

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

LAND ADJACENT TO BONSCALE CRESENT,
MIDDLETON, BOROUGH OF ROCHDALE, GREATER
MANCHESTER

Prepared for

J. Holden.

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Version 01

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Project Details	
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Grid reference	SD 864 074.
Field Survey Date	26 th of May 2026.
Report composed by	Miranda Cowan Ecology Limited.
Client	Cadent
Agent	MacMarshalls Rural Chartered Surveyors & Planning Consultants

Document History and Status					
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Data supplied by the client is assumed as correct. No responsibility can be accepted by Miranda Cowan Ecology Ltd. for inaccuracies in the data supplied by any other party. The conclusions and recommendations in this report are based on the assumption that all relevant information has been supplied by those bodies from whom it was requested.

Field surveys have been carried out, these have been restricted to a level of detail required to achieve the stated brief of the work. No part of this report may be copied or duplicated without express permission of Miranda Cowan Ecology Ltd. and the party for whom it was prepared.

The survey and reporting have been completed in accordance with the CIEEM Professional Code of Conduct, with the aim of upholding their objectives and the reputation of the profession.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Miranda Cowan Ecology Ltd was commissioned by MacMarshalls who on behalf of Cadent have requested a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment on land adjacent to Bonscale Crescent, Middleton, Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester.

The on-site redline boundary shown as **Figure 1.1** is positioned at an elevation of 150m, equates to c.0.01ha and centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OSNGR) SD 864 074.

The proposal relates to planning permission for a new proposed gas kiosk, shown in **Appendix A** as the Proposed Plan, Ref 001 -C 200-356.

Figure 1.1: On-site location of proposal gas kiosk (<https://earth.google.com/> historical imagery 2024)



1.2 Scope of Report

This report outlines and interprets the outcome of the Biodiversity Impact Assessment calculation delivered through the Statutory Metric¹ (the Metric hereafter). The Metric is based on the Proposed Site Plan: Ref 001 - C 200-356.

This report is accompanied with the Metric² and UK Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets³. In combination, these documents have provided the basis for establishing the Sites baseline biodiversity habitat units and habitat loss / retention relative to the proposal design.

¹ Biodiversity Defra Statutory Metric - Calculation tool (November 2024)

² JRD_Cadent_GasBuilding_Statutory_Metric_26.05.26(01)

³ JRD_Cadent_GasBuilding_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_Condition_Ass_26.05.2026

1.3 Legislation

The Environment Bill was given Royal Assent in November 2021 and is now the Environment Act 2021. The Act includes a target to halt the decline of nature by 2030 and to strengthen the existing biodiversity duty through the introduction of a mandatory requirement to achieve at least 10% BNG for new developments in England. These requirements commenced on 12th February 2024. The BNG requirement is framed as a pre-commencement condition and that BNG information will need to be provided by the applicant

The Act is supported by secondary legislation comprising six statutory instruments:

- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024;
- The Biodiversity Gain Site Register (Financial Penalties and Fees) Regulations 2024;
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024;
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024;
- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024; and,
- The Biodiversity Gain Site Register Regulations 2024.

1.4 Defining Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is defined as a specific, quantifiable outcome of project activities that deliver demonstrable benefits for biodiversity compared to the baseline situation. Achieving BNG means that a project's activities (i.e., the development) leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. It is also an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation.

This BNG assessment compares the biodiversity value of Sites baseline habitats with those habitats anticipated to be present following completion of the Proposed Development.

The aim is to achieve the target mandatory net gain of 10% through habitat creation and enhancement on Site. Where on-site net gain cannot be achieved, provision for off-site biodiversity units is calculated.

1.5 Competency

A Site survey (26th of May 2026) and the BNG assessment have been completed by Miranda Cowan Ecology Limited (Full member of MCIEEM and FISC 4) in accordance with the professional standards as defined by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management^{4,5}.

⁴ Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2024). Competency Framework, version 3.0.

⁵ CIEEM (2024). Code of Professional Conduct.

