Pre-development and Post-development Habitat Survey Report for Calculation of Biodiversity Net Gain

For

Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

May 2025

Status: For planning

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Quality Standards

This report is certified BS 42020:2013 'Biodiversity – code of practice for planning and development' compliant and has been prepared in accordance with The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Technical Guidance Series '*Ecological Report Writing*' and Code of Professional Conduct.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Commission

1.1.1 The Landscape Partnership was commissioned by Mr Joshua Goodrum to assess whether a proposed development at Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire would provide a biodiversity net gain. This was calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

1.2 Legislation and policy background

1.2.1 There is a range of protection given to sites and species. Sites may be designated for local, national, European or global importance for nature conservation. Species may be protected by European-scale legislation or varying levels of national regulation. Further information is given in Appendix 1.

1.2.2 The Local Planning Authority has a policy to protect features of nature conservation value within its Local Plan. Other regulators have policies relating to the consents issued by them.

1.2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain is required for most developments under The Environment Act 2021. A minimum of 10% net gain needs to be achieved under The Environment Act 2021.

1.3 Site location and context

1.3.1 The site is located within the village of Upton, in the district of Huntingdonshire. The site was bound to the north by the access road to a dwelling located within the wider land ownership. The site boundaries were not demarcated at the time of the site visit, excluding the northernmost site boundary which was defined by the access gate to the site. Access to the site is via Upton Hill to the north of the site.

1.3.2 Land in the immediate vicinity within the wider land ownership mainly comprised grassland, with several buildings of various condition, and treelines separating it from Upton Hill to the north and Upton Park to the east. A pond and ditch were located within the wider land ownership. The site is located rurally, with the wider landscape mainly comprising agricultural land, with the residential area of Upton to the east of the site.

1.3.3 The Ordnance Survey Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the proposed development site is TL 1730 7824. A plan showing the site is provided at Figure 01.

1.4 Description of the project

1.4.1 The proposed development is for the conversion of a storage barn to produce a net increase of three dwelling units with associated parking and garden spaces. The existing gravel drive is proposed to be resurfaced with permeable bound gravel, and a patio are surrounding the proposed dwellings. The development proposals are shown in Appendix 2.

1.5 Objectives of this report

1.5.1 The objectives of the biodiversity calculations are:

- Calculate the existing biodiversity units, prior to the development being implemented.
- Calculate the proposed biodiversity units according to the proposals provided at the time of the planning application.
- Assess the net change in biodiversity units resulting from the development.

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2 Methodology

2.1 UK Habitat Classification survey methodology

Pre-development

UK Habitat Classification

2.1.1 The standardised UK Habitat Classification and mapping methodology[1] was followed. All habitats present and areas or features of ecological interest within such habitats were recorded and mapped. The survey methodology facilitates a rapid assessment of habitats and it is not necessary to identify every plant species on site. Where given, scientific names of plant species follow Stace ed. 4[2]. The DAFOR scale was applied to each plant species found within the site and in each habitat type, as follows:

- **D**: Dominant - a percentage cover of greater than 75%
- **A**: Abundant – a percentage cover of 51-75%
- **F**: Frequent – a percentage cover of 26-50%
- **O**: Occasional – a percentage cover of 11-15%
- **R**: Rare - a percentage cover of 1-5%

2.1.2 The survey was undertaken on 18th November 2024 by Jacob Heath and Jess Grundy and the weather conditions were mostly cloudy (70% cloud cover), still (Beaufort 0), and a temperature of 4ºC.

Pre-development measurement methodology

2.1.3 The areas of existing on-site habitats were calculated in QGIS using the habitat map (Figure 01) produced by The Landscape Partnership.

Limitations to UK Habitat Classification Survey

2.1.4 The UK Habitat Classification survey was undertaken outside the main flowering season for many species, as well as being outside the seasons in which some invasive species would be visible, for example those that are annual, or which die back in winter.

2.1.5 Sufficient standing dead or remnant vegetation remained to allow species identification and confident assessment of habitat types, and the time of the site visit was therefore not considered to be a significant limitation to the UK Habitat Classification survey.

Post-development

UK Habitat Classification

2.1.6 The retained baseline habitats and linear features and proposed habitats and linear features are shown on the As Proposed Floor/Site/Roof Plans produced by Campbell McCrae Ltd. (drawing no: 22447_04 Revision D). These habitats and linear features were converted to the UK Habitat Classification[1] system and mapped in QGIS (Figure 02). Each proposed habitat was assigned a UK Habitat Classification that best fit with reasonable assumptions made about proposed habitats.

Post-development measurement methodology

2.1.7 The areas of proposed habitats and lengths of proposed linear features were calculated in QGIS using the As Proposed Floor/Site/Roof Plans (drawing no: 22447_04 Revision D) produced by Campbell McCrae Ltd.

Limitations to UK Habitat Classification Survey

2.1.8 The proposed habitats are based on proposal which do not provide detailed management information. This is not considered a significant limitation as there is sufficient information to classify the habitats.

[1] UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (at https://www.ukhab.org)*
[2] Stace, C (2019) *New Flora of the British Isles.* C&M Floristics. 4th Edition.

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2.2 Habitat Condition Assessment methodology

2.2.1 Habitat condition assessments are a measure of the state of a habitat and are used to measure variation between parcels of the same habitat type. Condition of habitats is often linked to past and present management and land use.

2.2.2 Condition assessments of all pre and post-development habitats and linear features were undertaken as stated within The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide[3]. The condition of the habitats was assessed using The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment spreadsheets.

2.2.3 Condition assessments of all pre-development habitats and linear features were undertaken on-site during the UK Habitat Classification survey.

2.2.4 Condition assessments of all post-development habitats and linear features was a desk-based exercise using the information provided in the site proposals and assessing likely condition at the indicated 'Time to Target Condition' within the metric spreadsheet.

Limitations to Habitat Condition Assessment

2.2.5 The proposed habitats are based on a proposals drawing which does not provide detailed management information. This is not considered a significant limitation as there is sufficient information to estimate their condition.

2.2.6 The UK Habitat Classification survey was undertaken outside the main flowering season for many species, as well as being outside the seasons in which some invasive species would be visible, for example those that are annual, or which die back in winter. A precautionary approach to the condition assessment has therefore been adopted.

2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain methodology

Calculation methodology

2.3.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric tool (metric version date: 23rd July 2024) and Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition assessment tables were downloaded from the gov.uk website[4] on 3rd December 2024. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide was followed[3].

2.4 Strategic Significance methodology

2.4.1 The strategic significance of habitats was assessed by reviewing the local plan for any mention of the existing and proposed habitats and linear features.

2.4.2 At the time of writing the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)[5] has not been published.

[3] Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide. Published February 2024. Updated July 2024
[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides
[5] https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/biodiversity-and-greenspaces/cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-local-nature-recovery-strategy [Date accessed 30th May 2025]

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3 UK Habitat Classification survey results

3.1 Pre-development

3.1.1 The UK Habitat types identified during the survey are shown on Figure 01 and each habitat is described below. Primary habitat codes (levels 2-5) are listed below in bold. Secondary habitat codes (essential and additional) are unbolded.

Grassland – Modified grassland g4

3.1.2 Three parcels of modified grassland were present within the site, across which cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* was abundant, and false oat *Arrhenatherum elatius* and Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* were occasional. The management of the grassland was different across the separate parcels. Within Parcel 1, the sward height was short (<5cm) and appeared recently mown. Within Parcel 2, the sward height was consistently >7cm, with small areas of soft rush *Juncus effusus* that created tufts approximately 10cm in height. Within Parcel 3, sward height was mostly below 7cm, with evidence of mowing previously in the year.

3.1.3 Within Parcels 1 and 3, creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans* was abundant. Instances of dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg, cut-leaved cranesbill *Geranium dissectum*, and bristly oxtongue *Helminthotheca echioides* were frequent. Common mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, common ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, wild teasel *Dipsacus fullonum* and cleavers *Galium aparine* were occasional.

