LIZARD
Landscape Design and Ecology

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN STATEMENT

Q Leisure, The Old Sand Pit, London Road, Albourne

On behalf of: The Padel Club Ltd

Client:	The Padel Club Ltd			
Project:	Q Leisure, The Old Sand Pit, London Road, Albourne			
Reference:	LLD3538-ECO-REP-002-00-BNG			
Revision:	**Date:**	**Author**	**Proof**	**Approved**
00	19/06/2025	Angus Cairncross (BSc)	Catherine O'Reilly MCIEEM	Catherine O'Reilly MCIEEM
01	21/11/2025	Angus Cairncross (BSc)	Catherine O'Reilly MCIEEM	Catherine O'Reilly MCIEEM

Disclaimer:

The information provided within this report has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

This report is intended for the sole use of the Client and their agents in accordance with the agreement under which our services were performed. Unauthorised communication, reproduction or usage of this report by any party other than the aforementioned is prohibited. No liability is accepted by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology for any use of this report, other than for the purposes for which it was originally prepared and provided. This report does not constitute legal advice. No warranty, express or implied, is made as to the advice in this report or any other service provided by us.

Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the final survey visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, to inform whether surveys should be updated.

LIZARD
Landscape Design and Ecology
The Old Bank, 34 South Street, Tarring, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7LH
T. 01903 216033 E. office@lizardlandscape.co.uk W. lizardlandscapeecology.com

Contents

LIZARD
Landscape Design and Ecology
The Old Bank, 34 South Street, Tarring, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7LH
T. 01903 216033 E. office@lizardlandscape.co.uk W. lizardlandscapeecology.com

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement for Q Leisure, The Old Sand Pit, London Road, Albourne. This report has been written with due regard to best practice guidance for ecological report writing (CIEEM, 2017) and the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, 2019) and the Biodiversity Net Gain User Guide (DEFRA, 2023).

1.2 The development does not appear to qualify under any exemption and will therefore be subject to the standard Biodiversity Gain condition.

Site Overview

1.3 The site covers an area of c. 0.24 ha and consists of a roughly rectangular shaped plot. It is comprised of predominately hardstanding, including a gravel path, 2no. buildings and a sports court, with surrounding grassland. Adjacent habitats include scrub, grassland and trees.

Surrounding Landscape

1.4 The site is located within a rural setting. It is c. 3.65km east of Hassocks, c. 12km southwest of Haywards Heath and c. 15km from Brighton and Hove. There is good connection to surrounding towns and villages via the A23. The overall surrounds are predominately arable fields, small patches of woodland, and scattered patches of human infrastructure.

Development Proposals

1.5 It is understood that the proposals are to build 6 paddle courts and replace existing buildings on site, providing guest facilities.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study - Assigning Strategic Significance

2.1.1 Due to the lack of Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) within Sussex, strategic significance has been assessed as per table 8 of the User Guide (DEFRA, 2023). This included assessing whether the site was located within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as well as examining the local plan for any specific targets regarding creation or retention of certain habitat types.

2.1.2 Where sites were found to be located within any designated area, such as an AONB, policy statement and management plans for the relevant area were examined. High strategic significance was then assigned to any habitat identified as a priority within these documents.

2.1.3 For any sites not located within a designated area, habitats were generally assigned low strategic significance, unless they were considered to provide important ecological linkages in which case they were assigned medium strategic significance.

2.2 Desk Study – Statutory Designated Sites and Irreplaceable Habitat

2.2.1 To identify any designated sites for nature conservation, irreplaceable habitat and/or priority habitats (the presence of which may influence the feasibility of delivering BNG) within or adjacent to the Site, the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) and The Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory were reviewed.

2.3 Baseline Habitat Assessment

2.3.1 A baseline habitat assessment in accordance with the UK Habitats Classification Manual (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) was undertaken on the 14th of May 2025 by Angus Cairncross Bsc. No habitat degradation had taken place prior to the survey and the baseline data is considered to be an accurate reflection of the ecological value of the site. Full details of the habitats present are contained within the PEA (LLD3538-ECO-REP-001-01-PEA) and summarised herein.

2.3.2 All area based and linear 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).

2.3.3 The habitats, their condition and strategic importance were input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (DEFRA, 2023). The area of habitats which would be retained or enhanced based upon the current proposals was also added to the calculator. This allowed the existing baseline value and loss of biodiversity units to be established.

