

**Rehoboth
Forest Road
Binfield
Wokingham
RG40 5QY**

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Report ref.: R2806_BNG_a

Report Quality Control Information	
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP was instructed by Just Around the Corner (JAC) Ltd to produce a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Rehoboth, Forest Road in Wokingham. The BNG Assessment was commissioned to accompany a full planning application to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for the proposed construction of a horse exerciser.
- 1.1.2** A desktop study was conducted by Conor Watson ACIEEM (including a TVERC 1km data search) and a site walkover was undertaken on the 1st November 2024 by John Wenman MCIEEM. No designated sites/priority habitats or protected/notable species are considered likely to be adversely affected by the proposed horse exerciser.
- 1.1.3** The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool demonstrates the feasibility of delivering a minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity. The biodiversity metric tool shows that off-site habitat enhancement (within the land ownership boundary) of 0.058ha of modified grassland will deliver a total net change of 58.75% in habitat units.
- 1.1.4** The offsite habitat enhancement is proposed within the Rehoboth ownership boundary and the standard time taken for a modified grassland to be enhanced from moderate to good habitat condition is 10 years. Therefore, it is considered likely that the management and monitoring of the proposed habitat enhancement can be sufficiently detailed in this document and secured by an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 1.1.5** The management would involve using fencing to control and ultimately reduce the level of horse grazing to allow for increased structural variation of the sward (criterion B) and preventing excessive poaching (criterion D). The habitat will be monitored every two years by a suitably qualified ecologist until it has reached target condition.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

2.1.1 John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP was instructed by Just Around the Corner (JAC) Ltd to produce a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Rehoboth, Forest Road in Wokingham. The BNG Assessment was commissioned to accompany a full planning application to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for the proposed construction of a horse exerciser (see proposed block plan in **Appendix 1**).

2.2 Site Location and Context

2.2.1 Rehoboth is approximately 5.2ha of land used primarily as horse stables on the northern side of Forest Road in Binfield, Wokingham. The application site covers 0.0752ha of the land at Rehoboth associated with the proposed construction of a horse exerciser (OS grid reference: SU 8119 7112).

2.2.2 Rehoboth is set in countryside between the M4 (approx. 380m northwest) and the A329M (approx. 600m south). The countryside is characterised by horse pasture and includes ancient woodland parcels, such as Ashridge Wood (adjacent to the east) and nearby parkland, such as the pre-1800 parkscape of Bill Hill Park (approx. 375m west).

2.3 Report Objectives

2.3.1 The aim of this BNG Assessment is to demonstrate that a minimum of 10% on-site net gain in biodiversity can be achieved as part of the proposed development. The key objectives are to:

- detail the approach taken for the BNG calculation (i.e. the Statutory Biodiversity Metric);
- describe and map the baseline habitats and important ecological features on site;
- describe and map the proposed habitats based on post-development design;
- complete the biodiversity metric tool with supporting condition assessment sheets; and
- outline the implementation of the design concepts and the long-term management to deliver BNG.

2.3.2 This BNG Assessment report should be read in conjunction with the completed Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool excel spreadsheet.

3 PLANNING POLICY

3.1 National Planning Policy

3.1.1 The biodiversity duty imposed through the Environment Act 2021 states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must consider what action they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.

3.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2023, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. Section 15 of the NPPF sets out the approach LPAs should adopt to conserve and enhance the natural environment when determining planning applications. The selection of excerpts taken from Section 15 refer to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as follows:

'Paragraph 180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: [...] d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures [...]

Paragraph 185. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should: [...] b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity [...]

Paragraph 186. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: [...] d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate [...]

3.1.3 In England, BNG became mandatory for major development from the 12th February 2024 and for minor development (small sites) from the 2nd April 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). In practice, planning permission in England is now subject to a condition to secure a minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity, unless the development is a type that is exempt from mandatory BNG requirements.

3.2 Local Planning Policy

3.2.1 Wokingham Borough Council website states that once planning permission is granted, a plan to create at least a 10% improvement of biodiversity, from the baseline assessment, will need to be provided.