2. Methodology

2.1 Desk-top Assessment

The following data sources have been used to complete this BNG assessment:

- Google Earth[®] aerial photography, review of historical imagery from 2020-2026.
- Magic Map - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk> for designations and notable habitats.
- Rochdale Borough Council Planning Policies Map cartogold.co.uk/rochdale/ for information of local site designation and land allocations.
- Greater Manchester Nature Network Map: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/> to identify Core Local Nature Sites and Nature Recovery Opportunity Areas.
- A local Nature Recovery Strategy for Greater Manchester published 2005, sourced https://gmlrc.org/local_nature_recovery_strategy/
- Greater Manchester Ecology Unit for Local Nature Recovery Strategy areas.
- The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, version 3rd July 2025.

2.2 Field Survey

A field survey completed on the 26th of May 2026 involved the classification and assessment of on-Site habitats underpinned by the UK Habitat Classification System⁶. Habitats were mapped (**Figure 1, Appendix A**) and a Condition Assessment (**Appendix B**) was undertaken using tools provided with the Metric⁷.

Baseline habitats have been mapped using a 'Minimum Mappable Unit' area of 25m². Trees were calculated using the Metric 'Urban Tree Helper' which requires a size ('small', 'medium' and 'large') to be assigned to each tree.

For evidence of habitat degradation, historical imagery⁸ was reviewed from year 2020 to retrospectively apply the Sites higher-value ecological state.

2.3 Strategic Significance

The site falls within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)⁹ for Greater Manchester, with Strategic Significance informed by Core local Nature Sites and Nature Recovery Opportunity Areas of the Greater Manchester Nature Network Map. Strategic Significance was also influenced by a Site based condition assessment and professional judgement

2.4 Survey Limitations

No limitations were encountered when delivering the habitat survey, the Site was made fully accessible.

⁶ UK Hab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification V2.0 (at <https://www.ukhab.org>)

⁷ The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology. July 2024 (v1.0.2)

⁸ <https://earth.google.com/> accessed May 2026

⁹ https://gmlrc.org/local_nature_recovery_strategy/

3. Biodiversity Net Gain

3.1 Designations and Biodiversity Allocations

The on-site redline boundary is located within an urban context and does not fall within a Nature Recovery Opportunity Area on the Greater Manchester Nature Network Map <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/>.

There are no designations or UK Priority habitats terrestrially or hydrologically linked with the on-site habitats.

3.2 Habitat Categorisation and Value

Pre and post development habitats are shown on the respective **Figures 1 and 2, Appendix A**. On-site photographs are included as **Table 3.1**.

The on-site habitat was g4 Modified grassland, which was regularly mown as an urban amenity park. Grass species dominated with perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, occasional dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* and creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, with rare common sorrel *Rumex acetosa* and common mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum*.

Assessment against Condition Assessment criteria, resulted in 'Poor' value, with an average of 3-4 species per m² and due to management targeted toward amenity use.

Table 3.1: Photographic plates

Plate 1: View of site from Bonscale Crescent.	Plate 2: On-site overview, indicative outline.
	
Plate 3: Top section of site looking towards Bonscale Crescent.	Plate 4: General view of amenity grassland.
	

3.3 Baseline Habitat Areas

Table 3.2 details the (ha) of on-site g4 Modified grassland.

Table 3.2: On-site Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline Habitat Area and Units

UK Hab Code	Primary Habitat (name)	Area (ha)	Condition	Units
g4	Modified grassland	0.0125	Poor	0.03
Total				0.03

3.4 Habitat Loss and Retention

The proposal post development will result in full loss of g4 Modified grassland, as illustrated in **Table 3.3**.

Table 3.3: Summary of habitat and unit lost as a result of the development

UK Hab Code	Primary Habitat (name)	Habitat Loss (ha)	Units Lost
g4	Modified grassland	0.0125	0.03
Total			0.03

4. Biodiversity Creation and Enhancement

4.1 Habitat Calculations and Outline Creation and Enhancement

The proposed kiosk does not include measures for creation and enhancement.

4.2 Biodiversity Headline Results

The headline results taken from the metric¹⁰ illustrate a BNG unit loss of -0.03.

FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	-0.03	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	-100.00%	
		Hedgerow units	0.00%	
		Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?		No - Check Trading Summaries ▲		
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.03	0.03	0.03
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

¹⁰ JRD_Cadent_GasBuilding_Statutory_Metric_Macro_Enabled_1.0.4_26.05.2026(01)

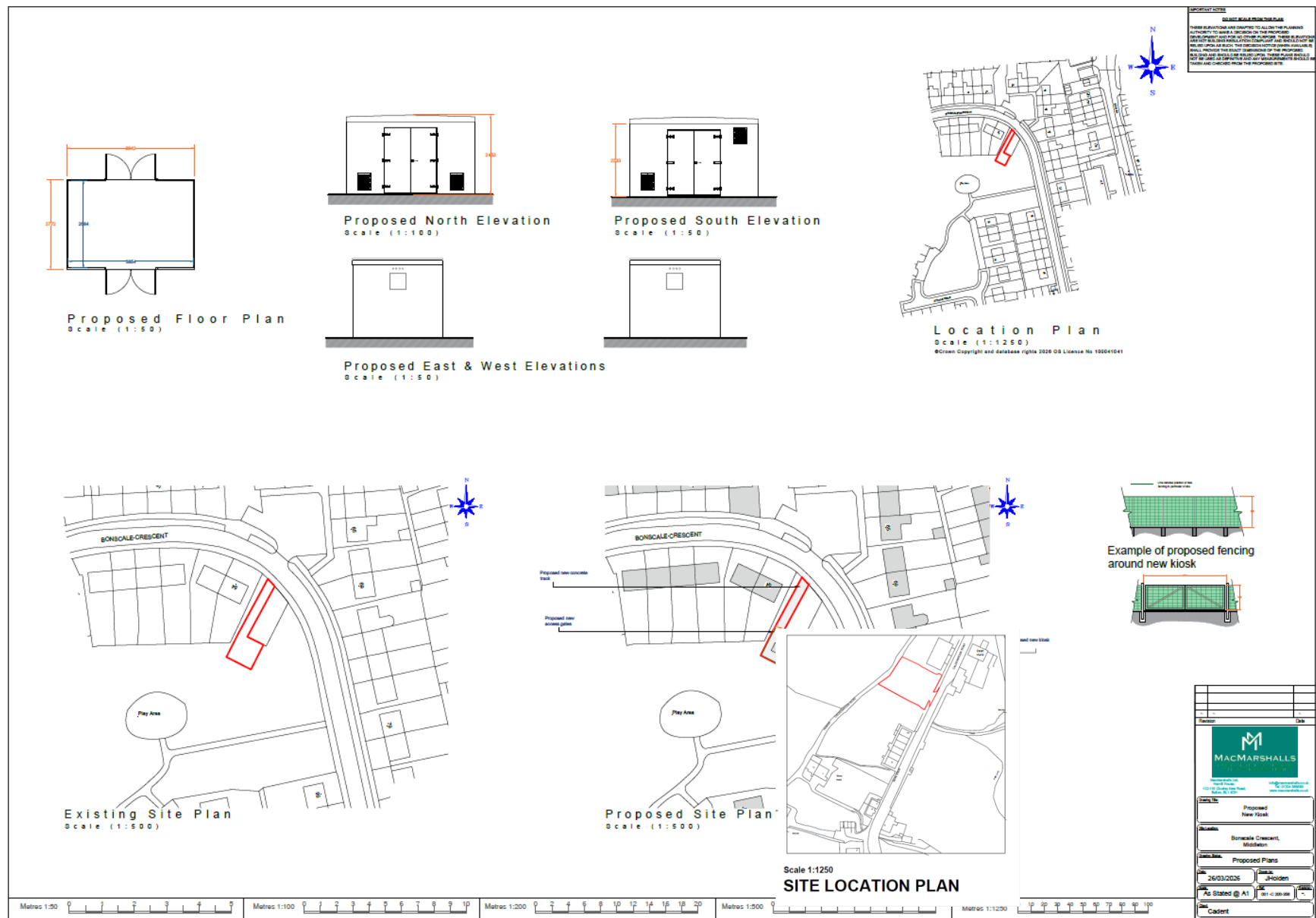
5. Conclusions and Requirements

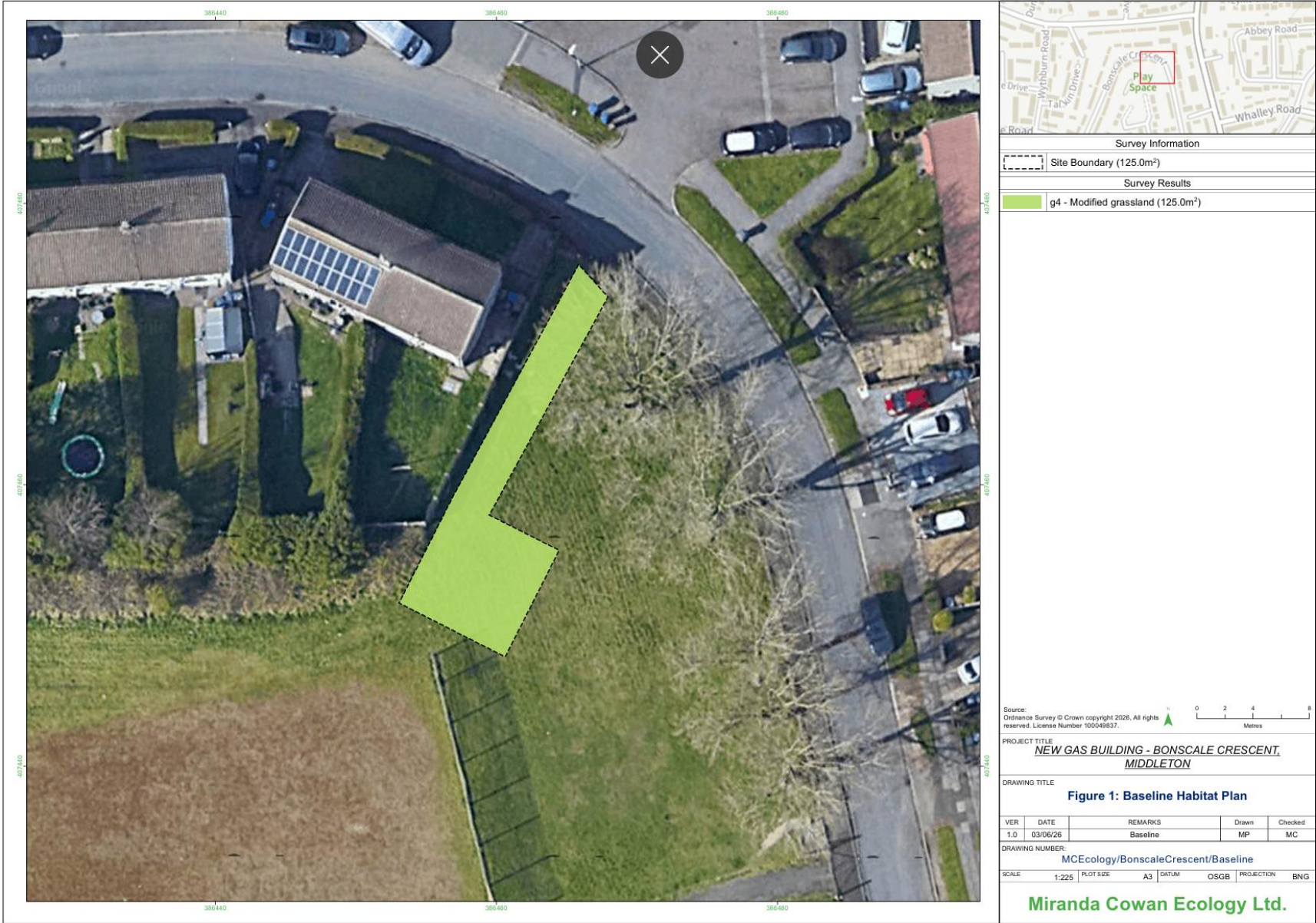
The proposed development does not meet the BNG mandatory 10% gain and will therefore be required for the Client to purchase off-site biodiversity units from a third-party provider.