3.1.4 Within Parcel 2, creeping cinquefoil and broadleaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* were abundant. Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. occurred frequently, and hairy tare *Vicia hirsuta*, soft rush and burdock *Arctium lappa* were occasional.

3.1.5 It is considered that additional herbaceous species which are not apparent or which die back in Winter are also likely to be within this habitat.

Urban – Buildings u1b5

3.1.6 The large storage shed was present to the southwest of the site; there was no vegetation noted on or within the building.

3.1.7 The building consisted of brick and mortar walls with weatherboarding on all elevations, and corrugated cement sheet roof panels with metal sheet barge boards on the northern and southern elevations. The building was not considered to provide roosting potential for bats. A full building description can be found in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report[6].

Urban – Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface u1c

3.1.8 The majority of the site consisted of a gravel driveway for the existing off-site dwelling within the wider landownership; there was no vegetation within this habitat.

Individual trees – Rural trees g4 Rural trees 32

3.1.9 Three Leyland cypress *Cupressus* x *Leylandii* trees were located within Parcel 2 of the grassland.

3.1.10 These trees have been classed as Rural Trees within the metric due to the setting of the site within a rural location. None of the trees within the site boundary were considered to have high ecological value and did not offer bat roosting opportunities, but still provided some degree of bird nesting opportunities.

3.1.11 The stem diameters of each of these trees is below 30cm and therefore all trees within the site are classed as small sized trees. The size class of trees was determined using the table below taken from the Statutory Metric User Guide[3].

Size class	Diameter at breast height (DBH) (cm)
Small	Greater than 7.5cm and less than or equal to 30cm
Medium	Greater than 30cm and less than or equal to 60cm

[6] The Landscape Partnership (January 2025) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

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Size class	Diameter at breast height (DBH) (cm)
Large	Greater than 60cm and less than or equal to 90cm
Very large	Greater than 90cm

Watercourse – Culvert u1 851

3.1.12 The culvert which allows a ditch adjacent to the site to pass under the access track has been included in this habitat type.

3.1.13 No assessment of riparian zone encroachment was undertaken for this habitat type as areas of watercourses associated with culverts are not associated with riparian zones. The amount of watercourse encroachment for lengths of watercourses possessing a culvert are automatically assessed as N/A – Culvert. The watercourse encroachment band was determined using the table below taken from the Statutory Metric User Guide[3]

Watercourse encroachment band	Description
No encroachment	Less than 5% of the bank length is an engineered bank revetment and there is no encroachment into the channel
Minor	5% to 20% of the bank length is an engineered bank revetment; or there is encroachment across up to 10% of the channel width at any one point
Major	Greater than 20% of the bank length is an engineered bank revetment; or there is encroachment across greater than 10% of the channel width at any one point
N/A - Culvert	To be used for culverts only

Watercourse - Ditch r2b 50

3.1.14 A ditch is located adjacent to the access road into the site. Areas of the ditch had terrestrialised with dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, and bramble. Although the base of the ditch held a muddy appearance indicative of being actively used for water drainage, water was only present intermittently along its length and to a depth of less than 5cm.

3.1.15 The site boundary crosses into the riparian zone of the ditch, which extends 5m from the top of each bank. In line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, the length of the ditch adjacent to the riparian zone overlapping with the site have been included within the metric calculation.

3.1.16 The watercourse encroachment for the length of the ditch lacking a culvert has been set to no encroachment within the metric because less than 5% of the bank length is an engineered bank revetment and there is no channel encroachment.

3.1.17 The riparian encroachment has been set to major/major within the metric because the footprint of encroachment occupies an area 0-2m from both bank tops. This is in the form of the access track. The riparian zone encroachment band was determined using the table below taken from the Statutory Metric User Guide[3].

Riparian zone encroachment band for a bank	Definition for Ditches
No encroachment	No encroachment within 5 metres of bank top
Minor	Any encroachment 4 to 5 metres from the bank top (covering up to 100% of area); or where the footprint of encroachment occupies 0-10% of the riparian zone area 2 to 5 metres from bank top.
Moderate	Where the footprint of encroachment occupies between 10 to 25% of the riparian zone area 2 to 5 metres from the bank top
Major	Any encroachment 0 to 2 metres from the bank top; or where encroachment occupies greater than 15% of the total riparian zone area.

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Off-site habitats

Grassland – modified grassland g4 scattered scrub 10 tall forbs 16

3.1.18 A parcel of grassland continuous with Parcel 3 is present to the north of the site and forms part of the riparian zone of the ditch. Rosebay willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium* was abundant within this habitat, with instances of cut-leaved cranesbill and bristly oxtongue being frequent. Common mouse-ear, creeping thistle, common ragwort, wild teasel, and cleavers were occasional. Low-growing patches of bramble scrub were occasional within this habitat.

Heathland and shrub – Mixed scrub h3d

3.1.19 A parcel of mixed scrub present within the ditch has been included within this habitat. This habitat comprised an approximately equal mix of bramble scrub and cherry *Prunus avium* shrubs. Nettle was dominant where the scrub transitioned to grassland.

Urban – Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface u1c

3.1.20 An area of the existing gravel path adjacent to the site boundary has been included within this habitat type.

Individual trees – rural trees g4 32

3.1.21 Six small wild cherry *Prunus avium* trees and one medium goat willow *Salix caprea* adjacent to the site and ditch are present within the off-site grassland.

Watercourse – Culvert u1 851

3.1.22 A culvert not associated with a riparian zone, but which is present along the length of ditch which has its riparian zone overlapping with the site boundary has been included within this habitat type.

3.2 Post-development

3.2.1 The UK Habitat types that were identified from the development proposals are shown on Figure 02.

Grassland – Other neutral grassland g3c (Proposed grassland)

3.2.2 Three areas of wildflower grassland are proposed within the site boundary. These areas should be seeded with a shade-tolerant seed mix such as 'Emorsgate – EH1 Hedgerow Mixture' or similar, given their proximity to proposed trees and proposed hedgerows. The grassland will be managed by light mowing to allow periods of a sustained, tall sward height.

3.2.3 It is expected this category is the best fit taking into consideration the likely management of the areas as well as the variety of grass and wildflower species within the suggested seed mix, which meets three of the four criteria for other neutral grassland (see table below).

Other neutral grassland criteria[7]	Justification
>20% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges	Yes – more than 20% cover of wildflowers should be achieved with this seed mix.
>8 species per m^2 (including forbs, grasses, sedges and rushes, and excluding bryophytes)	No – Due to shading of proposed grassland parcels, less than 8 species per m^2 are expected to be present.
≥1 grass species that is not generally sown for intensive agricultural production (i.e. Rye-grasses *Lolium spp.*, Timothy *Phleum pratense*, Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, Meadow fescue *Festuca pratensis*) is at least abundant	Yes – More than 1 species not sown for agricultural production present within the seed mix should be at least abundant after sowing.
Cover of Rye-grasses *Lolium spp.* and White Clover *Trifolium repens*, where present is <30%	Yes – seed mix contains no rye-grasses or white clover.

[7] UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (at https://www.ukhab.org)*

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Urban – Vegetated garden u1** 828 **(Proposed gardens)

3.2.4 The three gardens proposed within the development are included within this habitat type. In line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, proposed habitats such as hardstanding within these areas have not been recorded.

Urban – Ground level planters u1** Flower bed 846 **(Proposed plant beds)

3.2.5 Three areas of native hedging are proposed adjacent to the dwellings, with a further eight proposed adjacent to parking areas. These areas have been classified as ground level planters due to planting being proposed to consist of individual shrubs separated by gaps, which will therefore not resemble a hedgerow.

Urban – Developed land; sealed surface u1b (Proposed hardworks)

3.2.6 The proposed extended patio area comprising flagstones is included within this habitat type.

Urban – Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface u1c (Proposed drive)

3.2.7 The area of the existing access road is proposed to be replaced with an access road and drive consisting of permeable bound gravel has been included within this habitat type.

