
**Oban Airport – TSL site
BNG strategy statement**

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1.0 Introduction

In response to Planning condition 4 we have provided a summary of our approach to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) within the red line boundary for the site.

2.0 Existing site

The site is located at North Connel, north of Oban, centred at NM 90798 35352. It covers approximately 2,235sqm and lies around 10m above sea level (ASL) at its lowest point.

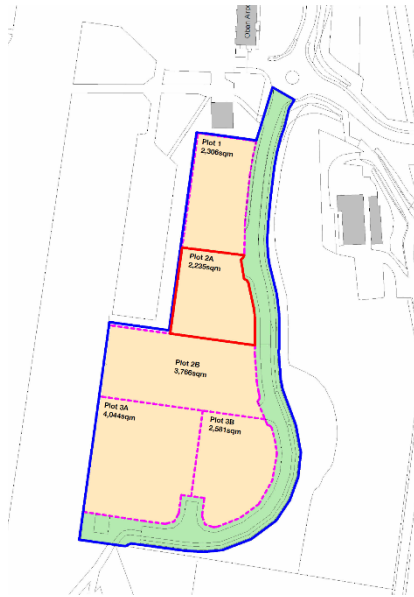
The site is dominated by native upland birchwood, a priority habitat that supports a diverse range of woodland species. Interspersed within this are extensive areas of dense gorse scrub, which has naturally colonised ground previously cleared during the Oban Airport redevelopment works between 2007 and 2008. Gorse scrub provides valuable structural habitat, offering shelter, nesting opportunities, and forage for birds, small mammals, and invertebrates.

The site sits within the wider Oban Airport site, with its western boundary positioned directly adjacent to the airport runway and exiting helipad.

The surrounding landscape is rich in natural habitats, comprising a mosaic of heathland, grassland, and woodland. Ardmucknish Bay lies approximately 230m to the west, providing coastal and intertidal ecological influences.

The settlement of North Connel is located around 250m to the south, while a series of inland freshwater lochs to the east further diversify the ecological context. Collectively, these habitats support a range of species and enhance the site's importance as part of a wider ecological corridor.

The redline boundary for the TSL plot is shown below.



3.0 Surveys

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was carried out 18 November 2024 and Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Assessment was carried out in December 2024.

Copies are appended to this report.

4.0 Relevant planning policies

National policies and legislation of relevance to the BNG Feasibility Assessment, through which BNG is targeted, include:

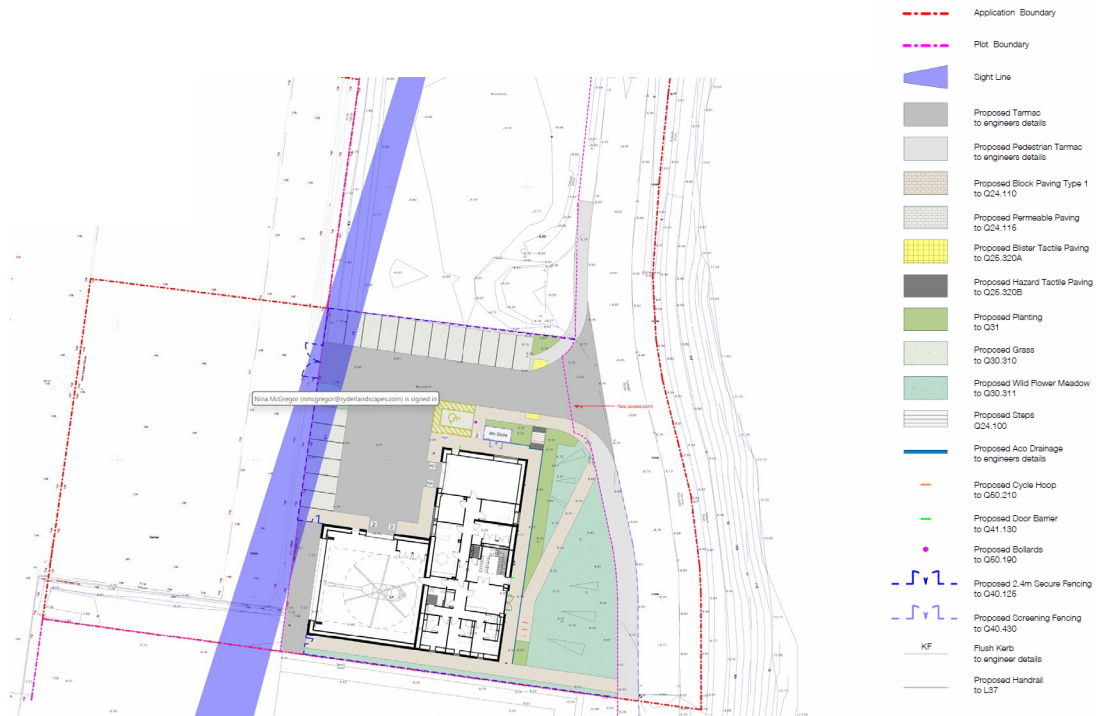
- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- National Planning Framework 4
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 (S. 41) 2
- Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL) 3
- Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045
- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP: 2014)
- Planning (Scotland) Act 2019
- Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 25 (LDP)
- Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Action Plan 6 (LBAP)

