

Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy

November 2025

Strategic Significance Guidance for Biodiversity Net Gain in Kent and Medway

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While the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy was in development, Kent County Council provided the local planning authorities with Biodiversity Net Gain interim strategic significance guidance in order to support local planning authorities navigate the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain into the planning process.

Since the publication of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the “local habitat map” and the potential measures that fall within this, supersede the interim strategic significance guidance for biodiversity net gain and simplifies the strategic significance multiplier within the Biodiversity Metric.

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HOW WILL THE LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY INFORM BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN?

The 2025 updated planning guidance notes that Local Nature Recovery Strategies will identify areas where habitat creation, restoration or enhancement would be most beneficial for nature recovery and wider environmental outcomes, and that the strategies can play a critical role in supporting offsite gains to be delivered in a way that maximises biodiversity benefits, when these are required to achieve a development's biodiversity gain objective. This can help to support bigger and more joined-up areas in which our wildlife can thrive.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are designed to promote the delivery of offsite biodiversity gain in the right places, where offsite provision is needed to meet the biodiversity gain condition for a development and it cannot be met in full through onsite habitat enhancements.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy can be used as a key source of information for strategic approaches to offsite biodiversity net gain delivery and connections to existing habitat, when local planning authorities are carrying out their functions in respect of biodiversity net gain.

The statutory biodiversity metric formula takes different factors into account, including the habitat's size, condition, type and strategic significance. Strategic significance is the local significance of the habitat based on its location and habitat type.

Where a Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been published, high strategic significance (and the associated score) is applied to a location when:

- the location of the habitat parcel has been mapped in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as an area where a potential measure has been proposed to help deliver the priorities of the Strategy; AND
- the proposed intervention is consistent with the mapped potential measure in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the habitat parcel.



What this means is that a development project that creates, enhances or recovers habitat in line with the identified action and in locations which are mapped in a local nature recovery strategy will get a higher biodiversity value in the biodiversity metric than they would in other locations. This is because they are in a more strategic location for nature recovery.

For the latest government guidance on biodiversity net gain, see: [Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK](#)

For the latest government guidance on Local Nature Recovery Strategies, see: [Local nature recovery strategies - GOV.UK](#)

The Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy document and advice can be found online at [Homepage | Making Space For Nature Kent](#)

The Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy mapping can be viewed online at [Local Nature Recovery Strategy LNRS Kent & Medway Mapping Tool - Web Experience](#)



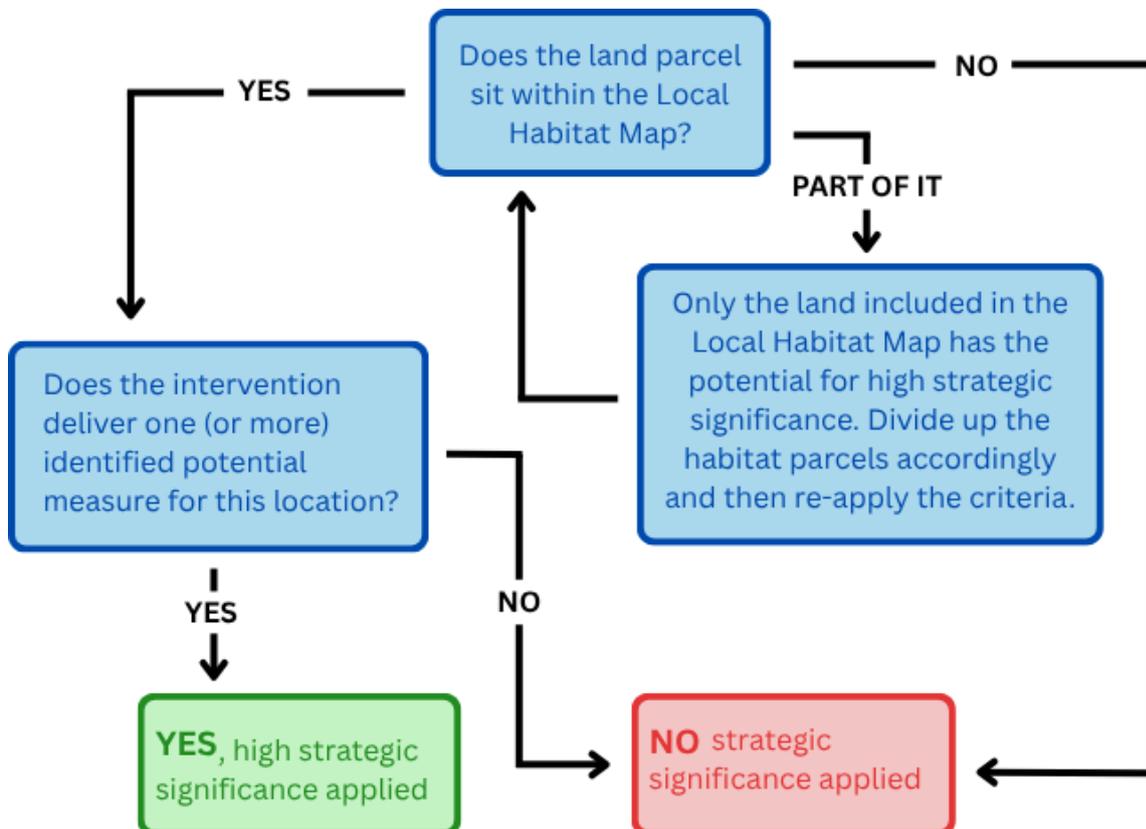
THE STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE MULTIPLIER

High strategic significance will be applied when the habitat parcel is located in an area proposed to help deliver the Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities AND the intervention is consistent with the potential measures proposed for that location.

The Local Habitat Map comprises of the APIB (Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity), ACIB (Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity) and potential measures (actions for nature).

- 1) A site must be located within the Local Habitat Map** (view the APIB and ACIB)
- 2) The intervention must be consistent with the potential measures proposed for the location**

If the land parcel is located in the local habitat map, it is not automatically given 15% strategic significance uplift - your nature recovery actions must also match a potential measure identified for that area. You can deliver a nature recovery action not identified here for biodiversity net gain but you will not receive the 15% strategic significance uplift.



