

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Ecological Consultants.**



LAND AT BLAKELY CLOSE, ATHERSLEY.

OS REF: SE 36002 09379.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT.

Ref No: 250315.

Date: 19th June 2025.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. Bo Homes Ltd are preparing a planning application for the erection of two residential properties on a small area of land on Blakely Close, Athersley.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd were commissioned to carry out a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) survey of the site to determine the baseline and post-works biodiversity value of the site. That survey was carried out on 13th June 2025.

1.3. This report outlines all pre-development and post-development information and includes a full biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment detailing how a 10% gain will be achieved.

2. METHODOLOGY.

2.1. All surveys were carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) survey standards and advice.

2.2. This document is prepared in line with The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the government policy on biodiversity and nature conservation and places a duty on Planning Authorities to give material consideration to the effect of a development on legally protected species when considering planning applications. The NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance on “Natural Environment” also promote sustainable development by ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity and that it is conserved and enhanced within the development.

2.3. This report is prepared in line with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act that came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

2.4. All habitats within and immediately around the survey area were documented and the dominant species within that habitat listed in line with the UK Habitat Classification methodology to identify the primary habitat types throughout the survey area. Where necessary, primary habitats are accompanied by secondary codes which are used to add further specific details.

2.5. This survey was undertaken by Mitchel Greenhalgh, managing director of Whitcher Wildlife Ltd and an ecological consultant with an array of experience in conducting surveys on a variety of flora and fauna in a professional capacity. Mitchel holds a level two Natural England survey licence in respect of both bats and great crested newts and a NatureScot licence in respect of bats and he is FISC level 4. He has attended courses run by CIEEM, the Species Recovery Trust, the Field Studies Council and others. He holds a BSc in environmental science attained from the University of Leeds and is an Associate member of CIEEM and therefore committed to continuous professional development.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION.

3.1. The Survey Area.

3.1.1. The survey area is a small piece of land located on the southern side of Blakeney Close, Athersley, just north of Holy Trinity Secondary School. The land is currently used as parking by local residents and comprises little more than hardstanding with a grass verge.

3.1.2. The aerial map below shows the location of the survey area and the surrounding area.



3.1.3. The photograph below shows a general view of the site, taken from Blakeney Close.



3.2. Description of Habitats.

3.2.1. Appendix I of this report contains an annotated map marked up with the varying habitats across the site. The primary habitats on the site are listed below, followed by descriptions of each habitat. Baseline condition assessments of each habitat for the purpose of the BNG assessment are appended to this report.

- g4 – modified grassland.
- u1b6 – other developed land.

3.2.2. *g4 – modified grassland.*

The grassland perimeter of the site is a very typical modified grassland verge which is intensively mown, likely by the local authority. It has limited species and is dominated largely by perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*) and annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*). Other very occasional grasses and forbs include ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), wall speedwell (*Veronica arvensis*), common field speedwell (*Veronica persica*), barren brome (*Bromus sterilis*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*). Other species such as hedge mustard (*Sisymbrium officinale*), soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*), wall barley (*Hordeum murinum*), dove's-

foot crane's-bill (*Geranium molle*), groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), smooth sow-thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*) and shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) are clinging on around the fringes where they have escaped the mower.



3.2.3. u1b6 – other developed land.

The remainder of the site comprises hardstanding used currently as parking.



4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT.

4.1. *Baseline Biodiversity Value.*

4.1.1. Baseline biodiversity calculations have been carried out using the Statutory Metric, the current metric at the time of writing this report. The calculations have been completed for all area habitats on the site. The condition assessments for each habitat are shown in the attached condition assessment document. The statutory metric calculation tool also provides the full BNG calculations, as well as being listed below. The totals are abstracted directly from the Statutory Metric tool and therefore, slight discrepancies may be due to rounding within the metric.

4.1.2. *Area Habitats Pre-Development.*

Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Biodiversity Units
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0248	V.Low	N/A	0
Modified Grassland	0.0144	Low	Poor	0.03
Total	0.0392			0.03

4.1.3. The area biodiversity value of the site prior to any works is 0.03BU.

4.1.4. There are no linear habitats or watercourses on the site and as such, no baseline has been provided. An ornamental hedgerow is situated along the western boundary of the site but is property of the neighbour and will not be affected.

4.2. *Post-Development Biodiversity Value.*

4.2.1. Post-development biodiversity calculations have been carried out using the Statutory Metric, the current metric at the time of writing this report. The calculations have been completed for all area habitats on the site. The table below demonstrate the biodiversity values afforded to the habitats that will be retained and created on the site.