Individual trees – Rural trees g3c** Scattered trees 32 **(Proposed trees)

3.2.8 The seven proposed trees within the development proposals have been classified as Rural Trees as these will be located within a rural setting. Management of these trees will be undertaken by a management company (*Pers comms.*). All of these trees have been included within the metric calculation.

3.2.9 The locations of tree planting are within grassland parcels to the north of the building. The species of trees proposed have not been specified, but it is detailed within the As Proposed Floor/Site/Roof Plans that native species will be used. Due to the context of the development for dwellings, it has been assumed that scattered trees will be managed for amenity value.

3.2.10 All trees at planting will have a stem diameter that is less than 30cm and therefore all proposed trees have been classed as small sized trees.

Watercourse - Ditch r2b 50 (Enhanced)

3.2.11 The ditch located adjacent to the site boundary is proposed for enhancement under current development proposals. This enhancement will include the clearing of plastic waste, removal of silt and deepening of ditch, introduction of aquatic marginal vegetation, and management of vegetation within and adjacent to ditch to reduce heavy shading. This reduction in shading necessitates the loss of off-site scrub habitat.

Retained habitats

Urban – Buildings u1b5

3.2.12 The storage shed within the site is proposed for conversion into three dwelling units.

Watercourse – Culvert u1 851

3.2.13 The off-site culvert located along the ditch is proposed for retention with no proposed alterations under current development proposals

Off-site habitats

Grassland – modified grassland g4 (cleared scrub)

3.2.14 The tree pruning and scrub removal proposed in order to enhance the ditch will result in scrub cover reducing below 75%, resulting in the habitat no longer meeting the definition of dense scrub. Management to maintain a low amount of shading of the ditch is likely to result in this habitat tending towards a similar condition to the surrounding off-site grassland parcel.

3.3 Habitat condition assessment results

3.3.1 The habitat condition assessment spreadsheets for existing and proposed habitats can be found in Appendix 3. A summary of the results can be found in the table below.

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Existing habitats/linear features

Habitat/Linear Feature	Condition
On-site	
Grassland - Modified grassland g4	Moderate
Urban - Buildings u1b5	N/A - Other
Urban - Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface u1c	N/A – Other
Individual trees – Rural trees 32	Moderate
Watercourse - Ditch r2b 50 & Culvert u1 851	Poor
Off-site	
Grassland – Modified grassland g4	Moderate
Heathland and shrub – Mixed scrub h3h	Poor
Urban – Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface u1c	N/A – Other
Individual trees – Rural trees g4 32	Moderate
Watercourse – Culvert u1 851	Poor

Proposed/Enhanced habitats/linear features

Habitat/Linear Feature	Condition
Proposed on-site habitat creation	
Grassland – Other neutral grassland g3c (Proposed grassland)	Poor
Urban – Built-up areas and gardens u1 vegetated garden 828 (Proposed gardens)	Condition Assessment N/A
Urban – Built-up areas and gardens u1 flower bed 846 (Proposed plant beds)	Condition Assessment N/A
Urban – Developed land; sealed surface u1b (Proposed hardstanding)	N/A - Other
Urban – Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface u1c (Proposed drive)	N/A- Other
Individual trees – Rural trees g3c 32(Proposed trees)	Moderate
Proposed on-site habitat enhancement	
Watercourse - Ditch r2b 50 (Enhanced ditch)	Moderate
Proposed off-site habitat creation	
Grassland –Modified grassland g4	Moderate

3.4 Biodiversity impact calculation results and discussion

3.4.1 The existing site value was calculated at 0.39 Habitat Units, and 0.05 Watercourse Units from the ditch within 5m of the site boundary. There are no hedgerow units before or after development.

3.4.2 Based on the proposals drawing that includes retained and created on-site vegetation, the proposed value is 0.20 Habitat Units and 0.09 Watercourse Units. This represents a net loss of -0.19 Habitat Units and a net gain of 0.04 Watercourse Units in the 'Headline Results' tab of the metric. The net percentage change for on-site habitats was calculated at a net loss of -49.39% for Habitat Units and a net gain of 71.58% for Watercourse Units. The net percentage change for on-site and off-site habitats, as a result of ditch enhancements, is calculated at -49.80%.

3.4.3 Trading rules have been satisfied for watercourses. Trading rules have not been met for habitats. Additional tree planting and heathland and shrub habitat creation is required in order to satisfy trading rules for medium distinctiveness habitats. Additional habitat units are required in order to satisfy trading rules for low distinctiveness habitats. The results of the metric can be found within a separate document.

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3.4.4 It is recommended that scrub planting is undertaken in the off-site grassland adjacent to the ditch to compensate for the lost scrub within the ditch. The presence of scattered bramble scrub and tall forbs such as nettle and rosebay willowherb within this off-site parcel would provide a highly suitable edge habitat and is considered to provide an opportunity to create a more ecologically valuable scrub habitat than could reasonably be created within the site boundary. Recommended species for scrub planting include hazel *Corylus avellana*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, and field maple *Acer campestre*. It is otherwise recommended that options to explore on-site habitat enhancement and creation are prioritised over off-site habitat enhancements and creation.

3.4.5 Due to the relatively small size of the proposed eastern grassland parcel relative to the proposed area of shrub planting, it is expected that heavy shading will adversely impact the majority of this parcel. It is therefore recommended that proposed shrub planting within this parcel is reduced or that a raised planter which is better suited to provide ecological benefits to invertebrates is proposed in place of this grassland.

3.4.6 Although a shade tolerant seed mix is recommended for grassland creation, it is expected that heavy shading resulting from proposed densely planted trees will result in a poor condition grassland. It is therefore recommended that the proposed tree spacing within areas of grassland is increased from approximately 4.5-6m to 6.5-9m and that additional areas for tree planting are identified. This is expected to increase the number of the species which the grassland is likely to support and result in the other neutral grassland being moderate condition.

3.5 Significance results

3.5.1 None of the existing or created habitats or linear features are mentioned within the current local plan. They have all been set to the default 'Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy'.

4 Conclusions

4.1.1 The development will currently achieve a total net loss of -49.80% in Habitat Units, and net gain of 73.08% in Watercourse Units. The trading rules have not been met for habitats. The trading rules have been met for watercourses.

4.1.2 This does not meet the requirements set by The Environment Act 2021 as achieving at least 10% net gain and satisfying trading rules. If a 10% net gain cannot be achieved within the site, then habitat units will need to be supplemented by offsite enhancements, secured via planning condition or legal agreement.

