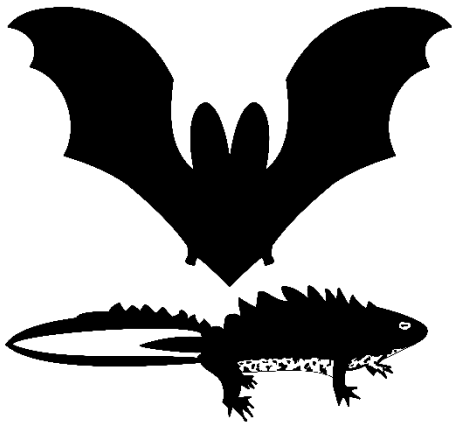




AEWC Ltd

Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Land at Lake View Road

**Lake View Road
Furnace Wood
Felbridge
RH19 2QD**

Natalie Arscott

**25-139
June 2026**

AEWC Ltd Birch Walk, Lower Street, Fittleworth, West Sussex, RH20 1JE

Tel: 08452 505585, info@aecwc.co.uk, www.aecwc.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales No. 06527840

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Author	Lexie Hobbs
Authorised By	Natalie Arscott
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Summary

- AEWC Ltd were commissioned by Batcheller Monkhouse on behalf of their client to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Land at Lake View Road, Furnace Wood, Felbridge, RH19 2QD at central grid reference TQ 34828 39299 to help inform the proposed development of the site.
- The estimated baseline and post-development biodiversity value of the habitats on the site has been calculated using the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool.
- The proposed development works are for the construction of a single residential dwelling and associated parking. This will involve the loss of small areas of modified grassland and ruderal/ephemeral vegetation and their replacement with a building, hardstanding, and vegetated garden. Two trees previously removed have also been included a lost.
- Biodiversity enhancements incorporated into the proposed site layout include improving the condition of a strip of modified grassland and planting of six trees along the western boundary, outside of the private garden area.
- **The habitat unit results show a decrease of 0.35 habitat units which equates to a 30.17% net loss.**
- **As such, the minimum target of 10% net gain has not been achieved. Trading rules have also not been satisfied.**
- **There is currently a deficit of 0.46 habitat units to reach a 10% gain. If an acceptable gain is not possible to achieve on-site, off-site units or statutory credits may be purchased with agreement from the Local Planning Authority.**

This report has been prepared by AEWC Limited, with all reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the Contract with the client. We disclaim any responsibility to the client and others in respect of any matters outside the scope of the above. This report is confidential to the client, and we accept no responsibility of whatsoever nature to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.

The information and data which has been prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal' and 'Code of Professional Conduct' issued by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 AEWC Ltd were commissioned by Batcheller Monkhouse on behalf of their client to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Land at Lake View Road, Furnace Wood to help inform the proposed development of the site.
- 1.2 In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). This came into force in February 2024 for major developments and April 2024 for minor developments. Under the legislation, developers must deliver a minimum biodiversity net gain of 10%.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to give an estimate of the BNG units that will be achieved under the current development proposals.

2. Background

- 2.1 The proposed development site is located at Land at Lake View Road, Lake View Road, Furnace Wood, Felbridge, RH19 2DQ at central grid reference TQ 34828 39299. The site is situated in a semi-rural part of West Sussex within the Furnace Wood private estate, approximately 550m south of the A264. The surrounding landscape comprises large residential properties and their associated amenity gardens to the east with a large woodland block and fishing pond immediately to the west. The wider landscape predominantly comprises a mosaic of tree and hedge-lined agricultural fields and woodland with residential properties interspersed throughout. See Figure 1.
- 2.2 The proposed development site is just under 0.2ha and largely comprises a plot of grassland that has previously been used as parking for the adjacent fishing pond. See Figure 2.
- 2.3 AEWC Ltd undertook a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal at the site in April 2026, during which the on-site habitats were mapped and condition assessed.



FIGURE 1: SHOWING THE SITE LOCATION



FIGURE 2: AERIAL VIEW OF THE SITE SHOWING THE BOUNDARY

- 2.4 The proposed development is for the construction of a single residential dwelling and associated parking which will involve the removal of a small area of vegetation. Most of the existing surrounding grassland will be retained. A strip along the western edge of the site has been reserved for biodiversity enhancement and will be fenced outside of the garden and managed separately. See Figure 3.



FIGURE 3: PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

3. Method and Constraints

- 3.1 The estimated baseline and post-development biodiversity value of the habitats on the site has been calculated using the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (Version 1.0.4 released July 2025). Habitat condition was assessed using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1 Condition Assessment Sheets (Version 1.0.2 released July 2025).
- 3.2 The following assumptions have been made and therefore associated constraints should be considered when looking at BNG unit values obtained:
- The potential for protected and notable species is not covered within the scope of this report.

