

Unsworth Cricket Club, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

2026



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Executive Summary

Development Details

On Padel is proposing an application for the development of five new padel courts at Unsworth Cricket Club, Greater Manchester hereafter referred to as the 'site'. This report uses the Statutory Biodiversity Metric to assess the predicted changes in biodiversity units resulting from the proposed development, and the resulting compliance with biodiversity policy and legislation.

Biodiversity Impact Assessment

The baseline assessment scores are 0.53 habitat units. Post-development assessment scores are 0.59 habitat units. This represents a net gain of 0.06 habitat units, equivalent to +11.14%.

Outcomes

The development proposals will result in a net gain of biodiversity, and will satisfy Trading Rules, therefore no further offsetting measures are required.

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

- 1.1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2026 by On Padel (The Client) to carry out a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment of part of Land at Unsworth Cricket Club (the 'site'). The site is located at O.S. grid reference: SE 50851 01530 see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Plan showing the site location (Basemap source: Bing maps)).

- 1.1.2 The site lies in the town of Unsworth. It comprises modified grassland and ruderal vegetation. The application site will comprise five padel courts and seating area.
- 1.1.3 The land beyond the site consists of residential development and the suburbs of Unsworth to the west, with a school to the north. The M66 runs adjacent to the eastern site boundary, buffered by a small parcel of woodland.

Scope of Work

- 1.1.4 On Padel commissioned Rachel Hacking Ecology to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment to quantify the predicted changes in biodiversity units resulting from the proposed development.

2. Methods

2.1 Habitat Survey

- 2.1.1 A Habitat Survey in accordance with UK Habitat Classification system¹ of the site was undertaken on the 3rd of February 2026. The site was walked, and habitats were recorded and mapped. The survey was undertaken by Stephen Griffith (Ecologist). Stephen has over 3 years' experience conducting similar surveys.

2.2 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

- 2.2.1 During the 2026 habitat survey the ecological condition of each habitat was assessed in accordance with the Statutory Metric User Guide and Condition Assessment sheets (2025)².
- 2.2.2 Habitat data including type, area (or length), condition and strategic significance were uploaded to the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator spreadsheet to determine the baseline value of the site. The extent of any habitats to be retained or enhanced was also entered into baseline worksheets. The pre- and post-development values were then compared to determine whether the yield of biodiversity units achieved a deficit or gain.

Post-development

- 2.2.3 The post-development masterplan Drawing (AS893-03 Proposed Site Plan) was interrogated to determine areas of landscaping, hard standing and buildings. New, retained and enhanced habitats were classified and allocated a target condition, based on habitat type, location and management input. This information was uploaded to the metric spreadsheet to obtain a post-development value.

Strategic significance

- 2.2.4 There is a Local Network Recovery Strategy (LNRS) published for Greater Manchester³, however the local plan does not highlight the site as being within any Urban Actions Priority Area. As a result, the site has been assigned as 'no strategic significance' within the baseline and post-development.

¹ UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions V2. 2023. at <http://UKhab.org>

² The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_User_Guide_.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

³ Greater Manchester Nature Network Map



3. Baseline Habitats

- 3.1.1 There are no irreplaceable habitats on site and the site has not been subject to any prior degradation.
- 3.1.2 The baseline habitats are recorded in Table 1 below. This is to be read in conjunction with the condition assessments shown in Appendix 3.

Table 1 showing the baseline habitats.				
Habitat Units				
Habitat	Area (ha)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Units
Modified Grassland	0.1493	Poor	None	0.30
Tall Forbs	0.1181	Poor	None	0.24

4. Proposed Habitats

- 4.1.1 The development will involve the creation of 5 padel courts and associated walkways. To compensate for the loss of modified grassland and tall forbs, two parcels of neutral grassland creation and 8 small individual trees are proposed.
- 4.1.2 The created grassland is to be species-rich and mown once yearly, with all arisings removed. Trees will be native species and managed. Condition assessments are shown in Appendix 4.
- 4.1.3 The post-development value of the site is summarised in Table 2 below:

Table 2 showing the habitats to be created				
Habitat Units				
Habitat	Area (ha)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Units
Developed land; sealed surface	0.1923	N/A	None	0
Other neutral grassland	0.0739	Moderate	None	0.49
Individual trees	0.0326	Moderate	None	0.10

5. Net Change

5.1.1 The summary of the changes in biodiversity units for the site is shown within Table 3.

Table 3 showing a summary of the Biodiversity Changes on site.							
Metric section	Units Achieved					Results	
	Baseline	Post-development				Change in Units	Percentage Change
		Retained	Enhanced	Created	Total		
Habitat Units	0.53	0	0	0.59	0.59	+0.06	+11.14%

5.1.2 The Biodiversity Net Gain calculation suggests that the Proposed Development will result in a net gain of biodiversity in the order of 0.59 Habitat Units, equivalent to +11.14% Habitat Units. Furthermore, the Trading Rules have been satisfied.

