

SOUTHVIEW FARM, TROWBRIDGE

OUTLINE HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

Client: Coulston Estates

Date Issued: 27 February 2026

Our Ref: B25_074_HMMP_REV00

Headline BNG Results

On-site baseline	Area habitat units	2.07		
	Hedgerow units	0.05		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.65		
	Hedgerow units	0.21		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	-1.42	-68.47%	On-site net gain is less than target set ▲
	Hedgerow units	0.16	306.32%	
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.00	0.00%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	-1.42		
	Hedgerow units	0.16		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	-1.42		
	Hedgerow units	0.16		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	-68.47%	Total net gain achieved is less than target set ▲	
	Hedgerow units	306.32%		
	Watercourse units	0.00%		
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲			

BNG Validation Requirements	
Statement of Inclusion	Planning permission, if granted, would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021)
Onsite Baseline Area Habitat Values	The pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the date of application is: 2.07 Area Habitat Units, and 0.05 Hedgerow units. There are no watercourses on site or within 10m of the boundary.
Biodiversity Net Gain Metric	The completed metric calculation tool is submitted alongside this document in Excel and PDF formats. The metric version is the Statutory Metric published 29 November 2023 and last updated 3rd July 2025.
Habitat Degradation	In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 036 Reference ID: 74-036-20240214, no unauthorised habitat degradation has taken place.
Irreplaceable Habitats	There is no irreplaceable habitat (as set out in column 1 of the Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations [2024]) on the land to which the application relates
Baseline Habitat Plan	A plan, drawn to an identified scale showing the direction of North, showing onsite habitat existing on the date of application is provided within this document and as a separate PDF file
The Mitigation Hierarchy	The application of the mitigation hierarchy is set out in the EclA that accompanies this document. In accordance with the hierarchy, net gains have been priorities on site and the remainder will be delivered off site.
Condition Assessments	Habitat condition assessment sheets are provided as accompanying documents.
Post-development Habitat Map	An illustrative post-development habitat proposals map, including retained and proposed new features, is provided in this document and as a separate PDF.

Document Issue Record

Revision	Author	Checked by	Issue Date
00	PS	Matt Davies, MSc, MCIEEM	26 th February 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Scope and Purpose of the Report

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| 1.1.1 | Planning permission is being sought for the renovation of an abandoned farmhouse and construction of a new children's nursery on a parcel of land just off Dyrnham Lane, Trowbridge, hereafter referred to as the 'Site'. |
| 1.1.2 | The planning application is within the scope of the mandatory biodiversity net gain requirement to deliver at least 10% net gain. Bengrove Ltd was engaged to advise on how to deliver net gain and this outline management plan sets out the net gain strategy for the development. |



Figure 1-1: Illustrative masterplan for the development

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1.1 The Site lies on the southeastern edge of Trowbridge, between Dyrnham Lane and the Wessex Mainline, and falls within the Thames and Avon Vales National Character Area (NCA 117). This area is characterised by undulating, low-lying landscape, around 72% of which is farmland. It is cut by the (Bristol) River Avon and its tributaries, and ancient patterns of flood meadows and drainage ditches dominate the valley floors with wet grasslands and woodlands. It is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory designations for wildlife.
- 2.1.2 The Wiltshire and Swindon Local Nature Recovery Strategy has now been formally adopted and published. At the time of writing, the Site does not fall within any mapped “Strategically Significant Habitat Networks”, or “Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity”, but the following are factors from the LNRS that could influence the project:
- Mapped priority species areas (Bat and arable plant assemblages)
 - The Built Environment
 - Hedgerows and Dry Stone Walls
 - Green and Blue Access
 - Spatial Prioritisation of catchments suitable for using Natural Flood Management
- 2.1.3 The Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy is also of material importance to the HMMP. The implications of the Strategy are discussed in more detail within the Ecological Impact Assessment and Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment reports.
- 2.1.4 Habitat condition assessments are provided as separate spreadsheets, and a **Baseline Habitat Map** is provided overleaf.

2.2. Proposed Development and Landscape Design

- 2.2.1 The developed part of the Site will consist of the renovated farmhouse and gardens, and the nursery itself. These habitats are of limited biodiversity value (although the green spaces still play a part) and are not the focus of the net gain strategy.
- 2.2.2 The illustrative landscape masterplan includes the following habitat types that have the potential to deliver additional locally beneficial enhancements for wildlife:
- A woodland area along the northeast edge that will act as a dark zone for foraging and commuting bats
 - Hedgerow planting along the southern boundary
 - Species-rich meadow creating a transition between the above features and the amenity lawn within the nursery outdoors area
 - Orchard trees in the southwest corner of the nursery outdoors area
- 2.2.3 The areas of the Site that are within the scope of the HMMP are shown on the plan overleaf. The target habitat types and conditions would be considered significant within the meaning of the net gain regulations and guidance. Each habitat has an assigned distinctiveness, which varies depending on whether it falls within the curtilage of the farmhouse (**Table 2-1**).

