

Biodiversity Net Gain

Land At Newgate Lane



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Ecology | Green Space | Arboiculture | GIS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Ethos Environmental Planning (Ethos) have undertaken an Ecological Assessment for two adjacent sites at Newgate Lane, Fareham, Hampshire (Ethos, 2018). As part of the assessment of the site, a Biodiversity Net Gain calculation has been requested and this report provides the results of the calculation for both sites.

The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) Biodiversity Net Gain Calculator was used to calculate the biodiversity unit score for each site. The habitat condition scores were assessed using criteria in the Higher Level Stewardship Farm Environment Plan (FEP) Manual and any deviation from these criteria have been detailed in section 2. The new habitats to be created and the management regime to achieve the target conditions are detailed in section 3. Details of any management measures referred to in this report are set out in detail in the Ecological Assessment reports referred to above.

2 EXISTING HABITAT

2.1 North Site

2.1.1 Parkland/scattered trees – broadleaved

0.02 hectares of scattered trees were present on site which was assessed to be in poor condition as the balance between trees, scrub and grassland was not typical for this habitat and there was insufficient age range amongst the trees present.

2.1.2 Neutral grassland – semi-improved

Semi-improved grassland accounted for 0.71 hectares of the site. The FEP manual does not provide criteria for a condition assessment of this habitat. The condition score was therefore gained from the habitat assessment of the site.

The grassland was assessed to be of moderate value due to the species diversity present and the existing management regime.

2.1.3 Running and standing water – Eutrophic

The River Alver flowed through the site, bordering the semi-improved grassland. There was limited aquatic vegetation and the water was turbid and the habitat was assessed to be in poor condition.

2.1.4 Hedgerows

2.1.4.1 Species poor hedgerow (with bank or ditch)

209.1 metres of species-poor hedgerow were present on site which assessed to be in moderate condition as they did not meet the minimum height requirement of 2 metres for good condition.

2.1.4.2 Line of trees (with bank or ditch)

Hedgerow 2a consisted of a line of trees 184 metres in length which was assessed to be in poor condition as it lacked a 6 metre grassland buffer. The line of trees showed few signs of management and low species diversity and was therefore assessed to be in poor condition.

2.1.5 Cultivated/disturbed land – arable

The site was dominated by arable farmland which accounted for 2.9 hectares and was assessed to be in poor condition due to the narrow field margins and intensive management regime resulting in a monocultural crop.

2.1.6 Bare ground

A small amount of bare ground (0.19 hectares) was present on site for which the FEP manual does not include a condition assessment. This habitat consisted of an access track bisecting the two sites which was heavily used with low botanical diversity and was assessed to be in poor condition.

2.1.7 Built environment: buildings/hardstanding

Structures are not included in the FEP manual and this habitat was assessed to be in poor condition.

2.2 South Site

2.2.1 Parkland/scattered trees – broadleaved

This habitat accounted for 0.04 hectares of the site and was assessed to be in moderate condition due to the lack age diversity of the trees which were predominantly young self-seeded trees.

2.2.2 Scrub – scattered

0.8 hectares of scrub was present on site and this habitat was assessed to be in poor condition due to the lack of species diversity and the absence of a well-developed edge to the habitat.

2.2.3 Improved grassland

The FEP manual does not include a condition assessment for this habitat and it was therefore scored based on the ecological assessment of the site. 1.2 hectares of improved grassland was present on site which was assessed to be in poor condition as it was heavily poached by livestock leading to low species diversity.

2.2.4 Species-poor hedgerow (with bank or ditch)

Several species-poor hedgerows were present on site, amounting to 767.9 metres in total. The hedgerows were assessed to be in poor condition as they did not meet the height or width criteria for good condition set out in the FEP manual.

2.2.5 Cultivated/disturbed land – arable

4.2 hectares of arable farmland dominated the south site which was assessed to be in poor condition due to the narrow field margins and intensive management regime resulting in a monocultural crop.

2.2.6 Bare ground

A small amount of bare ground was present on site (0.02 hectares) which consisted of an access track to the house outside of the site boundary. Very few flora were present and it was assessed that this habitat had negligible ecological value.

2.2.7 Built environment: buildings/hardstanding

Structures are not included in the FEP manual and this habitat was assessed to be in poor condition.

