Wild Solutions
Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

OFF-SITE BIODIVERSITY NET-GAIN DELIVERY

THE COMMON, CRICH

PILKINGTON ARCHITECTURE

MAY 2026



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1. Introduction

Wild Solutions were approached by **Pilkington Architecture** in **May 2026,** in relation to the delivery of offsite Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Units (BNG HU) to support their client's development at **The Common, Crich,** to ensure that they comply with the National Planning Policy Framework which requires all developments to give a 10% net gain in biodiversity. Detailed in the report below is our outline proposal for the delivery of off-site BNG Habitat Unit at Common Farm, one of Wild Solution's habitat banks.

About Wild Solutions & Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Wild Solutions is an ecological consultancy and ecosystem service provider backed by over 60 years' experience of making space for nature through Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. We offer a wide range of services including Nature Recovery Advice, Wilder Contracts and Ecosystem Service Provision.

We provide end-to-end nature-based solutions to our clients, partners and stakeholders through any ecological challenge or opportunity - from ideation to implementation. We provide bespoke, well-rounded solutions with nature at the heart.

The Wild Solutions brand is a mark of integrity and assurance. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust has been protecting and restoring local nature, and helping people access nature-rich spaces in their doorstep for over 60 years. DWT is rooted in the Derbyshire community with 500+ volunteers, over 19,000 members, and connections with groups of all kinds across the county.

In a report undertaken by SLR Consulting for Derbyshire County Council, Wild Solutions and DWT were recognised as being very well placed to deliver BNG across the county, because of the network of landholdings and the understanding of the county's wildlife and habitats (SLR, 2022).

With our specialist local knowledge and expertise, we believe we are uniquely positioned to deliver high quality natural spaces that can also generate the wider ecosystem services that society needs. We have completed Nature Recovery Network mapping for the whole of the county, identifying key areas for the creation of new habitats to facilitate nature's recovery, and are selling BNG units to support the development of this network.

2. Our strategy: more space for nature

BNG presents an unprecedented opportunity to restore natural systems. This means that Developers and Local Authorities can use BNG to benefit nature and local communities, but the right approach is essential to achieving this.

Wild Solutions is the only BNG provider in the county that is focused on making more space for nature. Our approach is nature-led, and focuses on developing functioning, resilient ecosystems, rather than simply maximising the number of BNG units per hectare. We allow more land to deliver the BNG Habitat Units (HU) than our clients require, allowing the development of more space for nature.

This approach to BNG delivery not only supports the creation of high quality and resilient habitats, delivered in the best place for nature, but also ensures lowest carbon expenditure for site management activities, which is a crucial consideration in the climate crisis.

We are delivering BNG through habitat banking - creating habitats in strategic locations before the loss occurs. These new spaces for nature will be accessible to the public will be managed in perpetuity for nature, under the stewardship of Derbyshire's leading conservation charity.

Our team is dedicated to identifying strategically important sites to deliver offsite BNG solutions for our clients, which support nature recovery networks and maximise the provision of other ecosystem services.

Our Nature Recovery Network model brings together the most up to date, county-wide habitat data to assess the permeability of our existing landscape and identify the most strategically significant sites for creating open, wooded and wetland habitat across the county. Using information from our model and our in-house expertise, we have identified key locations and opportunities to improve habitat connectivity across the county, ensuring our habitat banks are strategically located and support the Lawton principles of bigger, better, more and joined up.



Image 1: Bessalone *woods on the south side of Common Farm offers a seedbank for natural regeneration of native tress (July 2025)*

3. The Site

Our Amber Valley habitat bank is at Common Farm, near Nether Heage. The 32ha site, as shown in figure 1, is located at SK 35742 50171 and primarily consists of species poor, sheep grazed grassland, intersected by fencing, dry stone walls and number of hedgerows with standing trees.

Whilst the landscape surrounding the site is dominated by agriculture, a number of high priority sites are located within close proximity of the site. The site is within 800m of the River Derwent and DWT's Wyver Lane Nature Reserve and just over 1km from DWT's Crich Chase Meadows Reserve. The site is adjacent to Bessalone Woods and is 270m from Dunge Wood, a 10ha ancient woodland, that is connected to the site through a series of hedgerows and tree lines. DWT's Nature Recovery Network Map indicates that a small area of the site is in strategically significant locations for the creation of woodland, and forms a key part of DWT's Derwent Living Forest landscape priority area.

Two footpaths cross the site, one is coincidental with the track that runs along the site's eastern boundary and a second runs north-south across the site, connecting the site to Belper. Nether Heage is served by bus routes connecting the settlement to Alfreton and Matlock and the site is also located within 1.5km of Ambergate Station and 2.25km of Belper Station. A key component of DWT's BNG offering is that there is good public access to nature on our sites.



Figure 1: Site Overview

4. Additional benefits

In addition to the benefits to biodiversity which we will be delivering through the habitat bank, there are several co-benefits which will be delivered. As the proposal is for the provision of BNG HU, and to avoid double funding, these benefits are being delivered free of charge as a consequence of the BNG provision.

Access and Space for People

There are several public rights of way onto the site which will be retained. We are also proposing to add a permissive footpath allow visitors to walk right around the site. We will look to provide information and interpretation on the site and will look to maintain access to the site, in perpetuity, through the principles set out in Natural England's Outdoors for All strategy and Green Infrastructure principles. These are set out here: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Principles/HowPrinciples.aspx

Carbon Sequestration

Reversion of livestock grazed agricultural land to grassland and scrub, through the process of rewilding, is an excellent way to reduce the carbon footprint of a parcel of land, both through avoided losses, particularly through the reduction of methane emissions, and carbon sequestration in soil.

Flood Risk Reduction

Communities of the Derwent Catchment suffer from frequent flooding from the River Derwent, its tributaries and from surface water. Severe flooding has increased in frequency with one event every year since 2019 exceeding or close to "1 in 100 year" flood event. Holding water in the landscape will reduce the quantity of run off and will contribute to reducing peak flows during storm events, helping to protect the communities of Ambergate, Belper and Derby.

Water Quality

Removing the land from agricultural production and allowing natural habitats to regenerate will provide significant benefits to water quality. This includes a reduction in nutrient runoff from fertilisers and pollutants from agricultural operations, and a reduction in sediments by recovering bare soil caused by poaching from livestock and heavy machinery field operations.



Image 2: Common Farm (July 2025)

5. Fees & Terms

Outlined below are the fees and payment terms associated with the delivery of BNG HU for **the Common, Crich**

Item	Cost	No.	Total Cost (ex. VAT)	Payment Terms
DWT Grassland Habitat Units	£28,500.00	0.4	£11,400.00	10% on receiving planning permission to reserve units * 90% application to discharge condition to allocate units
LWT Lowland	£30,000.00	0.1066	£3,198.00	
LWT Hedgerow Units	£28,000.00	0.04	£1,120.00	
Total (ex. VAT)			**£15,718.00**	As above.

Includes detailed review and completion of DEFRA BNG Metric, preparation of BNG Design and Access Statement and the provision of all supporting documents to satisfy Gain Plan requirements and achieve condition discharge.

** Deposit is non-refundable and deductible from the full payment of units*

All costs associated with the creation and delivery of the BNG HUs are included within the cost per unit, this includes habitat creation and the ongoing habitat management and monitoring for the 30-year period.

This quote is valid for 60 days from the date of issue. If you wish to progress this proposal, please send written confirmation by email to pchappell@derbyshirewt.co.uk.



Image 3: Longhorn Cattle, rewilding at Common Farm (Spring 2025)