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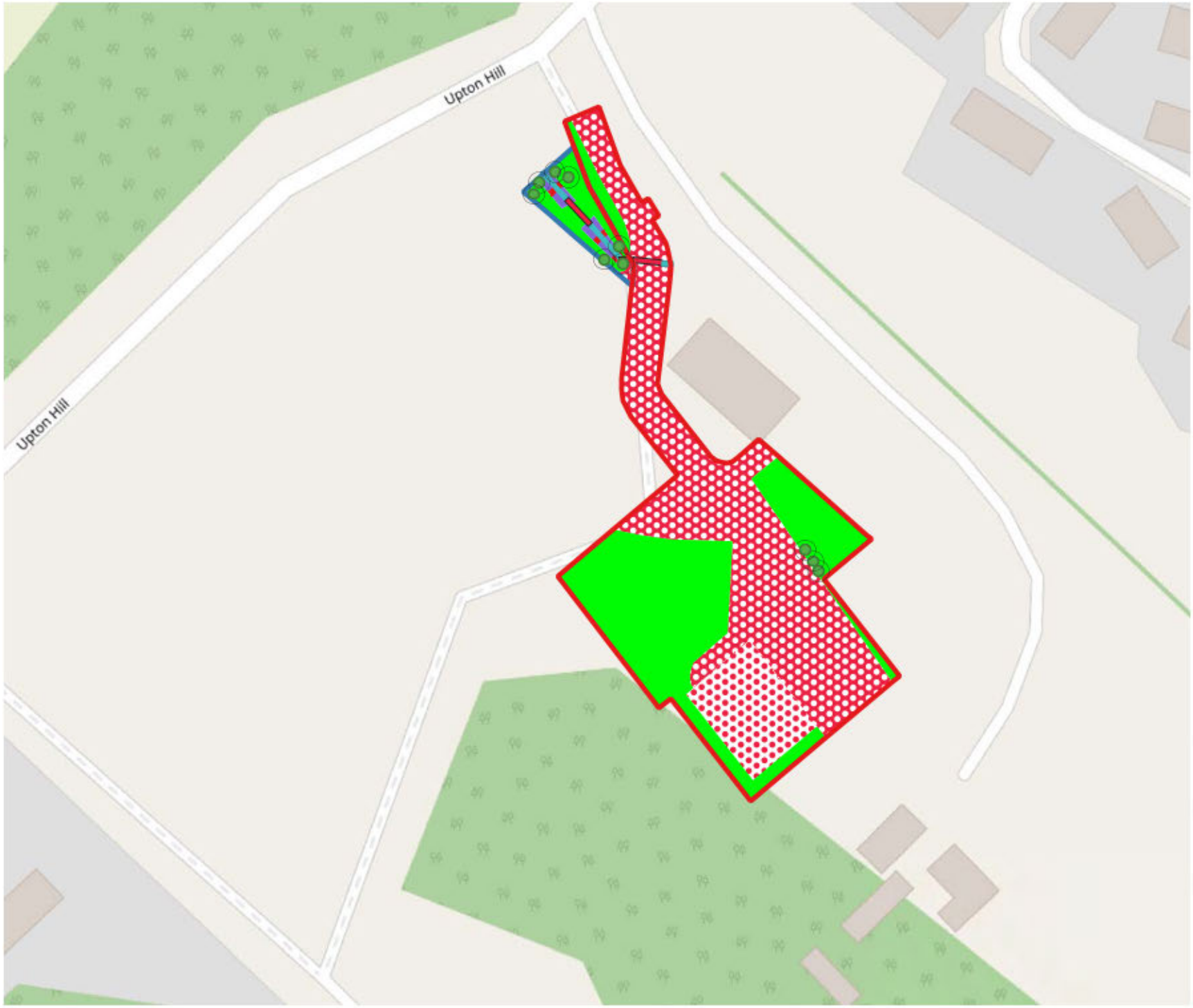
Figures



Key

- Red Line Boundary
- Off-site land ownership
- Modified grassland g4
- Mixed scrub h3h
- Buildings u1b5
- Artificial unvegetated - unsealed surface u1c
- Ditch r2b 50
- Culvert u1 851
- Rural trees g4 32

B24073 - Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

Pre-development UK Habitat Classification survey

Figure 01

Scale: NTS

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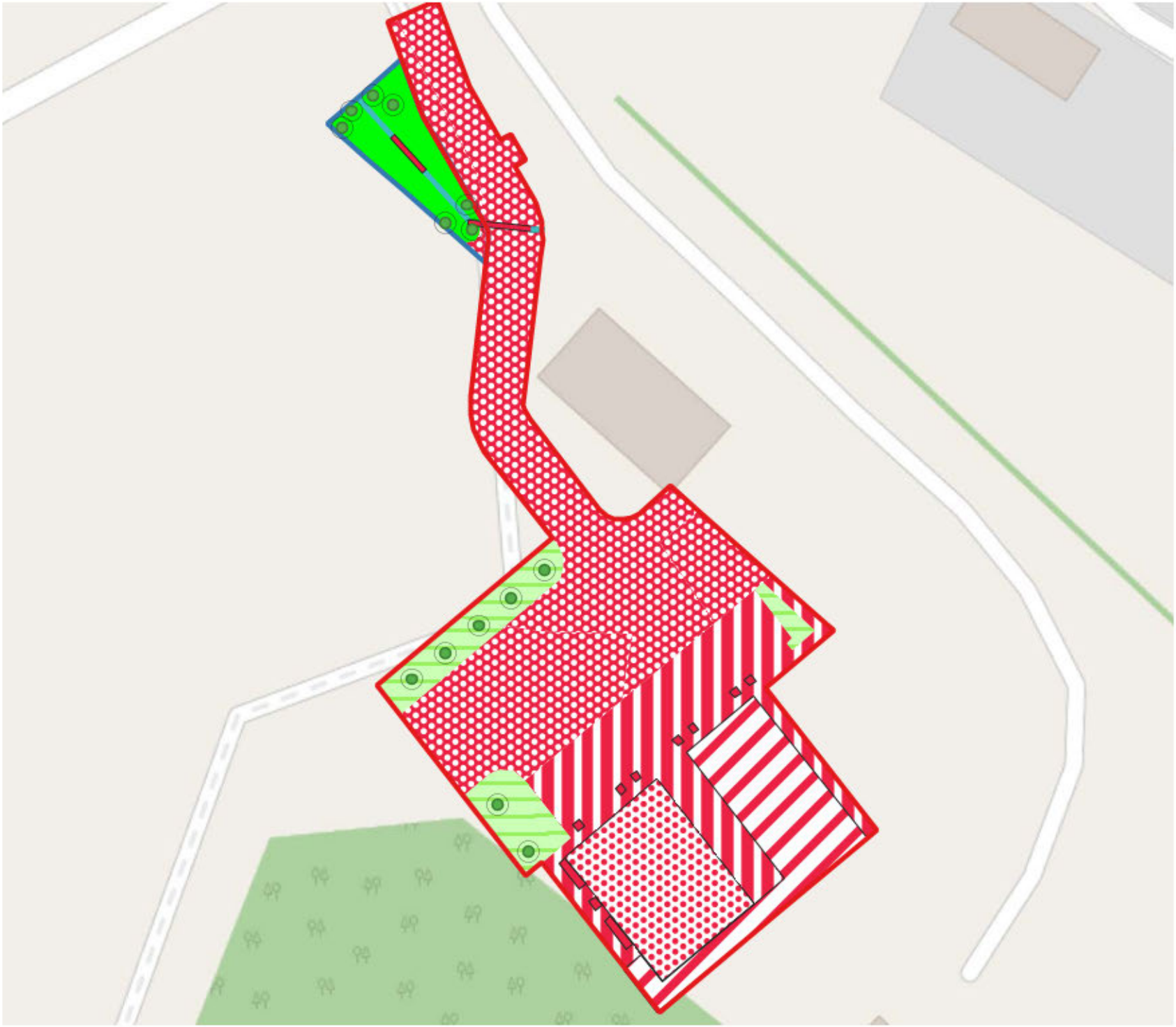

B24073 Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs

Post-development UK Habitat Classification Survey

Figure 02

Scale: NTS

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Appendix 1

Legislative and policy context

There is a number of pieces of legislation, regulations and policies specific to ecology which underpin this assessment. These may be applicable at a European, National or Local level. References to legislation are given as a summary for information and should not be construed as legal advice.

Birds Directive

The European Community Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC), normally known as the Birds Directive, sets out general rules for the conservation of all naturally occurring wild birds, their nests, eggs and habitats. It was superseded by the 'new' Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) which generally updated the previous directive.

These requirements are interpreted into English law by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) with regard to protection of birds, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 with regard to the registration and regulation of Special Protection Areas.

Habitats Directive

The European Community Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC), normally known as the Habitats Directive, aims to protect the European Union's biodiversity. It requires member states to provide strict protection for specified flora and fauna (i.e. European Protected Species) and the registration and regulation of Special Areas of Conservation.