You should always check the up-to-date government guidance as the eligibility for the strategic significance may change and there are certain nuances associated with areas mapped within the APIB- protected sites and irreplaceable habitats.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites and National Nature Reserves are statutory national and international designations. Measures have been mapped to these sites to maintain the integrity of the connectivity approach taken in creating a nature recovery network for the Strategy area. The potential measures also present future considerations for the site. However, the mapped potential measures do not override or replace existing management associated with the designation nor do they negate the need for any requisite consents or approvals. It is essential that the existing designated features and the legal processes and guidance are checked and followed prior to delivery of the suggested measure.

The mapped Areas of particular importance for biodiversity (APIB) are comprised of the Strategy area's national conservation sites (National Nature Reserve, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Marine Conservation Zones and Ramsar), Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites and irreplaceable habitat. Those mapped are representative of eligible areas as of August 2025 – the mapped area cannot be updated once the Strategy is published and therefore any newly designated sites will not feature. Therefore, the APIB map should not be used as a definitive guide to the location of designated areas in the county and areas where protections and restrictions may apply. For this, please refer to [MAGIC](#) and [Kent Local Wildlife Sites](#)

For the latest government guidance on Local Nature Recovery Strategies and strategic significance see [Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK](#)

High strategic significance is only applied post-intervention, the baseline strategic significance values for habitat parcels should always be scored as low. National guidance also states that a medium strategic significance cannot be applied in a Local Nature Recovery Strategy Local Habitat area.

You should assess each individual habitat parcel, for on-site and off-site. You should split habitat parcels where they are intersected by:

- a boundary between two areas of different strategic significance
- a planning authority boundary

Find more detail here: [The Statutory Biodiversity Metric](#) (pages 27-28) or in Appendix 1B.

Find transitional guidance from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) here: [LNRS and Strategic Significance Multiplier Transition Guidance](#) or in Appendix 1A.



HOW TO USE THE MAPPING TOOL TO DETERMINE 15% STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE UPLIFT

Find the mapping tool here: [Local Nature Recovery Strategy LNRS Kent & Medway Mapping Tool - Web Experience](#)

General guidance on how to use the mapping tool found here: [Local Nature Recovery Strategy mapping portal | Making Space For Nature Kent](#). You will also find the mapping approach, mapping methodology and data, and the mapping limitations.

To Begin:

Default starting setting - It is best to start with the default starting setting so you can easily and readily view all the potential measures mapped to the location. To do this, re-refresh the web page. If you would rather re-select all the measures boxes please see the mapping guidance for step by step guidance on this.

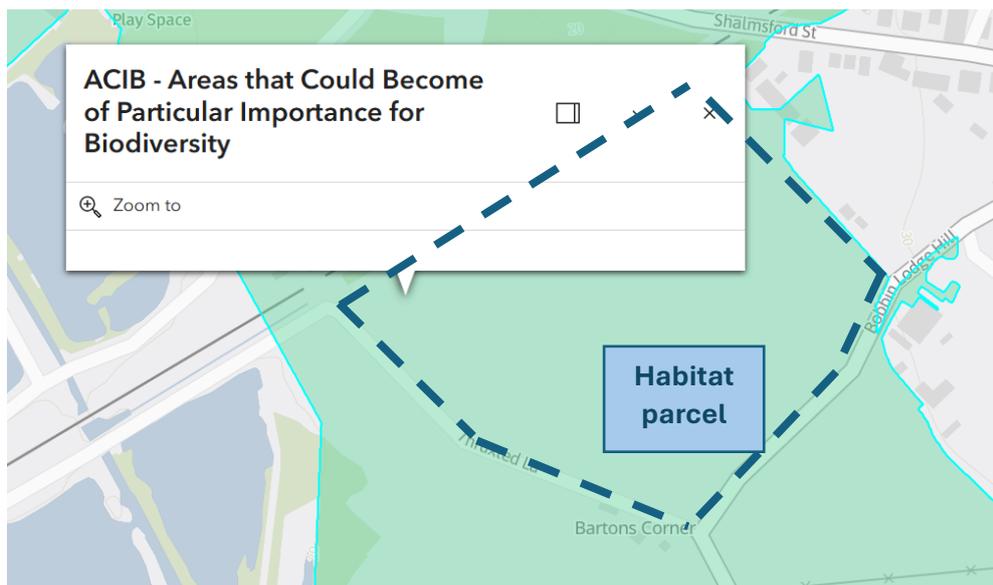
Find location -Zoom down to the location or use the search tool at the top of the mapping tool page. Do this before amending the layers to avoid extra loading time.



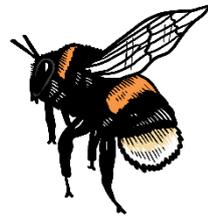
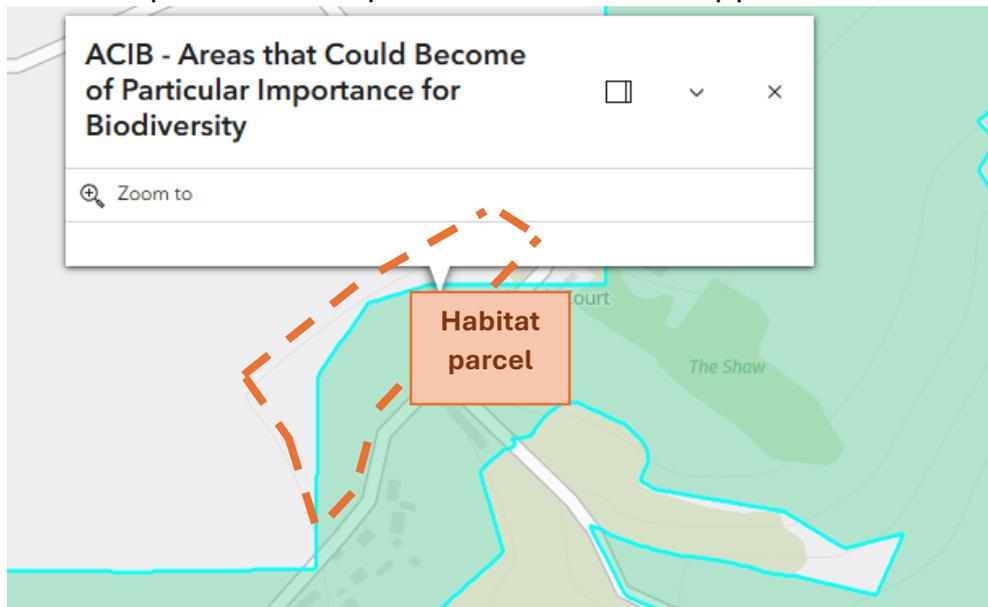
Does the land parcel sit within the Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) or Areas that Could be of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACIB)?