- Baseline habitats on-site are taken from those identified within the survey undertaken in April 2026 and from previous satellite and street view imagery for habitats removed since 2020.
- Post-development habitats have been inferred from those given with the Proposed Site Layout as shown in Figure 3 and as discussed with the client.
- All areas and lengths are approximate and have been obtained from QGIS mapping software.
- Areas in hectares and lengths in km are both given to four decimal places, therefore small rounding errors are unavoidable.
- Habitat condition has been estimated for post-development habitats using the proposed development plans and professional judgement.
- Tree areas are calculated using the tree helper tool within the metric.
- In line with the User Guide, proposed habitats that will fall inside private gardens have been included as 'vegetated garden' only.

3.3 Given the above constraints, the BNG results obtained should be considered to be an **estimate** only.

3.4 Calculations may need to be adjusted in future should the proposed site layout plan changes or the BNG metric or requirements be revised.

4. Habitat Data

4.1 At baseline, the site mainly comprises short-sward, species-poor modified grassland, assessed as poor condition due to there being consistently less than 6 species present per m². There is an area of gravel surfacing (artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface) at the eastern edge bordering Lake View Road. There are two areas of poorly developed ruderal/ephemeral vegetation to the north and west of this gravel area which are relatively sparse and assessed as poor condition. There is an area of tall forbs on the southern boundary which is more diverse and has been assessed as moderate condition. There are three medium-sized trees in the northeast corner, all assessed as being in moderate condition. See Photographs 1 - 4 below.

4.2 Two tree stumps were identified on-site and past aerial imagery and street view imagery show there to have been a further two trees on-site until at least 2022. Since these have been removed since January 2020, they have been included in the BNG baseline and shown as lost. Street view images indicate that these trees were likely of medium size. Condition has been assumed as good in the absence of a full condition assessment.

	
Photograph 1 – Modified grassland that covers majority of the site.	Photograph 2 – Gravel surfacing in southeast of site.
	
Photograph 3 – Ruderal/ephemeral in northeast corner.	Photograph 4 – Tall forbs along south boundary.

- 4.3 The development will involve the loss of small areas of modified grassland and ruderal/ephemeral, to be replaced with developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, and vegetated garden. The previous loss of two medium-sized trees has also been included. A portion of the existing gravel hardstanding will be re-vegetated and is therefore shown as vegetated garden. In line with the User Guide, all habitats created within the garden area are shown as vegetated garden, whilst unimpacted habitats are shown as retained in their current condition.
- 4.4 Along the western boundary, a belt of biodiversity enhancement land will be retained outside of the private garden and managed separately by the landowner. Here it is proposed that the modified grassland will be enhanced to good condition through re-seeding to improve species diversity, and six trees will be planted.
- 4.5 The baseline and post-development habitats used for this BNG assessment are illustrated in Figures 4 and 5 respectively.

