

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.  
Ecological Consultants.**



---

**ALEXANDRA WMC, ROYSTON.**

**MAP REF: SE 35917 11443.**

**BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT.**

**Ref No: 251144/1.**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026.**

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

---

	Page Number
<b>1. INTRODUCTION.</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. SURVEY RESULTS.</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT.</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>5. REFERENCES.</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Appendix I. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA PRE DEVELOPMENT.</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Appendix II. POST DEVELOPMENT PLAN.</b>	<b>21</b>

# **1. INTRODUCTION.**

1.1. A planning application, is to be submitted for the erection of new dwellings on the site of the Alexandra Working Mens Club, Royston.

1.2. The Local Authority will require a Biodiversity Net Gain report in support of that planning application.

1.3. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd was therefore commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment of the site to satisfy the above request. This has been undertaken using the Statutory Metric Calculation Tool.

1.4. A site visit was carried out on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025 to gather all relevant baseline information.

1.5. This document is now revised to take account of the revised post development layout.

\*\*\*\*\*



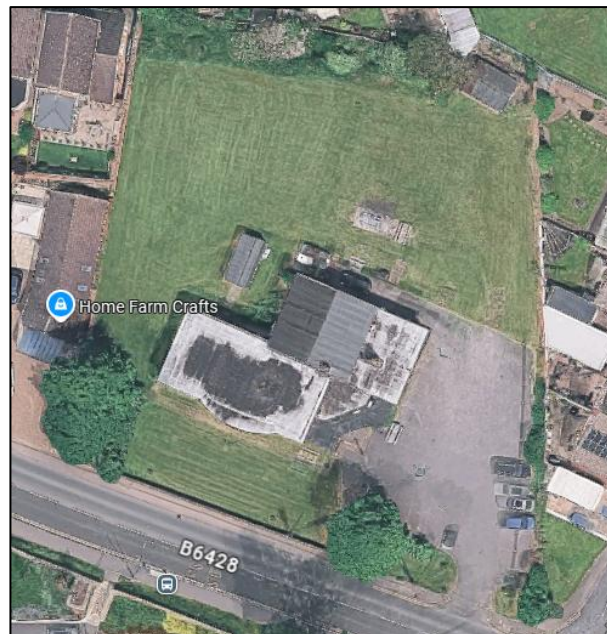
### 3. SURVEY RESULTS.

#### 3.1. The Survey Area.

3.1.1. The proposed development site will be on land currently occupied by the Alexandra Working Mens Club, Royston, as shown by the white arrow below. The site is located in the residential area of Royston surrounded by housing, shops and with a playing field to the north.



3.1.2. The aerial map below shows the location of the site and existing WMC.



### 3.2. Description of Habitats.

3.2.1. Appendix I of this report contains an annotated map marked up with the varying baseline habitats of the site. These habitats are: -

- u1b – Developed land, sealed surface.
- u1b5 – Buildings.
- g4 – Modified grassland.
- h3 – Mixed scrub.
- h2b – Other hedgerow.
- u1e – Built linear features.

#### 3.2.2. u1b – Developed land, sealed surface.

3.2.2.1. There is a large car parking area along with footpaths around the existing building.



3.2.2.2. There is no condition assessment for this habitat.

### 3.2.3. Secondary code 10 – Scattered scrub.

3.2.3.1. Down the side of the car park there are scattered buddleia (*Buddleia davidii*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) saplings.



3.2.3.2. The condition assessment for this habitat is within the Statutory BNG Condition Assessment document that accompanies this report. The condition of the scrub is moderate, passing three criteria.

### 3.2.4. u1b5 – Buildings.

There are two buildings on the site.

3.2.4.1. The first is the main club building that is to be demolished under a separate consent. That building is shown below.





3.2.4.2. The second is a Northern Powergrid building at the back of the site that is to be retained.



3.2.4.3. There is no condition assessment for this habitat.

### 3.2.5. *g4 – Modified grassland.*

3.2.5.1. The majority of the site comprises what was a closely mown lawn that has become neglected and overgrown, as shown below.



3.2.5.2. Species present include red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) and thistle (*Cirsium* sp(p)).

3.2.5.3. The condition assessment for this habitat is within the Statutory BNG Condition Assessment document that accompanies this report. The condition of the modified grassland is poor, failing the essential criteria and passing five criteria.