5.0 Landscape masterplan

The new building is situated to the south of the main airport terminal and to the north of the proposed Bristow facility. Its location provides direct operational access to both the existing runway and the helipad, ensuring efficient airside connectivity.

Public access is from the east, utilising the existing access road that leads directly to the front of the proposed building. A new junction from this road provides vehicular access to the car park, which is located immediately north of the building. Pedestrian routes are clearly defined, with footpaths connecting the car park and surrounding areas directly to the main entrances.

The landscape strategy focuses on enhancing the building's setting while supporting biodiversity. The frontage features soft landscaping composed of native shrub planting and species rich wildflower meadows, creating an attractive and ecologically valuable arrival space. Along the southern boundary, a meadow grass buffer provides a naturalised edge, helping to integrate the development into the wider airport landscape.



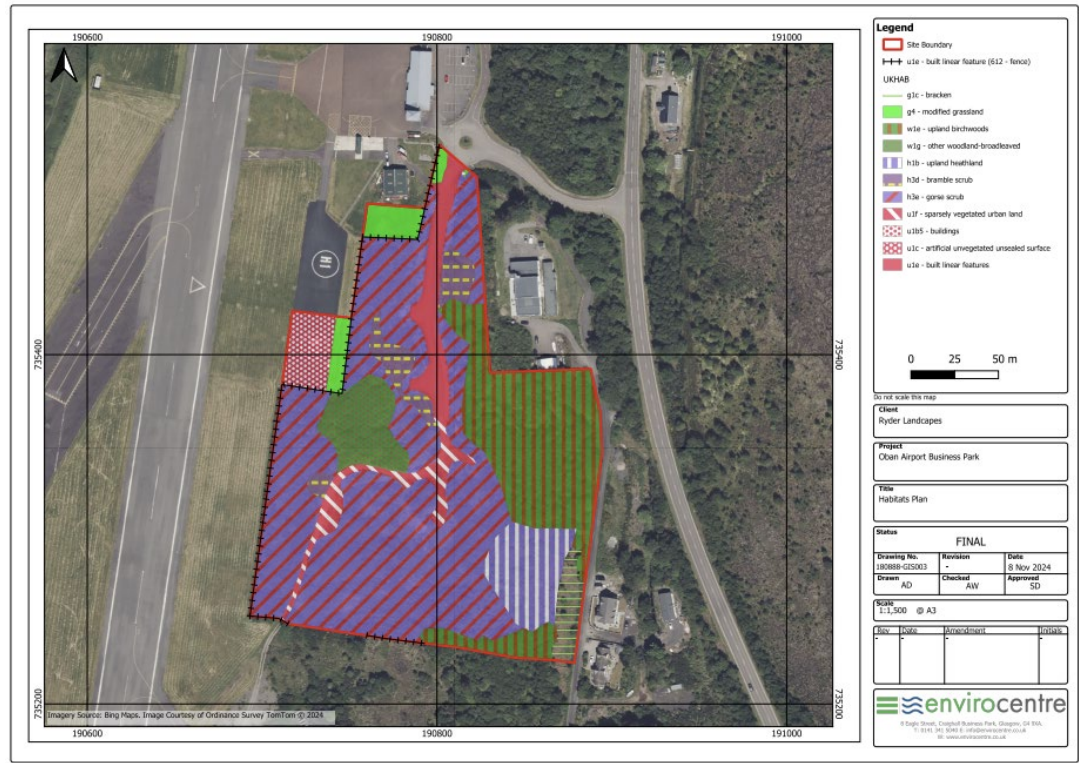
6.0 BNG and ecology

As stated in the PEA the main habitat categories were identified within the area under the UKHab system of habitat description. These were:

- Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*)
- Modified Grassland
- Upland Heathland
- Bramble Scrub
- Gorse Scrub
- Building
- Artificial Unvegetated – Unsealed Surface
- Built Linear Features
- Sparsely Vegetated Urban Land
- Upland Birchwoods
- Other Woodland – Broadleaf

They are shown on the diagram below.

Appendix F – habitat map for their site from the ecology report.



Within the external environment the soft landscape focuses on native and traditional plant species.

Within the site boundary we have provided the following:

- 123sqm of shrub planting
- 345sqm wildflower

7.0 Summary

As noted in the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Feasibility Assessment undertaken by EnviroCentre Limited for the whole of the site referred to as Oban Airport Business Park.

“A preliminary BNG assessment of the habitats present within the site boundary indicates a baseline totaling 30.52 habitat units. The current plan involves the partial removal and retention of modified grassland, bramble scrub, gorse scrub, other broadleaved woodland, and built linear features, with full retention of upland birchwoods, upland heathland, sparsely vegetated urban land, and bracken.

