BJ Collins
PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEYORS

REVISED - PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND BNG METRIC COVER REPORT

PROPOSED NEW 3G SPORTS PITCH
GODMANCHESTER ROVERS FC
BEARSCROFT FARM
GODMANCHESTER

A report to:

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Report to:	Surfacing Standards Limited
Report Title:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Condition Assessment Report

Survey Site/Job:	Godmanchester Rovers Football Club, Bearscroft Farm, A1198, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, PE29 2LQ
OS Grid Reference:	TL25526939

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Surveyed by:	Mr B J Collins MSc MCIEEM (Natural England Class Licence: 2015-13152-CLS) and registered Low-Impact Class Licence Holder (RC110)

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RELIANCE - The report describes the conditions and ecological features on the site (and possibly its environs) at the time of survey and that this may (is likely to) change over time. Reliance upon the findings of this report should be determined in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management guidance on the longevity of ecological surveys, see Advice Note (April 2019) On the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys CIEEM.

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SUMMARY

The attached report provides the results of a preliminary ecological appraisal and a biodiversity net gain condition report (to be used alongside the supporting net gain metric) of the area of sports field where a new artificial sports pitch has been proposed. The new pitch will be located on the grounds of Godmanchester Rovers FC in Godmanchester, PE29 2LQ. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal arrived at the following conclusions:

Habitats

The preliminary ecological appraisal identified the following habitats and conclusions:

The habitats affected by the development proposal comprise of modified grassland of low conservation value. No further mitigation is recommended.

The western boundary of the playing field where the artificial pitch is proposed contains a range of features valuable to biodiversity, due to its structure and width, principally for foraging bats, nesting birds and small mammals. The impacts from the pitch construction and floodlighting avoids illuminating this vegetated landscape bund.

The southern boundary habitats are a recently unmanaged hedgerow which is defunct and gappy, but with the presence of tall Bramble scrub infilling any gaps it offers a linear habitat feature across the south of the site. This particular hedgerow has value to protected mammals, specifically at the eastern end, commuting and foraging bats, nesting birds and small mammals.

Fauna

The preliminary ecological appraisal identified three species or groups which could be adversely affected by the construction of the new 3G Sports Pitch and it's floodlighting.

Committing and Foraging Bats (Mitigation and Best Practice)

Thick site boundaries with trees, scrub and hedgerows provide suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat, particularly on the western boundary. Consultation with the planning authority identified concerns with regards to usage of the southern and eastern boundaries, in particular with a lack of bat activity surveys in the active season.

To overcome this constraint the placement of the pitch has been changed rotating the pitch some 90° and as a result completely avoiding any light spillage from the proposed floodlighting scheme on to any of the boundaries. The impact is therefore negligible.

Badger and Hedgehog (Best Practice)

To ensure best practice it is recommended to adopt a precautionary approach to avoid any harm to potentially present badgers and hedgehogs. During development, in order to protect any foraging or commuting animals, any trenches dug during works activities that are left open overnight should be left with a sloping end or ramp to allow any mammals that may fall in a route to escape.

Furthermore there is an exclusion zone recommended within this document for protected mammals.

Nesting Birds (Mitigation)

The location of the development footprint is such that there is no requirement to remove any habitat feature with potential to support nesting birds. If there is any need to impact upon tall vegetation surrounding the site then this must avoid the bird breeding season, which runs from March to September (inclusive). This is to avoid adverse impacts to any active nests present. If any potential bird nesting habitat is to be impacted precautionary survey will be required by a suitably qualified ecologist in advance.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The area of modified grassland included within the red line boundary is equal to 0.6747ha of POOR condition Modified Grassland, and this scores a total of 1.35 Habitat Units. The overall net gain for this project is a loss of 100%, with an overall requirement of 1.48 Habitat Units to achieve the statutory 10% net gain.

As it is not possible to achieve this net gain provision on site, the owner and agent have arranged for 1.48 Habitat units from the Environment Bank, to be sourced from the Emberton Habitat Bank (MK03) which is in the same national character area as the proposed development(Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands).

1 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by BJ Collins – Protected Species Surveyors Limited for Surfacing Standards Limited on behalf of Godmanchester Rovers FC, Bearscroft Farm, A1198, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, PE29 2LQ.

The report provides the results of a preliminary ecological appraisal, to inform the installation of a new pitch. The new sports pitch is to be centred upon the ten figure Ordnance Survey grid references of TL TL25526939.

The preliminary ecological appraisal, which involved a systematic walkover of the site, was undertaken in July 2024. The objective was to assess the habitats on site with regards to protected habitats and species to inform the proposal.

This report also contains the results of **Biodiversity Net Gain Condition Assessments** undertaken as part of the supporting Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric, prepared for submission alongside this report.

The development plan involves the installation of a new, multi-use artificial sports pitch with floodlighting adjacent to the south and western boundary, over an area of grassland. See figure 1 below.

Legislation with regards to wildlife and habitats that may be affected by the construction is included within Appendix 1 of this report.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location of the Survey Site



Figure 1 – The survey area and the approximate location of the proposed sports pitch in relation to the surrounding habitats.

The survey site comprises the Godmanchester Rovers FC sports ground, located on the southern edge of town Godmanchester in Cambridgeshire. The area surveyed comprised the area enclosed within the yellow outline within Figure 1 above.

The survey area is characterised by intensively managed amenity grassland surrounded by security fencing, a woodland shelterbelt and hedgerows. The landscape beyond the playing fields and to the south and east is arable and pasture land. North of the survey area is a football stadium and to the west is a housing development site currently under construction. The site has connectivity to the wider countryside through boundary hedgerows.