4.2.2. Area Habitats Post-Development.

Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Biodiversity Units
Created:				
Developed land; sealed surface	0.0171	V.Low	N/A	0
Vegetated Garden	0.0222	Low	N/A	0.04
Total	0.0392			0.04

4.2.3. The area biodiversity value of the site post-development is 0.04BU, achieving a 48.77% biodiversity net gain.

4.3. Biodiversity Net Gain Results.

4.3.1. Shown below are the final results extrapolated directly from the metric.

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.01
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	48.77%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

4.3.2. With the above proposals the scheme will achieve the 10% net gain and meet the trading rules, which is required to support the application.

Prepared by:	
Mitchel Greenhalgh BSc ACIEEM	Date: 19 th June 2025

Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou BSc MCIEEM	Date: 23 rd June 2025

5. REFERENCES.

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.

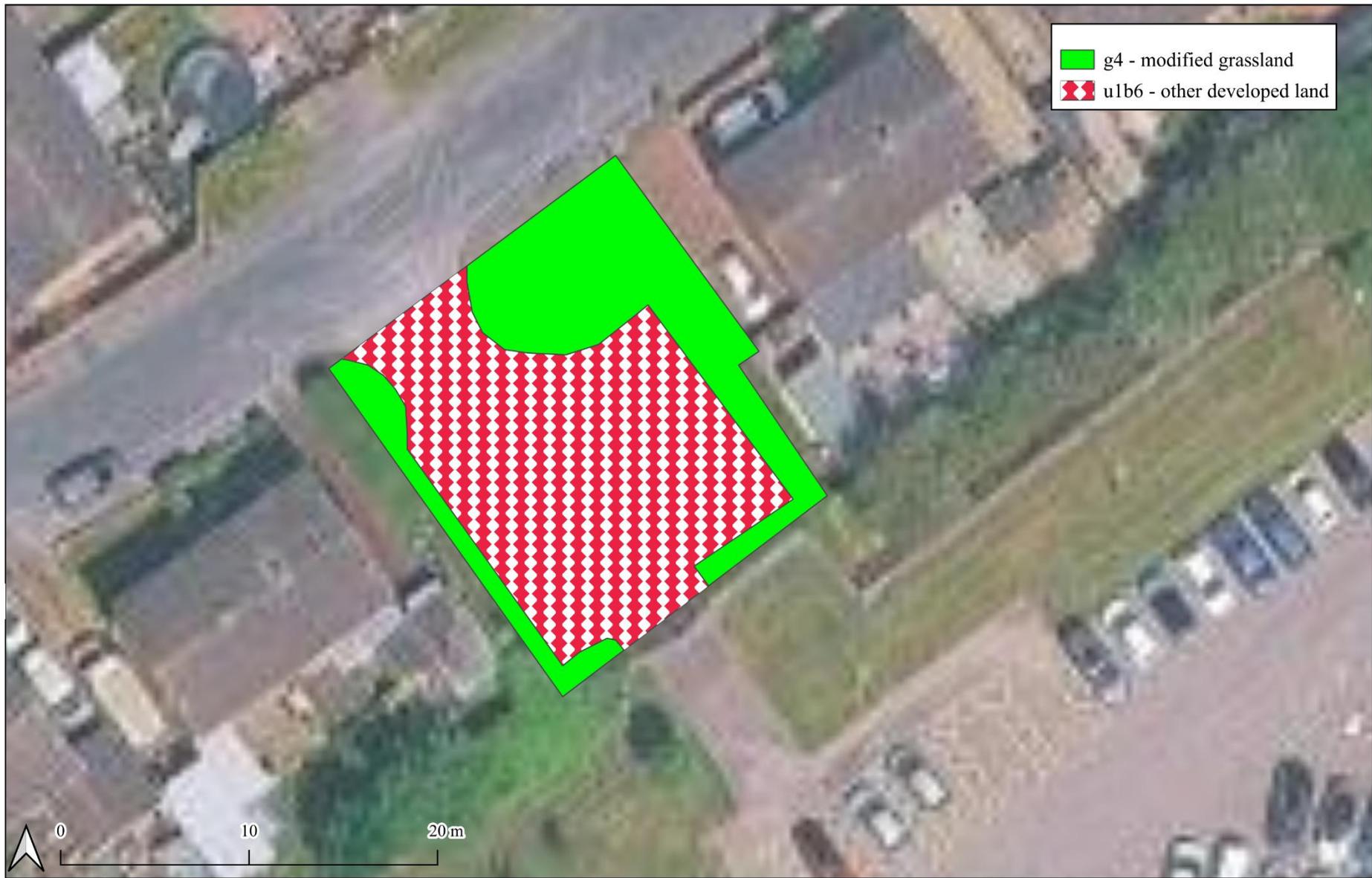
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Appendix I. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA PRE-DEVELOPMENT.