- 1) Select the drop-down box for the LNRS Local Habitat Map (leave it selected).
- 2) Then select APIB (Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity) and ACIB (Areas that could become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity)
- 3) Unselect the potential measures box.
- 4) APIB (The Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity) and ACIB (Areas that could become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity) will be displayed.

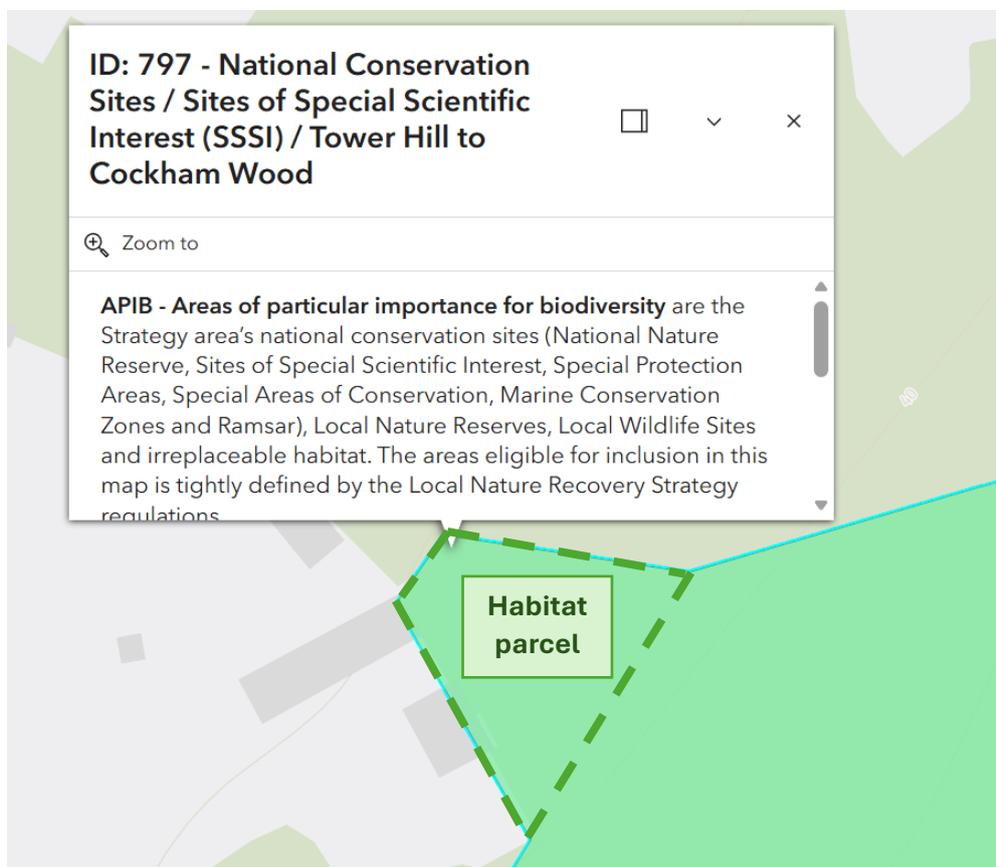
Example A: This habitat parcel is fully within the ACIB.



Example B: Only part of this land parcel is within the ACIB. The land must be divided up into habitat parcels and criteria reapplied to each.



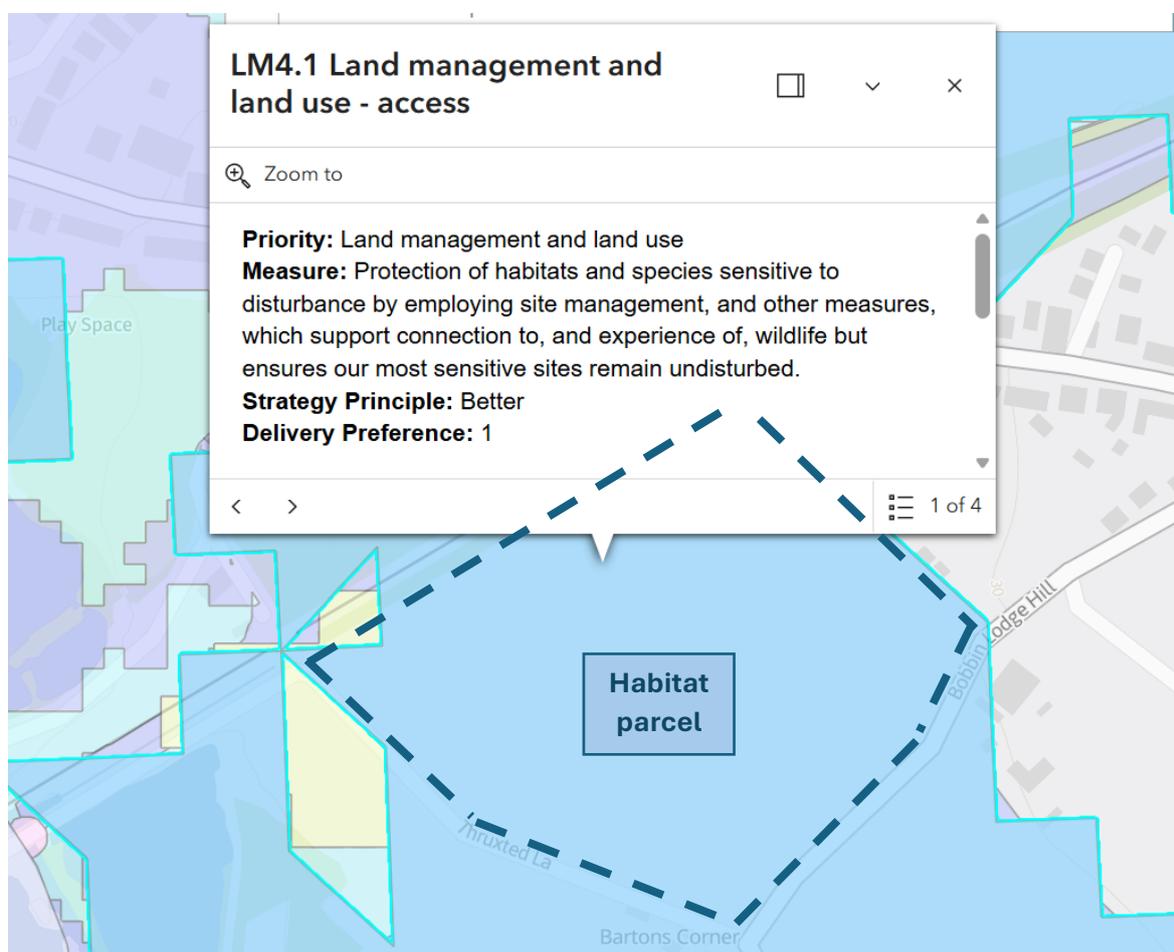
Example C: This habitat parcel is fully within the APIB. In this case, you should refer to the latest government guidance on biodiversity net gain to determine whether strategic significance is eligible for this habitat parcel.