### **3.2.6. Secondary code 200 - Individual trees.**

3.2.6.1. There is one sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) tree outside the front of the existing WMC as shown below.



3.2.6.2. There are three more sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) trees in the southwest corner of the site.



3.2.6.3. The condition assessment for this habitat is within the Statutory BNG Condition Assessment document that accompanies this report. The condition of the individual trees is good, passing five criteria.

### **3.2.7. h3 – Mixed scrub.**

3.2.7.1. Along the northern edge of the site there is a strip of mixed scrub as shown in the photographs below.



3.2.7.2. Species present include hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), brambles (*Rubus fruticosus*), nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and thistles (*Cirsium* sp(p)).

3.2.7.3. The condition assessment for this habitat is within the Statutory BNG Condition Assessment document that accompanies this report. The condition of the scrub is moderate, passing three criteria.

### **3.2.8. h2b – Other hedgerow.**

3.2.8.1. In the southwest corner of the site there is a short length of hedgerow. This comprises a mixture of native species and ornamental shrubs.



3.2.8.2. Species present include sycamore, cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster franchetii*) and (*Cotoneaster coriaceus*), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), ivy (*Hedera helix*) and brambles (*Rubus fruticosus*),

3.2.8.3. The condition assessment for this habitat is within the Statutory BNG Condition Assessment document that accompanies this report. The condition of the hedgerow is moderate, failing four criteria.

### **3.2.9. u1e – Built linear features**

#### **Secondary code - 612 Fence.**

3.2.9.1. There is a fence along the northern site boundary, partly timber fencing and partly palisade fencing.



3.2.9.2. There is no condition assessment for this habitat.

### 3.2.10. u1e – Built linear features

#### Secondary code - 853 Mortared Wall.

3.2.10.1. There are various mortared stone and brick walls around the site.





3.2.10.2. There is no condition assessment for this habitat.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT.

### 4.1. Baseline Biodiversity Value.

4.1.1. The below tables demonstrate the baseline area and linear biodiversity units of the red line development area using the Statutory Metric Calculation Tool.

#### *Area habitats:*

Habitat Type	Area in ha	Distinctiveness	Condition	Biodiversity units
Modified grassland	0.191	Low	Poor	0.38
Mixed scrub	0.014	Medium	Moderate	0.11
Developed land, sealed surface	0.084	V.Low	N/A	0
Developed land, sealed surface	0.044	V.Low	N/A	0
Individual trees	0.0651	Medium	Moderate	0.52
<b>Total</b>	0.33 (without trees)			<b>1.01</b>

#### *Linear habitats:*

Habitat Type	Length in km.	Distinctiveness	Condition	Biodiversity units
Native hedgerow	0.009	Low	Moderate	0.04
<b>Total</b>	0.009			<b>0.04</b>

### 4.2. Post Development Habitat Creation.

4.2.1. Post development there will be one area of public open space to the east of the new houses and this will be planted out as other neutral grassland with a moderate condition.

4.2.2. There will be additional areas of mixed scrub along the front of the site, at the eastern corner of the plot and behind the sub-station.

4.2.3. An additional three standard, native species trees will be planted within the scrub and grassland areas.

4.2.4. An additional 12m of hedgerow will be planted around the northeastern corner of the site.

4.2.5. The below tables demonstrate the post development area and linear biodiversity units of the red line development area using the Statutory Metric Calculation Tool.

*Area Habitats.*

Habitat Type	Area in ha	Distinctiveness	Condition	Biodiversity units
Developed land, sealed surface roads and drives etc.	0.126	V.Low	N/A	0
Developed land, sealed surface buildings.	0.075	V.Low	N/A	0
Vegetated gardens	0.11	Low	N/A	0.21
Other neutral grassland	0.013	Medium	Moderate	0.09
Mixed native scrub.	0.012	Medium	Moderate	0.08
3 new Individual trees.	0.0122	Medium	Moderate	0.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.33</b> (without trees)			<b>0.42</b>

*Linear habitats:*

Habitat Type	Length in km.	Distinctiveness	Condition	Biodiversity units
Ornamental hedgerow	0.081	V.Low	Poor	0.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.009</b>			<b>0.08</b>

