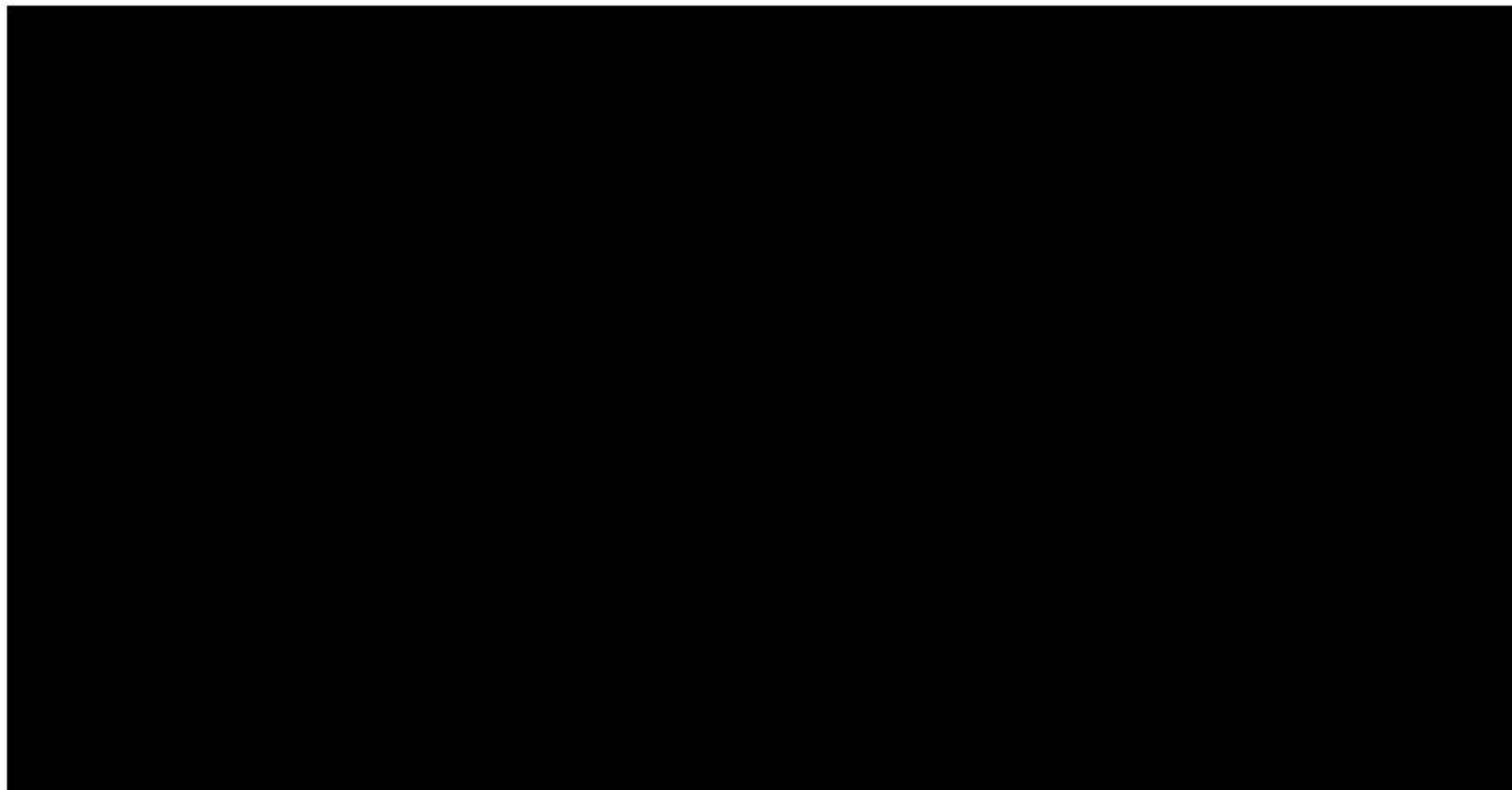




09 December 2024



Ref: 24/83b

Land to rear of Mulberry Gare, Felbridge: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

JWK Wildlife Surveys Ltd was commissioned by David Leppard to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment relating to proposed change of use of land to the rear of Mulberry Gate, Felbridge West Sussex (hereafter referred to as “the site”).

