



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

**LAND AT SPRING STREET,
TOTTINGTON, BURY**

OCTOBER 2025

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Land at Spring Street, Tottington, Bury

A report for

Paul Power
11 Spring Street
Tottington
BL8 3LU

Report by



Luke Pilling B.Sc. (Hons.), QCIEEM

email: luke@pennineecological.co.uk

web: www.pennineecological.co.uk

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PENNINE Ecological were commissioned to undertake an ecological assessment of land at Spring Street, Tottington, BL8 4AA. The assessment is required to support an application for the construction of a new residential dwelling.

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 0.20. The total number of habitat units lost (before mitigation) is 0.20.

The baseline hedgerows recorded on site are of very low distinctiveness and have a baseline habitat value of 0.01. There will be no loss of hedgerow units.

The proposed habitats include developed land and vegetated garden, split to a 70:30 ratio (70% developed land, and 30% vegetated garden).

The current landscape proposals would generate a -90.06% habitat net loss and neutral hedgerow unit. The habitat trading rules have also not been satisfied.

	Habitat Units	Habitat Units % Change	Hedgerow Units	Hedgerow Unit % Change
On-site Baseline	0.20	-	0.01	-
On-site Post-intervention	0.02	-	0.01	-
On-site Net Change	- 0.18	- 90.06 %	0.00	0.00 %
Trading Rules Satisfied	No			

In order for the proposal to achieve 10% net gain, 0.20 habitat units are required.

The applicant proposes to deliver the remaining net gains through purchasing off-site habitat units from a habitat bank.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

PENNINE Ecological were commissioned to undertake an ecological assessment of land at Spring Street, Tottington, BL8 4AA (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 construction of a new residential dwelling.

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 low and 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 CONTEXT

The site is located along Spring Street in the centre of Tottington. The address of the site is Spring Street, Tottington, Bury, BL8 4AA and the grid reference is SD 77498 13033.

A desk based assessment was undertaken on 30/10/2025 to verify habitats on site against historical imagery. The site has been cleared of three individual trees along the eastern boundary of the site.

Historic aerial imagery and street view (Google) indicates that the site had three individual trees along the eastern boundary (see Figure 1.1 below). The trees were assessed to be in moderate condition (applying a precautionary approach) as per the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide.

Figure 1-1: Google Street View of the eastern boundary (05/2012), Image of the eastern boundary taken on 14/10/2025



Figure 1.1 illustrates the eastern boundary pre and post degradation. The three individual trees were felled between the period of June 2023 and the 14th October 2025, when the habitat survey was undertaken (refer to figure 1.2 for context).

Figure 1-2: Google Earth Image of the site (06/2023) Latest image where the individual trees are still visible on site.



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 Robert Leatham who is a highly proficient botanist, in October 2025. This BNG assessment has a been undertaken by Luke Pilling (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 were undertaken by Robert Leatham, a highly experienced ecological consultant and surveyor with over 30 years' experience in a wide range of ecological survey and assessment. Robert has over 30 years completing Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey / UKHabs Survey on both small planning applications and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

The BNG assessment was undertaken by Luke Pilling, Qualifying member of CIEEM, an ecological consultant and surveyor with over 3 years' experience in a wide range of ecological survey and assessment. Relevant experience to this assessment includes;

- Two years' experience undertaking and reviewing BNG assessments for small and large planning applications.

2.4 LIMITATIONS

The field survey was undertaken in October 2025 which is outside of the optimal botanical season. However, all the habitats within the survey area were of limited botanical diversity and value, and have been accurately classified and condition assessed (where applicable).

All parts of the site were accessible. There are considered to be no constraints to this assessment.

3. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT RESULTS

3.1 HABITAT DEGRADATION

The site at Spring Street has been previously cleared and there are currently no trees on site. Where it is known that a site has been cleared or degraded, an earlier baseline must be used (refer to Figure 3.1 below). Therefore, aerial imagery and google street view has been used to determine pre-degraded habitat type, and a precautionary approach applied to determining habitat condition.

Figure 3-1: Extract taken from The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (02/2024)

Accounting for degraded sites

If a habitat has been cleared, destroyed or degraded previously, and you should use an earlier baseline, you must:

- use the pre-degradation habitat type as the site's baseline
- evidence how this habitat type and condition has been determined in the user comments
- record the habitat as lost within the biodiversity metric tool
- account for the time between the habitat loss and compensation using the 'delay in starting habitat creation or enhancement' function

[See more about the 'delay in starting habitat creation or enhancement' function.](#)

You can use data records, imagery and historic field surveys to determine pre-degradation habitat types. Use a precautionary approach when assigning condition scores. For example, assign a higher condition score in the absence of contrary evidence.