2.4 Post-Development Habitats

2.4.1 The proposed landscape plan has been used to inform the post-development scenario. This plan was converted from PDF to a GIS environment where it was overlaid on the baseline habitat data. Areas of proposed post development intervention (habitat creation and/or habitat retention / enhancement), including the built development, were calculated using QGIS.

2.4.2 The proposed habitats and strategic importance were input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (DEFRA, 2023). Target condition scores were assigned based upon what could realistically be achieved on site. The area of habitats which would be retained or enhanced based upon the current proposals was also added to the calculator.

2.4.3 The Metric takes into account whether habitat creation or enhancement is delivered in advance of any impact, or whether there will be any significant delay in an intervention relative to the impact. Where delays in habitat creation are anticipated, or habitat creation is to be undertaken in advance, this has been included within the metric and fully explained within section 3 of this report. Where no delays or advance creation shall occur, a standard temporal multiplier has been applied to created habitats.

2.4.4 Once all measures have been input into The Biodiversity Metric Calculation, the overall change in value of the site could then be determined.

2.5 Mitigation Hierarchy

2.5.1 Biodiversity net gain planning practice guidance and Articles 37A and 37D of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, sets out a list of priority actions to ensure adherence to the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy:

- First, in relation to onsite habitats which have a medium, high and very high distinctiveness (a score of four or more according to the statutory biodiversity metric), the avoidance of adverse effects from the development and, if they cannot be avoided, the mitigation of those effects; and
- Then, in relation to all onsite habitats which are adversely affected by the development, the adverse effect should be compensated by prioritising in order, where possible, the enhancement of existing onsite habitats, creation of new onsite habitats, allocation of registered offsite gains and finally the purchase of biodiversity credits.

2.6 Survey Constraints / Considerations

2.6.1 Areas and linear lengths have been rounded to the nearest $10m^2$ 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.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Strategic Significance, Irreplaceable Habitat and Designated Sites.

3.1.1 The site is not within any ecological designation, such as a *Biodiversity Opportunity Area* or *Nature Improvement Area* and no habitats on site are directly referenced in any local plan or other such document. Habitats on site have therefore been classified as being of low strategic significance.

3.1.2 There is no irreplaceable habitat within or immediately adjacent to the site.

3.1.3 The site is not location within any statutory designated site.

3.2 Baseline Habitat Value

Habitat Degradation

3.2.1 No site clearance or habitat degradation was evident, and the baseline information gathered is considered to be a true presentation of the on-site habitats at the time of the survey.

Existing On-Site Habitats

3.2.2 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment concluded that the existing baseline biodiversity value of the site was **0.08** Habitat Units, consisting of:

- 0.177ha of developed land; sealed surface providing 0.0 habitat units (condition assessment N/A).
- 0.027ha of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface providing 0.0 habitat units (condition assessment N/A).
- 0.04ha of modified grassland in poor condition providing 0.08 habitat units.

3.2.3 A full condition assessment for each existing habitat type is detailed in Appendix A.

Habitat Retention

3.2.4 Some of the existing habitat on site is to be retained in its current condition, meaning the retention of 0.00 habitat units comprised of:

- 0.177ha of developed land; sealed surface providing 0.0 habitat units (condition assessment N/A).
- 0.027ha of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface providing 0.0 habitat units (condition assessment N/A).

3.3 Baseline Hedgerow Value

3.3.1 No linear habitats are present on site.

3.4 Baseline Watercourse Value

3.4.1 No watercourses are present on site.

3.5 Proposed Habitat Creation

3.5.1 Proposals are to result in the creation of new habitat on site including:

- 0.04ha of developed land, sealed surface which is replacing bordering grassland of the existing hardstanding footprint.

3.5.2 Proposed habitats would deliver **0.00** habitat units.

3.6 Proposed Hedgerows / Watercourses

3.6.1 No new hedgerows or watercourses are proposed within the scheme.

3.7 Proposed Habitat Enhancements

3.7.1 No habitat enhancements are proposed within the scheme.

3.8 Adherence to the Mitigation Hierarchy

Avoidance and Mitigation

3.8.1 The scheme has been designed to avoid impacts to as much surrounding grassland, scrub and trees as possible. Development has largely been kept within the existing hardstanding footprint.

Compensation

3.8.2 Due to the clients engaging in a 15-year lease, the standard 30-year management and monitoring could not be guaranteed. Instead units from a habitat bank will be sought to compensate for the losses to grassland.

