



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

For

**Saram Salim
193-195 Drake Street
Rochdale
OL11 1EF**

Reference: **Q-PH-202605-124**

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This assessment is based on conditions observed at the time of the site visit and on data available at the time of preparation. Biodiversity values and habitat conditions may change over time due to natural processes, management practices, or development activities. As such, the findings and calculations presented represent a snapshot of the site's condition at the date of assessment only.

The results of this BNG Assessment rely on the accuracy of baseline data, habitat mapping, and measurements used in the Defra Biodiversity Metric (or other applicable metric). Any subsequent changes to the metric, survey data, or development proposals may alter the calculated Biodiversity Net Gain outcome.

This report should be read in full and not in part, as sections may be misinterpreted when taken out of context. Recommendations provided are based on current best practice and guidance available at the time of writing.

This report has been produced in accordance with the standards and principles set out in the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct. In line with current guidance, this report is considered valid for a period of 12 months from the date of the site visit, after which the baseline conditions may no longer reflect the true state of the site.

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1. Introduction

ProHort Limited have been commissioned by Saram Salim to conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment for 193-195 Drake Street, Rochdale, OL11 1EF. A site survey was undertaken on the 28th May 2026 and a desktop study was undertaken in June 2026.

The Local Planning Authority has requested that a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment is completed to support the planning application. The development includes the change of use of the building.

Rochdale Borough Council requires developments in the area to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, with a minimum of a 10% gain compared to the pre-development value of the site. A quantitative measure of the base value of a Site for biodiversity, and the value of a Site post-development, is arrived at by using a recognised Biodiversity metric. Biodiversity metrics measure the value of a Site in terms of Biodiversity Units. Biodiversity Units are a proxy measure of biodiversity, arrived at by assessing the type, area and condition of semi-natural habitats on site. A limitation of the use of metrics is that they only measure habitat areas, and do not consider species-specific measures which may nevertheless make meaningful contributions to gains in local biodiversity.

2. Site and Surroundings

The area surveyed is a large disused building with associated paving at 193-195 Drake Street, Rochdale, OL11 1EF (grid reference: SD 89485 12813), (Figure 1), hereafter referred to as the 'Site'. The Site is in the north of Rochdale. The surrounding area is dominated by residential and commercial properties, with areas of amenity grassland. Site access is off Drake Street and Norfolk Street.

The woodland to the northwest of the site is designated as priority habitat deciduous woodland and there are a number of priority deciduous woodland blocks and lowland fens within the surrounding area. The closest designated site is the Rochdale Canal SSSI, located 870 m southeast from the Site. The closest watercourse is the River Roch, located 400 m north from the Site.



Figure 1 - Red line boundary of the Site and the surrounding area.

Taken from Bing Maps (© 2026 Microsoft Corporation, © 2026 Maxar, ©CNES (2026) Distribution Airbus DS)

3. Methodology

The pre-development (baseline) and post development (proposed) value of the habitats have been calculated using the DEFRA/Natural England's Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator. The methodology for determining habitat distinctiveness and condition values, follows the guidelines set out in the User Guide and Technical Supplement for Biodiversity Metric.

The current assessment utilised the principles outlines in the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' denoting the steps involved in reaching the conclusions outstated in this report and preserving natural features and resources of importance. The 'Mitigation Hierarchy' states:

- Avoid: The easiest, cheapest and most desirable method of reducing potential impacts of the proposed development.
- Minimise: Where avoidance is not possible, measures can be taken to minimise the impacts of the proposed development.
- Mitigate: Where minimisation is not possible, measures can be taken to enhance/ create on Site habitats to compensate for potential losses caused by the proposed development.
- Offset: Where mitigation is not possible, on-site habitat loss must be compensated off site. This should be utilised as a last resort for compensating losses as it is the most risk involved, expensive and complex solution.

3.1. Site Boundary

The following data sources have been used to define the boundary for the BNG calculation and determine the relevant attributes for BNG (e.g. size, condition and habitat type) for the pre and post-development habitats.

The boundary used for the BNG assessment is the red line application boundary for the project (See Figure 2 for a detailed red line boundary).



Figure 2 – Red line boundary of the Site

Taken from Bing Maps (© 2026 Microsoft Corporation, © 2026 Maxar, ©CNES (2026) Distribution Airbus DS)

3.2. Baseline Habitats:

In order to generate the site baseline habitat data (e.g. habitat type, condition), a phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken, where the site was systematically walked over and the dominant habitat type in each area recorded. Dominant plant species were noted, as were any that are legally protected (Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981), invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Additionally, 5 (1 meter-squared) quadrats were used to determine species richness on any grassland habitats and the other grassland conditions were estimated from a visual inspection of the site.

