



BIDWELLS

# Biodiversity Net Gain Scheme

## *Billingshield Farms*





# This landscape-scale habitat creation and wetland restoration project will generate over 300 biodiversity units.

## Local Planning Authority

County Durham

## National character area

North Pennines

## Waterbody catchment

Swinhope Burn from Source to Wear

## Operational catchment

Wear Upper

## Distances

- 2 km from Daddry Shields
- 10.5 km from Stanhope

## Natural England registration

Biodiversity gain sites register reference BGS-220425003



*Get in touch with  
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# Developers with off-site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements can contribute to the creation and management of habitats within this BNG scheme through the purchase of biodiversity units.

## Location

The site is located approx. 6.5 miles southwest of Stanhope and sits within the County Durham Local Planning Authority and North Pennines National Character Area. The Swinhope Burn bounding the site to the west and it is within the Swinhope Burn from Source to Wear waterbody catchment.

The site is within the North Pennines National Landscape and is of high strategic significance due to being directly adjacent to the Upper Teesdale SSSI, Moor House-Upper Teesdale SAC, and North Pennine Moors SPA.

## Landscape character

The site is surrounded predominantly by bog and acid grassland habitats, as well as scattered woodlands.

## Land size

The BNG site is circa 178 hectares (440 acres).

## Current use and baseline habitats

The baseline is predominantly blanket bog habitat with areas of wet woodland, heathland and grassland.

## Habitat creation

Creation and enhancement of the following high-quality biodiverse habitats.

### Very high distinctiveness

- Blanket bog
- Fens (upland and lowland)
- Purple moor grass and rush pastures
- Upland hay meadows

### High distinctiveness

- Other rivers and streams
- Upland heathland
- Wet woodland

### Medium distinctiveness

- Grassland
- Line of trees

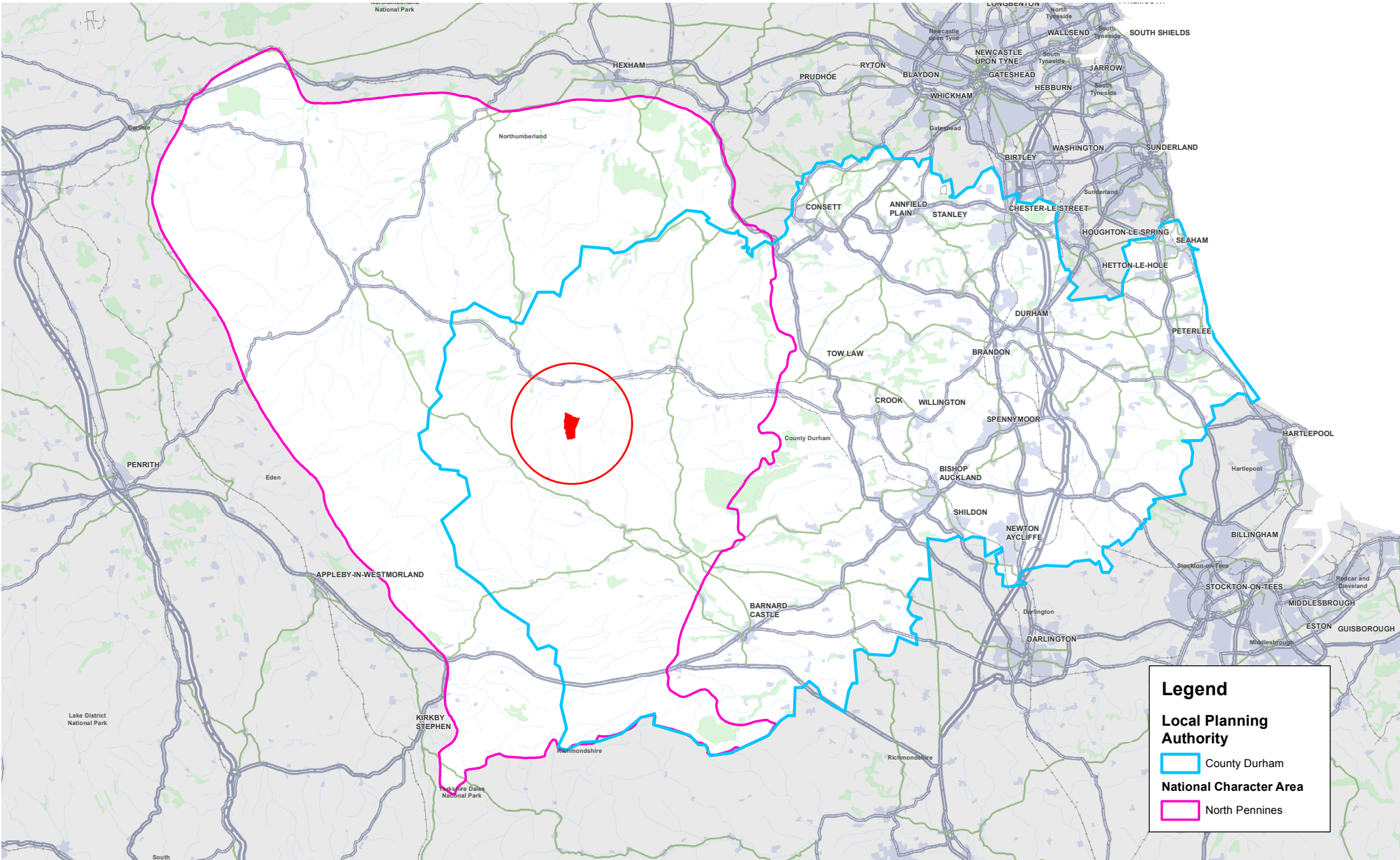
This presents significant opportunity for habitat trading up in the metric, to increase the ecological value of development offsetting.

## Land management

Strategic spatial planning of habitat delivery across the site has been undertaken and a robust and flexible long-term management structure is in place to maximise environmental outcomes. Living Uplands facilitated the project, liaising with Durham County Council and will monitor the scheme going forward.



# Regional context





## Method and terms of sale

Biodiversity units which meet developer compensation requirements in terms of habitat types and extents can be purchased 'off-the-shelf'. Where developments have planning consent with a BNG condition, a sale agreement will be provided for the allocation of units, while developments still in the planning process can secure an option for the purchase of biodiversity units.

## Environmental outcomes

This innovative habitat creation scheme will not only benefit nature but also contribute to a range of other ecosystem services including:

- Expansion of wildlife corridors
- Improved water quality
- Peatland restoration
- Carbon sequestration

## Scheme benefits

There are huge advantages in delivering BNG requirements through this scheme:

- Providing significant contributions to recognised local ecological priorities
- Surety of where offsets are being delivered
- Contribute to landscape scale enhancements
- Greater confidence in the security of long-term sustainable management beyond the requisite contractual 30-year period

The scheme will become a showcase for the effective delivery of BNG, demonstrating how offsetting development through habitat creation on a landscape scale is most efficient, cost-effective and maximises environmental outcomes.

**The provision of biodiversity units 'off-the-shelf' reduces the risks and delays to developers in seeking credible solutions to satisfy offsite BNG requirements.**

### Project website

Further information about this scheme can be found at the following dedicated web address:

[bidwells.co.uk/properties/billingshields-farm](https://bidwells.co.uk/properties/billingshields-farm)





## *Get in touch with our experts*

**Please contact our Natural  
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