3.2.2 The Wokingham Borough Council website states that *'Information about the existing biodiversity on site, sometimes called a baseline assessment, will need to be submitted by applicants. If planning permission is granted, a plan to create at least a 10% improvement of biodiversity, from the baseline assessment, will need to be provided. The biodiversity net gain requirement has been agreed by the Government and is additional to existing local and national policy and guidance. If permission is granted then a statutory condition, called the General Biodiversity Gain Condition, is applied – this condition cannot be changed or removed. A metric has been developed by the Government that will allow all the relevant information to be submitted. The metric tool will help work out the value of the biodiversity on the site and measure this in 'units'. This will mean the 10% increase in 'units' can be shown as part of a planning application. The metric will need to be supported with other information including whether if the increase in biodiversity will be provided on or off site and/or if there is an exceptional ecological reason to not follow the metric. Where the improvement to biodiversity is provided on the site, it is expected this will be in place for a minimum of 30 years and will be monitored over this time. The Council will likely use planning conditions or a legal agreement to make sure this is the case. The Council will also have to provide a report on the status of biodiversity net gain at least every five years. Where the improvement to biodiversity is provided off the site, a legal agreement will be required to secure this, and the improvement will need to be registered with Natural England. If it isn't possible to provide biodiversity improvement on or off the site, it will be possible to purchase 'credits' from the government.'*

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Baseline Information

Desk Study

- 4.1.1** A desktop study was conducted by Conor Watson ACIEEM. The study utilised data from the local environmental records centre and open access online resources to acquire information on the nature of the site and its surroundings, and to highlight any potential ecological features.
- 4.1.2** Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) was commissioned to provide legally protected and notable species records and non-statutorily designated wildlife site locations held within a 1km radius around a central point inside the application site.
- 4.1.3** The DEFRA Data Services Platform and the Multi-Agency Geographical Information Centre (MAGIC) were used to obtain geospatial datasets for statutorily designated sites, European Protected Species (EPS) and priority habitats. Google Earth satellite imagery and OS maps were examined to determine landscape-scale habitat connectivity and provide insight into historical and current land use; such information helps determine the importance of any potential ecological features on site.

Field Survey

- 4.1.4** A site walkover was undertaken on the 1st November 2024 by John Wenman MCIEEM. The site was surveyed using the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) system (UKHab Ltd 2023) in accordance with the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2nd Edition) (CIEEM 2017). Habitat condition assessments were conducted in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (February 2024).
- 4.1.5** There were no significant survey constraints because full access was available to the site. The survey was subject to seasonal constraints because not all plant and animal species are visible throughout the year and therefore the report represents a snapshot of the site at the time of the survey only.

4.2 Biodiversity Net Gain Approach

- 4.2.1** This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment uses the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (February 2024) to calculate the losses and gains in biodiversity unit value resulting from the proposed development. The biodiversity metric tool has been used to guide the proposed site layout and landscaping in order to deliver a minimum 10% net gain

for biodiversity.

- 4.2.2** The biodiversity metric rules must be followed for a valid biodiversity net gain and are as follows:

Rule 1: *The trading rules of this biodiversity metric must be followed.*

Rule 2: *Biodiversity unit outputs, for each type of unit, must not be summed, traded, or converted between types. The requirement to deliver at least a 10% net gain applies to each type of unit.*

Rule 3: *To accurately apply the biodiversity metric formula, you must use the statutory biodiversity metric calculation tool or small sites biodiversity metric tool (SSM) for small sites.*

The tools remove the need for a user to manually calculate the change in biodiversity value.

The tool will summarise the results of the calculation and inform a user whether the biodiversity net gain objective has been met.

Rule 4: *In exceptional ecological circumstances, deviation from this biodiversity metric methodology may be permitted by the relevant planning authority.*

- 4.2.3** The biodiversity metric principles inform the use of the biodiversity metric tool and are as follows:

Principle 1: *The metric assessment should be completed by a competent person.*

Principle 2: *The use of this biodiversity metric does not override existing biodiversity protections, statutory obligations, policy requirements, ecological mitigation hierarchy or any other requirements. This includes consenting or licensing processes, for example woodlands.*

Principle 3: *This biodiversity metric should be used in accordance with established good practice guidance and professional codes.*

Principle 4: *This biodiversity metric is not a complex or comprehensive ecological model and is not a substitute for expert ecological advice.*

Principle 5: *Biodiversity units are a proxy for biodiversity and should be treated as relative values.*