These requirements are interpreted into English law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 with regard to European Protected Species and the registration and regulation of Special Areas of Conservation.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 interpret the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive into English and Welsh law. For clarity, the following paragraphs consider the case in England only, with Natural England given as the appropriate nature conservation body. In Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales is the appropriate nature conservation body.

Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation are defined in the regulations as 'European sites'. The Regulations regulate the management of land within European sites, requiring land managers to have the consent of Natural England before carrying out management. Byelaws may also be made to prevent damaging activities and if necessary land can be compulsorily purchased to achieve satisfactory management.

The Regulations define competent authorities as public bodies or statutory undertakers. Competent authorities are required to make an appropriate assessment of any plan or project they intend to permit or carry out, if the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect upon a European site. The permission may only be given if the plan or project is ascertained to have no adverse effect upon the integrity of the European site. If the competent authority wishes to permit a plan or project despite a negative assessment, imperative reasons of over-riding public interest must be demonstrated, and there should be no alternative to the scheme. The permissions process would involve the Secretary of State and the option of consulting the European Commission. In practice, there will be very few cases where a plan or project is permitted despite a negative assessment. This means that a planning application has to be assessed by the Local Planning Authority, based on information provided by the applicant, and the assessment must either decide that it is likely to have no significant effect on a European site or ascertain that there is no adverse effect upon the integrity of the European site.

Government policy is for Ramsar sites (wetlands of global importance) to be treated as if they were European sites within the planning process.

Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment is required in certain instances under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Regulation 63 says that:

> *63.— (1) A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which-*
>
> *(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site*

(either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and

(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,

must make an appropriate assessment of the implications for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

(2) A person applying for any such consent, permission or other authorisation shall provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment or to enable them to determine whether an appropriate assessment is required.

(3) The competent authority shall for the purposes of the assessment consult the appropriate nature conservation body and have regard to any representations made by that body within such reasonable time as the authority may specify.

(4) They must also, if they consider it appropriate, take the opinion of the general public, and if they do so, they must take such steps for that purpose as they consider appropriate.

(5) In the light of the conclusions of the assessment, and subject to regulation 64 (considerations of overriding public interest), the competent authority shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site or the European offshore marine site (as the case may be).

(6) In considering whether a plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of the site, the authority must have regard to the manner in which it is proposed to be carried out or to any conditions or restrictions subject to which they propose that the consent, permission or other authorisation should be given.

The competent authority is typically the local planning authority. The appropriate assessment contains the information the council requires for the purposes of its assessment under the Habitat Regulations.

The Habitat Regulations also are applicable to local authority land use plans and policies. If a policy or plan is likely to have a significant effect upon a European site, the permission may only be given if the policy or plan is ascertained to have no adverse effect upon the integrity of the European site. This approach gives rise to a hierarchy of plans each with related appropriate assessments. For example, the appropriate assessment of a Regional Spatial Strategy will affect policies within a Core Strategy, which will then need its own appropriate assessment, and so on.

European Protected Species

European Protected Species of animals are given protection from deliberate capture, injury, killing, disturbance or egg taking/capture. Their breeding sites or resting places are also protected from damage or destruction, which does not have to be deliberate. A number of species are listed as European Protected Species, with those most likely to be considered in planning applications being bats, dormouse, great crested newt and otter. Natural England may give a licence for actions that are otherwise illegal, subject to them being satisfied on the three tests of no alternative, over-riding public interest, and maintenance of the species in favourable condition.

European Protected Species of plant are also listed and given protection. These species are generally very rare and unlikely to be present in proposed development sites.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 has been amended many times, including by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. It contains provisions for the notification and regulation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and for protected species.

The Regulations regulate the management of land within Sites of Special Scientific Interest, requiring land managers to have the consent of Natural England before carrying out management.

All public bodies are defined as 'S28G' bodies, which have a duty to further the nature conservation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the undertaking of their functions. In practice, this prevents planning applications being permitted if they would harm Sites of Special Scientific Interest, as it would be a breach of that duty.

The Act makes it an offence intentionally to kill, injure, or take any wild bird, take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird, while that nest is in use or being built, or take or destroy an egg of any wild bird. Special penalties are available for offences related to birds listed on Schedule 1, for which there are additional offences of disturbing these birds at their nests, or their dependent young.

The Act makes it an offence intentionally to kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5, and prohibits interference with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places. Some species have lesser protection under this Act, for example white-clawed crayfish, common frog and toads are only protected from sale, and reptile species, other than smooth snake and sand lizard, are protected from intentional killing or injury, but they are not protected from disturbance and their habitat is not protected. It is also an offence intentionally to pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant listed in Schedule 8.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) dated December 2024 provides Government Policy in relation to nature conservation and planning as well as other matters.

Chapter 15 paragraph 187(d) of the NPPF says that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Paragraphs 188 and 189 relate to policy for designated sites of biodiversity or landscape importance. Local Plan policies should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value and maintain and enhance networks of habitats and green infrastructure. Further policy is within paragraph 185, where Local Planning Authorities should to protect and enhance biodiversity within their Local Plans by:

- Identifying, mapping and safeguarding components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- Promoting the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

When determining planning applications Local Planning Authorities should apply the following principles (paragraph 193):

- If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused,
- development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Paragraph 194 adds protection to candidate sites of European or International importance (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites) and also to those sites identified or required as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential SPA, possible SAC listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

Paragraph 195 clarifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a 'habitats' site, i.e. a European site, (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Government circular 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact Within the Planning System' referenced ODPM 06/2005 has not been replaced and remains valid. It sets out the legislation regarding designated and undesignated sites and protected species and describes how the planning system should take account of that legislation. It does however pre-date the NERC Act 2006 (see below), which includes a level of protection for a further list of habitats and species regardless of whether they are on designated sites or elsewhere.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

This Act includes a list of habitats and species of principal importance in England. Local Authorities are required to consider the needs of these habitats and species when making decisions, such as on planning application.

Local Planning Authority's planning policy

The Local Planning Authority will have policies relating to biodiversity conservation.

Species Legislation

The following table provides an overview of legislation with regard to species.

Protected Species	Legislation			
	Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981	**The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017**	**Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006**	**Protection of Badgers Act, 1992**
Plants (certain 'rare' species)	✓	✓[8]	✓	
Invertebrates (certain 'rare' species)	✓	✓[9]	✓	
White-clawed crayfish	✓		✓	
Great crested newt, natterjack toad, pool frog	✓	✓	✓	
Other amphibians	✓[10]		✓	
Sand lizard, smooth snake	✓	✓[11]	✓	
Other reptiles	✓[12]		✓	
Breeding birds	✓	✓	✓	
Wintering birds (certain 'rare' species)	✓	✓	✓	
Bats	✓	✓	✓	
Dormouse	✓	✓	✓	
Water vole	✓		✓	
Otter	✓	✓	✓	
Badger				✓

[8] Nine species present in the UK, with very specialised habitat requirements, are European Protected Species.

[9] Fisher's estuarine moth, large blue butterfly and lesser whirlpool ram's-horn snail are European Protected Species.

[10] The four other native amphibian species (smooth and palmate newts, common frog and common toad) are only protected against trade under this act.

[11] Smooth snake and sand lizard are European Protected Species.

[12] The four other native reptile species (common lizard, slow worm, grass snake and adder) are protected against intentional killing, injury and trade under this act.