Is the intervention consistent with the potential measures proposed for the location?

- 1) Leave the APIB and ACIB box ticked if you would like to keep the layers on screen, otherwise untick.
- 2) Tick the potential measures box.
- 3) All potential measures will now be displayed.
- 4) Click on the habitat parcel to view the pop-up which describes which potential measures have been mapped to the area.

Example A: This land parcel has several potential measures mapped to it. The planned intervention/s must match those on the mapping. Here there are multiple combinations of mapped potential measures that would allow the land to be eligible for the 15% strategic significance uplift. Check the latest government guidance on Local Nature Recovery Strategies and strategic significance - [Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain)



WTH2.1 Woodland canopy cover - extend

Zoom to

Priority: Woodland canopy cover
Measure: Extension of existing woodland through natural colonisation and planting.
Strategy Principle: Bigger
Delivery Preference: 2

This is a **potential measure** and consequently may be eligible for the strategic significance uplift for biodiversity net gain. For the latest

WTH2.5 Woodland canopy cover - nature-based solutions

Zoom to

Priority: Woodland canopy cover
Measure: Plant more urban trees and create urban forests and orchards, ideally siting tree planting to where they will provide flood management, air quality and temperature regulation benefits.
Strategy Principle: Nature-based solutions
Delivery Preference: 5

This is a **potential measure** and consequently may be eligible for the strategic significance uplift for biodiversity net gain. For the latest

FW5.2 Headwater streams - restore and create wetlands

Zoom to

Priority: Headwater streams
Measure: Restore and establish wetlands in headwater areas and around natural springs, by reversing and preventing further drainage of springs and seepage areas.
Strategy Principle: Bigger
Delivery Preference: 2

This is a **potential measure** and consequently may be eligible for the

WTH1.2 Woodland management - extend

Zoom to

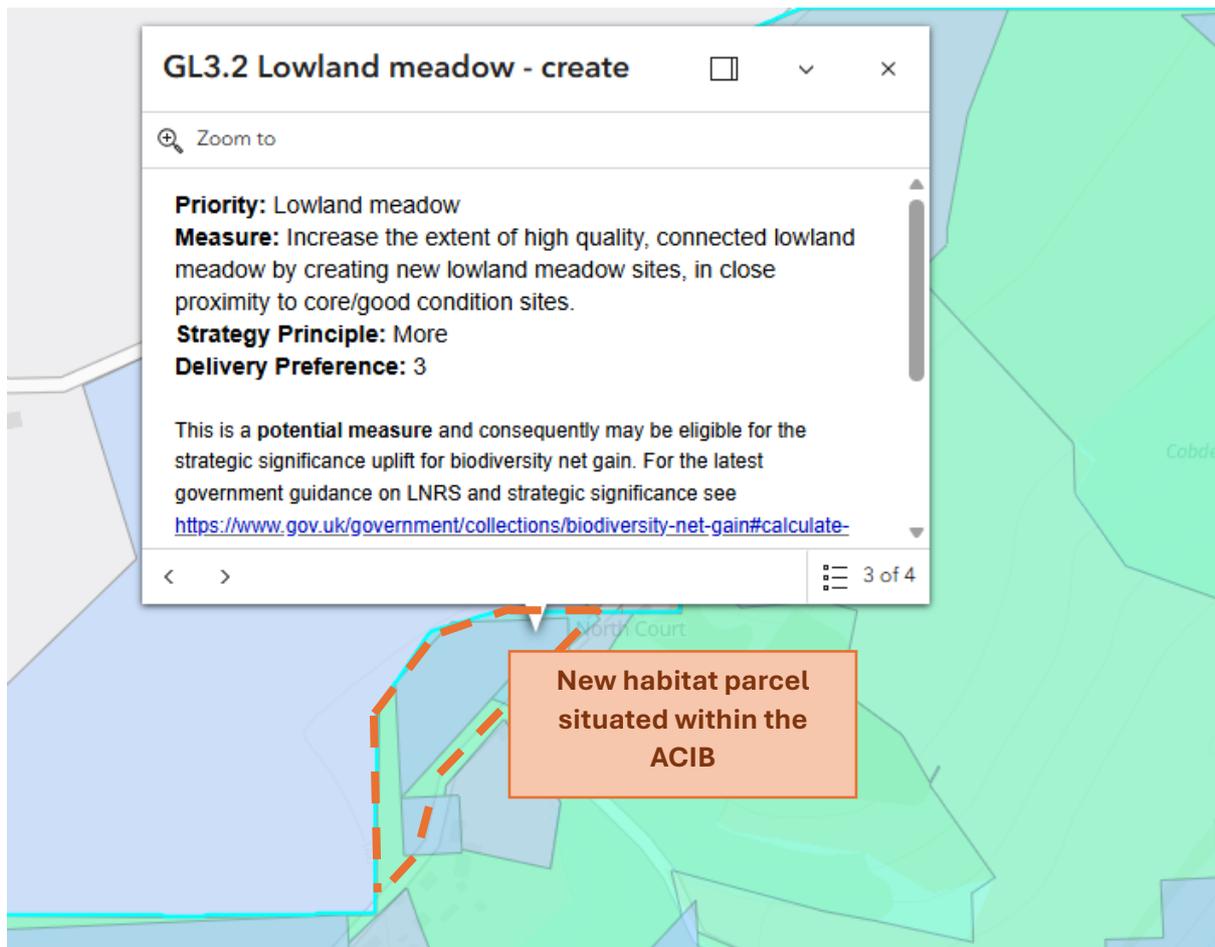
Priority: Woodland management
Measure: Restoration and extension of lowland and upland wood pasture and parkland.
Strategy Principle: Bigger
Delivery Preference: 2