2.2 Description of the proposed development area

The proposed new sports pitch to be installed within the area of sports ground highlighted yellow in Figure 1 above.

The new sports pitch will sit upon an area of intensively managed and regularly mown amenity grassland currently used as a football pitches. The sward of this area is dominated by the typical species of Perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*). The sward contains a few commonly occurring herb species and typical grasses.

The western boundary of the playing field, where the proposed sports pitch is to be located alongside, comprises of a band of woodland and bramble scrub on a landscape mound forming the western boundary. The boundary to the south and east comprises of native hedgerow with the adjacent arable field and pasture respectively. The northern boundary comprises the perimeter fence of the adjacent football stadium.

The following photograph shows the habitats that will be directly affected by the proposed new sports pitch installation.



Photograph 1 – View of the playing field, the proposed new sports pitch being positioned over this area of amenity grassland.

3 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desktop Study

A desktop study for designated and non-designated sites and wildlife records was undertaken for a 2km circumference of the survey area using the following resources:

- www.magic.gov.uk (the Multi-Agency Geographic Information website for maps of statutory designated nature conservation sites).
- The search for species records and designated sites comprised of examination of the publicly available documents on the local authority planning portal. In particular, reference was made to the planning application on Dexter Farm development 21/00928/REM, which is on the adjacent land to the southwest of the sports ground. This provided records of non-designated wildlife sites and species for a 2km circumference from the centre of the Dexter Farm at grid reference TL 25407 69385. This location is only 140m south-west of the central point of the new proposed sport pitch.
- Ecological consultants Southern Ecological Solutions previously carried out an Ecological Impact Assessment for the Dexter's Farm development, Godmanchester in October 2021. Findings from this report (Southern Ecological Solutions, 2021) are considered in this report.

3.2 Habitat Survey

The site was subjected to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (as per CIEEM, 2018). This involved systematically walking over the site and classifying each parcel of land, utilising the UK Habitat Classification survey methodology (Butcher et al, 2020), on the basis of vegetation into one of approximately 47 habitat types (Level 4) alongside a list of secondary codes which give information on the environment and management (Butcher et al, 2020) of those habitats.

Notes were made on the structure and composition of habitats:

- Trees with potential to support features used by roosting bats were noted. Boundary features were assessed for their potential suitability for bat foraging and commuting.
- The suitability of habitats was assessed for nesting birds, including ground nesting birds.
- The suitability of habitats was assessed for terrestrial mammals, specifically badger (*Meles meles*) and hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*).
- The suitability of habitats was assessed for reptiles and amphibians, including specially protected great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*).
- A search for any invasive non-native species such as Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and Indian balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) was also carried out.

The ideal time to carry out a habitat survey is during the plant growing season (i.e. April-September) and this is also when most animals are active.

4 SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 Desktop Study

4.1.1. Designated and Non-designated Nature Conservation Sites

Examination of the MAGIC website identified three statutory designated sites. These are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Statutory designated sites within 2km of the proposed new sports pitch.

Site and designation	Location from the site
Godmanchester Eastside Common SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest)	1.8km north-east
Portholme SSSI	1.9km north-west
Portholme SAC (Special Area of Conservation)	1.9km north-west

Data search by CPERC identified four non-statutory designated sites. These are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 Non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the proposed new sports pitch.

Site and designation	Location from the site
Littlebury Farm Meadows CWS (County Wildlife Site)	1km east
Huntingdon Bypass Borrow Pit CWS	1.4km north
River Great Ouse CWS	1.6km north-west
Cow Lane Gravel Pits CWS	1.9km north

4.1.2. Species Records

Amphibians

The CPERC data identified nine records for great crested newt within 2km of the site. The closest record was 1km to the south and the most recent record was in 2015. The NBN Atlas identified records associated with Natural England licence returns for a further two sites under 1km from the site.

Previously Southern Ecological Solutions (2021) conducted eDNA survey on a pond off-site to the north-west of the proposed sports pitch. This survey confirmed the absence of Great crested newts from the pond.

Two records of common toad *Bufo bufo* were recorded on the adjacent site in 2017 (Southern Ecological Solutions, 2021).

Reptiles

The data search returned one record grass snake *Natrix helvetica* within 2km of the site. This was recorded in 2016 1.4km north of the site.

Bats

There were 59 records of at least six species of bats within 2km of the site. These comprised Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Soprano pipistrelle (*P. pygmaeus*), Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), Myotis species bats, four records of Barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*), and unattributed to species *Pipistrellus* and *Chiroptera* bats.

The survey on the adjacent site (Southern Ecological Solutions, 2021) confirmed two buildings at Dexter Farm that were being used by three individual Soprano pipistrelles, for day roosting.

Badger

There were five records of badger returned on the data search. However, no specific locations were provided by CPERC.

The survey of the adjacent site found an active badger sett (Southern Ecological Solutions, 2021). This was located 150m west of the site. There were no badger setts found associated with the playing field or its boundary but evidence of activity suggesting the use of blackthorn scrub to the southeast corner of the playing field as a potential sett area.

Hedgehog

There was one record of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* located 0.7km from site in 2015.

Birds

The data search returned 111 records of species listed under Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981 within 2km. The majority of these records were associated with Godmanchester Gravel Pits LWS and Portholme SAC/SSSI and were predominantly species associated with wetlands.

