

Biodiversity Net Gain

Boyton Road



+44 (0)20 7043 0418
info@eightversa.com

Document Information

Document prepared for

Mark Andrews
Walker Construction Consultants

Date of issue

20/10/2022

Issue no.

2

Our reference

4499 - Boyton Road - BNG - 2210-20snc

Document prepared by

Sara Curtis

Quality assured by

Rachel Whitham

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Introduction and Methodology

Eight Versa has been commissioned by Walker Construction Consultants to conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Calculation for the proposed redevelopment at land adjacent Wat Tyler House - Boyton Road, Hornsey, London Borough of Haringey, N8 7AU, hereinafter referred to as the site (National Grid Reference TQ 3031 8960). This report provides details on the habitats pre- and post-development, the conditions of these habitats and the overall BNG score. This report should be read in conjunction with the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 – Calculator Tool¹.

To inform the BNG assessment, Eight Versa produced a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report² in July 2021 to inform the site proposal.

Site Description

The red line site boundary currently comprises hardstanding and modified grassland, both of negligible ecological importance. The adjoining enhancement areas currently comprises hardstanding, modified grassland, tall ruderal/ephemeral vegetation, and introduced shrubs of negligible ecological importance and broad-leaved urban trees of local ecological importance. All habitats are associated with the adjacent Wat Tyler House and Gillett House. The site is bounded by residential flats to the north, Boyton Road and residential buildings to the west, residential flats to the east and residential buildings with private gardens to the south. The red line site boundary is approx. 0.06ha and the enhancement area approx. 0.22ha.

Building Proposals

Current proposals consist of Redevelopment of the car park adjacent Wat Tyler House to provide 15 new Council rent homes in a part-4, 5 and 7-storey building. Provision of associated amenity space, cycle and refuse/recycling stores, a wheelchair parking space on Boyton Road and enhancement of existing communal areas and play space to the rear on the Campsbourne Estate. Current proposals within the enhancement area include the retention and creation of new habitats. Landscape proposals are detailed within **Appendix A**³.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

BNG is defined as “development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, and an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation”⁴. The purpose is to encourage developers to provide an increase in natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected by proposals with an aim to halt the current loss of biodiversity through development to allow ecological networks to be restored.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) recommends Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should seek a net gain for biodiversity when assessing any new planning applications.

In addition, after achieving royal ascent in November 2021, The Environment Act (2021) introduced a mandatory requirement for BNG as a condition of planning permission in England (Schedule 14, Section 92). As we are currently within the two-year implementation period, a net gain of 10% is currently not mandatory (with this requirement expected to come into force in winter 2023). That said, all developments should be aiming for a 10% BNG and some Local Planning Authorities (LPA) have already introduced policy to include this, whereas other LPAs solely require a net gain.

Methodology for the Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

The Natural England ‘Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (Beta Version)’⁵ is a recent update on the Defra Biodiversity Metric which has been commonly used in the UK in the past. The Biodiversity Metric 3.1 provides a way of measuring and accounting for biodiversity losses and gains resulting from development and has been used within this report. Natural England provides a spreadsheet-based calculator for Biodiversity Metric 3.1, which has been used to complete the calculation within this report¹.

¹ Natural England (2021). The Biodiversity Metric 3.0 - Calculation Tool. This can be found at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720>. [Last accessed on date of first issue].

² 4499 - Wat Tyler House - PEA - 2107-30gg

³ Remapp Landscape Architects (2022). Proposed Landscape Plan : New Development.

⁴ Baker, J. Beatty, B., Hoskin, R., Ecology, F., Butterworth, T., WSP. (2016). Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development. This can be found at: <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/C776a-Biodiversity-net-gain-Good-practice-principles-for-development-A-practical-guide-web.pdf> [Last accessed on date of first issue].

⁵ Natural England (2021). The Biodiversity Metric 3.0 (JP039). Information on the metric can be found at . [Last accessed on date of first issue].

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Condition Assessment

The BNG calculator uses the pre-development baseline and post-development habitats and hedgerows to calculate the biodiversity units' difference as a percentage. Each habitat is inputted into the calculator where it is automatically assigned a distinctiveness score. The user then inputs a condition score based on the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Habitat Condition Assessment Sheet⁶ of the pre- and post-development habitats. A justification for each habitat condition is detailed below. The user also inputs the habitats strategic significance and advances and delays in habitat creation, where required.