6. Conclusion

6.1.1 As the development has demonstrated a >10% net gain in biodiversity, no further offsetting or mitigation is required. Should the design proposals change, an updated BNG assessment will be required.

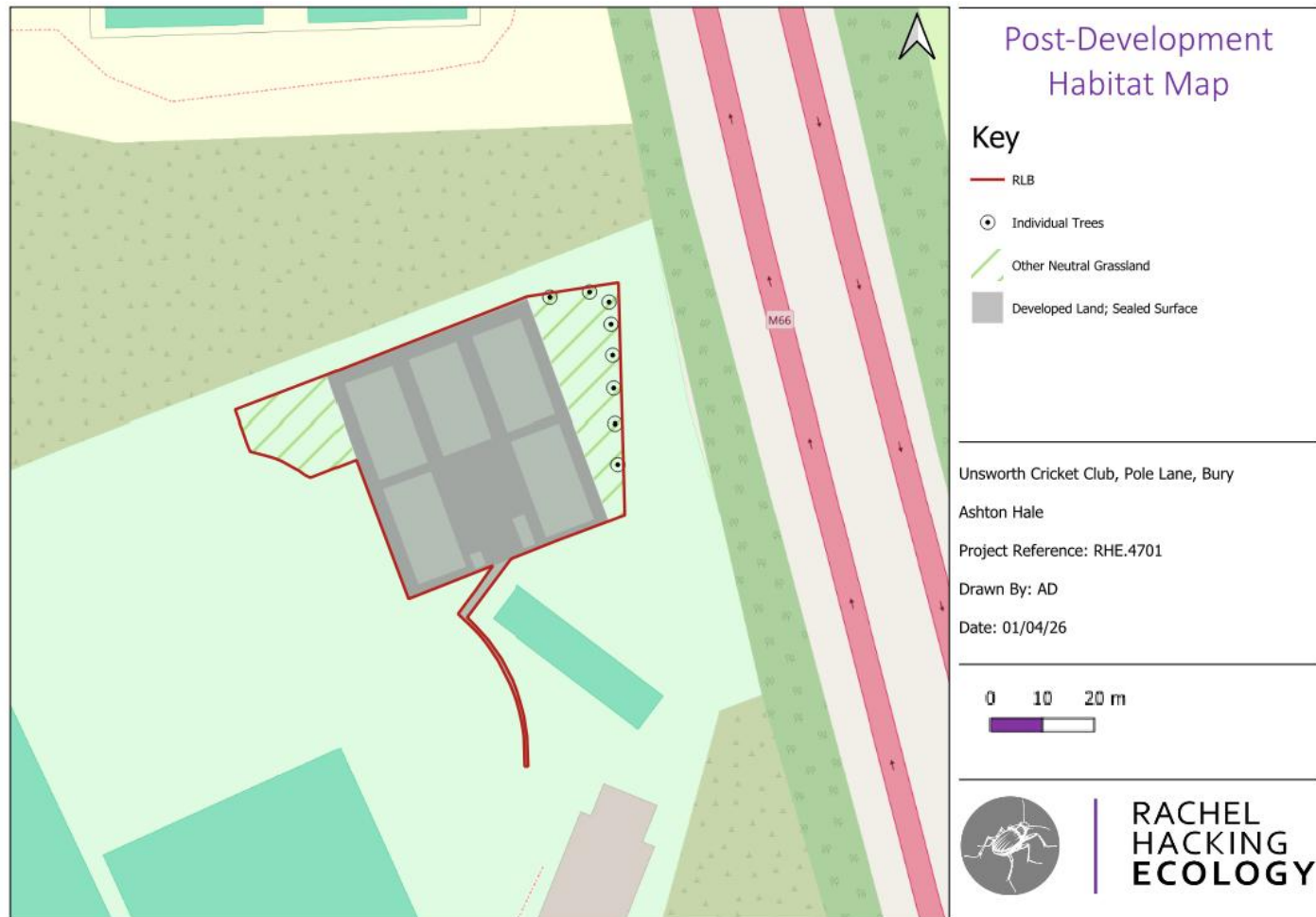
6.1.2 In compliance with current statutory requirements, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) should be produced to outline the management of the proposed new and enhanced habitats for a minimum of 30 years.



Appendix 1: Pre-development Habitat Map



Appendix 2: Post-Development Habitat Map



Appendix 3: Baseline Condition Assessments

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)

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.	No	
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	
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	
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.	Yes	
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Yes	
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes	
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Yes	

Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Type**Habitat Description**

Tall forbs

See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide for green roofs and UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) for other habitats:

On-site or off-site, site name and location	Onsite	Survey date and Surveyor name
Limitations (if applicable)		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)

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
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.	Yes
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement)² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area³. Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	No

Appendix 4: Post-development Condition Assessments

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high and very high distinctiveness)		
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description).¹ Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Y
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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	N
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ² .	Y
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Y
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types		
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	N

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y
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).	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	N
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.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y

