Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report

Ringers Road, Bromley

28th January 2022

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1. Tyler Grange Group Ltd was instructed by Ringer Road Property Ltd in January 2022 to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of Ringers Road, Bromley hereinafter referred to as the 'site'. A full planning application is to be submitted to Bromley Council in January 2022 for a mixed used development comprising residential units, ancillary residents' facilities (including co-working space) and commercial floor space across two blocks, along with associated hard and soft landscaping, amenity spaces, cycle and refuse storage. The site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 40249 68904.

1.2. To inform the application, an ecological impact assessment has been produced by Tyler Grange in August 2021 (reference 13577_R01e_ZD) which included the results of a Phase I habitat survey, data search, Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) and Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment for great crested newt. An assessment of the effects, mitigation and enhancement measures in line with policy and legislation was also completed.

1.3. The site comprises two buildings and areas of hardstanding of negligible ecological importance and amenity grassland and a single mature tree of site ecological importance. Detailed habitat descriptions are included within the ecological impact assessment (reference 13577_R01e_ZD).

1.4. As part of the Phase I Habitat Survey, all habitats were assessed with reference to the UK Habitat Classification (The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, 2018[1]) and the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric technical supplement (Natural England, 2021) to determine their condition and ecological importance.

1.5. This survey work enables the accurate completion of DEFRA's latest BNG metric (The Biodiversity Metric 3.0 Auditing and accounting for Biodiversity Calculator Tool, 2021) which should be reviewed in conjunction with this report (ref. 13577_R03_Biodiversity Metric 3.0). The condition assessments detailed below for the habitats pre and post construction are taken from the Condition Assessment Sheets (Excel format).

[1] Available online at: https://ukhab.org/ [visited 02/08/2021] 2 Available online at: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720

Section 2: Existing Baseline

Buildings

2.1 There are two buildings on the site (2-4 Ringers Road and 5 Ethelbert Road), both of negligible ecological importance.

Hardstanding

2.2 Areas of hardstanding surround building B1 and B2 and provide no benefit to biodiversity and therefore of negligible ecological importance.

Modified Grassland

2.3 There is a small area of modified grassland of moderate condition (amenity grassland), that has only recently been seeded. Therefore, the grass is very sparse and there are patches of bare ground where vegetation has not yet established itself. The dominant plant species included annual meadow grass *Poa annua*. The amenity grassland onsite is of site ecological importance. The modified grassland is assessed as being in a poor condition as it passes two criteria of seven criteria (no non-native species present and less than 20% bracken) however there are few plant species present, large patches of bare earth and very short sward height.

Urban Tree

2.4 There is one mature sycamore Acer pseudoplatanus tree T1 on the site boundary that could provide habitat for nesting birds. This tree species is common and widespread, and its location is highlighted on Plan 13577/P01. The single tree is of site ecological importance. The single urban tree is assessed as being a in a moderate condition as it passes three of the six criteria (native species, no evidence of adverse impacts on tree health and classified as mature).

Section 3: Proposals and Habitat Creation

Proposals

3.1. The design of the scheme has been informed by a review of data collected during the surveys undertaken, including ecology, and has avoided ecological impacts where possible. The majority of the site where development is taking place is hardstanding of negligible ecological importance and amenity grassland of site ecological importance. The single mature urban tree of site ecological importance is due to be removed.

3.2. Specific measures will be undertaken to compensate and mitigate any loss of habitats and impacts that occur, to ensure opportunities for wildlife are provided for the long-term, and an overall ecological enhancement remains.

Habitat Creation

3.3. The habitats that will be present onsite post-development will comprise urban - developed land (building and hardstanding; sealed surface), urban – artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, urban – extensive green roof, urban – rain garden, urban – ground based green wall, urban – urban trees, urban - Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs), grassland – other neutral grassland and grassland – modified grassland.

3.4. Post-development, newly planted trees, the extensive green roof, the rain garden, the ground based green wall, and the modified grassland will comprise native species or species with a known wildlife benefit and at least a moderate condition. The urban habitat types will have varied vegetation structure and non-native species will cover less than 5% of the area. The modified grassland will have less than 20% scrub cover, physical damage of less than 5%, cover of bare ground between 1 and 5%, bracken cover less than 20% and absence of invasive non-native species.

3.5. Although the modified grassland area will be slightly decreased, the creation of the other habitats will create a more diverse and wildlife beneficial site of moderate condition.

BNG Calculator

3.6. Based on the current proposals, the net habitat unit change is +0.22 habitat units (baseline = 0.05, post-development = 0.27 habitat units), totalling a gain of 424.9%.

Section 4: Summary

4.1 Overall, the majority of the site is of negligible ecological importance with the habitats of most importance, namely the amenity grassland and single scattered tree, being recreated or replaced with enhanced habitat as part of the proposals. The landscape and planting have been sensitively designed with biodiversity in mind to include native species and species with a known wildlife benefit which will increase the biodiversity of the site.

4.2 In line with the BNG metric and based on the current proposals, there is a net gain of 424.9% for habitats onsite. This is in conformity with Greater London's Policy G6: Biodiversity and Access to nature, where the Council expects all applications should aim to secure a net biodiversity gain[2].

[2] https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021

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