None of these species records are considered relevant to the intensively managed sports field where the artificial pitch is proposed.

Plants

No records of Schedule 8 protected plant species were included within the data search. Three records of NERC Act Species of Principal Importance were recorded within 2km of the site. Two records were of tubular water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulos*a) and the closest record was of Spreading Hedge-parsley (*Torilis arvensis*) which was located 1.4km northwest.

4.2 Habitat Survey

The following UK Hab habitats were recorded from the survey site (the proposed footprint and boundary of the new pitch):

Primary Habitats:

- Modified grassland - UKHab Code g4 64
- Tall ruderal neutral grassland – UKHab Code g3 17
- Dense bramble scrub – UKHab Code h3
- Woodland plantation – UKHab Code w1 36
- Hedgerows - UKHab Code h2

Linear Features:

- Ditches - UKHab Code r1e
- Fence – UkHab Code u1e

Grassland – Modified grassland UKHab Code g4 64

The location for the proposed new artificial sports pitch is almost entirely located upon a footprint of modified grassland (g4), an area of site that has signs of previous regrading. This grassland is intensively managed (g4 64).

The sward of playing field comprises a mixture of Perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), Timothy (*Phleum pratense*), Creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and Common fescue (*Festuca sp*.), with other species amongst it comprising Daisy (*Bellis perennis*), Dove's-foot crane's-bill (*Geranium molle*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Clover (*Trifolium repens*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*), annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), Black medic (*Medicago lupulina*), Lesser yellow trefoil (*Trifolium dubium*), and Cock's foot (*Dactylis glomerata*).



Photograph 2 – Modified grassland, the habitat which will be immediately affected by the proposed new sports pitch, looking southeast from the northwest corner.

Neutral Grassland and tall Herb – UKHab Code g3c 17

There are areas of tall neutral grassland and ruderals adjacent to the boundaries of the playing field. This comprises unmanaged neutral grassland with tall herbs and some bramble scrub. It sits on sandy substrate.

The first strip of neutral grassland and tall herb sits between the existing stadium and the adjacent playing field. It measures approximately 5 m in width and runs the length of the stadium fence line. Here the vegetation is dominated by False oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), as it is on all of the unmown areas of the playing field. The sward also includes (in order of occurrence heading west to east across the boundary) groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), smooth sow-thistle (*Sonchus asper*), Welsh poppy (*Papaver cambricum*), Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*), Cock's-foot grass (*Dactylis glomerata*), Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Yorkshire fog grass (*Holcus lanatus*), Black medic (*Medicago lupulina*), Creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Timothy grass (*Phleum pratense*), Wall barley (*Hordeum murinum*), ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), common mallow (*Malva sylvestris*), Oxeye daisy (r) (Leucanthemum vulgare) and broadleaved dock (Rumex obtusifolius). There are also areas of dense nettle bed (*Urtica dioica*) and stands of Creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*).



Photograph 2 - the area of neutral grassland and ruderal strip that runs parallel with the fence of the stadium.

There are then 3 other distinct areas of tall neutral grassland. A small section on the eastern boundary with relatively poor species diversity, a section in the south-east corner to the front of the area of dense Blackthorn scrub equally of poor diversity and finally a section of tall neutral grassland within the woodland and scrub embankment forming the western boundary of the site.







Photograph 2 – example of the areas of tall neutral grassland across the boundaries of the playing field

Dense bramble scrub – UKHab Code h3

At the north-west corner of the playing field and adjacent to the south west corner of the adjacent football stadium is a large stand of dense bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.).



Photograph 3 – Area of dense bramble scrub.

Woodland plantation – UKHab Code w1 36

The woodland plantation forms part of the west boundary of the playing fields, and is largely planted upon a soil mound. The tree species present comprise of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) and Sycamore with some regenerating hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) below. Behind this is a planted hedgerow of conifer with bramble and hawthorn remnant below.



Photograph 4 – Area of woodland plantation.

Hedgerows (UKHab Code h2) and ditches (UKHab Code r1e)

The southern boundary comprises of a relatively recently planted immature Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) hedgerow, which is thickening out to create a boundary approximately 5m wide. Hedgerow trees extend to this. There are some areas of bramble and hawthorn. The hedgerow also includes a short stretch of mature Hawthorn that has never been laid. Then there is a row of planted Oak (*Quercus* sp.) and Ash trees planted within the hedgerow. The eastern boundary of the playing field comprises of an area of dense Blackthorn thicket.

There is a ditch beyond the site boundary, which was dry at the time of the survey. In the ditch there is Typha and Soft rush (*Juncus effusus*) vegetation suggesting the ditch is occasionally wet.



Photograph 5 – Thick vegetation along the southern boundary.

Eastern boundary comprises overgrown Wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*), with some hawthorn hedgerow with dense bank of bramble and blackthorn extending 3-4m toward the football pitch. There is evidence of rabbit warrens. There is semi-mature Sycamore, Ash and Cherry trees within the hedge. There is also a dry ditch within this boundary. It leads onto a boundary with an area of pasture.



Photograph 6 – Thick vegetation along the eastern boundary.

4.3 Fauna

The following faunal groups were considered as part of the preliminary ecological appraisal:

Bats

There are no features on site which provide bat roosting potential.

The vegetated site boundaries have the potential to support commuting and foraging bats in the area (TN1). Of all of the boundaries that are located on site that to the west offers the optimum foraging habitat for bats given the structure of the trees and mix of trees and shrubs. The southern and eastern boundaries offer connectivity to wider habitats in the local area.