### 4.3. Biodiversity Net Gain Outcome.

4.3.1. Based on the above strategy, the following are the overall on-site biodiversity net gain results.

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change <small>(Including all on-site &amp; off-site habitat retention, creation &amp; enhancement)</small>	<i>Area habitat units</i>			-0.60
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>			0.04
	<i>Watercourse units</i>			0.00
Total net % change <small>(Including all on-site &amp; off-site habitat retention, creation &amp; enhancement)</small>	<i>Area habitat units</i>		-58.91%	Total net gain achieved is less than target set ▲
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>		117.13%	
	<i>Watercourse units</i>		0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲			
<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Baseline Units</b>	<b>Units Required</b>	<b>Unit Deficit</b>
<i>Area habitat units</i>	10.00%	1.01	1.12	0.70
<i>Hedgerow units</i>	10.00%	0.04	0.04	0.00
<i>Watercourse units</i>	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
				No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
				No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

4.3.2. These show there will be a 58.91% reduction in area biodiversity and a 117.13% increase in linear biodiversity.

4.3.3. This means that it will be necessary to purchase 0.70BU of off-site area habitat to achieve the necessary 10% net gain.

\*\*\*\*\*

Prepared by:	
Derek Whitcher. BSc, MCIEEM, MCM	Date: 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2026

Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou BSc, MCIEEM.	Date: 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2026

## 5. REFERENCES.

- Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom (2010) *ARG UK Advice Note 5: Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index*. ARGUK.
- Baker, J., Beebee T., Buckley, J., Gent, A. and Orchard, D. (2011). *Amphibian Habitat Management Handbook*. Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Bournemouth.
- Bat Tree Habitat Key (2018) *Bat Roosts in Trees: a guide for identification and assessment for tree-care and ecology professionals*. Pelagic Publishing, Exeter
- Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group (2023). *Bird Survey Guidelines for assessing ecological impacts, v.1.1.1*. Available at <https://birdsurveyguidelines.org> (Accessed 15/04/2024)
- Bright, P., Morris, P. & Mitchell-Jones, T. (2006) *The Dormouse Conservation Handbook*. English Nature, Peterborough.
- Chanin, P. (2003) *Ecology of the European Otter*. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Ecology Series No.10. English Nature, Peterborough.
- Chanin, P. (2003) *Monitoring the Otter Lutra lutra*. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No.10. English Nature, Peterborough.
- CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Cresswell, P., Cresswell, W.J., and Woods, M. (1993) *The Country Life Guide to Artificial Badger Setts*. Country Life, London.
- Collins J. (ed.) 2023. *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologist: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Dean, M., Strachan, R., Gow, D. and Andrews, R. (2016) *The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook* (Mammal Society Mitigation Guidance Series). Eds Fiona Mathews and Paul Chanin. Mammal Society, London.
- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2024) *Biodiversity Net Gain*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).
- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2024) *Statutory Net Biodiversity Metric User Guide*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023) *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).
- Edgar, P., Foster, J. and Baker, J. (2010) *Reptile Habitat Management Handbook*. Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Bournemouth.
- English Nature (2001) *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.
- Froglife (1999) *Froglife Advice Sheet 10: reptile survey*. Froglife, London.
- Gurnell, J., & Lurz, P. (2012) *Red Squirrel*. In: Cresswell, W.J., Birks, J.D.S., Dean, M., Pacheco, M., Trehwella, W.J., Wells, D. and Wray, S. (2012). *UK BAP Mammals: Interim Guidance for Survey Methodologies, Impact Assessment and Mitigation*. The Mammal Society, Southampton.
- Harris, S., Cresswell, P. and Jefferies D. (1989) *Surveying Badgers*. Occasional Publication No 9, The Mammal Society, London.
- Langton, T.E.S., Beckett, C.L., and Foster, J.P. (2001), *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*, Froglife, Halesworth.
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.
- Natural England (2022) *Hazel Dormice: Advice for making planning decisions*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hazel-dormice-advice-for-making-planning-decisions> (Accessed: 15/04/2024)
- Natural England (2014) *Protected species and development: advice for local planning authorities*. (updated 2021) Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications> (Accessed: 05/03/2021).
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006* Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/579/contents/made> (Accessed: 15/04/2024). 29
- Peay, S. (2003) Monitoring the White-clawed Crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No. 1. English Nature, Peterborough.

Stanbury, A. et al (2021) The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. *British Birds* 114: 723-747. Available at <https://britishbirds.co.uk/content/status-our-bird-populations> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2004). *Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for Birds*. 2004 ed. JNCC, Peterborough.