Principle 6: *This biodiversity metric is designed to inform decisions in conjunction with locally relevant evidence, expert input, or guidance.*

Principle 7: *Habitat interventions need to be realistic and deliverable within a relevant project timeframe.*

Principle 8: *Created and enhanced habitats should be, where practical and reasonable, local to any impact and deliver strategically important outcomes for nature conservation.*

Principle 9: *This biodiversity metric does not enforce a minimum habitat size ratio for compensation of losses. Proposals should aim to:*

- *maintain habitat extent - supporting more, bigger, better and more joined up ecological networks*
- *ensure that proposed or retained habitat parcels are of sufficient size for ecological function'*

5 BASELINE INFORMATION

5.1 Desk Study

Designated Sites and Priority Habitats

- 5.1.1** The desk study highlighted no internationally designated statutory sites within a 5km radius of the application site; one nationally designated statutory site was identified within a 2km radius – see **Table 1** below.

Table 1. Statutorily designated sites within the vicinity of the site (Source: MAGIC).

Site name	Designation	Description	Distance from nearest site boundary (m)
Holt Copse & Joel Park	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	5.28ha site managed by Wokingham Town Council and Holt Copse Conservation Volunteers. There is lowland mixed deciduous woodland, including ancient semi-natural woodland, and a large noctule bat roost.	1697SW

- 5.1.2** No locally designated non-statutory sites, i.e. Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), were revealed within a 1km search radius.

- 5.1.3** No priority habitats in the Priority Habitat Inventory (NERC Act 2006 Section 41 habitats of principle importance) are mapped on the application site.

Legally Protected and Notable Species

- 5.1.4** The TVERC database revealed a range of legally protected and notable species records from the last 10 years – see **Tables 2a & 2b** below.

Table 2a. Legally protected and notable species records within the vicinity of the site (Source: TVERC).

Common name	Scientific name	No. of records	Most recent record	Nearest record (m)	Precision (m)	Status
Amphibians & Reptiles						
Great crested newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	8	2021	247	1	HabReg_2 WCA_5s94 b/c NERC_s41
Birds						
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	1	2017	839	10	WCA_1p1
Black redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	2	2021	0	2000	WCA_1p1
Green sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	7	2022	839	100	WCA_1p1
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1	2015	32	1000	WCA_1p1
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	21	2022	752	1000	WCA_1p1
Red-backed shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	2	2021	832	100	WCA_1p1 BOCC_red
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	1	2015	32	1000	WCA_1p1
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	2	2022	206	1000	BOCC_red NERC_s41
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus</i>	1	2022	32	1000	BOCC_red

	<i>vanellus</i>					NERC_s41
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	3	2022	664	100	BOCC_red NERC_s41
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	4	2021	664	100	BOCC_red NERC_s41
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	2	2022	206	1000	BOCC_red NERC_s41
Yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	1	2015	32	1000	BOCC_red NERC_s41
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	6	2022	664	100	BOCC_red NERC_s41
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	2	2022	206	1000	NERC_s41
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	3	2022	206	1000	NERC_s41
Higher plants						
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	1	2020	860	10	WCA_8
English stick eyebright	<i>Euphrasia officinalis</i> subsp. <i>anglica</i>	2	2016	385	1	NERC_s41
Invertebrates						
Shaded broad- bar	<i>Scotopteryx chenopodiata</i>	1	2018	698	100	NERC_s41
Cinnabar	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	1	2017	787	100	NERC_s41
Terrestrial Mammals (bats)						
Brown long- eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	14	2023	160	100	HabReg_2 WCA_5s94 b/c NERC_s41
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	16	2021	160	100	HabReg_2 WCA_5s94 b/c
Daubenton's	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	1	2016	893	1000	HabReg_2 WCA_5s94 b/c
Nathusius' pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	2	2018	160	100	HabReg_2 WCA_5s94 b/c
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	6	2021	160	100	HabReg_2 WCA_5s94 b/c NERC_s41
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	8	2020	160	100	HabReg_2 WCA_5s94 b/c NERC_s41
Terrestrial Mammals (excl. bats)						
Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	2	2021	491	1	NERC_s41

Table 2b. Species status key.

