

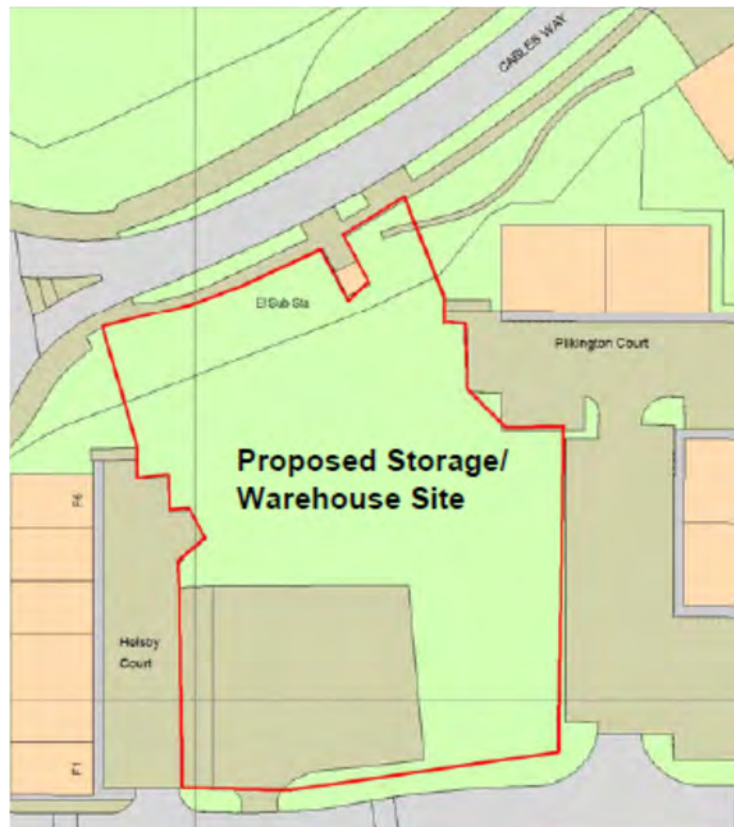
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Land off Sinclair Way, Prescott

Introduction

Etive Ecology Ltd were appointed by the applicant to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment of a planning application site off Sinclair Way, Prescott. The site is centred on National Grid Reference SJ 4652 9222 and the site is proposed for the construction of a new storage unit and associated parking and lay-down area.

The BNG Assessment used the Full Statutory BNG Metric (version: February 2024) owing to the size of the site and the slightly unusual determination of the baseline (see below). The appraisal was carried out by experienced ecologist Russell Grey (BSc, MCIEEM, CEnv).



Site Location showing red line application site boundary.

On-Site BNG Baseline

The ecological baseline for the site has been taken as the current condition. The site was cleared prior to August 2023 following the grant of planning permission from Knowsley LPA to develop the site. The current application is for a revised development layout, which has triggered the requirement for this BNG Assessment. According to habitat degradation guidance provided by Knowsley LPA in relation to this application, the degradation of the site is acceptable as the baseline as it was a) as a result of a planning permission and b) took place before the 25th August 2023.

Since the degradation or site clearance prior to 25th August 2023, the site has been operated as a storage yard for the nearby Home Improvement Centre. The baseline taken to inform this BNG assessment is the condition of the site on 3rd July 2024 when the site visit was undertaken.

The baseline habitats have been identified using the UKHab Classification. The baseline site is summarised as follows:

- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface; 0.3ha (no condition assessment required) of no strategic value = **0.0 Habitat Units**. This is the area of site that was previously cleared and has been surfaced with gravel for use as a storage yard.
- Bare Ground; 0.02ha in a Poor Condition (see condition assessment attached) and of no strategic value = **0.04 Habitat Units**. A mix of annual and perennial vegetation around the edged of the site, colonising bare ground that is left unmanaged.
- Introduced Shrub; 0.06ha (no condition assessment required) and of no strategic value = **0.12 Habitat Units**. Comprising ornamental planting alongside Cables Way to the north, with cherry laurel, New Zealand Broadleaf and occasional black pine and lime trees.



Existing storage yard – artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface..



Strip of bare ground along the edge of the site.



Introduced shrub along the edge of Cables Way to the north

The overall baseline score for the site was calculated as **0.16 Habitat Units**.

On-Site BNG Post-Intervention

Post-intervention (development) the site is proposed to comprise the following habitats as per the UKHab Classification:

Habitats Retained

- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface; 0.08ha (no condition assessment required) of no strategic value = **0.0 Habitat Units**. Northern part of the storage yard to be retained.
- Bare Ground; 0.02ha in a Poor Condition (see condition assessment attached) and of no strategic value = **0.04 Habitat Units**. Bare ground to the edge of the site is to be retained in its current condition.
- Introduced Shrub; 0.06ha (no condition assessment required) and of no strategic value = **0.12 Habitat Units**. All ornamental planting is to be retained and untouched by the development..

Habitats Created

- Developed land; sealed surface; 0.22ha (no condition assessment) and of no strategic value = **0.0 Habitat Units**. Comprising the new building footprint and car parking areas.
- Urban tree; two native trees representing 0.0081ha, in moderate condition (see condition assessment attached) and of no strategic value = **0.02 Habitat Units**.