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

3.2 ON-SITE HABITAT BASELINE RESULTS

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

- Medium – urban tree (removed)
- Low – Introduced shrub
- Very low – Developed land; unsealed surface, Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

In total, the baseline habitats surveyed have a total habitat value of 0.20 habitat units.

A summary of the baseline habitat information is shown in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3-2: Summary of the Baseline Habitats and Habitat Value

Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Habitat Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Total Habitat Units (Ecological Baseline)	Area Retained Units	Area Enhanced Units	Units Lost (before mitigation)
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.0067	V. Low	N/A	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Urban	Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	0.0262	V. Low	N/A	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Urban	Introduced shrub	0.0014	Low	N/A	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Individual trees	Urban tree	0.0081	Medium	Moderate	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.06
Individual trees	Urban tree	0.0163	Medium	Moderate	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.13
Sparsely vegetated land	Ruderal/Ephe meral	0.002	Low	Poor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL		0.03*			0.2	0	0	0.2

* Excludes urban tree area as tree area is calculated on canopy biomass.

3.3 ON-SITE HABITAT ENHANCED AND CREATED RESULTS

The habitats to be created on site (Table 3.3) are of the following distinctiveness':

- Low – Vegetated garden

- Very low; Developed land; sealed surface.

The total number of habitat units delivered is 0.02.

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

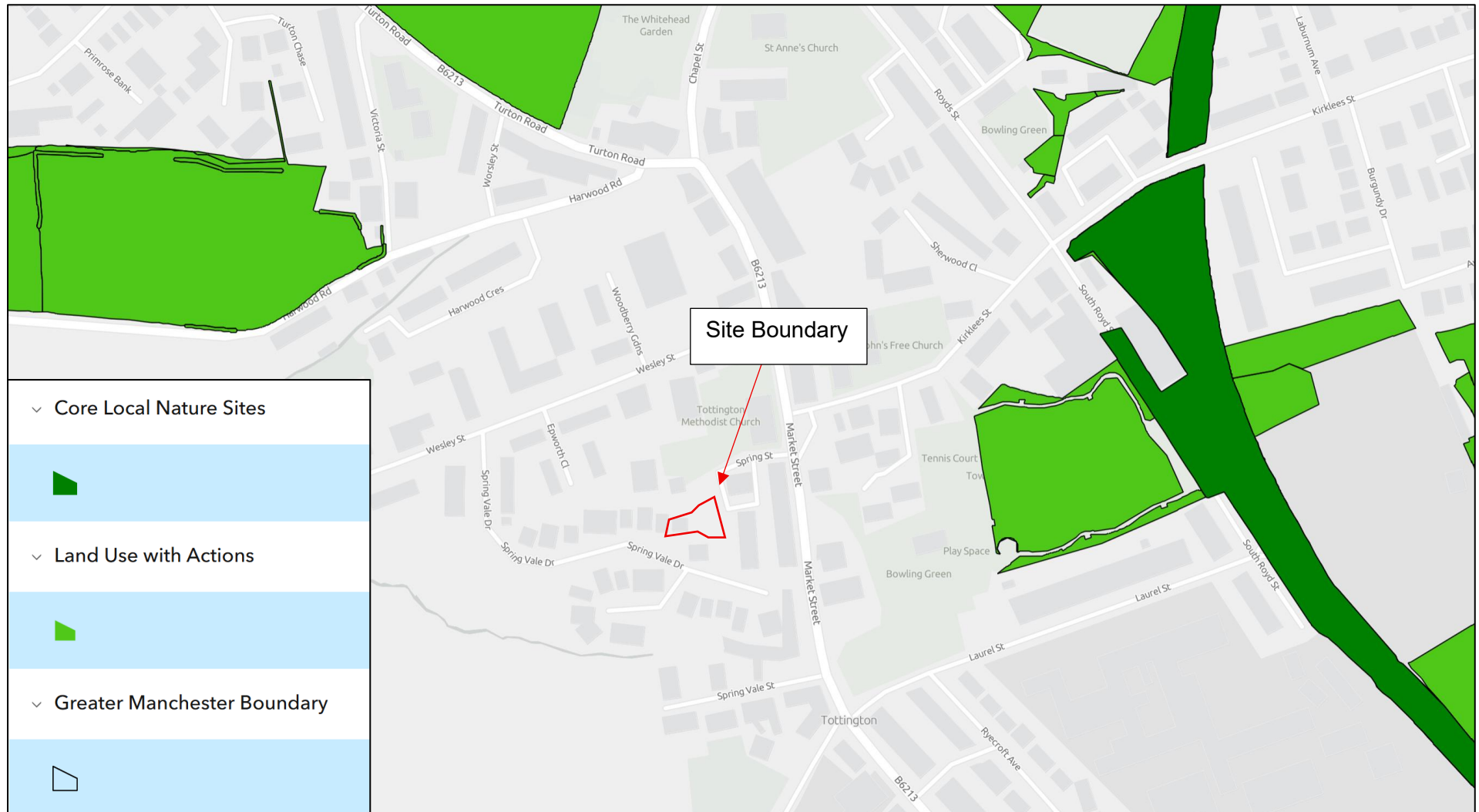
Table 3-3: Summary of the On-Site Habitat Creation and Habitat Value