Site: Blakeley Close

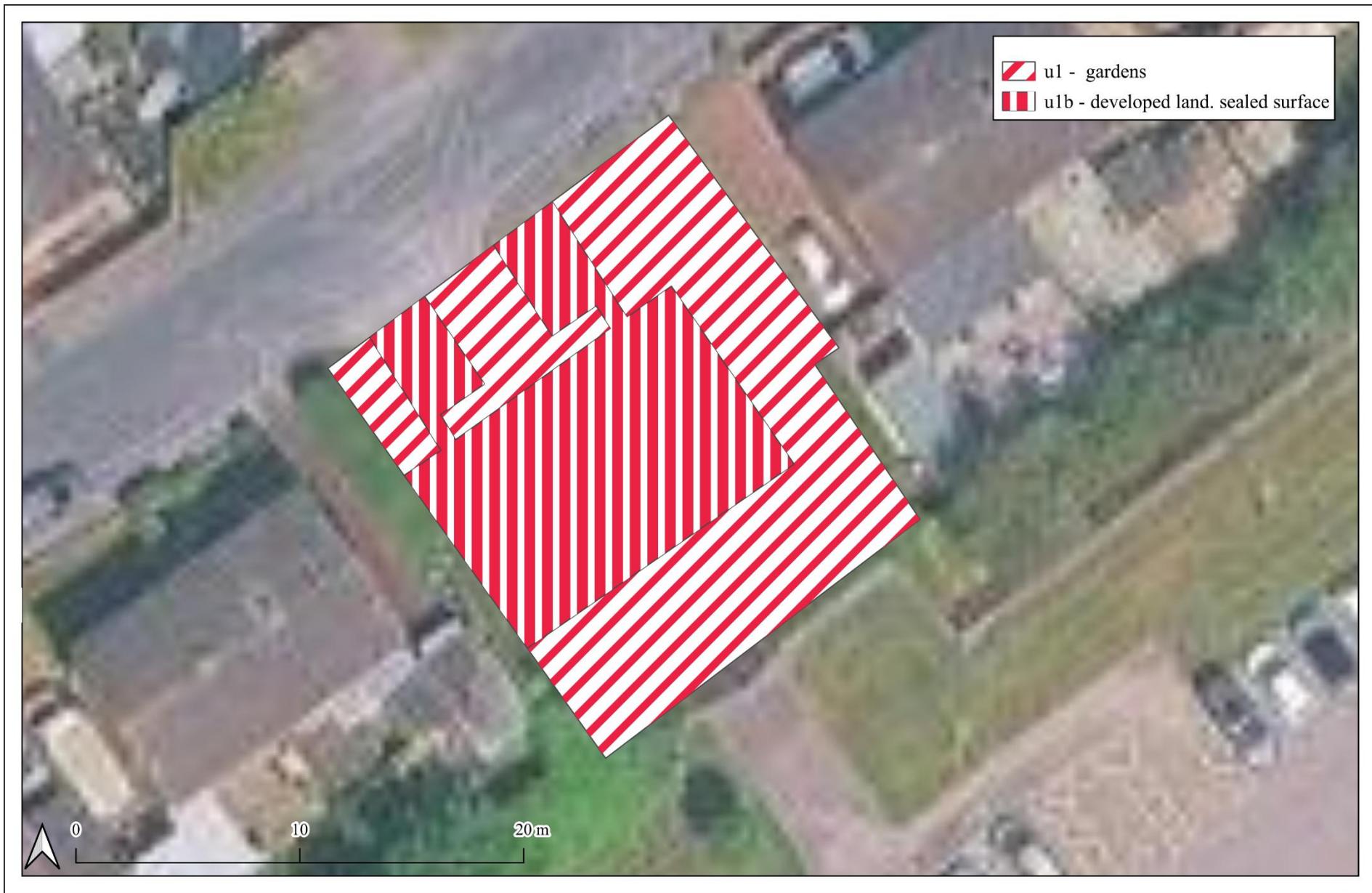
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Produced by: Mitch Greenhalgh



Appendix II. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA POST-DEVELOPMENT.



Site: Blakeley Close

Reference: 250315

Date: 23.06.2025

Produced by: Mitch Greenhalgh