In response to the planning consultation the impact of the previously mitigated floodlighting scheme has been further reduced. This has been achieved by rotating the proposed artificial pitch by some 90° and whilst this removes two existing grass pitches, whereas the previous scheme only removed one, it has had the result of completely avoiding any light spillage onto any boundary of the playing field and a significant buffer around the playing field boundaries and the artificial surface.

Furthermore, the proposed sports lighting specification has been designed in line with The Institute of Lighting Professionals (2023) guidance note.

The desktop study, combined with detailed surveys of the adjacent development site, produced a paucity of records of light sensitive bat species in the local area with all bat records in the area dominated by common and soprano pipistrelle bats. Both of these species are categorised as being unaffected by artificial lighting in their foraging and commuting routes (see ILP 2023, Table 1: Summary of the effect of ALAN on UK bat species).

The impact of this revised scheme is identified in figure 2 overleaf. This highlights that 0.5 lx of lighting is a significant distance from any of the boundaries thereby removing any possible impacts upon commuting bats, as well as avoiding the area of dense scrub which may have some potential for badger.

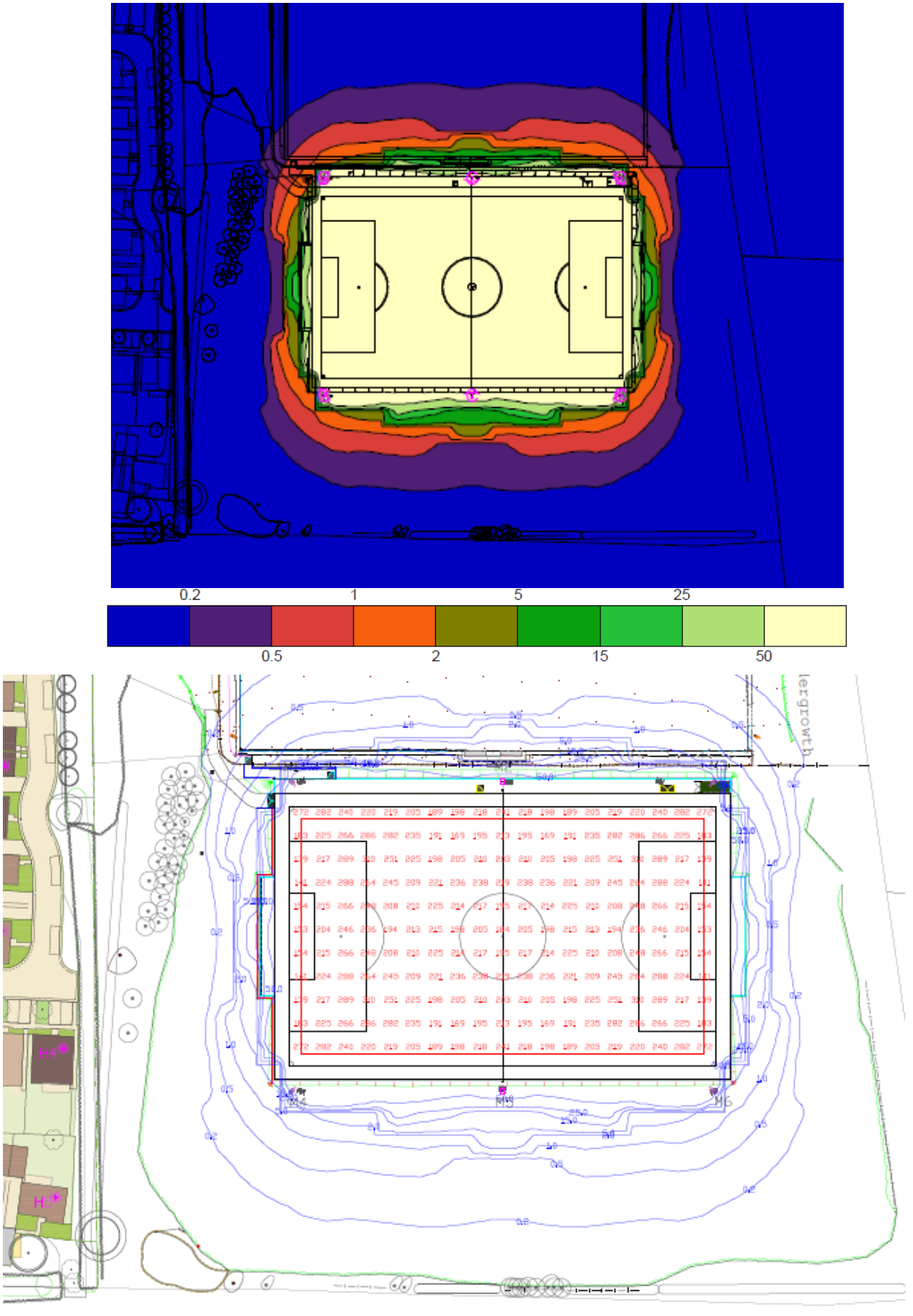


Figure 2 - showing the impact from a modern mitigated floodlighting scheme proposed for the playing fields.

Badgers and hedgehogs

No signs of an active badger sett was found on the site. However there was activity on site, specifically feeding evidence (swirls) and grass removal (possible bedding collection) amongst the tall grassland adjacent to the Bramble/blackthorn scrub to suggest the potential presence of an outlying badger sett within the boundary in this location. This part of the site is impenetrable and it was not possible to enter deep into the scrub to confirm the presence/absence of a sett, although there was no evidence of an established sett , typically characterised by worn paths and latrine. Precautionary actions are provided.