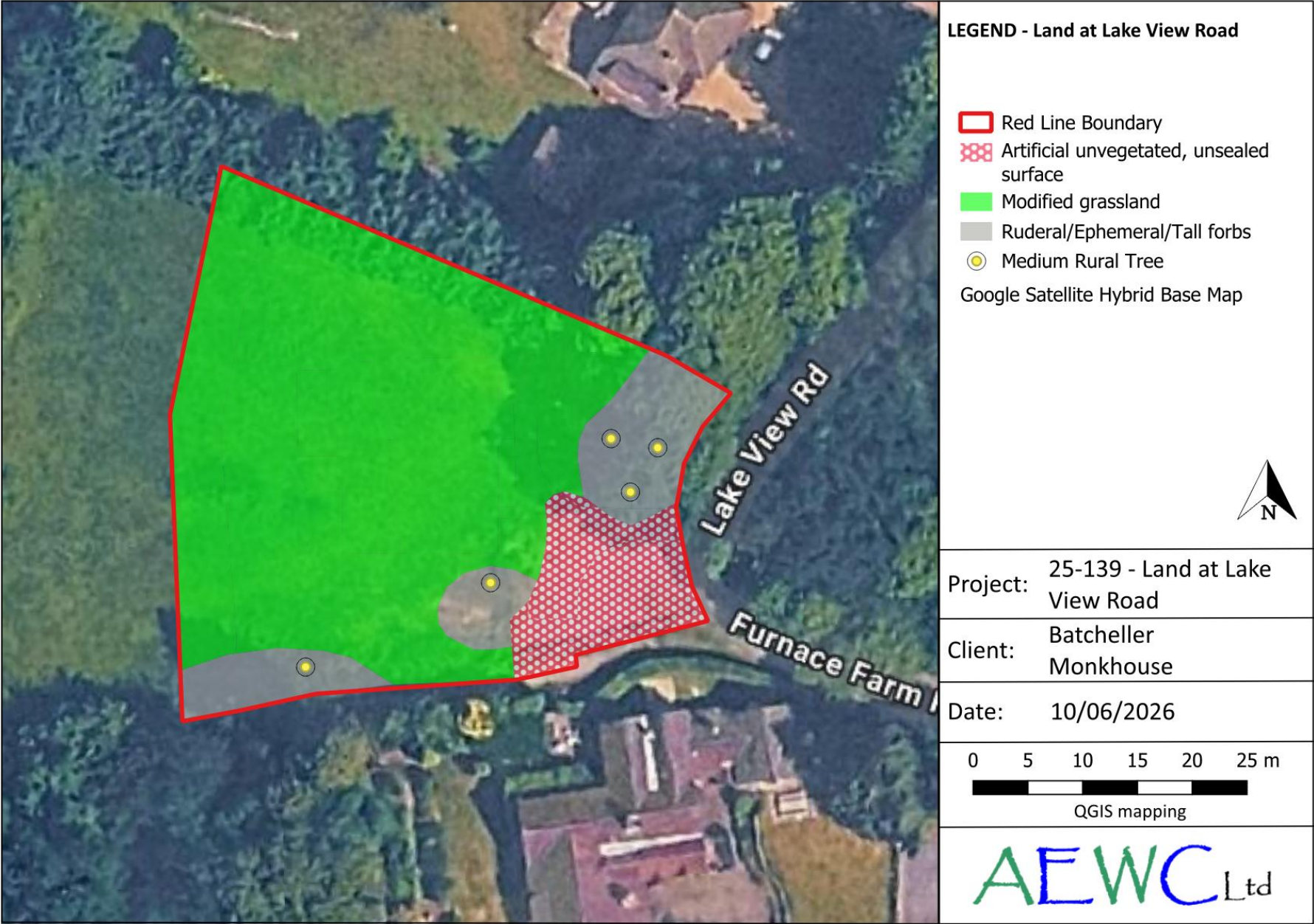


FIGURE 4: BASELINE ON-SITE HABITATS

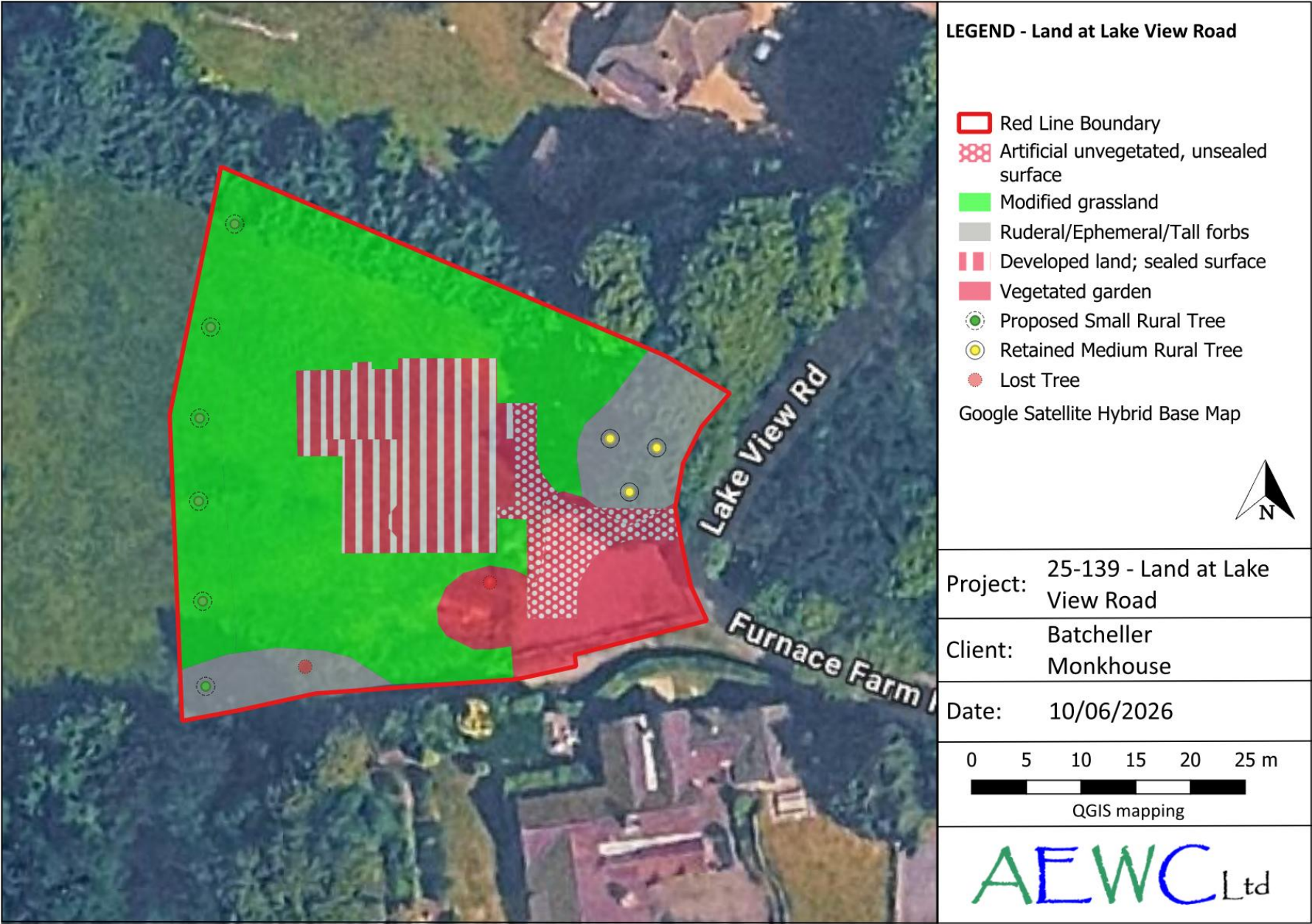


FIGURE 5: POST-DEVELOPMENT ON-SITE HABITATS

5. Results

5.1 The headline results of the BNG assessment using the habitats detailed in Section 4 are shown below (refer to the Metric for full details).

Table 1: Headline Results

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	-0.35
	<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>	-30.17%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲	

6. Conclusions & Recommendations

- 6.1 The proposed development works will involve the loss of small areas of modified grassland and ruderal/ephemeral vegetation and their replacement with a building, hardstanding, and vegetated garden. Two trees previously removed have also been included a lost.
- 6.2 Biodiversity enhancements incorporated into the proposed site layout include improving the condition of a strip of modified grassland and planting of six trees along the western boundary, outside of the private garden area.
- 6.3 **The habitat unit results show a decrease of 0.35 habitat units which equates to a 30.17% net loss.**
- 6.4 There are no hedgerows or watercourses on the site at baseline or post-development, therefore hedgerow units and watercourse units are not included.
- 6.5 **As such, the minimum target of 10% net gain has not been achieved. Trading rules have also not been satisfied.**
- 6.6 Only a low level of biodiversity enhancement is proposed, with no notable habitat areas of medium distinctiveness or higher, and the overall unit gain being low. As such, the proposal is not considered to provide 'significant gain'. The only creation of medium distinctiveness habitats will be the planting of six trees. The requirements for these to achieve their proposed condition (moderate) are low, with this likely to be achieved providing native trees are planted as shown and their survival ensured. This could be