Pre-development Habitats and Conditions

Hardstanding

The majority of the red line and areas within the enhancement area comprise hardstanding. This urban habitat automatically falls under a very low distinctiveness. In accordance with the Habitat Condition Assessment Sheet, no assessment is required for these habitat types and therefore the condition is N/A.

Introduced Shrub

Patches of introduced shrub are scattered throughout the enhancement area and this habitat automatically falls under a low distinctiveness. In accordance with the Habitat Condition Assessment Sheet, the condition of introduced shrub habitat is automatically set at 'N/A' and therefore does not require any further assessment.

Modified Grassland

Areas of modified grassland (referred to as amenity grassland within the PEA report) are located within the red-line site boundary and the enhancement area. The grassland comprises a short, regularly managed sward. No scrub or bracken is present. Areas of bare ground are present, most likely from residential use beneath the trees which is above 5% of the total grassland area. The modified grassland is considered to be of 'moderate' condition, passing 5 of the 7 criteria.

Ruderal/Ephemeral

Scattered areas of tall ruderal vegetation are present within the north of the enhancement area. The area is dominated by common nettle *Urtica dioica* which is considered to be an undesirable species under the habitat condition assessment sheet. The area is dense and vegetation cover falls above the 50% cover of vascular and non-vascular plants. This habitat is considered to be of 'poor' condition, passing 2 of the 4 criteria.

Trees

Scattered trees are located throughout the enhancement area within the modified grassland and tall ruderal. The majority of these are young or semi-mature and comprise sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, lime *Tilia x europaea*, plum *Prunus domestica* whitebeam *Sorbus aria*, late cotoneaster *Cotoneaster lacteus* and silver birch *Betula pendula*. The trees are either individual or in small groups although the canopies are not continuous. The trees are in a good condition and have a full canopy which encourages micro habitats for fauna. The scattered tree habitat on site was assessed as being of 'moderate' condition, passing 3 of the 6 criteria.

⁶ Natural England (2021). The Biodiversity Metric 3.0 - Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets With Instructions. Information on the assessment sheet can be found at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720>

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Post-development Habitats and Conditions

Within the enhancement area, areas of hardstanding, modified grassland, introduced shrub, urban tree, and ruderal/ephemeral vegetation habitats are being retained as part of the proposals.

Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface

Permeable paving is being installed within the red line boundary. This is to aid with natural filtration and flood risk alleviation. This urban habitat automatically falls under a very low distinctiveness. In accordance with the Habitat Condition Assessment Sheet, no assessment is required for these habitat types and therefore the condition is N/A.

Building and Hardstanding

The majority of the red line site boundary will comprise the new building with areas of hardstanding. This urban habitat automatically falls under a very low distinctiveness. In accordance with the Habitat Condition Assessment Sheet, no assessment is required for these habitat types and therefore the condition is N/A.

Extensive Green Roof

An extensive green roof is proposed on the building within the red-line boundary. The extensive green roof will be designed to be a low maintenance and lightweight system with a thin layer of substrate (the growing medium) to keep depth and weight to a minimum. The anticipated condition of the proposed green roof is 'poor' and is considered to provide opportunities for insects and in turn, foraging bats and birds.

Hedgerow

A mixed species hedgerow will be created along the front of Wat Tyler House within the enhancement area. It will include mainly native species with a number of wildlife friendly non-native species. The hedgerow will be maintained at a height of 700mm. The hedgerow is considered to be of 'poor' condition. Other areas of evergreen hedgerows are proposed within the introduced shrubs; however, these have been included within the introduced shrubs calculations.

Introduced Shrubs

The current areas of introduced shrubs will be retained and new planting will be reinstated with replacement planting where there are gaps. In accordance with the Habitat Condition Assessment Sheet, the condition of introduced shrub habitat is automatically set at 'poor' and therefore does not require any further assessment.

Modified Grassland

The proposals include new modified grassland seeding within the enhancement area. This grassland will be a similar composition and management regime to the current modified grassland and is therefore considered to be of 'moderate' condition.

Trees

A total of 18 new, native trees will be planted within the enhancement area above the grassland and introduced shrubs. Although this will increase the number of trees on the site, the canopies will not be continuous. The condition of these trees is therefore considered to be 'moderate'.

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Results and Conclusion

With the pre- and post-development habitats and their condition detailed above, the proposed development has an increase of 0.15 habitat units totalling 15.15% habitat units and 0.12 hedgerow units totalling 100% hedgerow units. This is above the required value of 10% BNG which is due to be set out in The Environment Act (2021) as a condition of planning permission in England (Schedule 14, Section 92).