Rabbit warrens were identified at the western boundary in the stand of bramble and tall ruderal vegetation (TN2). An associated mammal track was present across the playing field.

The western and southern site boundaries have suitable conditions for hedgehog refuge.

Precautionary mitigation is included within this report. The mitigation actions provided and will cover accidental discovery of badgers, hedgehogs and other mammals during the construction activity.

Great Crested Newt

The site falls within an 'amber zone' under the Natural England (2020) Cambridgeshire Risk Zones map (developed for the great crested newt district licensing scheme). The closest record of the species is 1 km from the proposal.

The location for the proposed pitch and the results of previous ecological assessments for developments within the village scope out the concerns with regards to this specially protected amphibian and this small area of amenity grassland.

Common reptiles and amphibians

There are no water bodies on the site. The site does not offer suitable conditions for breeding amphibians. There are four water bodies within 500m of the site, and site boundaries could offer some refuge for common amphibians and reptiles.

The development footprint itself does not offer suitable conditions for amphibians and reptiles, due to the extent of disturbance and the high level of maintenance activity. Therefore, it is not anticipated that herpetofauna will pose a constraint on the proposed development.

Breeding birds

The habitats on site affected by the proposed new artificial pitch have a negligible potential to support breeding birds. The extent of activity and regular disturbance from the use of the existing sport pitches limits the potential for notable birds to be present.

Any trees, hedgerows and scrub on site could support breeding birds. If the removal of trees or the cutting back of hedgerows is required, then the development proposal could have a direct impact upon breeding birds.

To that end, if there are any plan to remove any trees, hedgerows or scrub then this should be undertaken outside the breeding bird season, which runs from March to September inclusive on an annual basis, or alternatively the works will need to be informed by a suitably qualified ecologist.

4.3.1. Target notes

The following wildlife issues and target notes are identified on the extended phase 1 habitat plan overleaf.

Target note 1 – Habitat with bat commuting and foraging potential

Target note 2 – Mammal activity

Target note 3 – Habitat with potential for breeding birds

The habitat map is included overleaf:

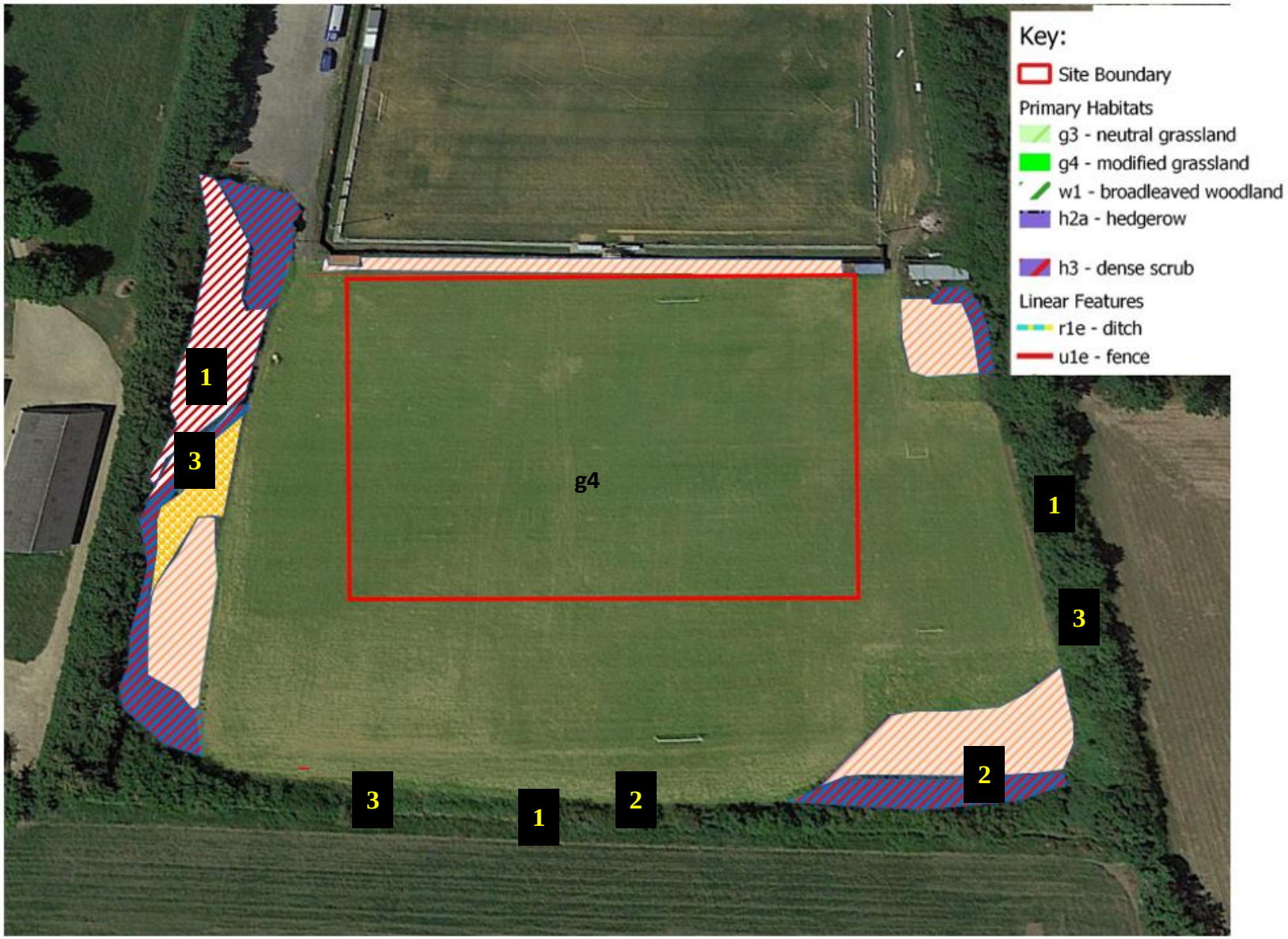


Figure 3 - UKHab up habitat map of the site.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Habitats