Abbreviation	Legislation
BOCC_red	Birds of Conservation Concern Red list – Globally threatened according to IUCN criteria; those whose population or range has declined rapidly in recent years; and those that have declined historically and not shown substantial recovery.
HabReg_2	Schedule 2 of Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (European Protected Species animal) – It is an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade in the animals listed in Schedule 2.
NERC_s41	Priority Species listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
PBA	Protection of Badgers Act 1992 – Badgers and their setts are protected; making it illegal to kill, injure or take, possess or cruelly ill-treat badgers or to

	interfere with a badger sett
WCA_1p1	Schedule 1 Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) – Birds protected from disturbance at their nests, or their dependent young.
WCA_5s94b/c	Schedule 5 Section 9 Parts 4b/c of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) – Animals which are protected from intentional disturbance while occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection / Animals which are protected from their access to any structure or place which they use for shelter or protection being obstructed.

5.1.5 The NatureSpace great crested newt (GCN) impact map shows the application site falling within a red risk zone; these zones are considered to have highly suitable habitat and are the most important areas for GCNs. MAGIC shows seven European Protected Species licence applications granted for GCN within the last 10 years inside a 2km radius of site, but all are over 1km away beyond the A329M to the south. The closest pond shown on OS mapping is situated 165m south of the horse exerciser.

5.1.6 MAGIC shows four European Protected Species licence applications granted for bats in the same 2km search radius. These licences cover works affecting three bat species: brown long-eared, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle; the closest licences are 800m north, covering the destruction of a breeding site and resting place for brown long-eared and common pipistrelle bats between 2015 and 2029(Case refs.: 2015-8658-EPS-MIT & 2015-8658-EPS-MIT-1).

5.2 Baseline Habitats

5.2.1 The application site is 0.0752ha of land at Rehoboth – land primarily used as horse stables – located on the northern side of Forest Road in Binfield. The application site covers land associated with the proposed construction of a horse exerciser, and includes an access road, a yard and horse paddock.

5.2.2 The UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) habitats identified during the field survey are described below with photographs (see **Photographs 1, 2 & 3**) and have been assigned condition and strategic significance as shown in **Table 3** below; a plan of these baseline habitats for the biodiversity metric tool is illustrated in **Figure 1** below.

Table 3. Baseline habitats for the biodiversity metric tool.

Habitat Type (UKHab code)	Habitat Distinctiveness	Habitat Condition	Strategic Significance	Area (ha)	Habitat Units
On-site					
Modified grassland (g4)	Low	Moderate	Low	0.0137	0.05
Developed land – sealed surface (u1b)	Very low	N/A	Low	0.0505	0.00
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)	Very low	N/A	Low	0.011	0.00
Total				0.0752	0.05
Off-site					
Modified grassland (g4)	Low	Moderate	Low	0.0584	0.23
Total				0.0584	0.23

g4 Modified grassland

- 5.2.3** The application site included 0.0137ha of horse paddock at Rehoboth, where preparation works for the proposed horse exerciser had already commenced (**Photographs 1 & 2**).



Photograph 1. Horse paddock (g4).



Photograph 2. Site of proposed horse exerciser (g4).

- 5.2.4** The plant species recorded in the horse paddock are listed in **Table 4** below.

Table 4. Plant species recorded in modified grassland (g4).

Quadrat nos.	Common name	Scientific name
	Bristly oxtongue	<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>
	Canadian fleabane	<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>
1	Cat's-ear	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>
1, 2 & 3	Common bent	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>
1	Common ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>
	Common vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>
2 & 3	Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
	Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
3	Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis sp.</i>
3	Greater plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>

1, 2 & 3	Perennial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
1 & 3	Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
	Scarlet pimpernel	<i>Lysimachia arvensis</i>
1	Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
	Slender speedwell	<i>Veronica filiformis</i>
3	Smooth meadow grass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>
1, 2 & 3	White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
	Wild pansy	<i>Viola tricolor</i>
2	Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>

- 5.2.5** The grassland was a low distinctiveness habitat because it had less than 9 species per square metre (in three quadrats). The habitat condition of the grassland has been assessed as moderate (see habitat condition assessment sheets in **Appendix 2**); the grassland is not of ecological value beyond the scale of the site and therefore has been assigned low strategic significance.

u1b Developed land – sealed surface

- 5.2.6** The application site followed an asphalt access road (**Photograph 3**). This very low distinctiveness habitat cannot be assigned a habitat condition and has low strategic significance.



