



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

St. Helen's School, Eastbury Road,
Northwood, HA6 3AS

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LIABILITIES:

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living animals and plants are capable of migration/establishing and whilst such species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date.

This report provides a snapshot of the species that were present at the time of the survey only and does not consider seasonal variation. Furthermore, where access is limited, or the site supports habitats which are densely vegetated only dominant species may be recorded.

The recommendations contained within this document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to or during works.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Padeltech to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for the development at St. Helen's School, Eastbury Road, Northwood, HA6 3AS, hereafter referred to as the 'site' (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The site (TQ 09456 91584) covers approximately 0.05 ha and is located to the north of Northwood, in west London. It comprises predominantly hardstanding asphalt sports courts, with an additional small grassland area situated along the eastern boundary of the site. The site lies within the grounds of an existing school, with a number of associated sports pitches, courts, and school buildings present in the immediate surroundings. The wider landscape is characterised by a urban development with pockets of urban greenspaces.



Figure 1: Site red line boundary

- 1.3 The proposed development is to build two padel courts equipped with fixed canopy structures and LED floodlights (Figure 2).

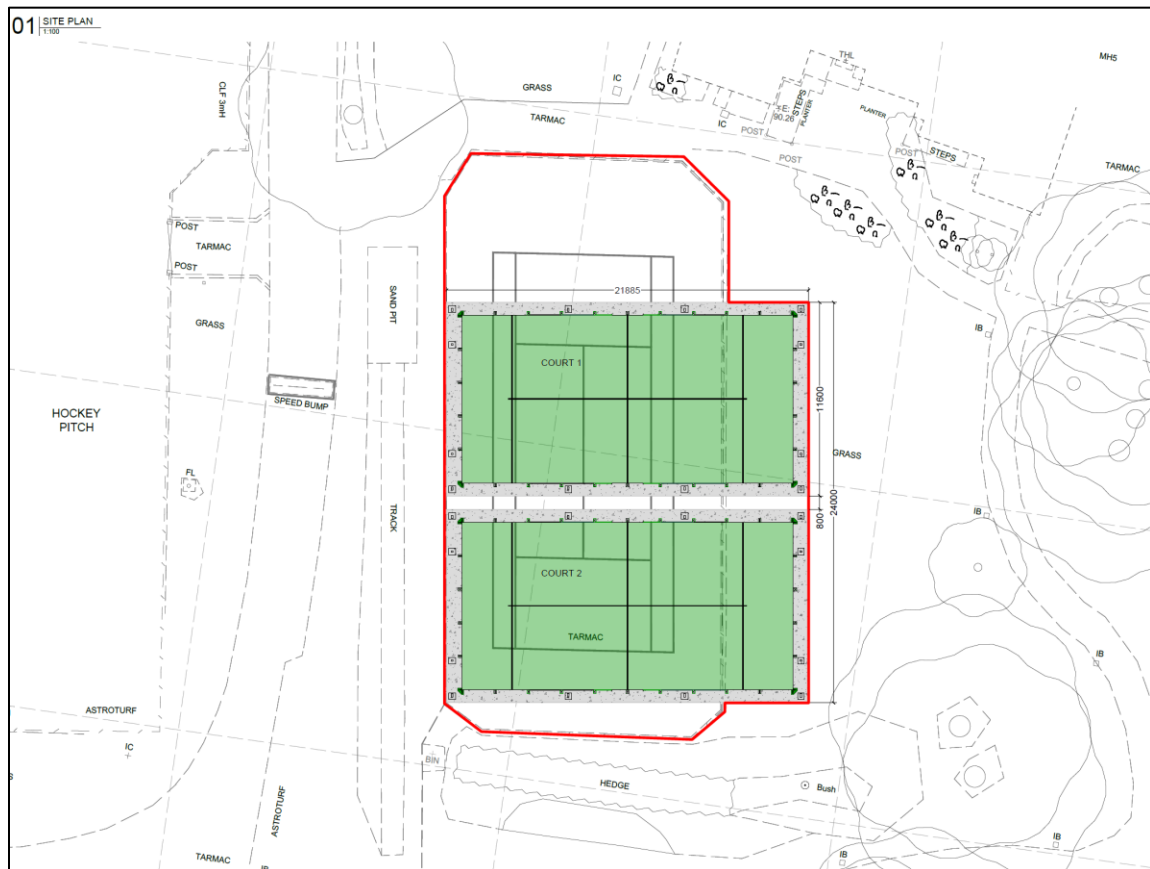


Figure 2: Site proposals

2.0 Statutory Biodiversity Metric

- 2.1 BNG principles are aimed to support both the aspired green infrastructural proposals set to define the created landscape and support biodiversity and habitat enhancement. BNG principles are set within the Environment Bill (2021).
- 2.2 In order to determine the on-site habitat baseline, a site survey was performed in April 2026 by The Ecology Partnership, in which the habitats onsite were subject to a condition assessment following standard metric guidelines.

