Biodiversity Net Gain
Supporting Information Report

Project name and address:
18, South Close, West Drayton, London, UB7 9LS

Report Number:
BWE-BNGSupport-18UB7

Commissioned by:
Mr. Zbigniew Curylo

Prepared by: Bee.Wise.Eco Limited

Date: 9th October 2025

QUALITY STANDARDS CONTROL

The signatories below verify that this document has been prepared in accordance with our quality control requirements. These procedures do not affect the content and views expressed by the originator.

This document must only be treated as a draft unless it has been signed by the originators and approved by a director.

Revision: Final

Date: 9th October 2025

Prepared by: Rita Smoldareva MSc Senior Ecologist/Director

Checked by: Rita Smoldareva MSc Senior Ecologist/Director

The advice provided in this report is in accordance with the CIEEM Code of Professional Conduct. The opinions expressed are true and professional.

LIMITATIONS

This report is for the sole use of Mr. Zbigniew Curylo. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based on information provided by others. The methodology and sources of information used in providing services are outlined in this report. The scope of this report and services are factually limited by the conditions encountered and the information available at the time of assessment.

The report sections below should be read in full and detailed guidance given in this report must be followed to avoid breaching legislation regarding protected and invasive species.

This report is valid for one year from the date of the survey visit. Should works be delayed to later than one year after the survey then a further update survey of the site would be required as habitats change over time, along with their potential to support protected species.

Non-Technical Summary

This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Supporting Information Report provides the detailed evidence base underpinning the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BWE-BNG-18UB7) and the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (BWE-ECO-18UB7) for the proposed two-storey side and rear extension at 18 South Close, West Drayton, UB7 9LS.

The report compiles comprehensive habitat condition assessments, quadrat data, soil characteristics, retrospective mapping, and policy context to ensure that the BNG evaluation is transparent, verifiable, and compliant with statutory and planning requirements.

The habitat condition assessments and quadrat surveys confirm that the site is dominated by species-poor modified grassland (UKHab g4), supporting a nutrient-enriched sward with low forb diversity.
Two small urban trees (UKHab w22) were assessed and recorded poor overall condition scores, reflecting limited native diversity, canopy isolation, and minimal structural features—characteristics typical of suburban garden habitats.

Soil analysis identifies the site within Soilscape 18, comprising slowly permeable, seasonally wet loamy and clayey soils of moderate fertility. These soils correspond with the nutrient-rich, improved character of the recorded grassland.
Retrospective mapping using Google Earth imagery (2020 – 2025) confirms that the property has remained in continuous residential garden use, with no evidence of recent clearance or loss of Priority Habitats.
Minor differences were observed between imagery years, with slightly greater grass cover visible in April 2020, prior to the construction of the detached outbuilding on the western side of the garden; this minor change does not materially alter the ecological baseline.

At the time of reporting (September 2025), the Greater London Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) remains in draft form, with publication anticipated by the end of 2025.
Accordingly, strategic significance within the BNG metric has been assessed against the London Plan (Policy G6: Biodiversity and Access to Nature) and the Hillingdon Local Plan biodiversity policies, focusing on opportunities for pollinator-friendly planting, hedgehog-friendly fencing, and small-scale ecological connectivity enhancements within the garden setting.

Overall, this Supporting Information Report provides the baseline habitat data, condition assessment evidence, quadrat results, soil and mapping context, and planning framework alignment required to support the BNG metric calculations.
Together with the main BNG Report (BWE-BNG-18UB7), it ensures that the evaluation is robust, evidence-led, and compliant with the Environment Act 2021, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric v4.0, and emerging Greater London biodiversity recovery priorities.

1 Introduction

This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Supporting Information Report has been prepared by Bee.Wise.Eco Ltd to accompany the main Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report (BWE-BNG-18UB7) for the proposed two-storey rear and side extension at 18 South Close, West Drayton, UB7 9LS.

The purpose of this document is to provide the detailed evidence base that underpins the biodiversity unit calculations presented in the main BNG Assessment.

In accordance with the Environment Act 2021, the Statutory BNG Metric and current best-practice guidance from Natural England (2025) and CIEEM (2023), this report sets out the baseline data, completed condition assessment sheets, and supporting information necessary to ensure that the evaluation is transparent, verifiable, and compliant with statutory and planning requirements.