Table 2-1: Baseline habitat distinctiveness

Habitat Parcel	UKHabs	BNG	BNG Distinctiveness
F1	g4	Modified grassland	Low
GD1-3	g4 – 519,828	Vegetated garden	Low
F2	h3d	Bramble scrub	Medium
ST2, ST4, GD4-5	h3d – 519,828	Vegetated garden	Low
GG1	u1b5	Developed land; sealed surface	Very low
ST1, ST3, FH1	u1b5 – 519,825		
DW1	u1f – 81,82,519	Ruderal ephemeral	Low

- 2.2.4 Of the above, the bramble scrub that has encroached on the abandoned gardens is of medium distinctiveness (except where it is in the vegetated garden). The **UKHabs Baseline Habitat Map** is provided overleaf.

3. TRENDS AND CONSTRAINTS

3.1. Climate Change

- 3.1.1 Climate change is likely to continue the trend of wetter winters, drier summers and increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. This means extra care is required during the selection of plants, and during the establishment phases of planting. Whilst native plant species are generally preferred, including non-native species or cultivars of natives in public realm planting can help to build resilience against the effects of climate change on habitat structure.

3.2. Ground Conditions

- 3.2.1 Species-rich grassland can be restored on former agricultural land with the right objectives and management actions. This is encouraged under past and current agri-environmental schemes in the UK, based upon research into its feasibility and outcomes. One of the most common challenges is high residual soil nutrient levels (Mountford et al., 1993; Silvertown et al., 1994; Smith, 1994). On soils with high nutrient availability, strongly competitive species such as rye-grasses, which are adapted to high nutrient uptake and fast growth rates, outcompete other species and reduce the type and extent of niches for annuals and other such plants.
- 3.2.2 The Site lies on neutral to slightly alkaline, clayey loam to silty loam soils¹, which means they will likely have higher concentrations of phosphorous (P) and nitrogen (N) through feed residue and deposition of faeces and urine. Returning a field to a less intensive management system can restore modest levels of species-richness over long periods of time (e.g. Smith *et al.*, 2002) but greater effects can be achieved by active reduction of soil nutrient availability. Application of N and potassium (K), to promote leaf growth, followed by cutting and removal of vegetation has been shown to potentially reduce P to semi-natural levels after 12 years of treatment (Tallowin et al., 2002). The addition of hemi-parasites such as Yellow Rattle can assist with reduce the competition between nitrophiles and other species.
- 3.2.3 For more rapid results still, de-turfing (i.e. removing the top layers of soil) removes nutrient pools and reduces the yield of P (Hopkins et al., 1999, Tallowin and Smith, 2001). Whilst this practice is not generally appropriate for larger sites, in discrete areas it provides a good option for overcoming the problem of elevated nutrient availability. The depth of soil removal needs to be determined on-site by the operator under the guidance of an ecologist, coupled with the results of soil

¹ UK Soil Observatory. UK Soil Observatory [Internet]. mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk. British Geological Survey; 2023. Available from: <https://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/ukso/home.html>

nutrient testing. This technique has been shown capable of establishing the desired sward composition over a period of less than 10 years.

- 3.2.4 Once soil nutrients have been addressed, the aim is to introduce the desirable species to create the sward, usually in the form of seed mixes. Where needed this can be supplemented by plug-planting of container-grown plants. This can be particularly effective for establishing larger species such as knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) that have been shown to perform less well when introduced as seed (Pywell et al., 2003).
- 3.2.5 Indicators of success must be suitably specific and achievable. Various studies have highlighted that the restoration of grassland to a specific plant community (such as where a project aims to recreate a species-rich meadow that closely matches an existing plant community) may take many years to achieve or may never be achieved (Pywell et al. 1996). As there is no reference community that is being targeted for this project, the aim is to create a locally-appropriate grassland community, with some flexibility over the species-composition. The specific criteria to create the right kind of habitat are:
- Greater than 20% cover of broad-leaved herbs and sedges
 - More than 8 species per m² (including forbs, grasses and rushes but excluding bryophytes)
 - More than or equal to one species of grass (in the whole sward) that is not generally sown for intensive agricultural production
 - Cover of rye-grasses and white clover is less than 30%
- 3.2.6 In NVC terms the aim is to create a community analogous to *MG6 Lolium-Cynosurus* neutral grassland (UKHabs ref g3c6). Further details of what constitutes good condition are provided in subsequent sections.