secured through a conditioned basic management plan and post-completion compliance check.

- 6.7 The BNG result achievable on the site can be increased by reducing the built footprint and / or increasing the area of the biodiversity enhancement area outside of the private garden. Some examples include:
- Including green roofs.
 - Replacing areas of hard standing with planted surface.
- 6.8 **There is currently a deficit of 0.46 habitat units to reach a 10% gain. If an acceptable gain is not possible to achieve on-site, off-site units or statutory credits may be purchased with agreement from the Local Planning Authority. See Table 2.**

Table 2: Unit Deficits

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
<i>Area habitat units</i>	10.00%	1.16	1.27	0.46
<i>Hedgerow units</i>	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Watercourse units</i>	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

7. Wildlife Enhancements

Bats and Birds

- 7.1 To enhance the site for bats and birds known to be present within the local area it is recommended that at least one bat box and one bird box be installed within the site. Boxes could be installed on existing retained trees or buildings or integrated into the new buildings.
- 7.2 Ideally bat boxes would be woodcrete or similar hard-wearing material (rather than the less durable wooden boxes) and should be installed at least 3m above the ground (where safe installation is possible), sheltered from strong winds and exposed to the sun for part of the day (usually south or south-west facing).
- 7.3 Example tree-mounted bat boxes are shown below: Schwegler 1FF bat box (below left, suitable for pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus sp.*), and a Schwegler 2F bat box (below right, suitable for long-eared bats *Plecotus sp.*), or similar bat boxes.