Post development landscaping shall incorporate the creation of the new development within the airport boundary i.e. extension of the helpads, new buildings, parking, and roads, alongside wildflower planting, amenity grassland creation, ground planting, and scattered tree planting.

The above proposed additions to the site are expected to lead to an approximate -8.61% net loss in habitat area units and a net gain of 0.07 linear hedgerow units. However, a net gain of +10.13%, or higher, can be achieved by undertaking the following within the future site developments:

- Enhancing 0.15ha of retained other broadleaved woodland through removal of invasive

- nonnative species (INNS) and sowing native species ground flora and scrub layer
- Enhancing at least 0.45ha of upland birchwood's by removing INNS and implementing woodland management to facilitate the formation of deadwood features
- Enhancing 1.1ha of gorse scrub by removing INNS and providing at least two other native scrub species to form a diverse area of mixed scrub
- Removal of bracken to enhance the upland heathland habitat within the east of the site"

BNG assessments do not directly address the presence or requirements of protected species. To further enhance opportunities for wildlife on site, additional measures, such as installing a variety of wildlife boxes (including bat, bird, invertebrate, and hedgehog boxes) and creating log or brash piles, could be incorporated. These features are not currently included within the proposed site plan for TSL.

The recommendations above are informed by the findings of the initial BNG feasibility report. Further detailed ecological surveys may be necessary to meet planning requirements and to ensure all protected species considerations are fully addressed.

8.0 Next steps

As recommended in the BNG Assessment prepared by EnviroCentre we will:

- As the BNG assessment was preliminary in nature, further BNG assessment(s) may be required where landscape plans are revised, or planting schedules cannot accommodate native planting recommendations on site
- Continued consultation between EnviroCentre Limited and the design team to develop a landscape plan and Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan (BEMP), focusing on the delivery of long term management and monitoring/auditing of created or enhanced features for a minimum 30 year period
- Production of an Implementation Plan, which may be included within the Design Stage Report, and should include drawings (eg detailed landscape planting schedules), management proposals, a construction handover checklist, and a timetable for implementation, and should specify those responsible for activities