Specifically, this report includes:

- Completed condition assessment sheets for all UKHab habitat parcels recorded within the site boundary (surveyed September 2025).
- Supporting photographs and mapping extracts evidencing habitats and site conditions from January 2020 to present, including UAV imagery and free-source aerial imagery.
- Soils and substrate information, confirming the feasibility of proposed habitat creation and enhancement within the small residential plot.
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) context, illustrating how small-scale habitat interventions (e.g. pollinator planting and tree retention)

This Supporting Information should be read in conjunction with:

- BWE-BNG-18UB7 – Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report, which presents the baseline and post-development biodiversity unit calculations and overall BNG outcome.
- BWE-ECO-18UB7 – Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (including Preliminary Roost Assessment), which provides the baseline ecological appraisal of habitats and protected species.

Together, these documents form the complete evidence package required to demonstrate the site's baseline biodiversity value and to support the delivery of measurable net gain in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), the Environment Act 2021, and the London Borough of Hillingdon's biodiversity and green infrastructure policies.

2 Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets

2.1 Methodology

The habitat condition assessments presented in this report were undertaken in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology (Version 1.0.2, July 2025).
The process follows three key steps:

Step 1 – Pre-assessment considerations
All condition assessments were carried out by a competent ecologist as defined in the Statutory Metric User Guide. The survey was undertaken on 22 September 2025, an appropriate time of year for identifying and assessing the habitat types present. Each habitat parcel was mapped in GIS, assigned a unique parcel reference, and its boundary and area recorded digitally. The correct UKHab v2.0 habitat code was confirmed prior to assessment to ensure that the corresponding condition sheet was selected.

Step 2 – Selecting the correct condition sheet
The appropriate condition sheet was chosen for each habitat in line with the "Selecting Condition Sheet" guidance within the Technical Annex.

- *Version A* sheets were used for individual parcels (e.g. modified grassland g4).
- *Version B* sheets were used where multiple sub-parcels of the same habitat type were present (e.g. ornamental planting w21).

Step 3 – Applying the condition sheets
Each parcel was assessed against the relevant criteria, with a pass/fail outcome recorded for each attribute.
Where a parcel exhibited internal variation, it was subdivided and assessed separately.
For habitats with "essential" criteria, all such attributes were required to pass for the habitat to achieve the stated condition band.
Photographic evidence and field notes were compiled and cross-referenced for every parcel.

Professional judgement was applied cautiously, particularly when assigning "Fairly Good" or "Fairly Poor" intermediate outcomes, which can only adjust a habitat by one condition class up or down from the standard result.
Any survey constraints—such as visibility limitations caused by fencing or shading—are noted in the individual sheets.
A precautionary approach was adopted throughout, consistent with the Technical Annex and CIEEM (2017) good-practice guidance.

A Condition Assessment Summary Sheet has been completed to provide an overview of:

- the number of habitat parcels assessed,
- the relevant condition sheets applied, and
- the resulting condition category for each parcel.

2.2 Additional Assessments Undertaken

In addition to the statutory condition assessments, several supporting evaluations were undertaken to confirm the accuracy and robustness of the BNG baseline:

- Soils and Substrate:

Garden soils were observed to be loamy clay with high organic content, typical of long-managed domestic topsoil. No compaction or contamination indicators were recorded. The substrate is suitable for the proposed pollinator-friendly planting and small tree retention, confirming feasibility of habitat enhancement measures.

2.3 Summary

Habitat Type	UKHab Code	Species Recorded	Secondary codes
Modified grassland	g4	Perennial rye-grass – *Lolium perenne* Dandelion – *Taraxacum officinale* agg. Creeping buttercup – *Ranunculus repens* White clover – *Trifolium repens* Broad-leaved plantain – *Plantago major* Ribwort plantain – *Plantago lanceolata* Moss sp. – *Bryophyte spp.*	516: Active Management 828: Vegetated Garden
Urban tree	NE0014	Small silver birch *Betula utilis var. jacquemontii* Small cherry *Prunus serrulata*	828: Vegetated Garden 200: Tree
Buildings & Hardstanding	U1b5/u1d	N/A	804: Car Park 818: Residential building
Introduced shrubs	BNG1160	Hebe – *Hebe* spp.Variegated spindle – *Euonymus japonicus* 'Variegatus' Garden rose – *Rosa* spp.	523: Non-native

Table 1. Summary of Broad and Linear Habitats Recorded on Site (Baseline)

2.4 Habitat Condition Assessment

2.4.1 Condition Assessment – Modified Grassland (g4)

Survey date: 22nd September 2025

Assessor: Rita Smoldareva **Distinctiveness:** Low **Strategic Significance:** Medium **Condition Outcome:** Poor
Surveyor FISC: Provisional Level 2