To ensure habitats are managed, maintained and monitored appropriately post-development, a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) will be implemented for at least 30 years, to be controlled via a planning condition.

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Validation

Report produced by Sara Curtis

Ecologist's Qualifications:	BSc - Environmental Science MSc - Environmental Consultancy (Biodiversity and Conservation)
Evidence of practicing Ecologist	Eight Versa, Principal Ecologist and Sustainability Consultant, conducting habitat and protected species surveys (2022 to present date); Senior Ecologist, Tyler Grange (2018 - 2021), Consultant Ecologist (2015 - 2018)
Professional Code of Conduct	I am a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

Report verified by Rachel Whitham

Ecologist's Qualifications:	MSc - Ecology and Evolutionary Biology BSc - Zoology
Evidence of practicing Ecologist	Eight Versa, Assistant Ecologist (September 2021 to present), Eight Versa, Seasonal Ecologist (May 2021 - September 2021).
Professional Code of Conduct	I am a member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

Validation

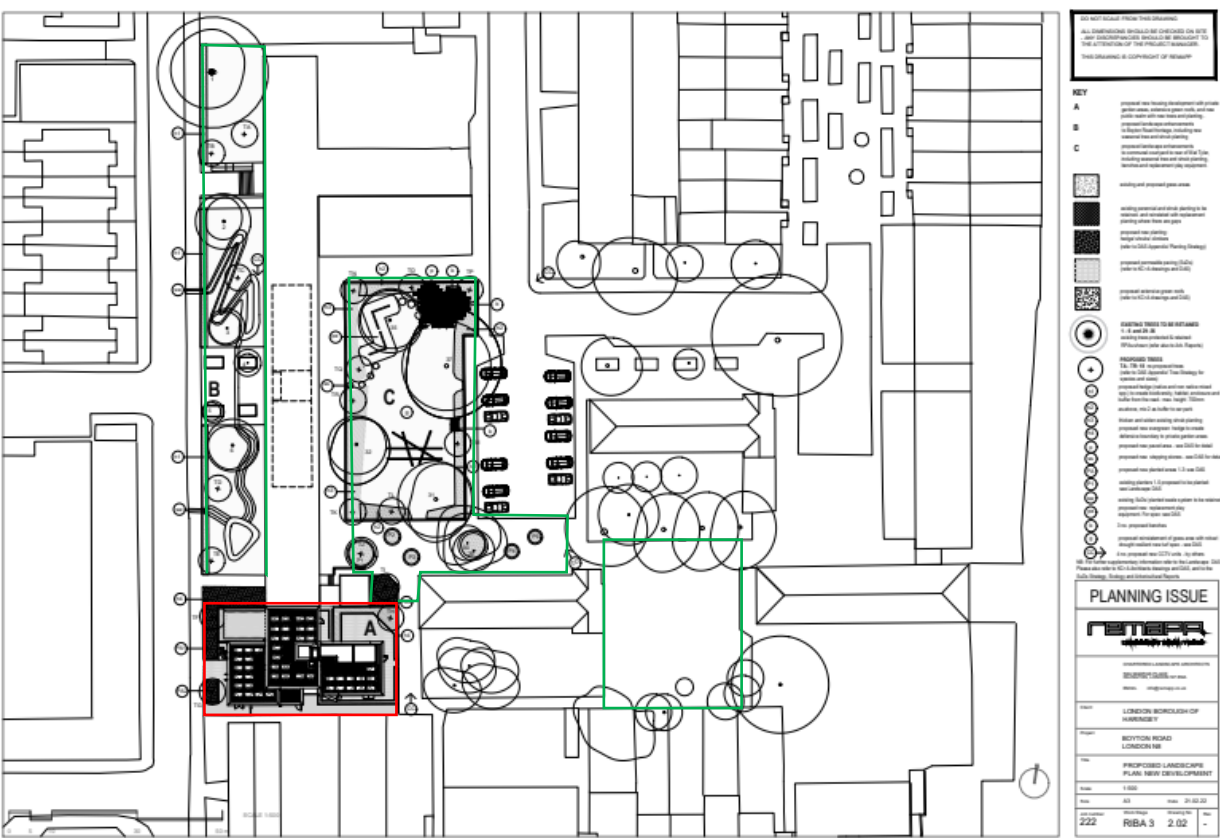
I confirm the information provided in this document is truthful and accurate at the time of completion.

Suitably Qualified Ecologist	Stacey Cougill
Signature of Ecologist	SC
Date	20/10/2022

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Appendix A - Landscape Plan



- Red line site boundary
- Enhancement area