Photograph 3. Asphalt access road (u1b).

u1c Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

- 5.2.7** The application site included an area of ground adjacent to the horse paddock that is used as a yard area. This very low distinctiveness habitat cannot be assigned a habitat condition and has low strategic significance.

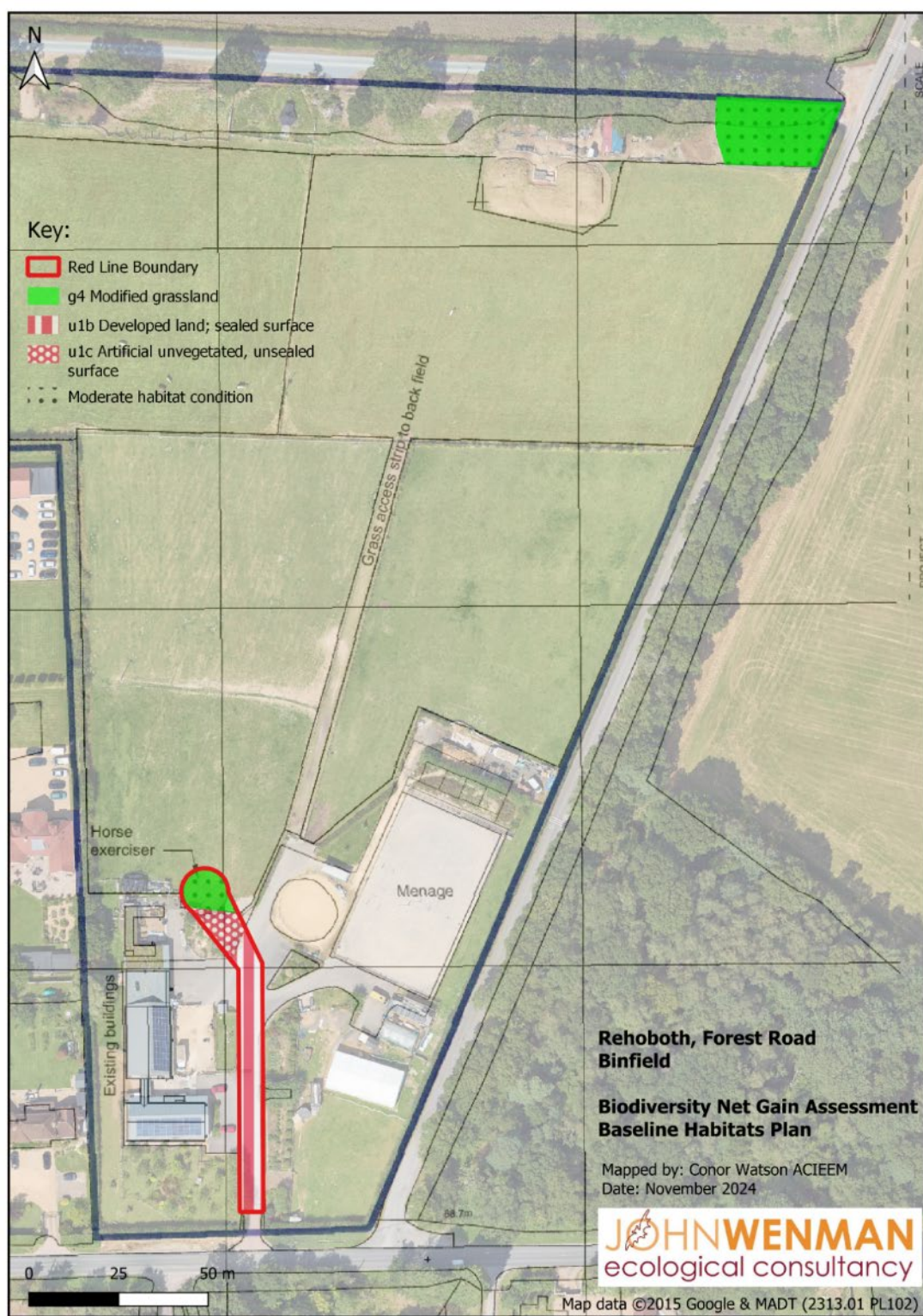


Figure 1. Baseline Habitats Plan.