3.9 Trading Summary

3.9.1 Trading rules have not currently been met due to the loss of biodiversity value on site.

3.10 Overall Results

3.10.1 Once all retention, enhancement and habitat creation measures are taken into the account, the scheme currently results in a net decrease of -**0.08** units and a **100%** loss in Habitat Units.

3.10.2 None of the on-site creation has ecological value, and therefore a formal Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP) should not be required.

4.0 MEASURES TO ACHIEVE MINIMUM REQUIRED LEVELS OF BNG

4.1 The purchase of units from a private habitat provider, such as the Iford Estate, Wiston Estate or The Environment Bank, shall be sought post-planning approval to allow the shortfall in units to be addressed. Purchased units shall include a minimum of 0.09 units of low distinctiveness habitat or better to ensure that all trading rules are met.

Table No. 01 – Unit deficit summary

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	10.00%	0.08	0.09	0.09
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

4.2 This approach is in accordance with Government guidelines, with the completion of a full metric with inclusion of off-site habitats provided pre-commencement as part of the standard Biodiversity Gain Condition.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Metric calculations have identified that the proposed scheme currently does not result in a minimum levels of Biodiversity Net Gain, however habitat units shall be purchased from a third-party provider to satisfy the current deficit and ensure that the current proposals abide by the trading rules.

5.2 No significant gains are proposed and as such a formal HMMP should not be required.

6.0 REFERENCES

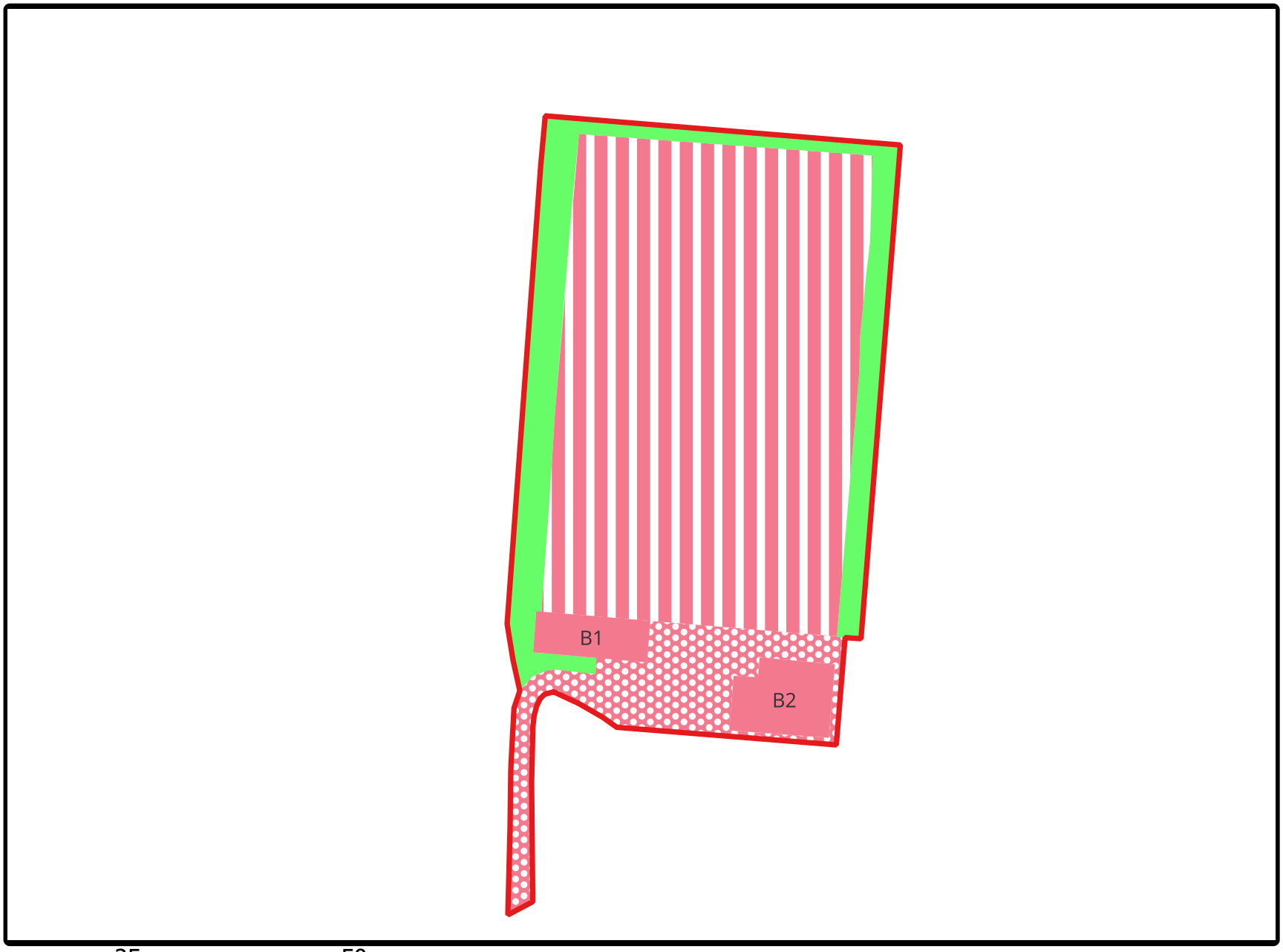
CIEEM. (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM. (2019). Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development. Winchester