Appendix 2

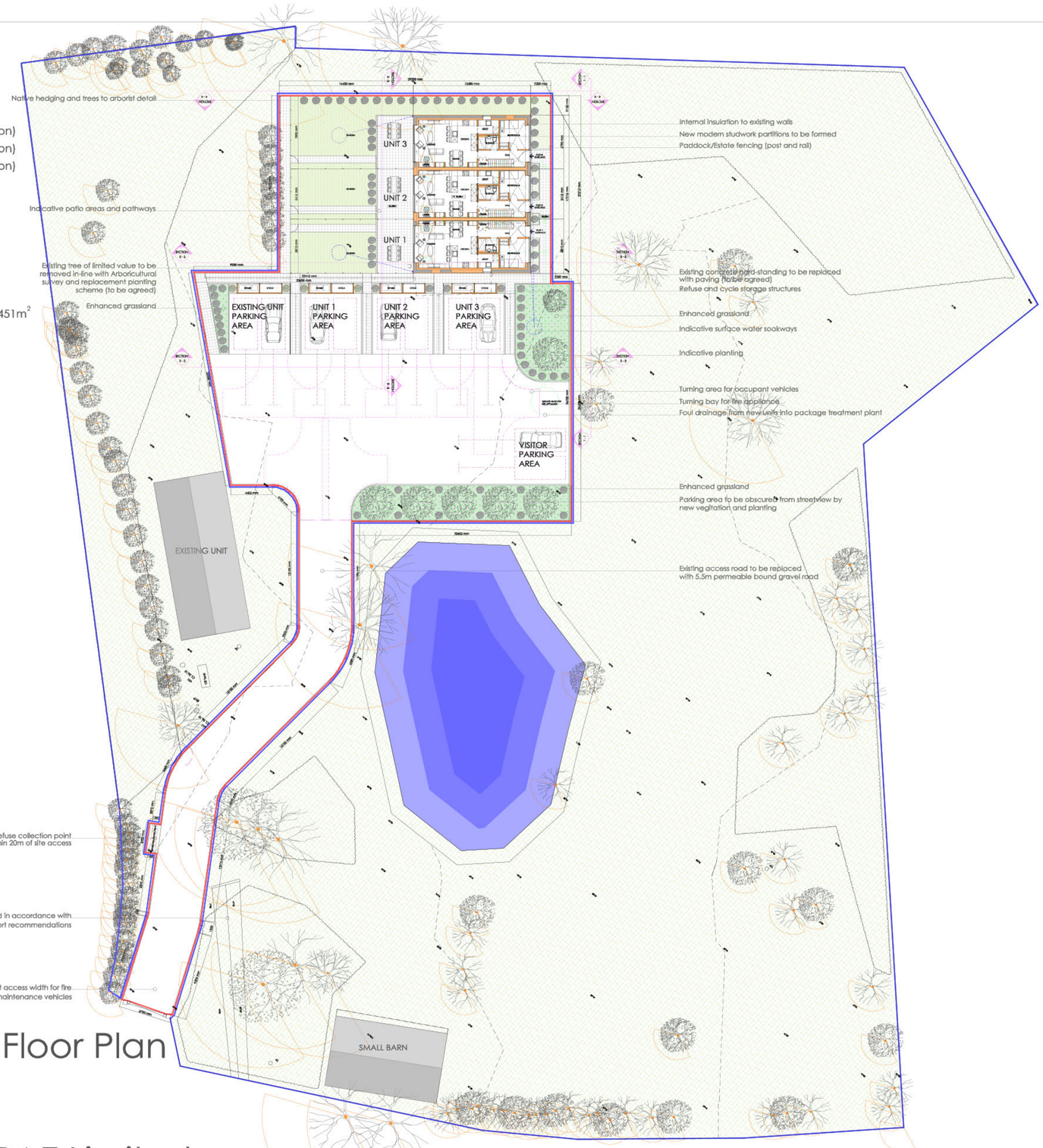
Dwelling Areas: m^2

Unit:	Plot:	GIA*:	Accommodation**:
01	201	90	converted 3-bed (5 person)
02	191	90	converted 3-bed (5 person)
03	255	90	converted 3-bed (5 person)

* Plot size includes parking areas and external stores
** GIA excludes external stores
*** In line with Housing standards - nationally described space standards

Site Area (within red line boundary): 1890m^2
Total building footprint: 214m^2
Coverage: 11.3%

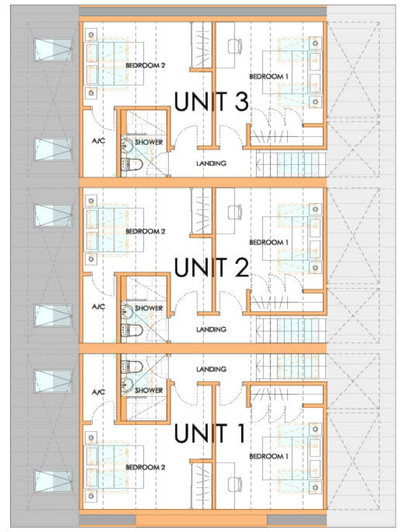
Wider Site Area (within blue line boundary): 10451m^2
Total building footprint: 436m^2
Coverage: 4.2%



Site/Ground Floor Plan

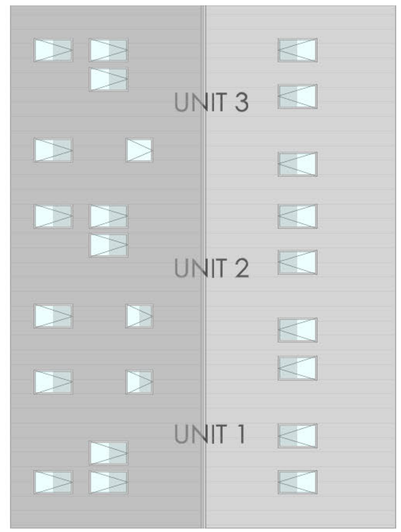
1:250

0 5 10 15



First Floor Plan

1:100



Roof Plan

1:100

0 5

CAMPBELL McCRAE Limited
architectural services

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Project:	Drawing title:	Scale	Date	Drwg No.	Revision
Barn at Upton Hill, Upton	As Proposed Floor/Site/Roof Plans	1:250@A1	JAN 25	22447_04	D

Use figured dimensions only, do not scale.
Campbell McCrae Ltd can accept no responsibility for the interpretation of this drawing when the practice is not named as contract administrator in the building contract.

Appendix 3

Survey Cover Sheet			
Survey date/s	Pre-development - 18th November 2024. Post-development 27th May 2025	**Site name or location**	Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs
Weather conditions	Pre-development - Cloudy (70% cloud cover), stil (Beaufort 0), and 4°C	**Project or development name**	Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs
Surveyor name	Jacob Heath	**On-site or off-site**	On-site
Survey reference	B24073	**Reason for assessment (if not baseline condition survey)**	
Notes			

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)

UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type

Grassland - Modified grassland

Habitat Description

See accompanying report - Modified grassland

ukhab – UK Habitat Classification

On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	18th November 2024; Jacob Heath									
		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)										
Limitations (if applicable)	Survey was undertaken outside the main flowering season for many species, as well as being outside the seasons in which invasive species would be visible, for example those that are annual, or which die back in winter. This was not considered to be a significant limitation due to the habitats found within the site.	**Habitat parcel reference**										
		1	2	3								
		Grid reference										
		TL 1728 7822	TL 1733 7824	TL 1728 7830								

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.	Yes	Yes	Yes								3-4 species were noted per m^2 outside of the optimal survey season, and it is reasonable to assume 6 or more would be found in June-July.
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	Yes	No								>80% of sward below 7cm (1 & 3), or sward variable within parcel (2).
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.	Yes	No	Yes								No scrub present (1 & 3), bramble scrub present (2).
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.	Yes	Yes	Yes								physical damage present in less than 5%.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2].	No	No	No								Less than 1% cover of bare ground.
F	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%.	Yes	Yes	Yes								No bracken present.
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]).	Yes	Yes	Yes								No non-native plant species were noted.
	Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)	Yes	Yes	Yes								
	Number of criteria passed	5	5	5								

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)										

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Footnotes

Footnote 1 – Creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* , spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare* , curled dock *Rumex crispus* , broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* , common nettle *Urtica dioica* , creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* , greater plantain *Plantago major* , white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris* .

Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.

Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.

Footnote 4 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type

Habitat Types

Individual trees – Urban trees
Individual trees – Rural trees
Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.

Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of rural trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in rural locations.

