woodland, and residential properties. Site access is off Great Lea.

The woodland to the north of the site is designated as priority habitat deciduous woodland and there are a number of priority deciduous woodland blocks, priority traditional orchards, priority ancient woodland, and priority wood pasture and parkland within the surrounding area.

There are no designated sites within proximity to the Site. The nearest watercourse to the Site was Foudry brook, a small stream approximately 708m from the Site. The Site does not contain a watercourse and there is no watercourse directly surrounding the Site.

Figure 1 - Red line boundary of the Site and the surrounding area.
Taken from Bing Maps (© 2025 Microsoft Corporation, © 2025 Maxar, ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS)

3. Methodology

The pre-development (baseline) and post development (proposed) value of the habitats have been calculated using the DEFRA/Natural England's Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator. The methodology for determining habitat distinctiveness and condition values, follows the guidelines set out in the User Guide and Technical Supplement for Biodiversity Metric.

The current assessment utilised the principles outlines in the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' denoting the steps involved in reaching the conclusions outstated in this report and preserving natural features and resources of importance. The 'Mitigation Hierarchy' states:

- Avoid: The easiest, cheapest and most desirable method of reducing potential impacts of the proposed development.
- Minimise: Where avoidance is not possible, measures can be taken to minimise the impacts of the proposed development.
- Mitigate: Where minimisation is not possible, measures can be taken to enhance/ create on Site habitats to compensate for potential losses caused by the proposed development.
- Offset: Where mitigation is not possible, on-site habitat loss must be compensated off site. This should be utilised as a last resort for compensating losses as it is the most risk involved, expensive and complex solution.

3.1. Site Boundary

The following data sources have been used to define the boundary for the BNG calculation and determine the relevant attributes for BNG (e.g. size, condition and habitat type) for the pre and post-development habitats.

The boundary used for the BNG assessment is the red line application boundary for the project (See Figure 2 for a detailed red line boundary).

Figure 2 – Red line boundary of the Site
Taken from Bing Maps (© 2025 Microsoft Corporation, © 2025 Maxar, ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS)

3.2. Baseline Habitats:

In order to generate the site baseline habitat data (e.g. habitat type, condition), a phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken, where the site was systematically walked over and the dominant habitat type in each area recorded. Dominant plant species were noted, as were any that are legally protected (Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981), invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Additionally, 5 (1 meter-squared) quadrats were used to determine species richness on any grassland habitats and the other grassland conditions were estimated from a visual inspection of the site.

The information collected during the site visit was used to baseline any applicable habitats and satellite mapping was used to calculate habitat areas. The areas and conditions of any onsite habitats were inputted into DEFRA/Natural England's Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator. The metric includes 3 broad categories of habitats and biodiversity units for which scores are calculated differently:

- Area habitats, such as grasslands, woodlands and ponds
- Linear hedgerows and lines of trees
- Linear rivers and ditches

4. Habitat Baseline

4.1. Habitat descriptions

Upon review of satellite imagery, it was identified that there has been habitat degradation on site since January 2020. Therefore, the baseline assessment will be conducted using a combination of satellite imagery and images collected during the site visit.

All habitats within the Site are outlined below:

No linear features were found within the red line boundary of the Site.

The location of all baseline habitats can be seen in Appendix 1 and habitat descriptions are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 – baseline habitat descriptions

Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Flora Species
Broadleaved woodland	The site was mainly comprised of broadleaved woodland. This had been removed prior to the site visit, but the habitat is clearly shown on satellite imagery.	Unknown

4.2. Baseline Metric

The value of the area and linear baseline habitats was calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and is outlined in Tables 2 below.

Table 2 – area habitat baseline calculation

Habitat	Notes	Area (ha)	Habitat Units	Area retained	Area enhanced	Units lost
Broadleaved woodland	Classified as 'good condition' in line with best practice guidance.	0.1919	2.30	0	0	2.30
Totals		**0.19**	**2.30**	**0**	**0**	**2.30**

The area habitat baseline of 2.30 units must be enhanced by 10% resulting in at least a **2.53** unit baseline post intervention. If this cannot be achieved on Site, off Site credits will need to be acquired.