Broad Habitat	Habitat	Habitat Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Habitat Units Delivered
Created Habitats					
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.024	V.Low	N/A	0.00
Urban	Vegetated garden	0.0102	Low	N/A	0.02

A review of the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) identified that the site does not lie within any core local nature sites' or 'land use with actions' (refer to Figure 3.1 below). Therefore the strategic significance for the created habitats is low; Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy.

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Land at Spring Street, Tottington

Figure 3-1: Greater Manchester Nature Network map with site location



3.4 ON-SITE HEDGEROW BASELINE RESULTS

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

- Very low – Non-native and ornamental hedgerow

In total, the baseline habitats surveyed have a total habitat value of 0.01 habitat units.

A summary of the baseline habitat information is shown in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3-4: Summary of the Baseline Hedgerow and Hedgerow Value

Habitat Type	Length (km)	Distinctive ness	Condition	Total Hedgerow Units (Ecological Baseline)	Hedgerow retained (Units)	Hedgerow enhanced (Units)	Units Lost (before mitigation)
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.008	V. Low	Poor	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00

3.5 ON-SITE HEDGEROW CREATION RESULTS

There are no plans to create any hedgerows on-site.

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 October 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: The current proposals are unable to avoid impacts on notable habitats.
- Minimise impacts on site: The current proposals are unable to minimise impacts on site.
- Restoring habitats on site: The current proposals include the creation of vegetated garden which will cover 30% of the site.

The current landscape proposals would generate a -90.06% habitat net loss and 0% hedgerow unit change. The habitat trading rules have also not 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	0.20	-	0.00	-
On-site Post-intervention	0.02	-	0.00	-
On-site Net Change	- 0.18	- 90.06 %	0.00	0.00 %
Trading Rules Satisfied	No			

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Land at Spring Street, Tottington

Table 4-2: Extract of BNG Headline Results

On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.20		
	Hedgerow units	0.01		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.02		
	Hedgerow units	0.01		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	-0.18	-90.06%	Un-site net gain is less than target set
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%	Un-site net gain is less than target set
	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	-0.18		
	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	-0.18		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	-90.06%	Total net gain achieved is less than target set	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%	Total net gain achieved is less than target set	
	Watercourse units	0.00%		
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries			
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.20	0.22	0.20
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.01	0.01	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
No additional watercourse units required to meet target				

5. BNG PROPOSALS

In order for the proposal to achieve 10% net gain, 0.20 habitat units are required.

It is acknowledged that the hedgerow units remain at 0%. However it needs to be considered that this is an 8m length of Leylandii hedge that is providing limited value and is proposed for retention. The unit requirement to achieve 10% for this is considered to be so minor and inconsequential that many habitat banks would not take on such a small unit size.

The applicant proposes to deliver the remaining net gains through purchasing off-site habitat units from a habitat bank.

5.1 POTENTIAL OFF-SITE LOCATIONS

A review of <https://www.futurehomes.org.uk/biodiversityunitfindermap> has been undertaken to identify potential nearby receptor sites.

Note – Future homes has not verified the accuracy of any of this information. The locations in the map are approximate only. Therefore, this information should be used as a guide only, to assist in finding a habitat bank.

Note - if the habitat bank is located outside of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) or National Character Area (NCA) of the site, then a spatial risk multiplier¹ is applied to the habitat unit deficit.

The following habitat banks have been identified:

(i) Habitat Bank Option 1 (Units Available)

Organisation: Environment Bank (via Future Homes link).

Site ID: A104

Address: Horwich, Bolton, BL6 6PZ, UK

Local Planning Authority (LPA): Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

¹ Refer to Page 35 of the Statutory Metric User Guide for details on Spatial Risk Multipliers - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e45fba3c2a28abb50d426/The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_User_Guide_23.07.24_.pdf

National Character Area (NCA): Southern Pennines

This site is within a neighbouring LPA and NCA. Spatial risk multiplier will apply.

(ii) Habitat Bank Option 2 (Units Available)

Organisation: Green Earth Developments Group

Site ID: A269

Address: Astley, Tyldesley, Manchester, M29 7JZ, UK

Local Planning Authority (LPA): Wigan North West England

National Character Area (NCA): 60 Mersey Valley

This site is within a neighbouring LPA and NCA. Spatial risk multiplier will apply.