Indicator	Good (3)	Moderate (2)	Poor (1)	Site Assessment (2025)
Species richness (Essential)	≥6–8 vascular spp. per m² including ≥2 forbs	3–5 vascular spp. per m² with some forbs	≤2 vascular spp. dominated by ruderals	Quadrat samples ranged between 5 to 6 species
Sward structure	>20% sward <7 cm and >20% >7 cm	Some variation but not evenly distributed	Uniform sward height	Lawn regularly mown, limited variation → Poor (1)
Scrub cover	<5% scrub	5–20% scrub	>20% scrub	<5% scrub present, occasional *Rubus fruticosus* → Good (3)
Physical damage	<5% area affected	5–10% area affected	>10% area affected	Slight trampling and mowing effects <5% → Good (3)
Bare ground	1–10% evenly distributed	<1% or >10% localised	None or extensive bare ground	<1% bare ground → Moderate (2)
Bracken cover	Absent or <5%	5–20%	>20%	No bracken recorded → Good (3)
Invasive / non-native species	Absent	Present but <5% cover	Widespread presence >5%	No invasive non-natives observed → Good (3)

Overall Condition Score:

- Essential Criterion A (species richness) = Moderate
- Criteria Passed = 5 of 7
- Condition Result: Poor

Suggested enhancement interventions:

- Reduce mowing frequency to allow sward structural variation.
- Introduce a native wildflower seed mix to improve species richness.
- Maintain scrub at <5% cover to prevent succession.
- Decrease nutrient built-up to reduce nutrient rich species to overtake

Sample - Quadrat Species List

Species	Latin name	% Cover
Perennial rye-grass	*Lolium perenne*	65
White clover	*Trifolium repens*	10
Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale* agg.	8
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*	5
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*	3
Bare ground / moss	—	9

Species	Latin name	% Cover
Perennial rye-grass	*Lolium perenne*	55
Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale* agg.	15
White clover	*Trifolium repens*	8
Broad-leaved plantain	*Plantago major*	8
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*	5
Moss spp.	*Bryophyte spp.*	4
Bare ground	—	5

Quadrat Survey Summary

A total of six (6) quadrat samples were undertaken across the modified grassland (UKHab g4) area, which extends to approximately 174.59 m² within the site boundary.

Quadrats were evenly distributed to capture representative variation in sward composition and management intensity, including areas of central lawn, lawn edge, and partially shaded margins near the outbuilding and shrub border.

All quadrats displayed a species-poor, regularly mown sward, dominated by *Lolium perenne* with low forb diversity and minor presence of *Trifolium repens*, *Taraxacum officinale*, and *Plantago* spp.

Condition outcomes across all six quadrats were consistently assessed as Poor (1), confirming a homogeneous and nutrient-enriched lawn habitat typical of urban modified grassland under regular garden maintenance.

2.4.2 Condition Assessment – Urban Tree

Survey date: 22nd September 2025

Assessor: Rita Smoldareva **Distinctiveness:** Medium **Strategic Significance:** Medium **Condition Outcome:** Poor

The urban tree habitat comprises two small ornamental garden trees located within the rear garden — two silver birch trees.
Both trees are healthy and well-maintained, contributing limited ecological value within a highly managed residential context.
No veteran or notable specimens are present, and no features suitable for roosting bats (e.g. cavities, flaking bark, or lifted unions) were observed.

Only two trees qualified to be classed as "small trees", each measuring less than 60 cm diameter at breast height (DBH), in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric criteria for urban tree classification.

Indicator	Good (3)	Moderate (2)	Poor (1)	Site Assessment (2025)
Age class diversity (at site scale)	3 or more age classes present	2 age classes present	1 age class only	Only one age and one species qualified - Poor (1)
Tree health	≤10% crown dieback, no significant disease	11–25% dieback, some disease	>25% dieback, major disease or mortality	<10% dieback observed, no major disease - Good (3)
Crown connectivity	Tree within continuous canopy / connected with others	Tree adjacent to other trees, partial canopy link	Tree isolated / no canopy link	Isolated tree in rear garden → Poor (1)
Structural diversity	Varied form, good habitat features (e.g. cavities, ivy, deadwood)	Some habitat features, limited structural variety	Limited structure, no features present	Limited structure. No present features – Poor (1)
Ground flora / understory	Diverse native understorey or associated planting	Some native understorey / shrub layer	Absent or non-native dominated	No understorey planting present → Poor (1)
Invasive / non-native species impact	No invasive / non-natives affecting condition	Some non-native planting present but limited	Widespread non-natives impacting value	No invasive species affecting tree → Good (3)

Overall Condition Score:

- Criteria Passed = 2 out of 6
- Condition Result: Poor (1)

Suggested enhancement interventions:

- Introduce native shrub and ground flora planting beneath canopy.
- Retain deadwood on site to enhance invertebrate value.
- Plant additional native trees nearby to improve canopy connectivity and age class diversity.