Planning permission is being sought for change of use of a small area of managed grassland which will be incorporated into the wider gardens of 6 Longwall, which bounds application site to the east. No works are proposed within the site beyond the construction of a fenceline along the southern boundary.

The purpose of this document and the associated statutory metric is to provide an assessment on the likely change in biodiversity value of the site as a result of the change of use proposals.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator (DEFRA, 2024), condition assessment and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (JWK Wildlife Surveys Ltd, 2024a).

Study Area Context

The site is located within a pre-dominantly urban location within central-western extents of Felbridge village in the Mid-Sussex district of West Sussex. The settlements of Newchapel and Furnace Wood lie 2.8km north and 1.75km west, respectively. East Grinstead town is located 2.35km southeast. Private residential land bounds immediately to the north, west and east with industrial land to the south. The site is accessed via Longwall which connects the proposed development site with Copthorne Road, 55m north.

Environment Act 2021

Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021) makes provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England.

Overview

1 (1) This Schedule makes provision for grants of planning permission in England to be subject to a condition to secure that the biodiversity gain objective is met.

(2) Paragraphs 2 to 12 have effect for the purposes of this Schedule.

Biodiversity gain objective

2 (1) The biodiversity gain objective is met in relation to development for which planning permission is granted if the biodiversity value attributable to the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by at least the relevant percentage.

(2) The biodiversity value attributable to the development is the total of—

- (a) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat,
- (b) the biodiversity value, in relation to the development, of any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development, and
- (c) the biodiversity value of any biodiversity credits purchased for the development.

Methodology

Habitats were classified following the methodology of the UK Habitat Classification system found in The UK Habitat Classification User Manual (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group V2, 2023). This involved mapping and describing the broad habitats and compiling a general plant species list to reflect the floristic assemblage of each habitat type.

A habitat condition assessment was undertaken on the existing onsite habitats using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments. This involved assessing a series of attributes representing key physical characteristics to assess whether the habitat is in a favourable condition. The habitats present on site were assessed as in either poor, moderate or good condition.

Similarly, a proposed habitat condition assessment based on the latest proposals was undertaken. Proposed habitat conditions were assigned to newly created and enhanced habitats by reviewing the criteria characteristics for each habitat, set out in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments and the proposed landscaping plans. As a precautionary measure all created habitat conditions were assigned to Poor to remove potential limitations with achieving a higher condition rating.

The metric converts the results of the habitat and condition assessments into measurable biodiversity units which assign a biodiversity value of each habitat based on the below three components for quality:

- Distinctiveness
- Condition
- Strategic Significance

The results of the metric then provide a baseline biodiversity score for each habitat parcel which combine to create an overall score for the site.

A similar calculation is carried out using proposed habitats that provide a post-development score, including retained, enhanced and created features including the associated risk factors:

- Difficulty of creating, enhancing or restoring habitat
- Temporal Risk

- Spatial Risk

The total net unit change is calculated by deducting the post-development units from the baseline units.

Where necessary, and there is a negative score of biodiversity following change of use, offsite measures or a revision of proposed development plans would be required to ensure a minimum of 10% gain is achieved as a result of the proposals.

Results

Based on current change of use proposals the application site will retain the baseline biodiversity value of 0.24 habitat units following change of use which results in **0.00%** net change, which indicates no biodiversity change as a result of the scheme. Refer to Fig 1 below for a summary of the biodiversity metric score.

Fig 1: Headlines Results Biodiversity Metric

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Habitat units	0.00	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Habitat units	0.00%	
		Hedgerow units	0.00%	
		Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?		Yes ✓		
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	0.00%	0.24	0.24	0.00
Hedgerow units	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

The calculated gain is based on the below habitat changes:

- Retention of two onsite trees present; and
- Change of 0.09ha modified grassland to 0.09ha vegetated garden.

Should the development proposals change, or the above detailed habitat changes become impractical then the metric calculations should be re-assessed based on the latest design to ensure accurate results, which may include additional habitat creation and enhancement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results of the completed metric calculations the proposed development will result in an overall biodiversity change of 0.00%.

The above summary is based on the current site proposals, should any significant changes to the proposed application be required, the metric calculation should be re-evaluated by the project ecologist to ensure results remain accurate.

I trust the above summary relating to biodiversity net gain at the above site is satisfactory, however if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