This is a **potential measure** and consequently may be eligible for the strategic significance uplift for biodiversity net gain. For the latest government guidance on LNRS and strategic significance see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain#calculate>

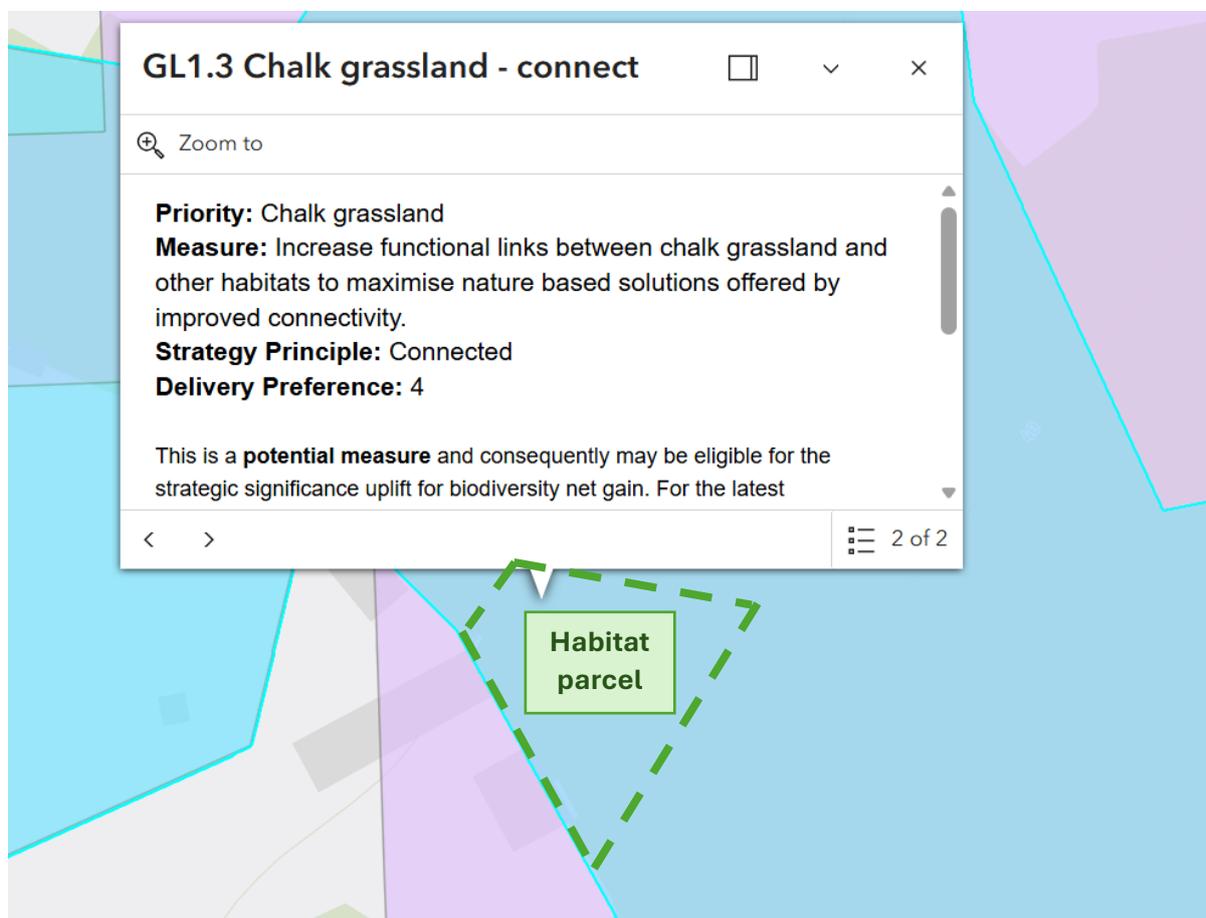
Make sure to click on all areas of the habitat parcel as there may be measures that only cover a portion of the site and could be missed.



Example B: The land has been divided up and the criteria has been reapplied. Here is the section of land situated within the ACIB. Again there are several measures mapped to this area. The planned intervention/s must match those on the mapping. There are multiple potential measures that would allow the land to be eligible for the 15% strategic significance uplift.



Example C: This land parcel has two potential measures mapped to it. The planned intervention/s must match those on the mapping; this would allow the land to be eligible for the 15% strategic significance uplift.



REMINDER: The land will only be eligible for 15% strategic significance uplift if it is situated within the Local Habitat Map **AND** the intervention is consistent with the potential measures proposed for the location.

HOW TO DETERMINE ACTION WHEN MORE THAN ONE POTENTIAL MEASURE IS MAPPED TO THE SITE

Where there is more than one measure mapped to the same habitat parcel, and the most appropriate measure is not clear following a local site assessment, the approach overleaf is recommended to aid the selection of the most appropriate measure to deliver. It is advised that professional advice is sought from a land advisor, nature conservation body or another appropriately qualified source.