- 2.3 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used to calculate biodiversity losses and gains for habitats within the site. The metric is included as a separate excel document and the metric underpins the Environment Bill's provisions for mandatory BNG in England.
- 2.4 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses habitat as a proxy for wider biodiversity with different habitat types scoring different values according to their relative biodiversity value and dependent on the condition and location of the habitat, to calculate 'biodiversity units'.

On-Site Habitat Baseline

- 2.5 There were two parcels of habitat on site. The grassland align with the BNG habitat category 'modified grassland'. The hardstanding is consistent with the BNG habitat category 'developed land; sealed surface'. As such, the core habitats on site comprise of modified grassland and developed land; sealed surface. The habitats are shown in Figure 3 and Table 1 overleaf.

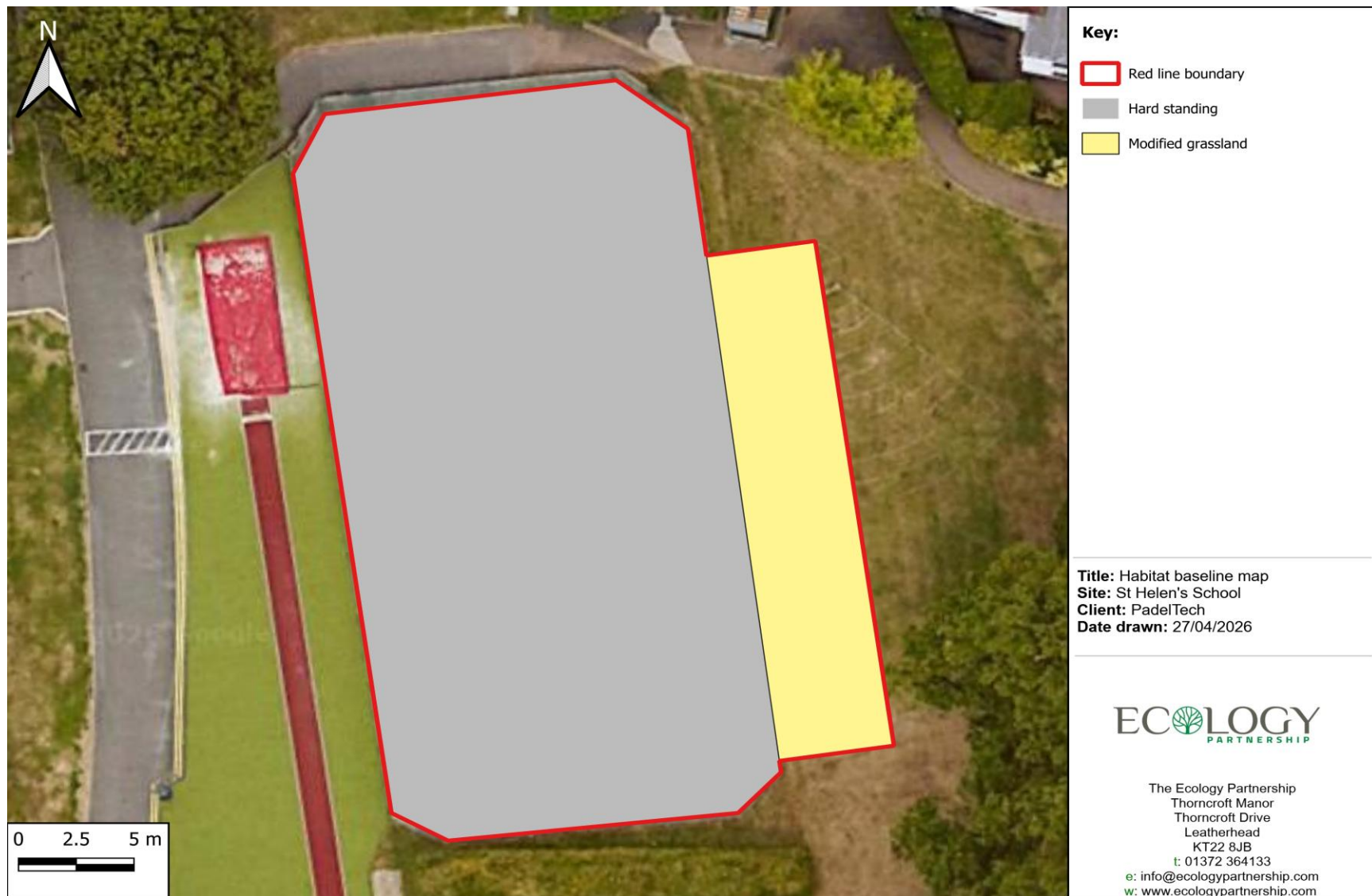


Figure 3: On-site habitat baseline

Table 1. On-site habitat breakdown – Pre-Development

Habitat	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Total habitat units	Area Retained	Units lost	User comments
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0584	V. Low	N/A – Other	Low	0.00	0	0.00	Multi-use sports court
Modified grassland	0.0117	Low	Moderate	Low	0.05	0	0.05	Eastern grassland
Total area (excluding trees)	0.07	Total Units/Area			0.05	0	0.05	

On-Site Habitat Creation

- 2.6 The proposals comprise the construction of two padel courts with associated floodlighting and a canopy structure. The courts are primarily to be developed on the footprint of an existing hardstanding sports court. However, the proposed development will result in a loss of modified grassland located to the east of the existing courts.
- 2.7 The remaining areas of disused hardstanding to the north and south of the proposed courts will be removed and reinstated through re-planting as modified grassland, in moderate condition.
- 2.8 The proposed habitat areas are detailed in Figure 4 and Table 3, overleaf.



Figure 4: On-Site Habitat Proposals

Table 3: On-site habitat breakdown – Post-Development Creation

Proposed habitat	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Years to target condition	Difficulty	Total habitat units delivered	Comments
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0526	V.Low	N/A - Other	Low	0	Low	0.00	Multi-use sports court
Modified grassland	0.0174	Low	Moderate	Low	4	Low	0.06	New creation grassland to north and south
Total area (excluding trees)	0.07	Total Area Units					0.06	

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	0.01
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	29.41%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Figure 5: Headline results

- 2.9 The calculations confirm that the development results in a **29.41% net gain** in habitat units. The trading rules were satisfied.
