

Biodiversity Net Gain Statement

Location: **Land at Oak Tree Caravan, Bishopstone Lane, Haywards Heath**

On Behalf of: **Murray Planning Associates Ltd**

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WM Ecology Ltd

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Disclaimer: This report has been produced by Mr William Mills ACIEEM, who has attained a 1st class Master of Science degree in Ecology and has at the time of publication, over 7 years of survey and report writing experience within the ecological consultancy industry and thus is considered to be a suitably qualified ecologist. This report is valid for a period of 18 months from the date of the specified site walkover. Should this report be submitted to a planning authority after this date, it should be accompanied by an updated site visit report undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist to ensure the findings stated within are still accurate.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The author of this report Mr William Mills ACIEEM, has been commissioned as an independent consultant ecologist by Murray Planning Associates Ltd to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of the land at Elfwoods, Petersfield, Hampshire, grid reference (TQ 28370 21570). This area of land shall hereafter be referred to as 'the site' within this report.
- 1.2 The site walkover and critical assessment provided within this report were undertaken following best-practice guidance as provided by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM 2018) together with the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, 2019) and the Biodiversity Net Gain User Guide (DEFRA, 2023).
- 1.3 The baseline of this report was produced using information from the site walkover which was undertaken on the 12th of June 2025. The baseline data is considered to be an accurate reflection of the ecological value of the site.

Site Description

- 1.4 The walkover survey area covered the entirety of the site which covers a total of 2425m² of residential property and gardens including a large pond, grassland and woodland with some scattered trees.

Surrounding Landscape

- 1.5 The area surrounding the site is considered to be rural in nature with the built mass of the town of Burgess Hill 2.0 km towards the South-East. Surrounding the site, the land is more open consisting of arable fields and pockets of woodland interspersed by hedgerow and road and rail infrastructure.

The Development Proposals

- 1.6 It is understood the proposals consist of the demolition of the existing static caravan and wooden garage and the construction of a new residential building with associated parking and access.

Report Aims

- 1.7 The aim of the site walkover survey and critical Biodiversity Net Gain assessment is to:
- Identify and describe the existing habitats and conditions on site;
 - Identify and determine if the proposals meet the requirements which would trigger the requirement for a 10% gain in Biodiversity; AND IF SO
 - To incorporate any adequate and appropriate avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures which may be required within the scheme from any identified impacts of the proposals through the use of the latest Statutory

Biodiversity Net Gain Metric and accompanying Statutory Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets;

- To provide details of any design suggestions to be included within the proposed scheme to enable it to meet the required 10% gain in biodiversity post development.

2.0 Methodology

Baseline Habitat Assessment

- 2.1 A baseline habitat assessment in accordance with the UK Habitats Classification Manual (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) was undertaken on the 12th of June 2025 by a suitably qualified ecologist. No signs of site clearance or habitat degradation were noted. Therefore, the baseline data is considered to be an accurate reflection of the ecological value of the site.
- 2.2 All area and linear based habitats were mapped on site with the aid of aerial imagery and topographical survey where available. The condition of habitats was assessed in accordance with The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology (DEFRA, 2023).

Constraints / Considerations

- 2.3 Areas and linear lengths have been rounded to the nearest 10m² and measurements input to the metric using three decimal places. Due to the output of the Metric being displayed to two decimal places, slight imprecision in output may occur.
- 2.4 Due to the site walkover survey consisting of a single visit, there is the potential that some species (flowering forb species in particular), may have not been visible at the time of survey and thus overlooked. This is an accepted constraint recognised within standard survey methodology.

3.0 Biodiversity Net Gain Qualifying Assessment

Exemption Criteria

- 3.1 Should a development meet any of the following criteria as stated, it shall be exempt from the required 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (DEFRA, 2024):

Existing planning applications

- If a planning application for a development was made before day one of mandatory BNG on 12 February 2024.

Developments below the threshold

- A development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat AND/OR 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows.

Householder applications

- These are applications made by householders as defined within article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. It includes, for example, small projects like home extensions, conservatories or loft conversions.

Self-build and custom build applications

- The development must consist of no more than 9 dwellings; AND
- Be on a site that has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares ; AND
- Consist exclusively of dwellings that are self-build or custom housebuilding as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015.

Other exemptions

- Urgent crown developments;
- Developments that are granted planning permission by a development order (including permitted development rights

Proposal Assessment

- 3.2 Due to the proposals meeting the criteria for a self-build, the proposed scheme is considered to be **exempt** from the requirement to provide a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on site.

4.0 References

British Standards Institution. (2013). BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development. London: BSI.

CIEEM. (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. Winchester, UK.

CIEEM. (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

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Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool.

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology.

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2024). Guidance Biodiversity net gain: exempt developments. This publication is available [online] at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. (2023). National Planning Policy Framework. Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London. This publication is available [online] at www.gov.uk/government/publications.

UKHab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.1