(iii) Habitat Bank Option 3 (Pending Legal Agreement)

Organisation: N/A

Site ID: A097

Address: Rochdale, UK

Local Planning Authority (LPA): Rochdale

National Character Area (NCA): 54 Manchester Pennine Fringe

This site is within a neighbouring LPA and NCA. No spatial risk multiplier would apply.

REFERENCES

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

Natural England (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - User Guide. Last updated: July 2024

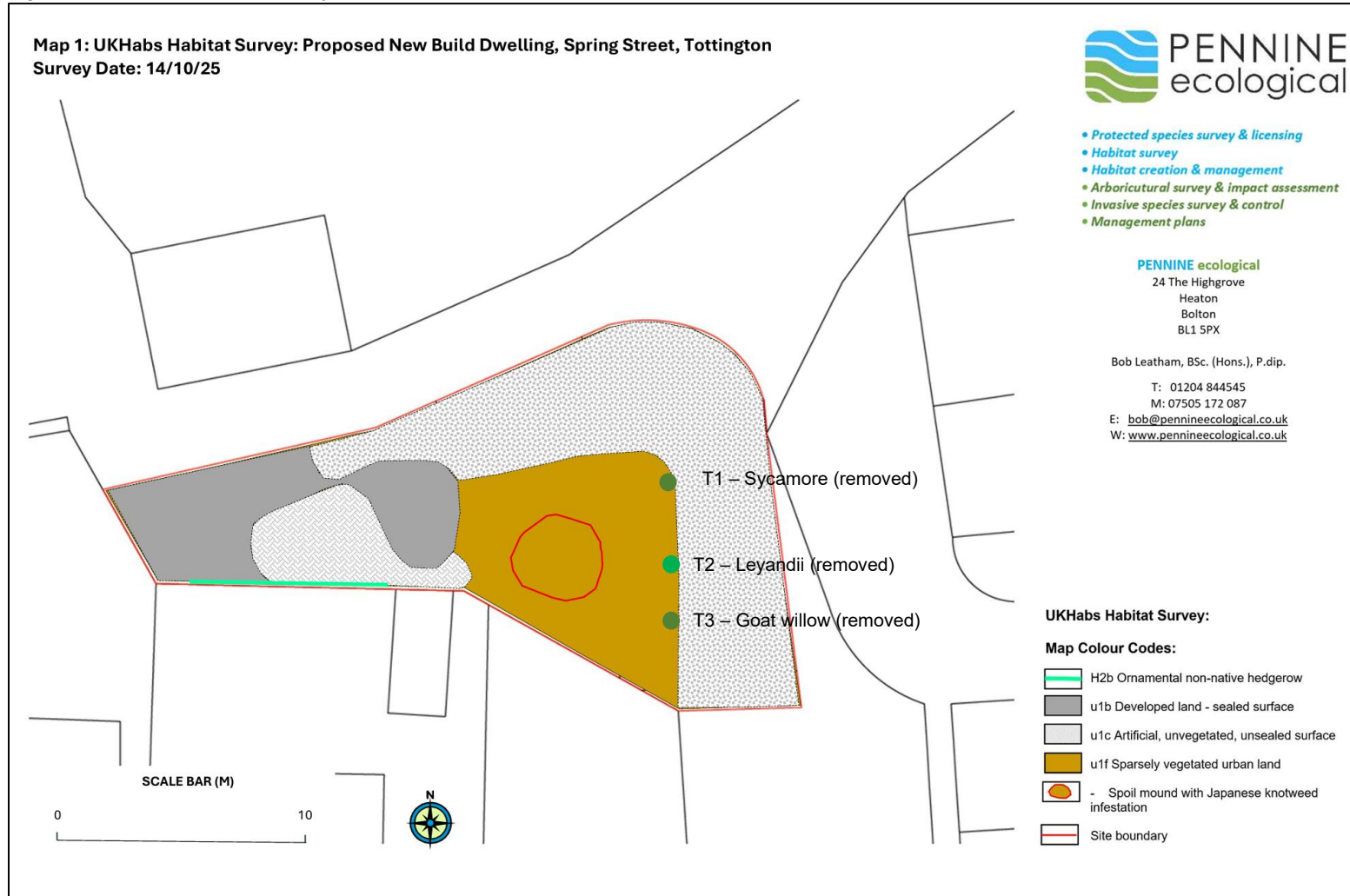
PENNINE ecological (2025). Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – Proposed New Build Dwelling, Spring Street, Tottington

UKHabs Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (at <https://www.ukhab.org>)

Greater Manchester Nature Network Map – Latest Access 31/10/2025 - (at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8515e56d91a64fb3bae39e58ded10fb5>)

Appendix A - Figures

Figure 1: Baseline Habitats Map



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
Land at Spring Street, Tottington

Figure 2: Proposed Plans and Elevations (Thorp Design Services LTD, 2025) (Drawing No: TDS-25-196-02)