2.5 Condition Assessment Summary Sheet

Site or location	Condition sheets	Total number of condition sheets used, or habitat parcels	Number of parcels of each condition achieved					Notes
			Good	Fairly Good	Moderate	Fairly Poor	Poor	
On site	Modified grassland	1					1	
On site	Urban tree	1					1	Retained as part of the proposed scheme

2.6 Limitations and assumptions

Every effort has been made to ensure that this Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment and supporting information are accurate, robust, and based on the best available data. However, the following limitations and assumptions should be noted:

Survey timing and scope
The baseline habitat survey was undertaken on 22 September 2025.

The results provide a reliable representation of the habitats present at that time; however, as with all ecological surveys, they represent a snapshot in time and may not capture short-term or seasonal variation in habitat quality or species presence.

Given the highly managed nature of the site, such variation is not expected to materially alter the conclusions.

Botanical competency
All condition assessments were completed by a competent ecologist with over 11 years of professional experience in habitat survey, Biodiversity Net Gain assessment, and ecological evaluation.
A Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) assessment was undertaken by the surveyor on 14 August 2025, and the awarded a provisional level 2 at time of reporting.

The surveyor's professional botanical competency is considered sufficient to ensure accurate classification of habitats and condition scoring in line with UKHab v2.0 and the Statutory BNG Metric requirements.

Metric version and updates
The Statutory Biodiversity Metric v4.0 (Technical Annex 1, Version 1.0.2 – July 2025) was used for all calculations.

It should be noted that the metric is periodically revised by Natural England, and future updates may result in minor variations in unit values or habitat distinctiveness bands.

This assessment therefore reflects the most current version available at the time of reporting.

3. Soil Characteristics

According to the Cranfield University Soilscapes dataset, the site at 18 South Close, West Drayton lies within Soilscape 18: Slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils.
These soils are typical of low-lying areas in west London and are commonly associated with managed grassland, garden habitats, and mixed urban cover.

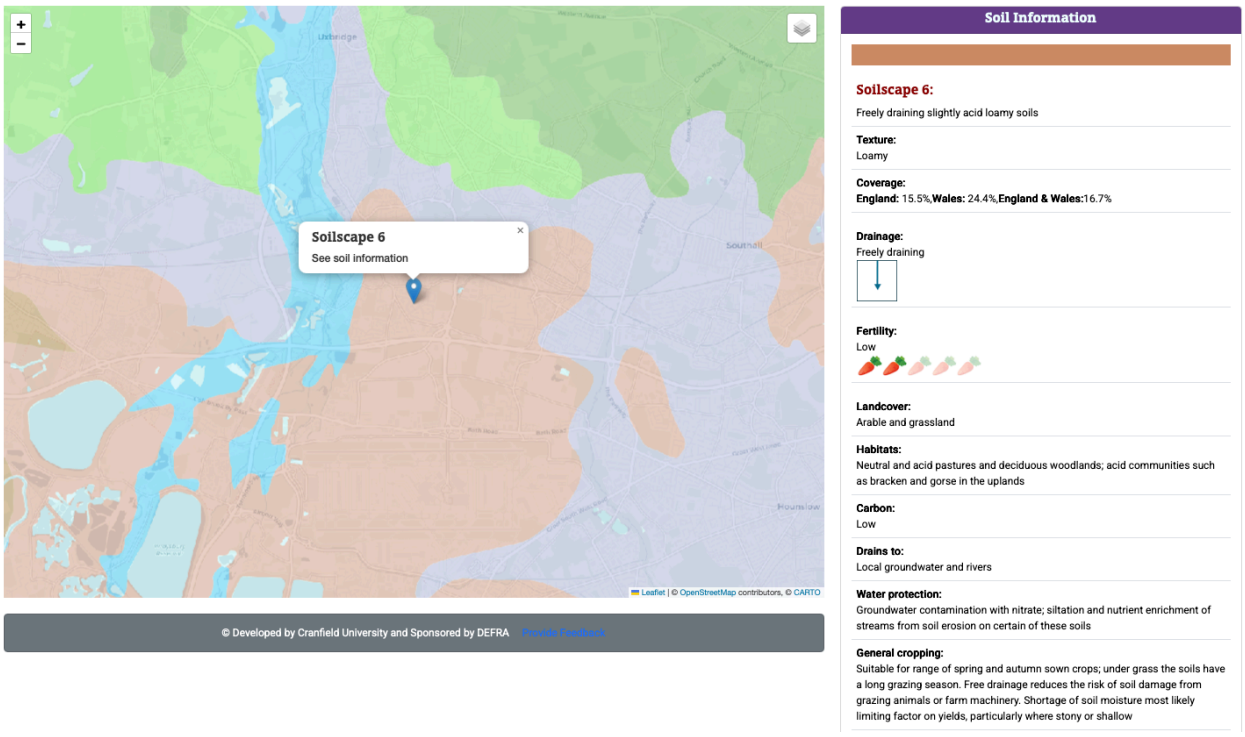
Soilscape summary:

