SPORT ENGLAND

Biodiversity Net Gain case study

Phoenix Collegiate, West Bromwich

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Introduction

The following case study is one in a series showcasing practical examples of how Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) has been successfully delivered in real-world planning applications.

This example illustrates the creative and effective integration of BNG principles, aligning with the objectives outlined in Chapter 3: Practical Implementation of BNG on Site from the Sport England Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance. This scheme focuses on areas of the site that are not currently used for sport and improves the biodiversity of the site boundary. This case study serves as helpful guidance for similar sites seeking to install an artificial grass pitch.

Phoenix Collegiate, West Bromwich

Introduction

The proposed development at The Phoenix Collegiate, located on Clarkes Lane, West Bromwich, involves the construction of a new full-size 3G synthetic turf pitch. The development includes fencing, floodlighting, and ancillary equipment to support its use.

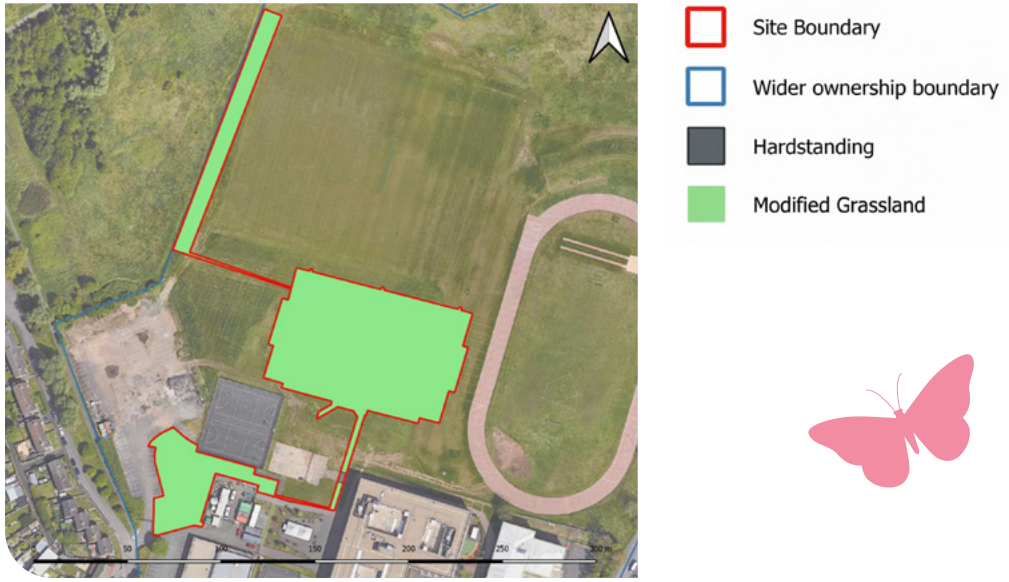
The design aims to replace an area of natural grass playing field with a high-quality, all-weather surface suitable for football, rugby, and physical education activities. The facility is intended to benefit both the school and the wider community, encouraging greater physical activity throughout the year.

The Sandwell Playing Pitch Strategy highlights the need for enhanced sports provisions at the Phoenix Collegiate, while the Football Foundation's Local Football Facilities Plan identifies Sandwell as an area in need of additional artificial and natural grass pitches, changing pavilions, and small-sided facilities. The proposed development would not only enhance the school's curriculum but also provide much-needed community sports infrastructure, fostering year-round engagement in physical activity.