3.3. Access

- 3.3.1 The renovated farmhouse will have no public rights of way, and the nursery will have monitored access on and off the premises. Neither will allow unrestricted public access, so areas proposed for biodiversity enhancement will have to be managed around nursery hours and access requirements. The species-rich meadow planting around the edges of outdoors space within the nursery grounds will likely see light footfall. Whilst allowing access to meadow grassland can come with problems, there are numerous examples of nature reserves where the dual aims of nature conservation and public access are negotiated successfully.

3.4. Pests and Diseases

- 3.4.1 Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) is present in the area and it is likely that if any new native ash trees were planted they would also become infected.

- 3.4.2 Biosecurity during the selection of planting stock is also an important aspect of preventing the spread of novel pathogens. Government guidance recommends three key approaches:

Think Kit

- make sure all equipment, including boots, clothing, ropes and saws, is free from soil and organic material before entering and leaving a site
- regularly clean ropes as per the manufacturer's guidance, or use dedicated ropes for particular sites
- clean and disinfect chainsaws, pruning saws and other cutting tools as part of routine maintenance, and before using them on a new site

Think Transport

- remove any build-up of soil and organic material on vehicles and machinery, including cabs, wheels and foot wells, before leaving each site
- use proper off-site wash-down facilities regularly

Think trees, Plants, and Materials:

- responsibly source planting stock through nurseries or suppliers that adhere to national standards such as the Plant Health Management Standard, or that have their own biosecurity policy in place that you trust
- source planting stock from pest and disease-free areas
- keep accurate, up-to-date records of all purchases and supplies to assist with tracing exercises in the event of an outbreak
- regularly monitor plant and tree stock for signs of ill-health, and report any suspect symptoms using TreeAlert
- if you're responsible for importing or moving plants, check your plant passport and registration requirements with APHA before doing so
- source landscaping materials from pest-and-disease-free areas only
- be aware of any restrictions in place, or phytosanitary (plant health) measures and treatments required when importing certain materials or their packaging
- specify British-grown plants when sourcing planting stock, to reduce the risk of an accidental introduction of invasive non-native pests or diseases

- 3.4.3 Climate change will alter the natural balance between plants and pathogens. Drought stress can make plants more susceptible to the effects of common factors such as powdery mildew, and wetter warmer winters can mean that some pathogens are not killed off by frosts. The effects of this should be watched for during long-term management of the site and adaptations of management prescriptions adopted accordingly. It is not possible to set out all possible scenarios within a single plan: vigilance during monitoring and reference to the latest research and best practice are necessary.

4. OUTLINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

4.1. Aims and Objectives

- 4.1.1 The proposals aim to benefit foraging bats, birds, reptiles, section 41 mammals, and provide habitat rich in invertebrates. The open areas will also be an asset for children to enjoy a natural play area and orchard. In accordance with the biodiversity gain hierarchy, mitigation and enhancement actions have been maximised on site and the residual net gain requirements will be delivered off-site, within the local authority area.
- 4.1.2 The specific net gain objectives (as set in the accompanying statutory metric) are:
- Create an area of **Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland** along the northeast edge in 'Poor' condition. Achieving 'Moderate' is unlikely because the trees will all be young for the first 20 years of their lives, which leaves only 10 years to ensure two age classes are present (Young: 0-20 / Intermediate: 21-150).
 - Create a **Species-rich Native Hedgerow** along the southern boundary. This will provide additional commuting and foraging routes for animals.
 - Enhance some of the grassland to **Other Neutral Grassland** in 'Moderate' condition. The areas are either too small or will see too much footfall from children to ensure the species richness required for 'Good'.
 - Plant **orchard/fruit trees** in the southwest corner of the nursery outdoors area. While deadwood may be kept to the sides within the areas of Other Neutral Grassland, this area is too small and the trees too close together for this to be classified as a Traditional Orchard.
 - Plant **four new, native trees** within the nursery's outdoor area.
- 4.1.3 The arrangement of the proposed habitats is illustrated on the **Proposed Habitat Plan** overleaf.