Where the delivery of multiple measures is appropriate, it is suggested to also view the “wider measures” mapped to the site. Wider measures are proposed actions which would either be similarly beneficial over wide areas or it was not possible to determine specific locations to carry out the proposed action. Collectively, wider measures identify areas of additional opportunities for nature recovery but do not form a part of the formal Local Nature Recovery Strategy’s local habitat map. Consequently, they are not eligible for any strategic significance uplift but where possible to deliver these actions alongside potential measures, they will further enhance the site and its provision for nature recovery.



HOW TO USE THE LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY TO MAXIMISE NATURE BENEFITS THROUGH BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

Please visit the [Developer Toolkit](#) for advice on going beyond biodiversity net gain within development and urban land management. Other relevant toolkits can be found on our [website](#).

Are you a developer and looking to purchase land for biodiversity net gain?

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy is a key tool for developers to meet their Biodiversity Net Gain targets, both on-site and off-site, by directing them to where and how they would make the greatest gains for nature using this spatially framed strategy. The strategy's mapping tool identifies strategic locations for off-site biodiversity net gain uplift, where nature recovery actions will have the greatest benefit. Delivering biodiversity net gain in these locations is incentivized with a 15% uplift in the Strategic Significance Multiplier generating more biodiversity units and therefore reducing the overall land area needed to deliver off-site biodiversity net gain.

By aligning plans with the priorities and potential measures in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, it ensures contribution to a larger, more joined-up nature recovery network, leading to more meaningful ecological outcomes for Kent & Medway. It is possible to maximize the benefits of biodiversity net gain by using the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to go beyond the minimum requirements and contribute to wider ecological goals. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy is a strategic strategy for Kent and Medway. It is therefore important that discussions are had between you and your Local Planning Authority to ensure the correct and most appropriate decisions are made for each case based on ecological site data.

For more guidance on how to use the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a developer, please see the [Developer Toolkit](#).



Are you a landowner looking to deliver biodiversity net gain?

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy has spatially identified actions which most benefit nature recovery across Kent & Medway. Using the mapping tool you can view which potential measures (actions) are best suited to your land to provide the greatest gains for nature. Aligning your nature recovery efforts with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy opens you to the possibility of various funding streams.

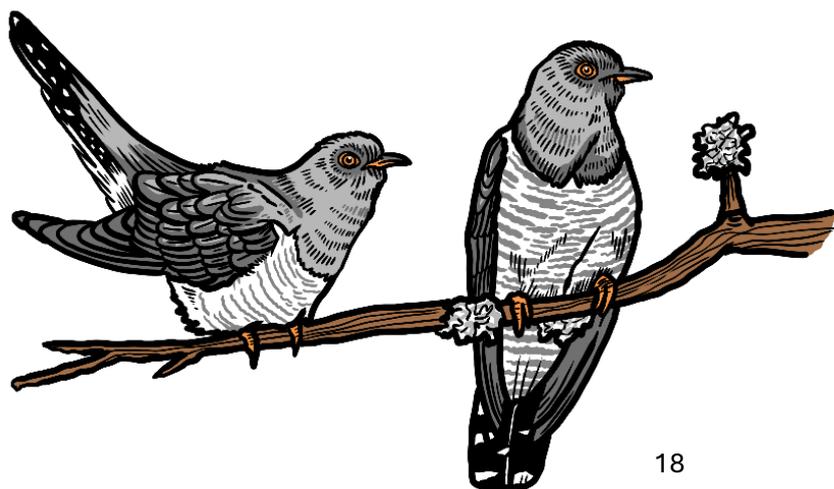
The mapping tool will also identify whether you are eligible receive the 15% strategic significance uplift and what actions you must take on your land to receive it, yielding more biodiversity units and therefore being more valuable and offering a greater potential source of revenue. Register your site and interest on the [Kent BNG Site Register](#).

For more guidance on how to use the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a landowner, please see the [Farming and Land Management Toolkit](#).

Are you looking to invest?

If you are looking to invest in biodiversity net gain, you should focus on securing land within the Local Habitat Map. Delivering the potential measures (actions) mapped to this land will mean you are eligible to receive the 15% strategic significant uplift for biodiversity net gain. Please check up to date government guidance.

For more guidance on how to use the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a landowner, please see the [Farming and Land Management Toolkit](#).



FAQS



How does the published Local Nature Recovery Strategy affect live planning applications?

Find transitional guidance [here](#) or in Appendix 1A.

What happens if a biodiversity net gain baseline has been agreed prior to the publication of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy?

Find transitional guidance [here](#) or in Appendix 1A.

How did you create the maps?

Find information on how the strategy was developed [here](#).

Where can I find the Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy and associated documents?

Find strategy documents [here](#).

I would like to do more for nature in my area, how do I use the strategy?

Find all sector specific Local Nature Recovery Strategy toolkits [here](#).

As a developer I want to go beyond the minimum requirements but there are too many options to choose from, how do I know which is most appropriate?

For help prioritising action when more than one potential measure is mapped to the same location, visit [here](#).

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy is a strategic strategy for Kent and Medway, It is therefore important that discussions are had between you and your Local Planning Authority to ensure the correct and most appropriate decisions are made for each case based on ecological site data.

APPENDIX 1A:

The following is the [LNRS and Strategic Significance Multiplier Transition Guidance](#) from the [Planning Advisory Service \(PAS\), Local Government Association](#) as of 05/01/2026.

FAQ's for Local Planning Authorities on how biodiversity metric calculations may need amendments at the time a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is published.

Context

The statutory biodiversity metric tool includes a strategic significance (SS) multiplier to incentivise targeted habitat creation and enhancement in areas identified as “mapped measures”, within a local nature recovery strategy (LNRS).

There are implications as to how the SS multiplier is applied within the metric to baseline and post intervention on and off-site biodiversity habitats before and after the publication of a LNRS and for live applications within the planning portal at the time a LNRS is formally published.