3 PROPOSED HABITAT

3.1 North Site

3.1.1 Parkland/scattered trees – broadleaved

The scattered trees on site will be retained and enhanced with the aim of achieving moderate condition within 5 years.

3.1.2 Marsh/marshy grassland

It is proposed that the semi-improved grassland in the west of the site be turned into a marshy grassland in good condition within 5 years.

3.1.3 Neutral grassland – semi-improved

Areas of open space within the development will consist of semi-improved grassland which will be created and managed to a moderate condition within 5 years. This is considered achievable due to the recreational pressures which will be exerted on this habitat once the development has been completed and occupied.

3.1.4 Running and standing water – eutrophic

The River Alver will be retained and enhanced to a moderate condition within 5 years. This will be facilitated by the creation of the marshy grassland specified in section 3.1.2.

0.04 hectares of standing water will also be created through the construction of SuDS which will be managed to a moderate condition within 5 years.

3.1.5 Hedgerows

The hedgerows on site are being retained with the exception of some small sections required to create access to the development. The retained hedgerows will be planted up and managed to a moderate condition within 5 years.

In addition, a new species-rich hedgerow will also be created on the eastern boundary which will result in an additional 112.3 metres of hedgerow on site which will be managed to a moderate condition within 5 years.

3.1.6 Built environment

3.1.6.1 Building/hardstanding

1.17 hectares of new structures and hardstanding will be created on site.

3.1.6.2 Gardens

1.08 hectares of gardens will be created through the development which will achieve moderate condition within 5 years. Prescriptive management of this habitat will not be possible as this will be private land and the assessment of this habitat condition is an estimate.

3.2 South Site

3.2.1 Parkland/scattered trees – broadleaved

The scattered trees on site will be retained under the proposals and managed to a moderate condition within 1 year.

3.2.2 Scrub – scattered

This habitat will be retained and enhanced to a good condition within 5 years through the management of the edges of the habitat and improvement of the existing species diversity.

3.2.3 Marsh/marshy grassland

It is proposed that the semi-improved grassland in the west of the site be turned into a marshy grassland in good condition within 5 years.

3.2.4 Standing water – mesotrophic

The creation of SuDS on site will lead to 0.12 hectares of standing water on site which will be managed to a good condition within 5 years.

3.2.5 Hedgerows

The majority of the hedgerows on site will be retained and enhanced through planting up and management to achieve a good condition within 5 years. In addition, new species-rich hedgerows will be created on the eastern boundary which will be managed to achieve a good condition within 5 years resulting in a gain of 222.4 metres of hedgerow on site.

3.2.6 Built environment

3.2.6.1 Building/hardstanding

2.69 hectares of new structures and hardstanding will be created on site.

3.2.6.2 Gardens

1.76 hectares of gardens will be created through the development which will achieve moderate condition within 5 years. Prescriptive management of this habitat will not be possible as this will be private land and the assessment of this habitat condition is an estimate.

3.2.7 Cultivated/disturbed land – amenity

0.69 hectares of amenity grassland will be created through the construction of play areas and open space which will be managed to a good condition within 1 year.

4 RESULTS

4.1 North Site

Overall, a net gain of 5.62 biodiversity units will be achieved through the proposed development for the north site. The majority of these units came from the creation of the marshy grassland in the west of the site. The remaining units were achieved through the creation of open water, the enhancement and creation of hedgerows and the creation of gardens.

4.2 South Site

A net gain of 31.38 biodiversity units will be achieved through the proposed development. The largest gains will be achieved through the creation of a large amount of garden space to replace the monoculture arable farmland. Other units came from the retention of the woodland and scrub and the creation of the marshy grassland which account for 17.11 biodiversity units in total. The remaining units were achieved through the creation of open water and the enhancement and creation of hedgerows.

REFERENCES

Ecology Assessment Land at Newgate Lane (North), Ethos Environmental Planning, November 2018.

Ecology Assessment Land at Newgate Lane (South), Ethos Environmental Planning, November 2018.

Higher Level Stewardship, Farm Environment Plan (FEP) Manual: Technical guidance on the completion of the FEP and identification, condition assessment and recording of HLS FEP features (Third Edition), Natural England, March 2010.