6 POST-DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

6.1 Proposed Habitats

- 6.1.1** The proposed habitats derived from the proposed block plan (see **Appendix 1**) are listed in **Table 5** and described with photographs (see **Photograph 4**) below; a plan of these proposed habitats for the biodiversity metric tool is illustrated in **Figure 2**.

Table 5. Proposed habitats for the biodiversity metric tool.

Habitat Type (UKHab code)	Habitat Distinctiveness	Habitat Condition	Strategic Significance	Area (ha)	Habitat Units (net change)
On-site					
Modified grassland (g4)	Low	Moderate	Low	0.0013	0.01 (-0.05)
Developed land – sealed surface (u1b)	Very low	N/A	Low	0.0505	0.00
Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)	Very low	N/A	Low	0.0234	0.00
Total				0.0752	0.01 (-0.05)
Off-site					
Modified grassland (g4)	Low	Good	Low	0.0584	0.32 (0.08)
Total				0.0584	0.32 (0.08)
Combined Net Habitat Unit Change					0.03

g4 Modified grassland

- 6.1.2** 0.0124ha of the horse paddock will be lost to the proposed horse exerciser, with only 0.0013ha of grassland within the application site retained.
- 6.1.3** A 0.0584ha area of horse paddock beyond the application site boundary (**Photograph 4**) will be enhanced from moderate to good condition via criteria B and D (see habitat condition assessment sheets in **Appendix 2**).



Photograph 4. Horse paddock for proposed enhancement (g4).

u1b Developed land – sealed surface

- 6.1.4** The asphalt access road will be retained.

u1c Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

- 6.1.5** A small part of the yard area will be replaced by the proposed horse exerciser but the habitat will remain the same.