Prior to the publication of an LNRS, LPAs should be clearly referencing which strategies and plans are to be used to inform the value applied to the strategic significance multiplier for baseline and post development habitats.

Further information on LNRS is detailed in the [LNRS guidance](#).

Pre-development biodiversity value

Schedule 7A (part 1, paragraph 5) of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (TCPA) defines a site's pre-development biodiversity value as the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the 'relevant date' – this in the case of planning permission, which is granted on application, will usually be the date of application. Although, habitat surveys from earlier than the date of application can be utilised, if the biodiversity value has not changed.

As such, if an LNRS is published after the 'relevant date', the pre-development biodiversity value of a site can not to be re-assessed, given that the value is date stamped on the 'relevant date'.

For example, a planning application is submitted on the 21st of September 2024, and there is no published LNRS for the strategy area on the date the application is submitted. The predevelopment biodiversity unit metric value has been calculated using the statutory metric details on page 27 and 29 and within Table 8 of the user guide (Figure 1)¹ are followed to assign the appropriate strategic significance multiplier.

If the LNRS for the strategy area is published after the date the application is submitted, the baseline biodiversity unit value remains unchanged as it relates to the 'relevant date' when it was calculated i.e. the 21st of September or the date of the habitat survey.

Post-development biodiversity value

Schedule 7A (part 1, paragraph 8), of the TCPA defines the post-development biodiversity value of a site's onsite habitat as the projected value of the onsite habitat as at the time the development is completed. If the publication of an LNRS while a planning application is live alters the SS multiplier value in the initial post-development metric calculation, the SS multiplier to be updated in the metric calculations to reflect the site's overall new post-development biodiversity value.

Where an LNRS is published after grant of planning permission and before the submission of the Biodiversity Gain Plan to discharge the pre-commencement condition. The calculations for the site's post-development biodiversity value are to be reassessed using the correct SS multiplier for the on and off-site biodiversity units reflected by measures identified in the areas LNRS.

For example, consider a development which submitted a planning application on the 21st of September 2024, in a strategy area with no published LNRS on the submission date, and planning permission is granted on 11th December 2024. The applicant is about to submit their Biodiversity Gain Plan to discharge the pre-commencement statutory biodiversity gain condition on 27th February 2025 and the LNRS for the strategy area was published on 2nd February 2025. The submitted Biodiversity Gain Plan, if prepared before the LNRS was published will need to update the post-development biodiversity metric unit value to reflect any change in the SS significance multiplier of both proposed post-development on and off-site habitats. This is to capture whether the proposed habitat interventions are consistent with mapped measured identified within the published LNRS. An updated metric calculation tool is also to be submitted.

Where details of the post-development biodiversity unit values have been secured at the application stage through legal agreement, we anticipate these agreements are likely to contain clauses that set out what happens in such cases.

How will the application of the SS multiplier in the statutory biodiversity metric tool change when an LNRS is published?

Pre-publication

The details on page 27 and 29 and within Table 8 of the user guide (Figure 1)² should be followed to correctly assign the strategic significance multiplier for on and off-site baseline and post development habitats. The SS multiplier options available are low, medium or high.

When published

For new non-exempt planning applications submitted after the publication date of the LNRS the SS multiplier for all on and off-site baseline habitats is to be marked "Low". The SS multiplier for post development habitats that meet the 'High' criteria listed in Table 7, page 28 of the user guide (Figure 1)³, are to be marked 'High', and where habitats do not meet the 'High' criteria the SS multiplier is to be marked 'Low'. The medium SS multiplier category is redundant and not to be used, where a strategy area has a published LNRS.

What does this mean for validated and undetermined planning applications at the time an LNRS is published?

On and off-site baseline biodiversity values

Schedule 7A, Part 1, Paragraph 5 of Town and Country Planning Act (1990) states that in most cases the pre-development biodiversity value of a site is that at date of submission of the application.

The publication of a LNRS whilst an application is live will not require any changes in the SS multiplier applied to baseline habitat values.

On and off-site post-development biodiversity values

If through the publication of an LNRS the value of the post-development biodiversity units derived through the metric calculations are likely to be altered by the SS multiplier, the post-development biodiversity values are to be reassessed, in light of the published LNRS. Where updates are required, the revised documents, including metric calculation tool, HMMP, Gain Plan, and landscape details are to be submitted to the LPA for consideration, making clear reference to the scale and significance of any change(s).

Any change in biodiversity unit values needs to be reflected in the sites overall post-development biodiversity value in accordance with Schedule 7A, Part 1, Paragraph 8 of Town and Country Planning Act (1990) where the post-development biodiversity value of on-site habitat is the projected value as at the time the development is completed. A revised and updated metric will need to be submitted to the LPA and design modifications might be required to meet biodiversity net gain requirements.

What does this mean for planning applications that have been approved prior to publication of an LNRS, and the LNRS is published before submission of the gain plan (to discharge the pre-commencement biodiversity net gain condition)?

On and off-site baseline biodiversity values

There is no need to reassess the baseline values as these are taken at the time the application is submitted.

Post development on-site biodiversity values

The SS multiplier applied to the post development habitats will need to be reassessed according to the criteria in Table 7 of the user guide (Figure 1) , and reflected by mapped measures identified in the strategy areas LNRS.

For future applications where the reassessment of the SS multiplier could result in a difference in biodiversity units from the original unit count, the legal agreements secured at the time permission is granted should contain clauses which set out what is to happen in such cases.

Post development off-site biodiversity values

The SS multiplier applied to the post development habitats will need to be reassessed according to the criteria in Table 7 of the user guide (Figure 1), and reflected by mapped measures identified in the strategy areas LNRS.

LPA Considerations

Build in flexibility within the legal agreements that secure the post development biodiversity unit values delivered on and off-site as calculated by the metric (before an LNRS is published) as the SS multiplier has the potential to change the biodiversity unit value, and clauses should be put in place to account for arising variations.

Ahead of publication of a draft LNRS publicly communicate which strategy or plan is to be used to determine the strategic significance multiplier for baseline and post development habitats.