The preliminary ecological appraisal identified the following habitats and conclusions:

- The habitats affected by the footprint of the proposed artificial pitch comprise of modified grassland of low conservation value. No further mitigation is recommended.
- The western boundary contains a range of features valuable to biodiversity, due to its structure and width, principally for foraging bats. The impacts from the pitch construction and floodlighting should avoid the tall vegetation on this landscape bund.
- The eastern and southern boundary habitats are also of value to commuting and foraging bats, to a lesser degree, along with nesting habitat for birds. The southern boundary habitats of the sports ground will be affected by spillage from the pitch floodlights.

Fauna

The preliminary ecological appraisal identified three species or groups which could be adversely affected by the construction of the new 3G Sports Pitch.

Committing and Foraging Bats (Mitigation and Best Practice)

Thick site boundaries with trees, scrub and hedgerows provide suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat, particularly on the west boundary. Following concerns with regards to bat commuting activity on the southern and eastern boundaries the aspect of the pitch has been changed and it has been rotated by 90°. As a result, once a sensitive and modern sports flood lighting installation has been installed, as per the specification described within Appendix 3 of this document, there is minimal spillage and therefore no predicted negligible impact upon foraging or commuting bats.

In all instances, the species previously recorded in this location are categorised as being unaffected by artificial lighting in their foraging and commuting routes by best practice guidance, see section 4.3 (Bats) and reference 4.

Badger and Hedgehog (Best Practice)

To ensure best practice it is recommended to adopt a precautionary approach to avoid any harm to potentially present badgers and hedgehogs and to avoid any possible impact on the potential for a badger sett in the area of dense scrub cover in the southeast corner of the ground.

The precautionary actions are firstly that during development, to protect any foraging or commuting animals, any trenches dug during work activities that are left open overnight should be left with a sloping end or ramp to allow any mammals that may fall in a route to escape.

There should be no excavation or digging activities falling within a 30 metre buffer of the bramble/blackthorn scrub in the south-east corner of the playing field. If works are required in this zone, they must be completed only after consultation with the ecologist.

The exclusion zone is identified within figure 4 overleaf.

This should be no storage of materials, accessing this area using large machines or any excavations within the shaded zone in the figure overleaf.

The 30 metre exclusion zone will be established by the site contractor in advance of any construction works commencing or heavy vehicles entering onto the site. The buffer will be created by a strip of ‘heras’ type fencing as indicated in figure 4.



Figure 4 - exclusion zone for all and any excavation activities falling or required or storage of equipment or materials or vehicle access, all must remain at least 30 m away from the 'possible/potential' badger sett habitat. If works are required in this zone must be done only after consultation with the ecologist.

Nesting Birds (Mitigation)

If there is any requirement to remove any habitat feature with potential to support nesting birds then this should be timed to avoid the bird breeding season, which runs from March to September (inclusive). This is to avoid adverse impacts to any active nests present.

If any potential bird nesting habitat is on an area of proposed works and during the nesting season then a precautionary prestart survey should be carried out by a suitably qualified ornithologist to identify and map bird nests, in advance of any work.

Reptiles and amphibians

There is no habitat suitable for amphibians within the developing footprint and therefore no potential impact upon reptiles and amphibians from the development proposal. This is as the development is constrained within an area of modified and regularly mown grassland.

6 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN COVER REPORT

The Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric has been used to calculate the baseline biodiversity value of the site (before development), the post-development biodiversity value, and the Total Net Unit Change.

During the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, the surveyor undertook condition assessments of the relevant habitats to further inform the Statutory Metric.

6.1 Biodiversity Net Gain – Condition Assessments

The following section describes the Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Condition Assessments undertaken in the field. Only the Modified Grassland areas were included within the requirements for the BNG condition assessments, as the remainder of the habitats on site are outside the impact zone of construction

6.1.1 Modified grassland (g4 (106))

Statutory condition assessment sheet 5A was utilised for this assessment – Appendix 2.

First looking at essential criterion A, the grassland had an average of three species per m^2, meaning it **FAILS the essential criterion and is subsequently assessed as being in POOR condition**.

The grassland also failed the criterion B, with no variation in the sward height due to the mowing regime.

The area of modified grassland included within the red line boundary is equal to 0.6747ha of POOR condition Modified Grassland, and this scores a total of 1.35 Habitat Units.

6.2 Biodiversity Net Gain – Metric Results

The net gain target for this project was set at 10% as the statutory minimum.

As seen in section 6.1.1 above, the total habitat units assigned to the modified grassland within the red line area was 1.35, all of which was to be lost.

The client and landowner advise that as the entire area of playing field is needed for sports provision that there is no available land to deliver net gain “on site”.

The overall net gain for this project is **a loss of 100%,** with an overall requirement of **1.48 Habitat Units** to achieve the statutory 10% net gain.