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2023). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool.*

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2023). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology.*

UKHab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.1



Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Modified grassland
- Building

LIZARD
Landscape Design and Ecology
The Old Bank, 34 South Street, Tarring, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7LH
T: 01903 216033 E: office@lizardlandscape.co.uk W: lizardlandscapeecology.com

Client

The Padel Club Ltd

Project Title & Location

Q Leisure, The Old Sand Pit, London Road, Albourne

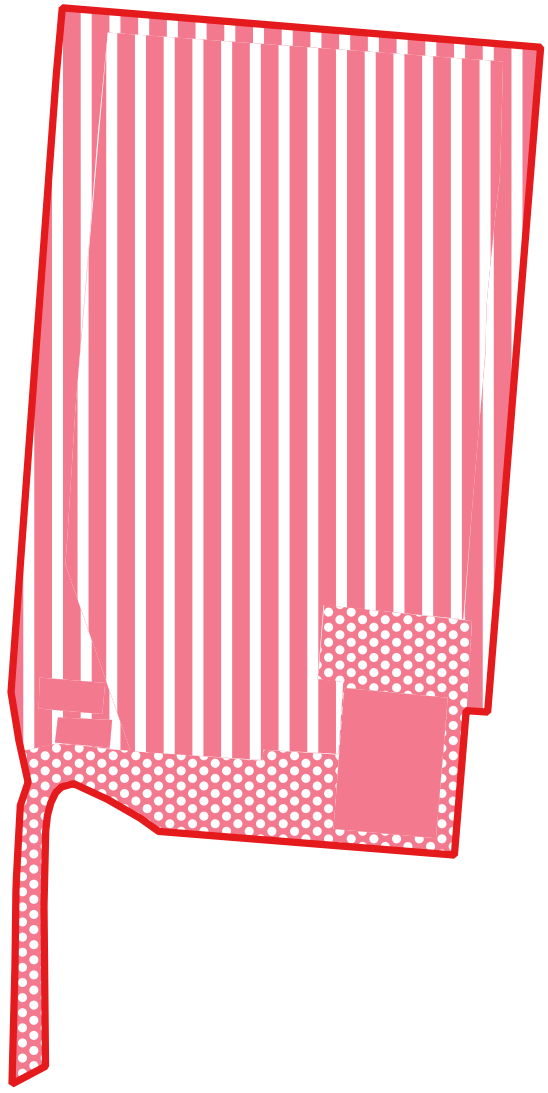
Drawn by	Approved by	Rev	Date
AC	CO	01	21/11/25

25 50 m

Figure No. 01 - Baseline Habitat Plan

N

1:600



25 50 m

Figure No. 02 - Proposed Habitat Plan

N 1:600

Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Building

LIZARD
Landscape Design and Ecology
The Old Bank, 34 South Street, Tarring, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7LH
T. 01903 216033 E. office@lizardlandscape.co.uk W. lizardlandscapeecology.com

Client
The Padel Club Ltd

Project Title & Location
Q Leisure, The Old Sand Pit, London Road, Albourne

Drawn by	Approved by	Rev	Date
AC	CO	01	21/11/25

Appendix A – Condition Assessment for Existing Habitats

Modified Grassland in Poor Condition:

Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference	Modified grassland
Habitat Description			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m^2 present, including at least 2 forbs (these 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^2 (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.	No	Average of 5 species per m2
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.	yes	Sward was varied
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	yes	There was some scattered bramble but <20%
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.	yes	No physical damage observed
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2].	yes	No bare ground observed
F	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%.	yes	No bracken observed
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]).	yes	No invasive species observed
		Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)	No
		Number of criteria passed	6

Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	x