Publicly communicate proposed LNRS consultation draft and publication dates. Clearly communicate the implications for applicants so that they are prepared for any reassessments of the SS multiplier that might be required when the application is live, or to discharge precommencement biodiversity gain condition.

Decide whether or how to use the information in a LNRS consultation draft to inform SS multipliers in the transition period to formal publication.

On publication of LNRS, contact applicants of all non-exempt live planning applications, to make them aware of the need to reassess the SS multiplier for post-development biodiversity metric values.

¹ The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, DEFRA, July 2024

² The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, DEFRA, July 2024

³ The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, DEFRA, July 2024

Strategic significance

Strategic significance is the local significance of the habitat based on its location and habitat type.

You should assess each individual habitat parcel, both at baseline and at post-intervention, for on-site and off-site. You should split habitat parcels where they are intersected by:

- a boundary between two areas of different strategic significance
- a planning authority boundary

You should assign strategic significance for off-site habitats using relevant local documents for the off-site location rather than the development location.

Where a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been published

You should use the relevant published LNRS, and the descriptions set out in table 7 to assign strategic significance.

[Find out more about Local Nature Recovery Strategies](#)

Where an LNRS has not yet been published

You should use the specified alternative documents, and the descriptions set out in table 8 to assign strategic significance. When there are no alternative suitable documents for assigning high strategic significance, medium strategic significance can be assigned when the criteria in table 8 are met.

A relevant planning authority should specify alternative documents for assigning strategic significance whilst an LNRS is put in place. Examples include:

- Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategies
- Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans
- Local Planning Authority [Local Ecological Networks](#)
- Tree Strategies and Woodland Strategies
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans
- Biodiversity Action Plans
- Species conservation and protected sites strategies
- Green Infrastructure Strategies
- River Basin Management Plans
- Catchment Plans and Catchment Planning Systems
- [Shoreline management plans](#)
- Estuary Strategies

Table 7 Biodiversity metric strategic significance categories and score applied in the metric where an LNRS has been published

Category	Score	Description
High (Formally identified in local strategy)	1.15	This category can be applied when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the location of the habitat parcel has been mapped in the Local Habitat Map as an area where a potential measure has been proposed to help deliver the priorities of that LNRS; and the intervention is consistent with the potential measure proposed for that location If your project delivers the mapped potential measure set out in the LNRS you should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> record strategic significance as low in the baseline record strategic significance as high in post-intervention sheets record that you have applied the published LNRS in your gain plan
Medium	1.10	This category cannot be applied.
Low (Area / compensation not in local strategy)	1	Where the definitions for high strategic significance are not met. Even if your project is an area mapped with a potential measure, if it does not deliver the specific actions outlined for your location you should record strategic significance as low.

Table 8 Biodiversity metric strategic significance categories and score applied in the metric where an LNRS has not yet been published

Category	Score	Description
High (Formally identified in local strategy)	1.15	<p>The habitat type is mapped and described as locally ecologically important within a specific location, within documents specified by the relevant planning authority.</p> <p>If your project delivers the mapped habitat creation, enhancement or actions set out within specified alternative documents, or enhances an existing habitat identified within specified alternative documents as locally ecologically important, strategic significance can be recorded as high in the post-intervention sheets.</p> <p>If the specified alternative documents identify existing habitat as locally ecologically important within a specified location, strategic significance may be recorded as high in the baseline.</p> <p>You should record the name of the plan the relevant planning authority has specified in the user comments and record that you have used the specified document in your gain plan.</p>
Medium (Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy)	1.10	<p>This category can be applied when the LPA has not identified a suitable document for assessing strategic significance. Users should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain how the habitat type is ecologically important within a specific location • demonstrate the importance of that habitat in providing ecological linkage to other strategically significant locations • use professional judgement <p>When the above criteria are met, strategic significance may be recorded as medium in the baseline and post-intervention sheets.</p>
Low (Area / compensation not in local strategy)	1	<p>Where the definitions for high or medium strategic significance are not met.</p>

APPENDIX 1B:

The following is [The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide](#), pg 27-28 (Last updated: July 2025).

Strategic significance Strategic significance is the local significance of the habitat based on its location and habitat type.

You should assess each individual habitat parcel, for on-site and off-site. You should split habitat parcels where they are intersected by:

- a boundary between two areas of different strategic significance
- a planning authority boundary

You should assign strategic significance for off-site habitats using relevant local documents for the off-site location rather than the development location.

Where a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been published

Where a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been published, use the LNRS and descriptions set out in table 7 to assign strategic significance.

[Find out more about Local Nature Recovery Strategies](#)

Once an LNRS has been published, the baseline strategic significance values for habitat parcels in that area should always be scored as low.

You may need to refer to multiple LNRS areas and make separate assessments for each habitat parcel (including separate assessments for on and off-site habitats).

[See guidance published by Local Government Association](#) for worked examples of how strategic significance should be recorded in the transition period leading up to and after publication of a LNRS.

Table 7 Strategic significance categories applied to post-development interventions where a LNRS has been published.

Category	Score	Description
High (Formally identified in local strategy)	1.15	<p>This category can only be applied to post development interventions when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the location of the habitat parcel has been mapped in the Local Habitat Map⁴ as an area where a potential measure has been proposed to help deliver the priorities of that LNRS; and the proposed intervention is consistent⁵ with the mapped potential measure in the LNRS for the habitat parcel <p>You should record that you have applied the published LNRS in your gain plan.</p>
Medium (Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy)	1.10	This category cannot be applied.
Low (Area / compensation not in local strategy)	1	<p>Where the definitions for high strategic significance are not met.</p> <p>Even if your project is in an area mapped with a potential measure, if the proposed intervention is not consistent with a potential measure proposed by the LNRS for that location, you should record strategic significance as low.</p>

⁴ Where the habitat parcel has been mapped with corresponding potential measures in the LNRS

⁵ Where developments negatively impact areas that are of particular importance for biodiversity, mapped in the LNRS Local Habitat Maps (such as Local Wildlife Sites), interventions are highly unlikely to be consistent with the potential measures proposed