As it is not possible to achieve this net gain provision on site, the owner and agent have arranged for 1.48 Habitat units from the Environment Bank, to be sourced from the Emberton Habitat Bank (MK03) which is in the same national character area as the proposed development(Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands).

Overleaf is the extract from the associated biodiversity net gain metric, note that the provided metric specifies that there are ‘rule breaks’ within the metric, these will all be dealt with by the provided Off-Site Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Units:

6.3 Biodiversity Net Gain – Figures

The biodiversity net gain figures are provided in the extracted headline sheet from the metric overleaf:

On-site baseline	*Habitat units*	1.35	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	*Habitat units*	-1.35	-100.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	*Habitat units*	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	*Habitat units*	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	-1.35	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	*Habitat units*	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	

Figure 6: The Headline Results taken from the Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric for Godmanchester Rovers.

FINAL RESULTS

Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	-1.35
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	-100.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?		No - Check Trading Summaries ▲

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	10.00%	1.35	1.48	1.48
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

Figure 7: The Final Results taken from the Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric for Godmanchester Rovers.

7 REFERENCES

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Appendix 1 - Relevant wildlife legislation

Birds

The bird breeding season generally lasts from early March to September for most species. All birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. This legislation makes it illegal, both intentionally and recklessly to kill, injure or take any wild bird; take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or in use; take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird; and possess or control any wild bird or egg unless obtained legally.

Birds listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) (e.g. barn owl) are afforded additional protection, which additionally makes it an offence to disturb a bird while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Great crested newt

Great crested newts and their breeding sites or resting places are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019) which continue the same provision for European protected species, licensing requirements, and protected areas after Brexit.

This makes it an offence to intentionally to kill, injure or disturb a great crested newt. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by great crested newt for shelter. The legislation extends to both breeding ponds as well as terrestrial habitat.

Common amphibian species (i.e. common frog, common toad, smooth newt and palmate newt) are afforded partial legal protection under UK legislation, i.e. Schedule 5, Section 9 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This legislation prohibits sale, transportation and advertising for sale.

Common Amphibians

Common amphibian species (i.e. common frog, common toad, smooth newt and palmate newt) are afforded partial legal protection under UK legislation, i.e. Schedule 5, Section 9 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This legislation prohibits sale, transportation and advertising for sale.

European Hedgehog

Hedgehogs are protected under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which prohibits killing or taking of individuals.

The hedgehog is also listed as a Priority Species for conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Under the NERC Act 2006, the hedgehog is categorised as a 'Species of Principal Importance' for biodiversity. Listing as a Biodiversity Action Plan priority and 'Principal Importance' species reflects concerns that hedgehog numbers are in decline and that some protection should be afforded to hedgehog habitat through the planning system.

Reptiles

Slow-worm, viviparous/common lizard, adder and grass snake are protected under Schedule 5, Section 9 (1 and 5) of the WCA 1981 (as amended) and the CRoW Act 2000 against deliberate or reckless killing and injuring and sale.

Bats

All species of British bat and their roosts are protected under British law by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and bats are classified as European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the 2017 Regulations'). This has recently been amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019) which continue the same provision for European protected species, licensing requirements, and protected areas after Brexit. The legislation makes it an offence to kill, injure or disturb a bat and/or to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place for a bat. It is also an offence to disturb the animals such that it impairs their ability to survive, to reproduce, to nurture their young, or such that it impairs their ability to hibernate or migrate. Under this legislation development work that could affect a bat or bat roost can only be permitted under a licence from Natural England.

Badger

Badger is a widespread and generally common species. However, they are legally protected under The Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which is based primarily on the need to protect badgers from baiting and deliberate harm or injury. Under this legislation it is illegal to:

- Wilfully kill, injure, take, or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or attempt to do so

- Possess any dead badger or any part of, or anything derived from, a dead badger
- Intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett by disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, damaging or destroying a sett, causing a dog to enter a sett, or obstructing access to it

A badger sett is defined in the legislation as "any structure or place, which displays signs indicating current use by a badger."

Appendix 2 – Grassland Condition Assessment

On-site or off-site, site name and location	Godmanchester Rovers Football Club	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	27th of June 2024 - Mr B J Collins MSc MCIEEM
Limitations (if applicable)	None	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	NA
Grid reference	TL25526939	**Habitat parcel reference**	Grassland

Habitat Description

The sward of playing field comprises a mixture of Perennial rye grass (Lolium perenne), Timothy (Phleum pratense), Creeping bent (Agrostis stolonifera) and Common fescue (Festuca sp.), with other species amongst it comprising Daisy (Bellis perennis), Dove's-foot crane's-bill (Geranium molle), Yorkshire fog (Holcus lanatus), Clover (Trifolium repens), greater plantain (Plantago major), annual meadow-grass (Poa annua), Black medic (Medicago lupulina), Lesser yellow trefoil (Trifolium dubium), and Cock's foot (Dactylis glomerata).