- Texture: Loamy and clayey
- Drainage: Impeded; prone to seasonal waterlogging following prolonged rainfall
- Fertility: Moderate
- Carbon: Low
- Landcover: Typically supports improved grassland, garden lawns, and occasional broadleaved trees
- Associated habitats: Seasonally wet pastures and woodlands

Water protection and management considerations:
These soils are susceptible to compaction and surface runoff when disturbed, with associated risks of siltation, organic matter loss, and nutrient enrichment of local drainage pathways.
During construction and landscaping, measures should therefore be taken to avoid heavy machinery use during wet conditions, maintain infiltration routes, and minimise topsoil disturbance.
Sustainable drainage features such as shallow swales or rain gardens could be incorporated to manage runoff and deliver biodiversity benefits.

BNG implications:

- The site's moderate fertility and impeded drainage are best suited to modified grassland (UKHab g4) and ornamental garden habitats (w21), with limited feasibility for species-rich grassland without soil improvement or nutrient stripping.
- The dominance of nitrophilous species (e.g. *Urtica dioica*, *Taraxacum officinale*, *Ranunculus repens*) recorded during quadrat sampling indicates nutrient enrichment consistent with domestic management.
- These soils are suitable for native tree and shrub planting, though waterlogging tolerance should guide species selection (e.g. *Alder – Alnus glutinosa*, *Rowan – Sorbus aucuparia*, *Hawthorn – Crataegus monogyna*).
- Their seasonally wet character presents an opportunity to create SuDS-linked microhabitats such as rain gardens, wet-tolerant pollinator beds, or planted soakaways, combining biodiversity enhancement with improved water management.



(Source: Soilscapes, 2025)

4. Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Under the Environment Act 2021, each county or region in England is required to prepare a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to identify priority habitats, species, and areas for restoration.

The LNRS provides a spatial framework to guide planning decisions, land management, and the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), ensuring that local actions contribute to wider ecological recovery.

For Greater London, the Greater London Authority (GLA) has been designated as the responsible authority for preparing the LNRS.

The London LNRS is being developed in partnership with Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL), the London Wildlife Trust, and the 32 London boroughs, including the London Borough of Hillingdon, within which the site at 18 South Close, West Drayton is located.

At the time of reporting (September 2025), the London LNRS remains in draft form and has not yet been published.

Public consultation is anticipated during autumn 2025, with formal adoption expected by early 2026.
Until the LNRS is formally adopted, strategic significance assessments within the Statutory BNG Metric rely on existing regional and local policy frameworks — namely:

- London Plan (2021, Policy G6: Biodiversity and Access to Nature), and
- Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 (2021) and Part 2 (2022) biodiversity and green infrastructure policies.
- Emerging Priorities from the Draft London LNRS and Associated Frameworks
- Restoration and creation of species-rich grassland and urban wildflower habitats.
- Enhancement of ecological connectivity through street trees, hedgerows, and green corridors.
- Expansion and buffering of woodlands and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- Wetland, river, and SuDS-linked habitat enhancements for water quality, flood resilience, and carbon sequestration.
- Improving the urban environment for pollinators, birds, and priority species such as hedgehog and swift.