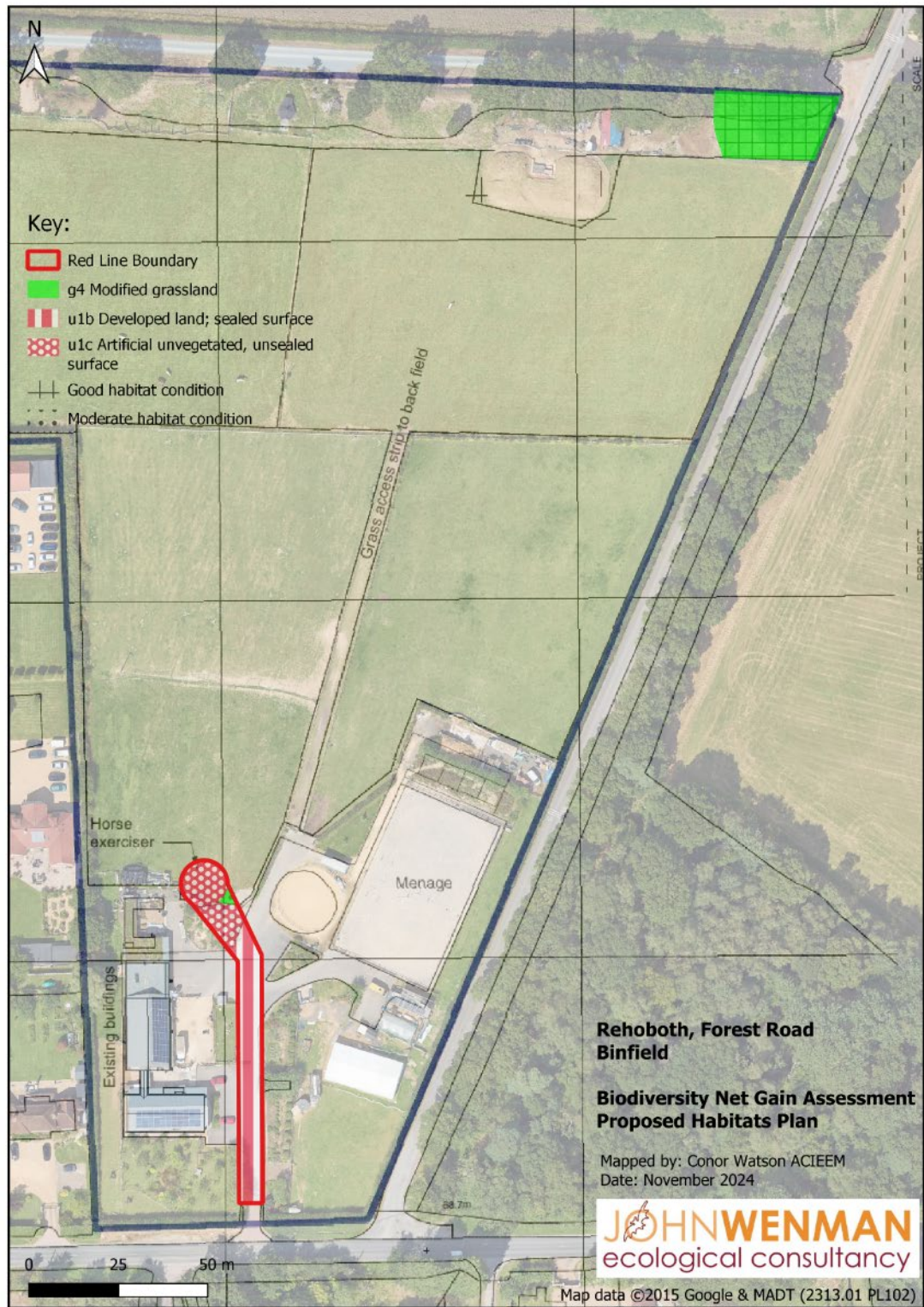


Figure 2. Proposed Habitats Plan.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Impact Assessment

Designated Sites and Priority Habitats

- 7.1.1** No designated sites or priority habitats are considered likely to be adversely affected by the proposed horse exerciser because of the small extent of the land affected and distance of the proposals from the single designated site with the search area i.e. 1.6km from the site.

Protected and Notable Species

- 7.1.2** The land within and adjacent to the red line comprises hard standing, grazed pasture and artificial, unsealed surfaces – habitats that are of very low suitability for protected and notable species that may otherwise be associated with farmland and rural environments including the locally recorded great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*). With reference to the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Tool, the loss of the small area of land to the horse exerciser (0.0124ha) 165m from the closest pond, would have no impact on local newt populations. Other notable amphibians and groups such as birds, invertebrates, mammals and reptiles are unlikely to be present. Therefore, no protected or notable species are considered likely to be adversely affected by the proposed horse exerciser.

7.2 Biodiversity Metric Result

- 7.2.1** The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool demonstrates the feasibility of delivering a minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity. The biodiversity metric tool shows that off-site habitat enhancement (within the land ownership boundary) will deliver a total net change of 58.75% in habitat units – see the final results section in **Figure 3** below.

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.03		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	58.75%		
	Hedgerow units	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00%		
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓			
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	10.00%	0.05	0.06	0.00
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

Figure 3. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Final Results.

7.3 Project Implementation and Management

- 7.3.1** It is Government guidance that all offsite BNG provision must be legally secured for a minimum of a minimum 30-year period, and subject to a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP). However, due to the nature and the scale of the scheme this approach is considered disproportionate.
- 7.3.2** The offsite habitat enhancement – enhancing a section of modified grassland - is proposed within the Rehoboth ownership boundary and the standard time taken for a modified grassland to be enhanced from moderate to good habitat condition is 10 years. Therefore, it is considered likely that the management and monitoring of the proposed habitat enhancement can be sufficiently detailed in this document and secured by an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 7.3.3** The management would involve using fencing to control and ultimately reduce the level of horse grazing to allow for increased structural variation of the sward (criterion B) and preventing excessive poaching (criterion D). The habitat will be monitored every two years by a suitably qualified ecologist until it has reached target condition.