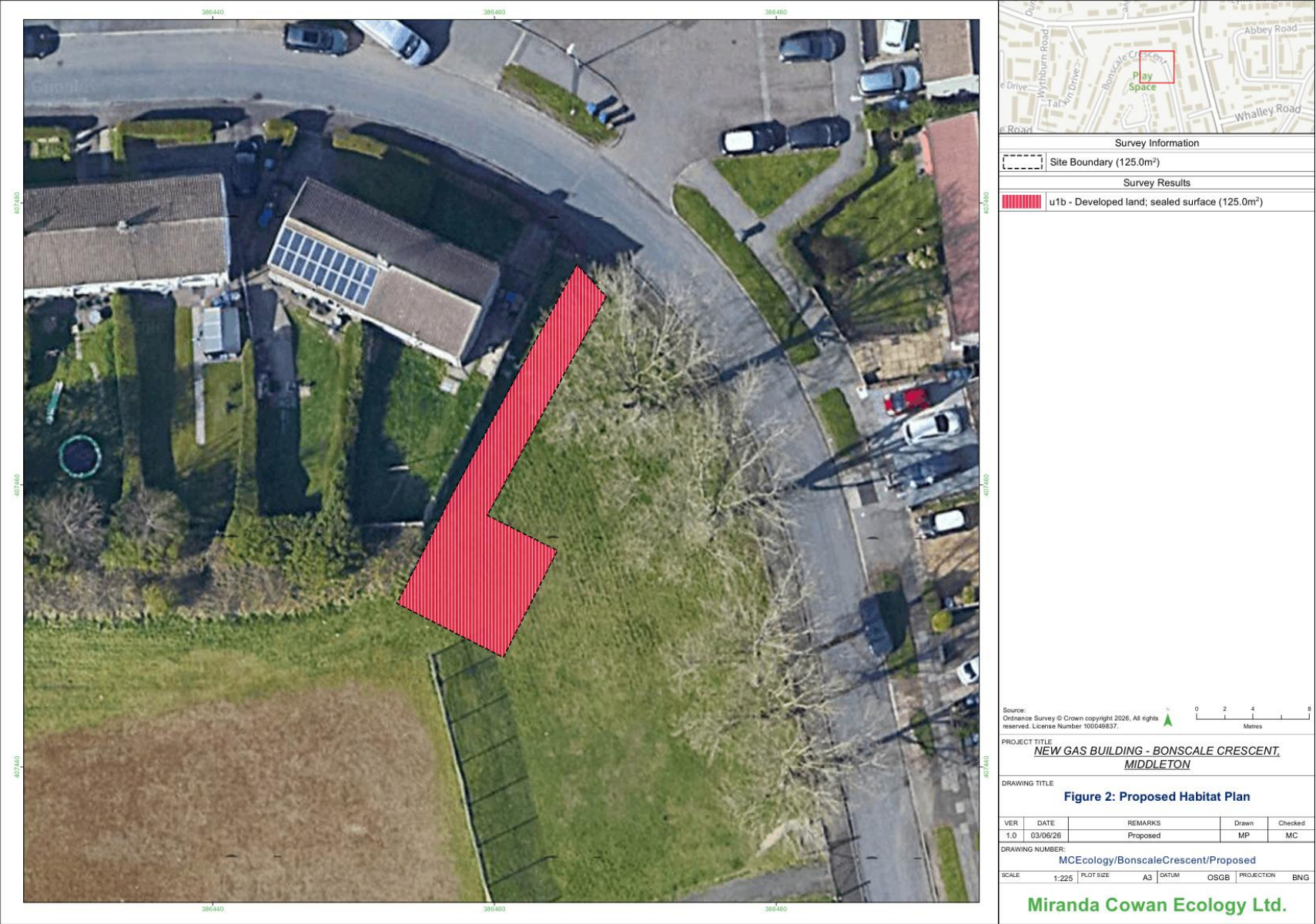
The third-party company will require the Metric Statutory calculation sheet and supporting BNG report to verify the assessment and confirm fees relative to BNG unit loss.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-gain-plan>) will also need to be submitted to Rotherham LPA.

Appendix A: Figures







Appendix B: Condition Assessment

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site. Land adjacent to Bonscale Crescent, Middleton, Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester.	Survey date and Surveyor name	26th of May 2026
Limitations (if applicable)	None	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Grid reference	SD 864 074.	Habitat parcel reference	g4 Modified grassland
Habitat Description			
g4 Modified mown grassland, managed for amenity within urban park.			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	No	3-4 species, although poorly represented by herbaceous plants, otherwise grass dominant.,
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	No	
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes	
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	No	
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	No	
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes	
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Yes	
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			
Number of criteria passed			
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)		
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	Yes	