<u>Relevance to the 18 South Close Project</u>
The site comprises a small residential garden plot, supporting modified grassland, ornamental planting, and two small urban trees (*Betula pendula* and *Prunus* spp.).

These habitats align with LNRS priorities to enhance urban garden biodiversity, support pollinator networks, and strengthen local ecological connectivity.

Although no Priority Habitats occur within the site, the proposed landscaping offers opportunities to:

- Establish nectar-rich native planting,
- Incorporate hedgehog-access features, and
- Install bird and bat boxes, delivering measurable biodiversity gain consistent with London Plan Policy G6 and emerging LNRS objectives.

Once the London LNRS is formally adopted, it will provide the definitive framework for assigning strategic significance scores within the statutory BNG metric.

Until that time, this assessment applies a precautionary, proportionate approach based on the London Plan and Hillingdon Local Plan policies.

5. Retrospective Maps

Retrospective mapping was undertaken to provide a historical baseline of habitats present within the red-line boundary at 18 South Close, West Drayton (UB7 9LS).
This ensures that the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment reflects a fair, transparent, and evidence-based baseline, in accordance with CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Natural England, 2025) requirements.

Data Sources

Baseline imagery was reviewed using:

- Google Earth Pro high-resolution aerial imagery (time series: April 2020 – September 2025).
- Site photographs and UAV imagery collected by Bee.Wise.Eco (September 2025).

Findings and Verification

- The habitats recorded during the September 2025 field survey — namely modified grassland (g4), introduced shrubs, urban trees , and developed land / sealed surfaces (u1b, u1c) — are consistent with the site's long-term residential garden use.
- No Priority Habitats or irreplaceable features were identified within the site, and there is no evidence of intentional site clearance or habitat removal prior to survey.
- Minor variations in grass cover and garden structure were observed between imagery years. In particular, the April 2020 aerial imagery shows a larger extent of grassed area within the rear garden before construction of the detached outbuilding on the western portion of the site.
- The addition of this small outbuilding has marginally reduced the total grassland area but does not materially alter the ecological baseline, as the affected area represented maintained lawn habitat of low distinctiveness and poor condition.

Conclusion

The retrospective review confirms that the 2025 baseline used in the BNG metric accurately represents the site's ecological condition following minor development changes between 2020 and 2025.
No ecological value has been lost through pre-survey clearance, and the baseline remains valid, transparent, and compliant with Statutory BNG Metric principles.

Dated back to March 2020 (Google Earth Pro, 2025)

6. Summary

This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Supporting Information Report provides the evidence base underpinning the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BWE-BNG-18UB7) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (BWE-ECO-18UB7) for the proposed two-storey side and rear extension at 18 South Close, West Drayton, UB7 9LS.
The report compiles detailed habitat condition assessments, quadrat data, soil characteristics, retrospective mapping, and policy context to ensure that the BNG evaluation is transparent, verifiable, and compliant with statutory and planning requirements.

The habitat condition assessments and quadrat surveys confirm that the site is dominated by species-poor modified grassland (UKHab g4), with a nutrient-enriched sward and low forb diversity.
Two small urban trees recorded poor condition scores, reflecting limited native diversity, isolation, and minimal structural features typical of suburban garden habitats.

Soil analysis confirms that the site lies within Soilscape 18, comprising slowly permeable, seasonally wet loamy and clayey soils of moderate fertility—consistent with the nutrient-rich, improved character of the recorded grassland.
Retrospective mapping using Google Earth imagery (2020–2025) verified that the site has remained in continuous residential garden use, with no evidence of recent clearance or Priority Habitat loss.
Minor differences were noted between imagery years, with slightly greater grass cover visible in April 2020 prior to the construction of the detached outbuilding to the west of the site; this change does not materially affect the ecological baseline.

At the time of reporting (September 2025), the Greater London Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is still in draft form, with final publication anticipated by the end of 2025.
Accordingly, strategic significance within the BNG metric has been assessed against the London Plan (Policy G6: Biodiversity and Access to Nature) and the Hillingdon Local Plan biodiversity objectives, focusing on opportunities for pollinator-friendly planting, hedgehog access, and small-scale ecological connectivity enhancements.

Overall, this Supporting Information Report provides the baseline habitat data, condition assessment evidence, quadrat results, soil and mapping context, and planning framework alignment required to support the BNG metric calculations.
It ensures that the BNG evaluation is robust, evidence-led, and compliant with the Environment Act 2021, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, and emerging Greater London biodiversity recovery priorities.

References

Supporting ecological reports

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