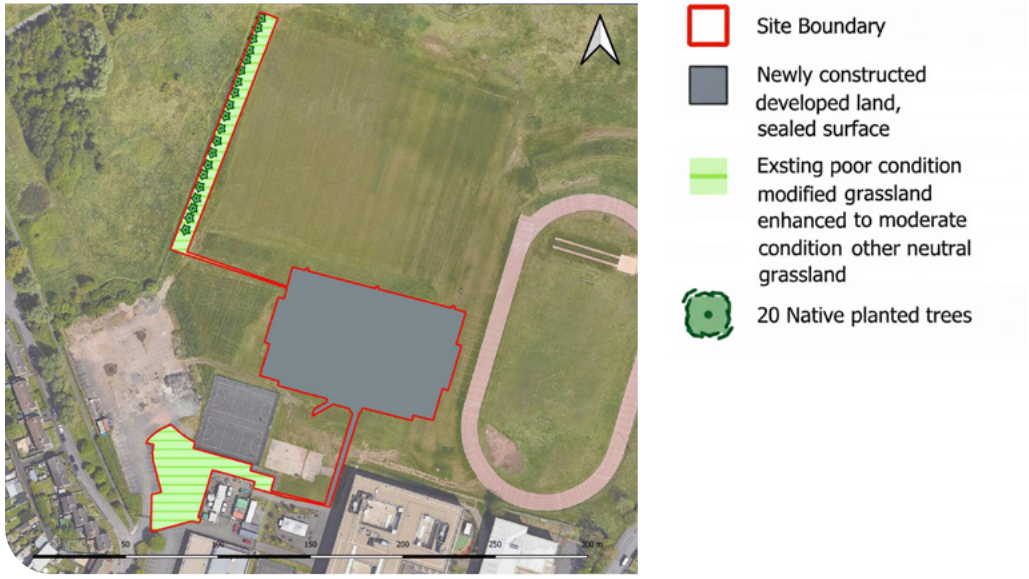
BNG baseline

The baseline habitat survey for The Phoenix Collegiate conducted as part of the ecological appraisal for the proposed development identified that the site consists predominantly of modified grassland, which covers the area designated for the new synthetic turf pitch. The baseline assessment concluded that the habitat present on-site offers limited ecological value. The baseline biodiversity value of the site was determined to be consistent with a habitat dominated by modified grassland, reflecting its primary function as a playing field.

Baseline habitat plan

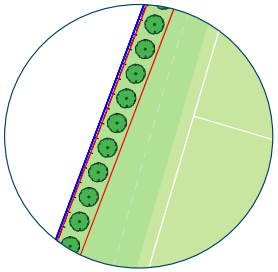


Post development habitat plan



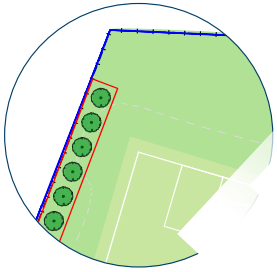
BNG Delivery Strategy

The proposals for biodiversity delivery at Phoenix Collegiate include planting of 20 native trees and the enhancement of 0.17ha of land within the school grounds. The area will be modified to other neutral grassland, providing a higher biodiversity value. These offsetting measures are planned to be implemented in the available space near to the proposed facility, ensuring that biodiversity net gain (BNG) is achieved as part of the development. The proposed offsetting works will contribute to achieving a measurable net gain in biodiversity while supporting the dual aims of ecological enhancement and the development of sports facilities for the school and wider community.



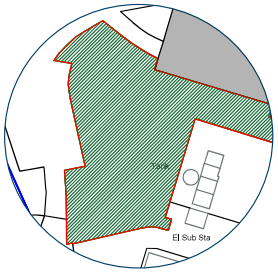
01 Utilisation of Fringe Spaces

The landscape proposals ensure effective use of fringe spaces unsuitable for sports, utilising them for Biodiversity Net Gain delivery through the planting of 20 native trees within the narrow strip between the playing pitches and the site boundary.



02 Site Boundaries

The landscape proposals strategically enhance the site boundary by incorporating native tree planting. This approach not only supports Biodiversity Net Gain delivery but also strengthens the site's natural edge and creating a buffer.



03 Use of Non-Recreational Site Areas

The proposals effectively utilise a non-recreational area within the school site for enhanced neutral grassland, maximising the ecological value of underused land.

User guide

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As with all guidance, you should always appoint an appropriate professional team with relevant expertise to take your project forwards.

Document accessibility

This document has been designed for comfortable reading at A4 and on a laptop screen but can also be printed at A3 for large print versions. The pdf is accessible and has been tested to work with text readers.

Acknowledgements

Sport England wishes to thank LUC for contributing to this document and those involved with the project that gave us permission to use this as a case study.

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