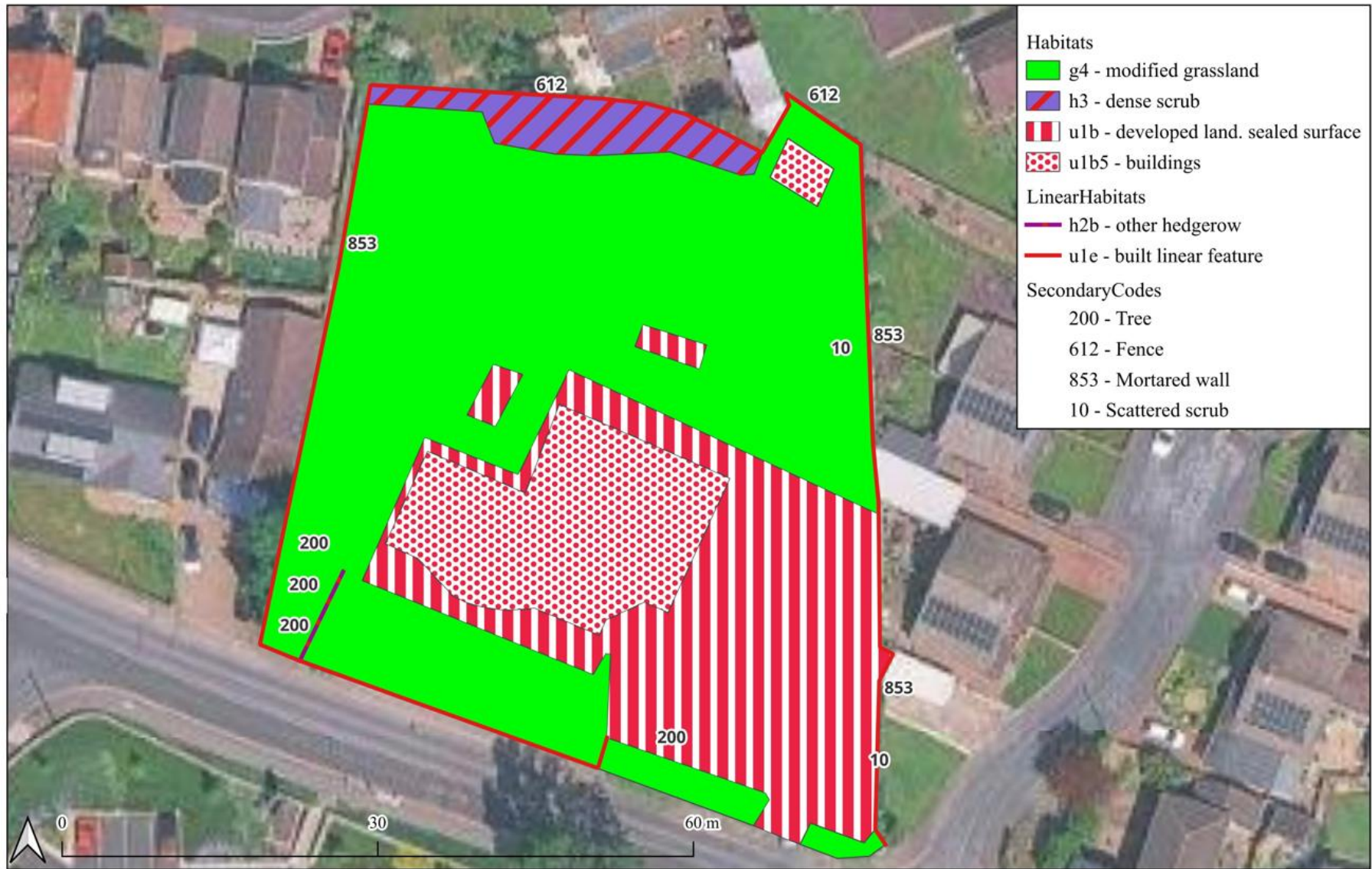
The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/579/contents/made> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

UKHab Ltd (2023) UK Habitat classification Version 2.0 Available at <https://www.ukhab.org>. JNCC, Peterborough.

# Appendix I. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA PRE DEVELOPMENT.



Site: Alexandra WMC

Date: 28.11.2025

Reference: 251144

Produced by: Samuel Bentley



# Appendix II. POST DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