The overall post-intervention score On-Site was calculated as **0.18 Habitat Units**. This corresponds to a change in Biodiversity Value of +0.02 Habitat Units (+15.48%), which meets the mandatory 10% BNG.

Assessment

The BNG assessment calculates a change in Biodiversity Value of **+0.02** Habitat Units (+15.48%) as a result of the On-Site proposals. Therefore, the proposed scheme meets the mandatory BNG target and also meets the habitat trading rules.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Proposed Site Layout Plan is updated to show the two new native trees to be planted as part of the scheme, in order to meet the mandatory 10% BNG target. These trees should be managed appropriately to ensure their successful establishment and long-term (minimum 30 years) growth.

Report Prepared by: Russell Grey

Report date: 18.09.24



Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral Sparsely vegetated land - Tall forbs Urban - Allotments Urban - Biodiverse green roof Urban - Bioswale Urban - Cemeteries and churchyards Urban - Facade-bound green wall Urban - Ground based green wall Urban - Intensive green roof Urban - Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land Urban - Rain garden Urban - Sustainable drainage system (SuDS) Urban - Vacant or derelict land Urban - Bare ground			
Habitat Description			
A narrow strip of bare ground along the edge of the application site. The ground has been left and become colonised by annuals and perennials such as ragwort, willowherb, broadleaved dock, etc.			
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide for green roofs and UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) for other habitats:			UKHab – UK Habitat Classification
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Land off Sinclair Way	Survey date and Surveyor name	Russell Grey, 3rd July 2024
Limitations (if applicable)	None	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	n/a
Grid reference	SJ46539225	Habitat parcel reference	n/a
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - must be assessed for all urban habitat types :			
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	No	The vegetation cover is sparse and of a single type; 30-40cm tall perennials/annuals.
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	No	Only annuals and perennials were present, offering nectar sources during the summer months only.
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Yes	No Schedule 9 listed INNS were present.
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land only:			
D	The parcel shows spatial variation and forms a mosaic of bare substrate PLUS: - At least four early successional communities (a) to (i); Communities: (a) annuals; (b) mosses/liverworts; (c) lichens; (d) ruderals; (e) inundation species; (f) open grassland; (g) flower-rich grassland; (h) heathland, (i) pools.		
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for Bioswale and SuDS habitat types only:			
E1	Plant species are mostly native. If non-native species are present, they should not be detrimental to the habitat or native wildlife ⁴ .		
E2	The vegetation is comprised of plant species suited to wetland or riparian situations.		
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Intensive green roofs only:			

F	The roof has a minimum of 50% native and non-native wildflowers. 70% of the roof area is soil and vegetation (including water features).		
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Biodiverse green roofs only:			
G	The roof has a varied depth of 80 – 150 mm; at least 50% is at 150 mm and is planted and seeded with wildflowers and sedums or is pre-prepared with sedums and wildflowers. Note – to achieve Good condition some additional habitat, such as sand piles, stones, logs etc. are present.		
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)			Yes
Number of criteria passed			1
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only (all listed urban habitats except Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, Bioswale, SuDS and Green roofs):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Good (3)	
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Moderate (2)	
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.		Poor (1)	X
Results for Green roofs and Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land (requiring assessment of 4 criteria only - core criteria plus additional criterion specified for habitat type):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C; AND • Passes additional criterion relevant to specific habitat type (D, F or G).		Good (3)	
• Passes 2 or 3 of 4 criteria; OR • Passes 4 of 4 criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Moderate (2)	
• Passes 0 or 1 of 4 criteria.		Poor (1)	
Results for Bioswale or SuDS (requiring assessment of 5 criteria - core criteria plus additional criteria specified for habitat type):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C; AND • Passes all additional criteria relevant to specific habitat type (Group E)		Good (3)	
• Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria; OR • Passes 5 of 5 criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Moderate (2)	
• Passes 2 or fewer of 5 criteria.		Poor (1)	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
The area could be over-seeded with a native wildflower mix and managed by way of an annual cut. But realistically, the area is likely to be left unmanaged.			
Footnotes			



Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type				
Habitat Types				
Individual trees – Urban trees Individual trees – Rural trees Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees. Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of <u>rural</u> trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in <u>rural</u> locations.				
Habitat Description				
Two new trees to be planted to deliver the required 10% BNG.				
Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment): Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching. Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only): Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.				
On-site or off-site, site name and location		Land off Sinclair Way	Survey date and Surveyor name	Russell Grey, 3rd July 2024.
Limitations (if applicable)		None	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	n/a
Grid reference		SJ46539225	Habitat parcel reference	n/a
Condition Assessment Criteria			Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).		Yes	Only native species of tree will be planted. Suggested silver birch or bird cherry.
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).		Yes	Trees are to be supported and encouraged to establish well, enabling strong growth and full canopy coverage/spread.
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .		No	Trees will not reach maturity within 30 years.
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.		Yes	Trees will be managed with minimal intervention.
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.		No	Niches are unlikely to be weel-established within 30 years.
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.		No	Vegetation cover beneath trees is likely to be bare ground.
Number of criteria passed			3	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 5 or 6 criteria		Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria		Moderate (2)	X	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)		
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.				
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score ²				
Moderate is the best score that can be achieved within the 30 year timeframe of management.				