Habitat Description

See accompanying report - Rural trees

Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment):
Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching.

Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only):
Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.

On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	18th November 2024; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Survey was undertaken outside the main flowering season for many species, as well as being outside the seasons in which invasive species would be visible, for example those that are annual, or which die back in winter. This was not considered to be a significant limitation due to the habitats found within the site.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	
Grid reference	TL 1732 7824	**Habitat parcel reference**	

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	No	All Leyland cypress.
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Individual trees.
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1].	No	None of the trees were mature.
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes	No evidence of adverse impacts on tree health.
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	None of the trees are mature, and none have developed these features.
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	All are located within grassland Parcel 2.
	Number of criteria passed	3	

Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/√
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.		

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score[2]

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Off-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	18th November 2024; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Based on block plan drawing	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	B24073
Grid reference	TL 1729 7823	**Habitat parcel reference**	
Habitat Description			
See accompanying report - Modified grassland			
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.	Yes	3-4 species were noted per m² outside of the optimal survey season, and it is reasonable to assume 6 or more would be found in June-July.
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	>80% of sward below 7cm.
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.	Yes	Scattered scrub was present, however accounted for approximately 15% of the grassland area.
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.	Yes	physical damage present in less than 5%.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2].	No	Less than 1% cover of bare ground.
F	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%.	Yes	No bracken present.
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]).	Yes	No non-native plant species were noted.
		Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)	Yes
		Number of criteria passed	5

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)		

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Footnotes

Footnote 1 – Creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, greater plantain *Plantago major*, white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*.

Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.

Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.

Footnote 4 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Condition Sheet: SCRUB Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Heathland and shrub - Blackthorn scrub **Heathland and shrub - Gorse scrub** **Heathland and shrub - Hawthorn scrub** **Heathland and shrub - Hazel scrub** **Heathland and shrub - Mixed scrub** **Heathland and shrub - Dunes with sea buckthorn (H2160)** **Heathland and shrub - Willow scrub**			
Habitat Description			
For Dunes with sea buckthorn see:	Dunes with sea-buckthorn (Dunes with Hippophae rhamnoides) - Special Areas of Conservation (jncc.gov.uk)		
For other scrub types see:	ukhab – UK Habitat Classification		
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Off-site, Upton Hill, Huntington, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	18th November 2024
Limitations (if applicable)	Survey was undertaken outside the main flowering season for many species, as well as being outside the seasons in which invasive species would be visible, for example those that are annual, or which die back in winter. This was not considered to be a significant limitation due to the habitats found within the site.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	B24073
Grid reference	TL 1728 7830	**Habitat parcel reference**	

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range).[1] - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species[2], - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel *Corylus avellana* , common juniper *Juniperus communis* , sea buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* (only in its restricted native range), or box *Buxus sempervirens* , which can be up to 100% cover).	No	The species present within the scrub are native with no single species comprising above 75% cover, howvever only two woody species were present.
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran[3]) shrubs are all present.	No	Only young shrubs and mature bramble was present.
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[4] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[5]) and species indicative of suboptimal condition[6] make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Yes	No invasive non-native species were noted.
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	Yes	The grassland adjacent to the scrub supported both scattered scrub and tall forbs.
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	No	The habitat parcel is not large enough to support these features.

		Number of criteria passed	2
Condition Assessment Result (out of 5 criteria)	**Condition Assessment Score**	**Score Achieved ×/✓**	
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	✓	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type

Habitat Types

Individual trees – Urban trees
Individual trees – Rural trees
Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.

Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of rural trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in rural locations.

Habitat Description

See accompanying report - exisitng off-site rural trees

Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment):
Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching.

Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only):
Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.

On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	18th November 2024; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Survey was undertaken outside the main flowering season for many species, as well as being outside the seasons in which invasive species would be visible, for example those that are annual, or which die back in winter. This was not considered to be a significant limitation due to the habitats found within the site.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	B24073
Grid reference	TL 1732 7824	**Habitat parcel reference**	

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	All ash trees.
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Individual trees.
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1].	No	None of the trees were mature.
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes	No evidence of adverse impacts on tree health.
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	None of the trees are mature, and none have developed these features.
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	All are located within grassland Parcel 2.
	Number of criteria passed	4	

Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/√
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.		

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score[2]

Condition Sheet: DITCH Habitat Type			
Habitat Type			
Watercourses - Ditches			
Habitat Description			
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide.			
See accompanying report - Ditch			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	18th November 2024; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Survey was undertaken outside the main flowering season for many species, as well as being outside the seasons in which invasive species would be visible, for example those that are annual, or which die back in winter. This was not considered to be a significant limitation due to the habitats found within the site.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	
Grid reference	TL 1728 7829	**Habitat parcel reference**	

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The ditch is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution.	No	Rubbish present within ditch.
B	A range of emergent, submerged and floating-leaved plants are present. As a guide >10 species of emergent, floating or submerged plants present in a 20 m ditch length.	No	Only terrestrial species are present.
C	There is less than 10% cover of filamentous algae and or duckweed *Lemna* spp. (these are signs of eutrophication).	Yes	No algae or duckweed present.
D	A fringe of aquatic marginal vegetation is present along more than 75% of the ditch.	No	No aquatic marginal vegetation present.
E	Physical damage is evident along less than 5% of the ditch, with examples of damage including: excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, or any other damaging management activities.	Yes	Less than 5% physical damage noted.
F	Sufficient water levels are maintained - as a guide a minimum summer depth of approximately 50 cm in minor ditches and 1 m in main drains.	No	Ditch held less than 5cm of water.
G	Less than 10% of the ditch is heavily shaded.	No	Trees resulted in more than 50% of ditch being shaded.
H	There is an absence of non-native plant and animal species[1].	Yes	No non-native plant and animal species present.
	Number of criteria passed	3	

Condition Assessment Result (out of 8 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Passes 8 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria	Moderate (2)	
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	✓

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score
Footnotes

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high and very high distinctiveness)

UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types

Grassland - Lowland calcareous grassland
Grassland - Lowland dry acid grassland
Grassland - Lowland meadows
Grassland - Other lowland acid grassland
Grassland - Other neutral grassland
Grassland - Tall herb communities (H6430) [Not to be confused with the Tall forbs secondary code – see UKHab guidance for details.]
Grassland - Upland acid grassland
Grassland - Upland calcareous grassland
Grassland - Upland hay meadows
Sparsely vegetated land - Calaminarian grassland

On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	27th May 2025; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Based on proposal which do not provide detailed management information. This is not considered a significant limitation as there is sufficient information to classify the habitats.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	B24073
Grid reference	TL 1728 7829	**Habitat parcel reference**	

Habitat Description

See accompanying report - Proposed other neutral grassland

ukhab – UK Habitat Classification

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description).[1] **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**	No	Combined effects of shading from trees, hedgerows, and shrubs will limit the ability of the grassland to support indicator species consistently across the habitat.
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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	No	Habitat is to be managed by mowing, which will produce a uniform sward height.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens[2].	No	Bare ground is likely to be below 1% at target time to condition due to grasses establishing in spaces between wildflowers.
D	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is less than 5%.	Yes	Bracken should not be present within the wildflower seed mix.
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition[3] and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species[4] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[5]) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Yes	The suggested seed mix does not contain species indicative of suboptimal condition, however competitive species present in conneced habitats may become present in gaps between wildflowers by target time to conditon

Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m^2 present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**	No	Combined effects of shading and trees, hedgerows, and shrubs will limit the ability of the grassland to support a high species diversity,
	Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)	No	
	Number of criteria passed	2	

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)		
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	
Non-acid grassland types (Result out of 6 criteria)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	Good (3)	
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	Moderate (2)	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F.	Poor (1)	Poor

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Notes

Footnote 1 - Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.

Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover.

Footnote 3 - Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* , spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare* , curled dock *Rumex crispus* , broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* , common nettle *Urtica dioica* , creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* , greater plantain *Plantago major* , white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris* . There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.

Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement.

Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type

Habitat Types

Individual trees – Urban trees
Individual trees – Rural trees
Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.

Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of rural trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in rural locations.

Habitat Description

See accompanying report - Rural trees

Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment):
Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching.

Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only):
Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.

On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	27th May 2025; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Based on proposal which do not provide detailed management information. This is not considered a significant limitation as there is sufficient information to classify the habitats.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	
Grid reference	TL 1729 7824	**Habitat parcel reference**	

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	Species for planting are believed to be native.
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	All trees have been classified as individual trees, which automatically pass this criterion.
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1].	No	Trees will be newly planted as part of the development and will not reach maturity within 30 years.
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes	Trees should be in good condition. Any failed plants will be replaced within the first five years and appropriate management should prevent damage to trees at target time to condition.
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	Trees will be immature and will be unlikely to develop these features within 30 years.
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Trees will be planted in areas of grassland.
	Number of criteria passed	4	

Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.		

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score[2]

Condition Sheet: DITCH Habitat Type			
Habitat Type			
Watercourses - Ditches			
Habitat Description			
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide.			
See accompanying report - Enhanced ditch			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	27th May 2025; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Based on recommendations for ditch enhancement.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	B24073
Grid reference	TL 1728 7829	**Habitat parcel reference**	

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The ditch is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution.	Yes	The removal of vegetation and plastic waste from the bank and deepening the ditch should encourage water into the ditch and encourage good quality water.
B	A range of emergent, submerged and floating-leaved plants are present. As a guide >10 species of emergent, floating or submerged plants present in a 20 m ditch length.	No	No floating or submergent aquatic species are likely to become present within 30 years.
C	There is less than 10% cover of filamentous algae and or duckweed *Lemna* spp. (these are signs of eutrophication).	Yes	Filamentous algae and duckweed are unlikely to colonise this area; ditch will not be subject to agricultural runoff and is therefore unlikely to undergo eutrophication.
D	A fringe of aquatic marginal vegetation is present along more than 75% of the ditch.	Yes	Removal of silt and deepening of ditch should improve water retention and allow supporting of introduced aquatic marginal vegetation.
E	Physical damage is evident along less than 5% of the ditch, with examples of damage including: excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, or any other damaging management activities.	Yes	There should be no physical damage evident along the ditch.
F	Sufficient water levels are maintained - as a guide a minimum summer depth of approximately 50 cm in minor ditches and 1 m in main drains.	No	Removal of silt and deepening of ditch can improve water retention, but is unlikely to result in the ditch holding 50cm of water.
G	Less than 10% of the ditch is heavily shaded.	Yes	Management of vegetation surrounding the ditch should be employed to reduce heavy shading to below 10%.
H	There is an absence of non-native plant and animal species[1].	Yes	No invasive non-native species are proposed.
	Number of criteria passed	6	

Condition Assessment Result (out of 8 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Passes 8 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Footnotes

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Off-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	27th May 2025
Limitations (if applicable)	Based on recommended scrub clearance for ditch enhancement.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	B24073
Grid reference	TL 1729 7823	**Habitat parcel reference**	
Habitat Description			
See accompanying report - Off-site habitat, modified grassland (cleared scrub).			
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.	Yes	The grassland parcel is likely to be colonised by the species present withint the surrounding grassland. 3-4 species were noted per m^2 in adjacent grassland outside of the optimal survey season, and it is reasonable to assume 6 or more would be found in June-July.
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	Occasional mowing will likely result in a uniform sward height.
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.	Yes	Area is proposed to be cleared of scrub; scattered scrub may develop but management should maintain a cover of below 10%.
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.	Yes	With appropriate management no physical damage should be present at the time to target condition.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)[2].	No	Areas of bare ground are expected to be colonised by species in the surrounding grassland.
F	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%.	Yes	No bracken is expected to colonise the area following scrub removal.
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[3] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[4]).	Yes	No non-native plant species are likely to colonsie this habitat.
		Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)	Yes
		Number of criteria passed	5

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)		

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Footnotes

Footnote 1 – Creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, greater plantain *Plantago major*, white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*.

Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.

Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.

Footnote 4 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high and very high distinctiveness)

UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types

Grassland - Lowland calcareous grassland
Grassland - Lowland dry acid grassland
Grassland - Lowland meadows
Grassland - Other lowland acid grassland
Grassland - Other neutral grassland
Grassland - Tall herb communities (H6430) [Not to be confused with the Tall forbs secondary code – see UKHab guidance for details.]
Grassland - Upland acid grassland
Grassland - Upland calcareous grassland
Grassland - Upland hay meadows
Sparsely vegetated land - Calaminarian grassland

On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site, Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambs	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	27th May 2025; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Based on proposal which do not provide detailed management information. This is not considered a significant limitation as there is sufficient information to classify the habitats.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	B24073
Grid reference	TL 1728 7829	**Habitat parcel reference**	

Habitat Description

See accompanying report - Biodiversity impact calculation results and discussion.

ukhab – UK Habitat Classification

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description).[1] **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**	Yes	Reducing the density of proposed tree planting is expected to prevent the habitat form becoming heavily shaded and allow a greater diversity of species typical of neutral soils to establish.
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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	No	Habitat is to be managed by mowing, which will produce a uniform sward height.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens[2].	No	Bare ground is likely to be below 1% at target time to condition due to grasses establishing in spaces between wildflowers.
D	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is less than 5%.	Yes	Bracken should not be present within the wildflower seed mix.
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition[3] and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species[4] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[5]) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Yes	The suggested seed mix does not contain species indicative of suboptimal condition, however competitive species present in conneced habitats may become present in gaps between wildflowers by target time to conditon

Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m^2 present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**	Yes	The suggested seed mix contains a high number of species which should be present throughout the habitat, including areas subject to shade from tree and shrub planting.
	Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)	Yes	
	Number of criteria passed	4	

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)		
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	
Non-acid grassland types (Result out of 6 criteria)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	Good (3)	
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F.	Poor (1)	

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Notes

Footnote 1 - Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.

Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover.

Footnote 3 - Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* , spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare* , curled dock *Rumex crispus* , broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* , common nettle *Urtica dioica* , creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* , greater plantain *Plantago major* , white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris* . There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.

Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement.

Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Condition Sheet: SCRUB Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Heathland and shrub - Blackthorn scrub **Heathland and shrub - Gorse scrub** **Heathland and shrub - Hawthorn scrub** **Heathland and shrub - Hazel scrub** **Heathland and shrub - Mixed scrub** **Heathland and shrub - Dunes with sea buckthorn (H2160)** **Heathland and shrub - Willow scrub**			
Habitat Description			
See accompanying report - Biodiversity impact calculation results and discussion.			
For Dunes with sea buckthorn see:	Dunes with sea-buckthorn (Dunes with Hippophae rhamnoides) - Special Areas of Conservation (jncc.gov.uk)		
For other scrub types see:	ukhab – UK Habitat Classification		
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Off-site; Upton Hill, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	27th May 2025; Jacob Heath
Limitations (if applicable)	Based on recommendations for scrub creation.	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	B24073
Grid reference	TL 1728 7830	**Habitat parcel reference**	

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range).[1] - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species[2], - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel *Corylus avellana* , common juniper *Juniperus communis* , sea buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* (only in its restricted native range), or box *Buxus sempervirens* , which can be up to 100% cover).	Yes	It is recommended that a native scrub mix comprising three species of which none comprise more than 75% cover is used.
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran[3]) shrubs are all present.	No	Only young shrubs and mature bramble was present.
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species[4] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[5]) and species indicative of suboptimal condition[6] make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Yes	No invasive non-native species were noted.
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	Yes	The grassland adjacent to the scrub supported both scattered scrub and tall forbs.
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	No	The habitat parcel is not large enough to support these features.
		Number of criteria passed	3

Condition Assessment Result (out of 5 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓	

Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			