

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

Address: 8-12 Silver Street, Bury, BL9 0EX

Project number: GSS25142

Date: 1 July 2026

Proposal: Prior approval for change of use from Use Class E to create 8 no. apartments (Use Class C3)

Executive Summary

- The application site at 8-12 Silver Street, Bury, BL9 0EX is a town centre commercial building comprising entirely developed, sealed surface with no gardens, trees, hedgerows or areas of vegetated land within the application red-line boundary.
- The proposed works are entirely internal. The only external alteration is the removal of an existing fire escape staircase and door on the rear elevation.
- The baseline biodiversity value of the site is negligible. No habitat units, hedgerow units or watercourse units are applicable. There is no impact on any priority habitat.
- The development is considered to be exempt from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement on the basis that the site is entirely hard-surfaced, contains no habitats of ecological value, and the proposed works are internal only with no external land take.
- Enhancement measures are nonetheless recommended as good practice to deliver a positive biodiversity outcome.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Biodiversity Net Gain Statement has been prepared in support of the prior approval application (Ref 72980) at 8-12 Silver Street, Bury, BL9 0EX for the change of use of the upper floors from Use Class E to create 8 no. self-contained apartments (Use Class C3).
- 1.2 In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is required under the statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). Every grant of planning permission is deemed subject to a general biodiversity gain condition, requiring a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development baseline. However, certain developments are exempt from this requirement.
- 1.3 This statement sets out the basis on which the development is considered exempt from the statutory BNG requirement and includes recommended enhancement measures as good practice.

2. Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption

- 2.1 The development is considered exempt from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement. The site is currently entirely hard-surfaced, consisting of developed sealed surface (buildings and other sealed surface), and contains no existing habitats of ecological value. All habitats, including urban habitats, have been considered in making this judgement. No habitats with a distinctiveness score above 0 are present within the red-line boundary, as confirmed by the Magic Map extract at **Figure 1**.
- 2.2 No habitat degradation has taken place on the site since January 2020 and the site does not contain, and did not previously contain, any irreplaceable habitats. The application will not have a negative impact on any habitat outside of the red-line boundary.

- 2.3 The proposed works are entirely internal. No external land take is proposed and there is no impact on any priority habitat. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric confirms that the development does not trigger a requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain.

Figure 1: Magic Map extract showing no priority habitat designations within or adjacent to the application site (8-12 Silver Street, Bury, BL9 0EX)



3. Site Description and Baseline Condition

- 3.1 The application site is located within Bury town centre in the Bury Town Centre Conservation Area. The site comprises three interconnected mid-terrace commercial properties arranged over ground, first and second floor levels. The entire ground floor footprint and surrounding public realm consists of developed, sealed hard surface. There is no garden, vegetated land, trees, hedgerows or watercourses within the application red-line boundary.
- 3.2 The baseline habitat types at the site are as follows:
- Developed land; sealed surface (buildings) – u1b5
 - Developed land; sealed surface (other) – u1b6
- 3.3 Both habitat types have negligible distinctiveness under the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The baseline biodiversity value of the site is therefore negligible, and no meaningful habitat units, hedgerow units or watercourse units arise from the baseline assessment.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The application site at 8-12 Silver Street, Bury, is a wholly developed, sealed surface town centre site with a negligible baseline biodiversity value. The site contains no habitats of ecological value and there is no impact on any priority habitat within or outside the red-line boundary.

- 4.2 The development is exempt from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement. The proposed works are entirely internal with no external land take, and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric confirms no deficit requiring offsetting or compensation.