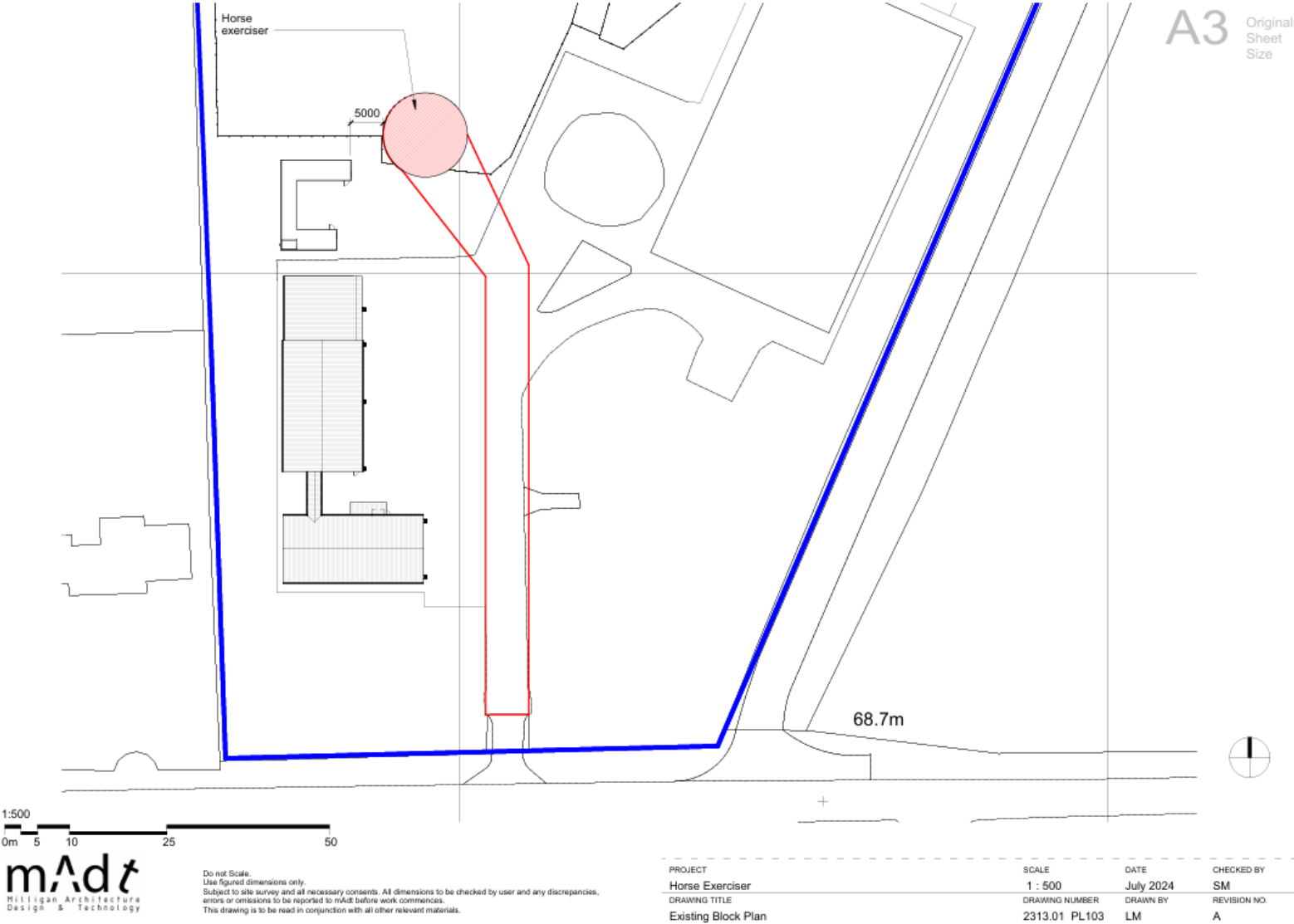
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<https://www.ukhab.org>).

APPENDIX 1 – PROPOSED BLOCK PLAN



APPENDIX 2 – HABITAT CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Rehoboth	Survey date and Surveyor name	01/11/2024, John Wenman MCIEEM
Limitations (if applicable)	N/A	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	R2806_BNG_a
Grid reference	SU81197112	Habitat parcel reference	1
Habitat Description Horse paddock with the following species: Bristly oxtongue, Canadian fleabane, Cat's-ear, Common bent, Common ragwort, Common vetch, Creeping buttercup, Creeping thistle, Forget-me-not, Greater plantain, Perennial ryegrass, Ribwort plantain, Scarlet pimpernel, Selfheal, Slender speedwell, Smooth meadow grass, White clover, Wild pansy, Yorkshire fog			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	Yes	Less than 9 species per m2 (in 3 quadrats). One quadrat with 8 species
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	No	Horse grazed - uniform sward
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes	Horse grazed - no scrub
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	No	Horse grazed - excessive poaching
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Yes	Small area of bareground associated with paddock access
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes	Horse grazed - no bracken
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Yes	No invasive plant species identified
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			Yes
Number of criteria passed			5
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	✓	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)		