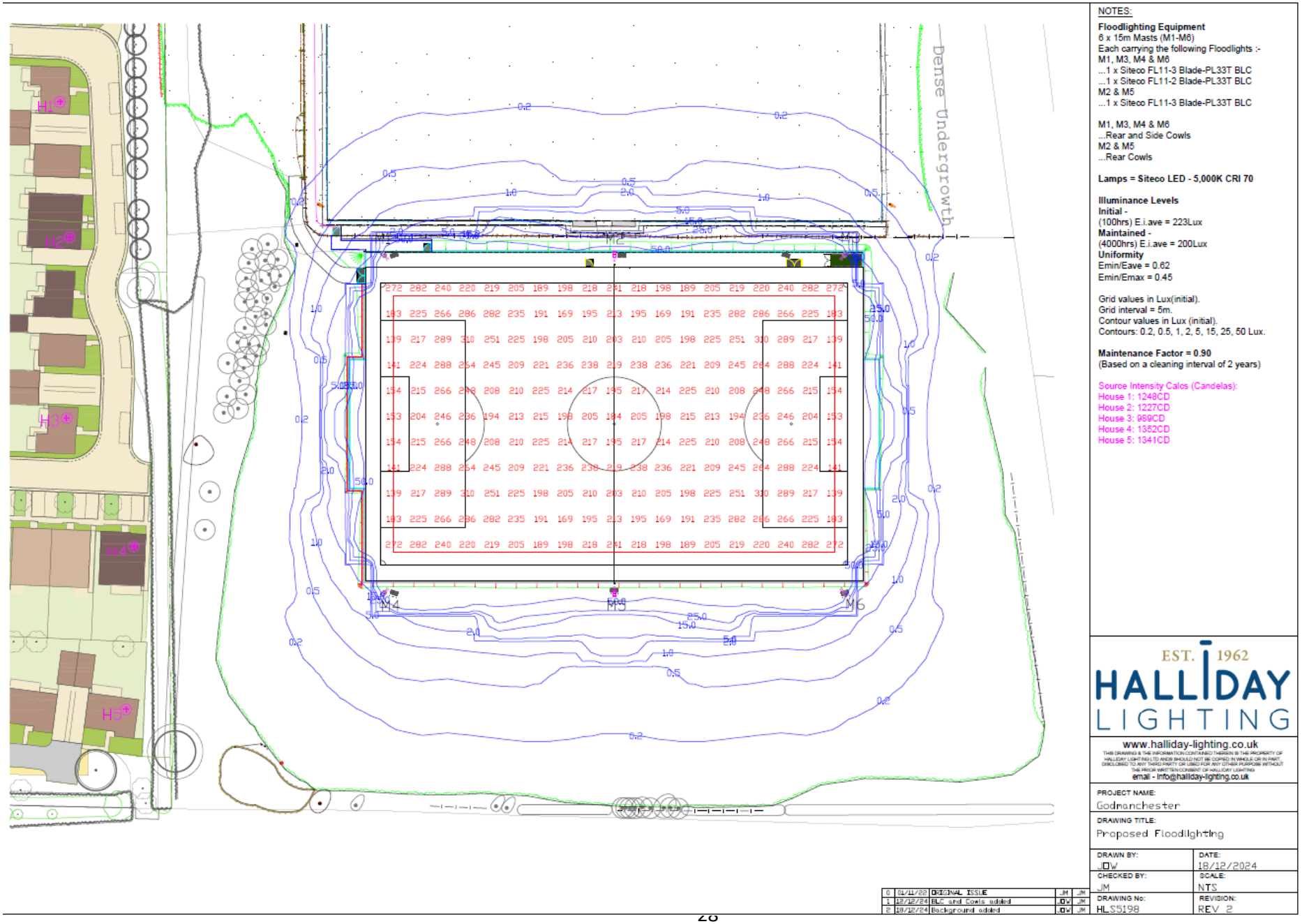
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m^2 present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.** Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m^2 (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	NO	Between 3 and 4 species per quadrat
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	NO	Regularly mown
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	PASS	Although this is an area of amenity grassland and the presence of areas of scrub is unlikely
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.		
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2].	PASS	
F	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%.	PASS	Although this is an area of amenity grassland and the presence of areas of bracken is unlikely
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]).	PASS	There are no invasive species within the development footpirnt
	Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)		
	Number of criteria passed	4	

Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	POOR

Appendix 3 - Proposed Installation and Floodlighting Scheme

The proposed installation and floodlighting scheme is provided overleaf



NOTES:

Floodlighting Equipment
6 x 15m Masts (M1-M6)
Each carrying the following Floodlights :-
M1, M3, M4 & M6
...1 x Siteco FL11-3 Blade-PL33T BLC
...1 x Siteco FL11-2 Blade-PL33T BLC
M2 & M5
...1 x Siteco FL11-3 Blade-PL33T BLC

M1, M3, M4 & M6
...Rear and Side Cowls
M2 & M5
...Rear Cowls

Lamps = Siteco LED - 5,000K CRI 70

Illuminance Levels
Initial -
(100hrs) E.i.ave = 223Lux
Maintained -
(4000hrs) E.i.ave = 200Lux
Uniformity
Emin/Eave = 0.62
Emin/Emax = 0.45

Grid values in Lux(initial).
Grid interval = 5m.
Contour values in Lux (initial).
Contours: 0.2, 0.5, 1, 2, 5, 15, 25, 50 Lux.

Maintenance Factor = 0.90
(Based on a cleaning interval of 2 years)

Source Intensity Calcs (Candelas):
House 1: 1248CD
House 2: 1227CD
House 3: 989CD
House 4: 1352CD
House 5: 1341CD

0	01/11/22	ORIGINAL ISSUE	JM	JM
1	18/12/24	BLC and Cowls added	JDW	JM
2	18/12/24	Background added	JDW	JM

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PROJECT NAME:	Godmanchester
DRAWING TITLE:	Proposed Floodlighting
DRAWN BY: JDW	DATE: 18/12/2024
CHECKED BY: JM	SCALE: NTS
DRAWING No: HLS5198	REVISION: REV 2