The information collected during the site visit was used to baseline any applicable habitats and satellite mapping was used to calculate habitat areas. The areas and conditions of any onsite habitats were inputted into DEFRA/Natural England's Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator. The metric includes 3 broad categories of habitats and biodiversity units for which scores are calculated differently:

- Area habitats, such as grasslands, woodlands and ponds
- Linear hedgerows and lines of trees
- Linear rivers and ditches

4. Habitat Baseline

4.1. Habitat descriptions

Upon review of satellite imagery, it was identified that an individual tree was present on Site as recently as June 2023, but has since been removed. As it was removed after 2020, it has been included within this assessment retrospectively. Assumptions regarding its condition are made using satellite imagery.

All habitats within the Site are outlined below:

- Developed land; sealed surface
- Ground level planters
- Individual trees

No linear features were found within the red line boundary of the Site.

The location of all baseline habitats can be seen in Appendix 1 and habitat descriptions are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 – baseline habitat descriptions

Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Flora Species
Developed land; sealed surface	The majority of the Site was comprised of developed land; sealed surface, including a large disused building and associated paving for pedestrian access at the front of the property and vehicle access to the rear.	Abundant: moss (<i>Bryophyta</i> spp.) Frequent: shining geranium (<i>Geranium lucidum</i>) Rare: square-stalked willowherb (<i>Epilobium tetragonum</i>), dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>), sycamore sapling (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>), ash sapling (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>), wych elm (<i>Ulmus glabra</i>), herb Robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>), creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>), Adria bellflower (<i>Campanula portenschlagiana</i>), eared willow (<i>Salix aurita</i>), barren brome (<i>Anisantha sterilis</i>), ivy-leaved toadflax (<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>), Yorkshire fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>), cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>), fireweed (<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>)
Ground level planters	There were several areas of ground level planters located at the front of the building.	Abundant: hybrid bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides × massartiana</i>) Frequent: apple rose (<i>Rosa villosa</i>) Occasional: square-stalked willowherb (<i>Epilobium tetragonum</i>), hawksbeard (<i>Crepis</i>)

spp.), climbing euonymus (*Euonymus fortunei*), greenstem forsythia (*Forsythia viridissima*)
Rare: dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), ash sapling (*Fraxinus excelsior*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), sycamore sapling (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), heath groundsel (*Senecio sylvaticus*), common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*)

Individual trees There was an individual tree located to the rear of the property, which was removed prior to the survey. **Species unknown**

4.2. Baseline Metric

The value of the area and linear baseline habitats was calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and is outlined in Tables 2 below.

Table 2 – area habitat baseline calculation

Habitat	Notes	Area (ha)	Habitat Units	Area retained	Area enhanced	Units lost
Developed land; sealed surface		0.0732	0	0.0732	0	0
Ground level planters		0.0067	0.01	0.0067	0	0
Individual trees	Assumed as good condition in line with best practice and medium sized based on satellite imagery.	0.0163	0.20	0	0	0.20
Totals		0.10	0.21	0.08	0	0.20

The area habitat baseline of 0.21 units must be enhanced by 10% resulting in at least a **0.23** unit baseline post intervention. If this cannot be achieved on Site, off Site credits will need to be acquired.

5. Proposed Habitats

All habitats proposed within the Site are outlined below:

- Developed land; sealed surface
- Ground level planters

The location of these proposed habitats can be seen in Appendix 2.

5.1. Developed land; sealed surface

The developed land on Site will be retained. Any modifications to the building will not impact or alter any habitats present on Site.

5.2. Ground level planters

The ground level planters at the front of the property will be retained.

5.3. Proposed habitats metric

As no new area habitats will be created or enhanced as part of the proposed works, there will be a 93.59% loss of biodiversity on Site.

6. Conclusion

The development will result in a measurable loss to local biodiversity.

There will be a total decrease of 93.59% biodiversity of area habitats. This is due to the loss of an individual tree on Site prior to the site visit taking place, which has therefore been included retrospectively. In order to achieve the obligatory 10% uplift of area habitats, at least 0.22 off site biodiversity units must be acquired, of which 0.2 units must be of the broad habitat group 'Individual trees' to satisfy trading rules.

Offsite biodiversity units can be obtained through local landowners, habitat banks and the market which can be found through your LPA, a broker etc. If this is not possible statutory biodiversity credits must be purchased from the UK government as a last resort. The number of statutory credits required is 0.43 A1 units. These units are exclusively purchased from the government and the cost of these is inflated to equate 2 credits per 1 off site biodiversity unit.

As mitigating and minimising was not a viable option due to the scale of the project off setting was the only feasible option.

7. Other recommended enhancements

Enhancements for bats and birds are recommended due to the proximity of the Site to a number of priority woodland parcels. It is likely bats and birds will use the site for commuting and foraging. It is proposed that 2 bat box for crevice dwelling species and 2 bird boxes are installed on the building. Green and Blue Bee Bricks should be used within any new brick walls to be constructed. This species intervention would enhance local biodiversity.

Appendix 1 Baseline Habitat Maps



Appendix 2 Habitat Proposals



Appendix 3 Additional Photographs



Photograph 1 – The developed land located throughout the Site



Photograph 2 – The ground level planter located at the front of the property.

