



Venturia Ltd
68 Derby Street
Manchester
M8 8AT

DATE: 20th December 2022
SITE: Billberry Close, Whitefield
REFERENCE: UES03928/01

Dear Mr Dempsey,

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

United Environmental Services Ltd (UES) were commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment at Billberry Close, Whitefield. This report is written and compiled by Robert Mooney MSc, UES Graduate Ecologist. Robert 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 surveys. Other surveyors include:

- Tom Kenwright BSc MSc, UES Senior Ecologist. Tom holds a level 5 BSBI FISC, which certifies him as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat and national vegetation classification (NVC) surveys.

The purpose of the report is to provide an assessment of the impacts on biodiversity resulting from the development proposals at Billberry Close. The assessment was undertaken with the following methodology:

- Establish the total number of baseline biodiversity units (BUs) and linear units (LUs) at the site of the proposed development.
- Establish the total number of BU and LU which will be created, retained and/or enhanced under landscape and ecological mitigation proposals at the site of the proposed development.
- Determine whether the proposed development will result in a net loss, no net loss or a net gain for biodiversity.
- Recommend additional enhancement / compensation measures to ensure BNG is achieved.

The BNG assessment has been undertaken using the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Biodiversity Metric 3.1 to calculate baseline and post-development biodiversity and linear units. A walkover survey was conducted on 21st November 2022, the

results of which have been used to inform the assessment and to determine the condition of pre-development baseline habitats on site. The development proposals include the construction of seven residential dwellings with associated gardens and parking.

The proposed development site has an area of approximately 0.34ha and is largely composed of amenity grassland. A band of dense scrub is present along the north, east and west site boundaries, and a band of introduced shrub is present in the northwest corner of site with a species-poor hedgerow to the rear. Two connected hardstanding pathways run across the site, and a number of predominantly broadleaved scattered trees are present.

UES have liaised with the developer to ensure the proposals follow the mitigation hierarchy and maximise the ecological value of the development where possible. A number of ecological compensation / enhancement measures have been incorporated into the site design, including:

- Planting of native trees and hedgerows to provide nesting and roosting opportunities for birds

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 1.58 BU and 0.09 LU using DEFRA's biodiversity metric. This is based on:

- 0.2475ha of Grassland (modified grassland, poor condition)
- 0.0786ha of Heathland and scrub (mixed scrub, poor condition)
- 0.0109ha of Urban habitat (introduced shrub, N/A condition).
- 0.0188ha of Urban habitat (developed land / sealed surface, N/A condition)
- 0.0936ha of Urban habitat (5 small and 2 medium trees, moderate condition)
- 0.022km of Native hedgerow (moderate condition)

Based on the landscaping proposals outlined to UES, the ecological value of the site will decrease from 1.58 to 0.84 BU (a net loss of 0.74 BU / 46.73%), while linear units will increase to 0.32 from 0.09 LU (a net gain of 0.23 LU / 260.33%). This is based on:

1. Retention of:

- The entirety of the Urban habitat (introduced shrub, N/A condition)
- 0.0591ha of Heathland and scrub (mixed scrub, poor condition)
- 0.0163ha of Urban habitat (4 small trees, moderate condition)
- 0.014km of Native hedgerow (moderate condition)

2. Creation of:

- 0.1144ha of Urban habitat (developed land / sealed surface, N/A condition)
- 0.1669ha of Urban habitat (vegetated garden, N/A condition)
- 0.0448ha Urban tree (planting of 11 small predominantly native trees, moderate condition)
- 0.078km of Native hedgerow (moderate condition)

Details of the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric 3.1 calculations are provided in the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 calculation tool which is submitted alongside this report.

Offsite compensation

Given that the proposed development as set out in the illustrative masterplan is likely to result in a net loss of 0.74 BU, additional compensatory habitat creation is likely to be required. Due to the proposed use of the site for residential dwellings with associated parking and gardens, it is not feasible to rectify this net loss of BUs onsite. Therefore, a number of additional habitat creation and enhancements works will need to be undertaken offsite to ensure that the development provides a net gain.

At this stage of the design process, an appropriate offsite location has not yet been determined. The applicant has undertaken a detailed evaluation of land within their ownership and no suitable offsite compensation sites have currently been identified. Should it not be possible to identify offsite sites for compensation, it is certain that a contribution will be made to facilitate offsite habitat creation in order to rectify the net loss of 0.74 BU. The cost of the commuted sum and details of habitat creation and management will be agreed at a later date. In order to achieve a 10% net gain, a minimum of 0.9 BUs would need to be created offsite (in addition to the 0.84 BUs created as part of the proposals). Moreover, the offsite habitat creation will need to ensure the trading rules of the metric are satisfied by trading up in terms habitat distinctiveness or replacing habitats lost with the same broad habitat type.

Evaluation and recommendations

This BNG report should be updated following the availability of a detailed landscaping plan for the proposed development site. Based on the illustrative masterplan and the landscaping proposals outlined to UES it is anticipated that compensatory offsite habitat creation works of 0.74 BUs are required via offsite habitat creation or through a commuted sum, to ensure that the development will result in a no net loss in biodiversity. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development would be compliant with current national and local planning policy with regards to biodiversity net gain.

This BNG report should also be updated following the availability of condition assessments regarding offsite habitat creation, and the creation of these habitats should be supported by a habitat created method statement and management plan to detail how the proposed habitats will be created and managed in line with national planning policy.

If you require any further information or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact myself or another member of staff at UES.

Yours faithfully,

Robert Mooney MSc
Graduate Ecologist
United Environmental Services Ltd

Appendix 1 – Baseline habitat map



Biodiversity Net Gain - pre-development

**Site: Billberry Close,
Whitefield
NGR: SD 81690 05915
Author: Robert Mooney
Date: 16/12/2022**



KEY:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Mixed scrub | Introduced shrub |
| Broadleaved trees | Native species-poor hedge |
| Coniferous trees | Sealed surface |
| | Survey boundary |

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Appendix 2 – Post-development habitat map



Biodiversity Net Gain - post-development

Site: Billberry Close,
Whitefield
NGR: SD 81690 05915
Author: Robert Mooney
Date: 16/12/2022



KEY:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| New planted gardens | Introduced shrub |
| Mixed scrub | Native species-poor hedge |
| Broadleaved trees | Sealed surface |
| Coniferous trees | Survey boundary |

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