- 7.4 Example integrated bat boxes are shown below: Integrate Eco Bat Box (below left), Habibat Bat box - Plain for rendering (below centre) and a Schwegler 1WI Summer and Winter bat box (below right) or similar bat boxes.



- 7.5 Tree-hung bird boxes should comprise a mix of traditional '32mm round-holed' (below left: which are suitable for tits, sparrows, redstarts and nuthatches) and open-fronted boxes (below right: these are suitable for pied wagtails, robins and wrens), and also ideally be woodcrete or similar hard-wearing material (rather than the less durable traditional wooden boxes). Boxes should be installed with an aluminium nail or screw to prevent tree damage between 2m and 4m above ground for round-holed and low down, below 2m, well hidden in vegetation for open-fronted boxes, and (unless shaded by buildings or trees) be facing north or east.



- 7.6 Integrated bird boxes should include swift bricks (below left), these should be installed at a minimum of 4m above the ground, north or east facing and with open flight access, or sparrow terraces (below centre), which should be installed in line with vegetation such as trees or hedge lines to allow the birds the use of jumping off points, and be installed a minimum of 3m above the ground on a north or east elevation. Where suitable overhanging eaves are present, house martin cups (below right) may also be suitable.



Reptiles and Amphibians

- 7.7 **To enhance the site for reptiles and amphibians, a hibernaculum and/or log pile could be created on-site.** These would use untreated timber, logs, brash, rubble and/or soil, arranged to provide a range of crevices and voids. On well-draining soils, hibernacula can be partially buried, with a stable base of rubble or hardcore overlain by logs and soil to ensure frost-free refuges suitable for overwintering. Hibernacula should be constructed in moderately shaded, well-drained areas whilst log piles should be constructed in sunny, south-facing locations. Both should be located away from areas of regular disturbance and at the margins of suitable habitat such as rough grassland, scrub edges, or pond margins.

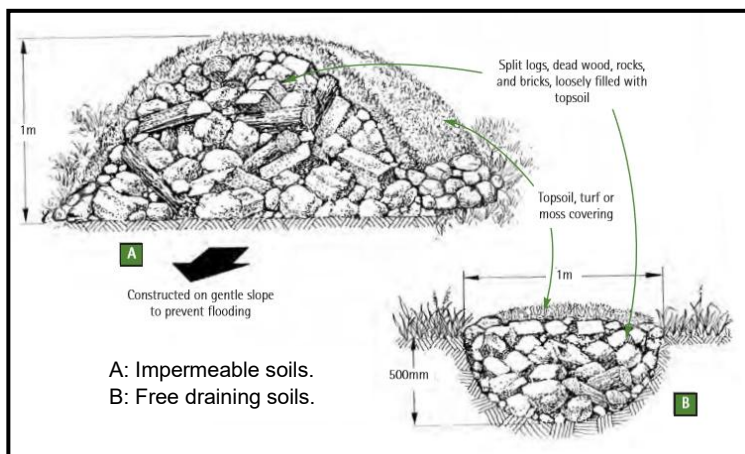
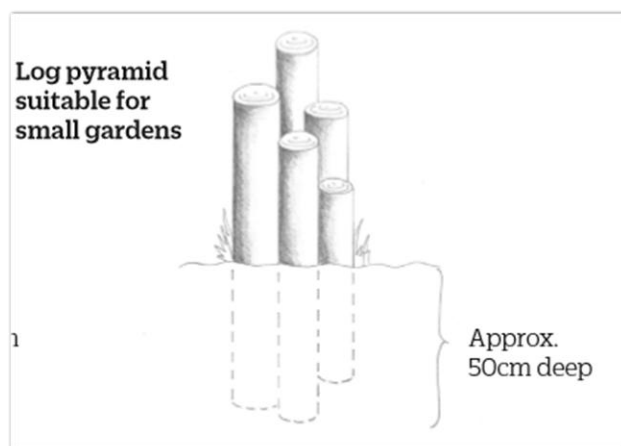


Diagram from Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook

Stag Beetles

- 7.8 A log stack could be created in a shaded area of the site to provide dead wood habitat features for stag beetles and other saproxylic species.
- 7.9 A suitable log pile comprises a variety of lengths of untreated hard wood at least 5cm in diameter, this should be sighted in partial shade and the wood partially buried to prevent it drying out. See below diagram and picture below from the PTES 'how to build a loggery' factsheet - (<https://ptes.org/get-involved/wildlife-action/help-stag-beetles/>).



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