- 2.10 To achieve the required BNG of +29.41%, a total of **0.0174 hectares** of modified grassland in moderate condition will be created. As the modified grassland lost as a result of the proposals is classified as a low distinctiveness habitat, the creation of replacement habitat may be delivered through the provision of other low distinctiveness habitats, in accordance with the Biodiversity Metric. As habitat creation is low distinctiveness, and at the same condition as existing, this is not considered a significant enhancement and therefore will not require a separate HMMP and Section 106 agreement, which would be disproportionate to the size of the habitat created.
- 2.11 To achieve a moderate condition, the new grassland will also need to deliver a species richness of 6 species/m² or higher. This is considered achievable through use of a flowering lawn mix such as EL1 from Emorsgate or N14 from Naturescape, which include low growing wildflowers, resistant to more frequent management. These mixes both include 19 species with 20% wildflowers (by weight). This will ensure that a moderate condition can be easily achieved if the area is managed in the same manner as the existing grassland. Prio to seeding the ground should be harrowed to produce a medium tilth and rolled to produced a level firm surface. Seeding should be undertaken in the spring or autumn at a rate of 4g/m² and then gently rolled.

3 Conclusions

- 3.1 The current ecological baseline value of habitats on site is **0.05 units**, comprising developed land; sealed surface and modified grassland.
- 3.2 The proposals for the site will result in a **29.41% biodiversity net gain** in habitat units. The proposals do satisfy the trading summary for both habitat units.
- 3.3 As the habitat created is of low distinctiveness and covers a small area, it is not considered a significant enhancement and therefore will not require a separate HMMP and S106 agreement, and will instead be managed in the same manner the existing grassland has.
- 3.4 To achieve at least a moderate condition a flowering lawn seed mix should be used which contains a diverse mix of low growing native wildflowers, resistant to more frequent management

Appendix 1: Grassland condition assessment

bare Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Grassland - Modified grassland		
Condition Assessment Criteria		Grassland 1
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m present, including at least 2 forbs (this 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~ (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.	P
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.	F
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.	P
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.	P
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	F
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	P
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	P
Condition		
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including essential criterion A	
Moderate	Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	
Poor	Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR 4-6 of criteria but failing criterion A	
Footnote 1 – Creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> .		
Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.		
Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into <u>parcels</u> accordingly, applying the buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.		
Footnote 4 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)		

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