Watercourse	Notes	Length (km)	Watercourse Units	Length retained	Length enhanced	Units lost
Ditch 1	Poor condition	0.044	0.15	0	0	0.15
Ditch 2	Poor condition	0.031	0.11	0	0	0.11
Totals		**0.08**	**0.26**	**0**	**0**	**0.26**

The watercourse baseline of 0.26 units must be enhanced by 10% resulting in at least a **0.29** unit watercourse baseline post intervention. If this cannot be achieved on Site, off Site credits will need to be acquired.

5. Proposed Habitats

All habitats proposed within the Site are outlined below:

- Developed land; sealed surface, created
- Vegetated garden; created

The location of these proposed habitats can be seen in Appendix 2.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Guidelines, no creation or enhancement of habitats within the curtilage of a privately owned or tenanted dwelling is to be recorded. As these gains cannot be legally secured the area habitat will be classified as either 'vegetated garden' or 'unvegetated garden'.

We outline indicative suggestions on how such habitats may be established and should be treated as general guidelines.

5.1. Developed land; sealed surface

The developed land will consist of the construction of two static caravans, a dayroom building, and associated access paths, and car park area comprised of hardstanding.

5.2. Vegetated garden

Vegetated garden will be present on the majority of the site, surrounding the constructed dwellings and parking area.

In order to establish a vegetated garden, any existing vegetation will be cut short. A grass seed mix containing a range of species will be distributed around the area. This will then be rolled in to increase

likelihood of establishment. This will contain species that can handle heavy management e.g. red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), black medick (*Medicago lupulina*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) and a mix of grass species.

5.3. Proposed habitats metric

Table 4 – area habitat proposal calculation

Habitat	Notes	Area (ha)	Habitat Units Delivered
On-site habitat creation			
Developed land; sealed surface	N/A – Other condition	0.062	0.00
Vegetated garden	N/A – Other condition	0.1299	0.25
Totals		**0.19**	**0.25**

If all area habitats and conditions are met post intervention, then an **89.11%** loss of biodiversity will occur.

Regrading watercourses, there are no plans within the proposed development to retain or replace the ditches present on site, therefore there will be a **100%** loss of biodiversity in the on site watercourses.

6. Conclusion

The development will result in a measurable loss to local biodiversity.

There will be a total decrease of 89.11% biodiversity of area habitats. In order to achieve the obligatory 10% uplift of area habitats, at least 2.28 off site biodiversity units must be acquired. Of these units, 2.28 must be of the broad habitat type “Woodland and forest” to satisfy trading rules.

There will be a total decrease of 100% in the watercourse biodiversity. In order to achieve the obligatory 10% uplift, at least 0.29 off site watercourse units must be acquired, these units must be of the broad watercourse habitat type “ditches”.

Offsite biodiversity units can be obtained through local landowners, habitat banks and the market which can be found through your LPA, a broker etc. If this is not possible statutory biodiversity credits must be purchased from the UK government as a last resort. The number of statutory credits required is 4.61 A2 units and 0.57 W units. These units are exclusively purchased from the government, and the cost of these is inflated to equate 2 credits per 1 off site biodiversity unit.

As mitigating and minimising was not a viable option due to the scale of the project off setting was the only feasible option.

7. Other recommended enhancements

Enhancements for bats and birds are recommended due to the proximity of the Site to a number of priority woodland parcels. It is likely bats and birds will use the site for commuting and foraging. It is proposed that bat boxes for crevice dwelling species, and bird boxes are installed on any suitable trees on site. A Biocube planter should also be placed within the Site to provide a habitat for a wide variety of species. This species intervention would enhance local biodiversity.

Appendix 1 Baseline Habitat Maps

Figure 3 Baseline map of the Site

Appendix 2 Habitat Proposals

Figure 4 Habitat proposals for the site

ProHort Limited
Waterbridge Farm
Yarnfield Lane
Yarnfield
Stone
Staffordshire
ST15 0NE

Telephone: 01782 479479
Email: info@prohort.co.uk
Website: www.prohort.co.uk

Appendix 3 Additional Photographs

Figure 5 Modified grassland on site

Figure 6 View of site from the northeast corner

Figure 7 View of the western boundary of the site

Figure 8 Tree stump present on site, located centrally

Figure 9 Ash and brash piles present on site, located centrally