4.2. Target Habitat Conditions

Grassland

- 4.2.1 The objective is for the grassland within the nursery's outdoor area to be retained as amenity lawn, and edged with species-rich meadow. I.e., enhance the baseline Modified Grassland to Other Neutral Grassland in Moderate condition by establishing a species-rich plant community with minimal bare ground and good variation in sward height. The specific criteria to achieve this condition (summarised from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain condition assessment sheets) are shown in **Table 4-1**. The key actions required to achieve this at the Southview Farm development are:
- Reduce soil fertility
 - Create a more even balance of grasses and forb species
 - Maintain at varied sward heights
- 4.2.2 As part of achieving these actions, the following measures of species richness and abundance must be implemented:
- Total grass cover is no more than 75% of the total area, with palatable species generally sown for intensive agricultural production such as Rye (*Lolium spp.*) and Timothy (*Phleum pratense*) having <30% cover. Other species like Crested Dogs-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) and Soft-brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*) must be allowed to thrive.
 - While White Clover (*Trifolium repens*) may be present, it does not dominate, and does not exceed 40% cover collectively with the palatable grass species mentioned above. Other forbs (non-grasses) present are associated with less fertile soils and can cover up 50% of the total area. Some examples include Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) and Lady's-smock (*Cardamine pratensis*).
 - There must be more than 8 species per m² (including forbs, grasses and rushes, but excluding bryophytes).
 - Maintain 1-5% of bare ground across the Site for wild species to self-seed.
- 4.2.3 The Site lies on clayey loam to silty loam soils and considering the relevant trends and constraints, over-seeding with a suitable seed mix and subsequent management to control undesirable species and competition is the preferred strategy. The seed mix will be 80% wildflowers and 20% grasses: several suppliers provide suitable mixes.
- 4.2.4 To achieve 'Moderate' condition, the grassland will need to pass the essential criterion highlighted in yellow, in addition to those criteria relevant to the field's baseline conditions.

Table 4-1. Summarised Condition Criteria for Baseline and Proposed Grassland Communities

Current Baseline Condition	Target Conditions
Modified Grassland (g4)	MG6 Lolium-Cynosurus neutral grassland (g3c6)
There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). <i>Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.</i>	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type. <i>Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.</i>
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.	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. <i>Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.</i>
Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i> may be present).	Cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>) is less than 5%.
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.	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition 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.
Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).
Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	
There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA4).	If any invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA5) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.

Soil Fertility Works

- 4.2.5 In the first year of the project's commencement, the soil nutrient levels will be tested to provide a benchmark understanding of pH, nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium levels. A commercially available testing kit² will be used to measure these determinants at several points across the field. The results will be compared with reference values (e.g. see **Table 4-2** below). The test results are unlikely to change the overall strategy, but if any of the nutrient values are particularly high, further action may be considered to reduce fertility. This may include delaying the overseeding for one or more seasons whilst the grass is regularly harvested and removed. Application of additional nitrogen and potassium can be used to promote leaf growth and speed up this process of reducing soil nutrients (nitrogen and potassium are relatively soluble and easily taken up by plants so their application will not increase levels in the soil in the long term).

Table 4-2: Reference values for soil testing

Soil Test	Low	Medium	High
Nitrogen (kg/ha ⁻¹)	<280	281-560	>560
Phosphorous (kg/ha ⁻¹)	<10	11-25	>25
Potassium (kg/ha ⁻¹)	<108	109-280	>280
pH	4-5.9	6-7.5	7.6-8

- 4.2.6 Once soil nutrients have been addressed, the ground will be prepared for seeding. Discs or chain harrows will be run over the field to break up the sward and provide germination sites for seeds. The ideal time to sow seeds is in late summer, as some species require their seeds to be frosted before they will germinate. The disc/harrowing should therefore be undertaken in late summer.
- 4.2.7 A seed mix should be selected to best suit the soils and climate of the region. In this case it is likely that a mix suited to freely draining soils in a relatively dry climate will be suitable. The inclusion of Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) can also assist in suppressing competitive grasses in the first years of establishment. In lieu of a source of local green hay, a seed mix with the widest possible variety of species (e.g. British Wildflower Seeds' Special General Meadow Seed Mix) will give the best chance of establishing a species-rich sward. The seed will be sown at a rate of around 4kg per ha – broadcast by hand or machine as needed. Once the

² <https://martinlishman.com/shop/soil-testing/soil-testing-kits/soil-test-kit-25-test/>

seed has been sown it will be lightly rolled to allow it to bed in and make good contact with the soil.

Adaptive Management

- 4.2.8 Once the seed has germinated and the wildflower species begin to establish themselves it is important to take an adaptive approach to long-term management. The prescriptive outcomes regarding sward variety and height (**Table 4-1**), and the balance of desirable species with 'weeds' should be the main guide to management. In the first year after sowing there should be less need to cut than in subsequent years – one or two cuts are likely to be sufficient. Guideline management prescriptions are given in Error! Reference source not found. but these may need to be adapted depending on weather, climate and the emerging ecology of the field. In the fortunate scenario that Yellow Meadow Ants (*Lasius flavus*) colonise the field and begin to establish anthills, these should be preserved and not damaged during management. These ants perform a very beneficial role in grassland ecosystems, influence plant growth and diversity, and benefit species that feed on them and the aphids on which they feed.



Figure 4-1: Species-rich grassland with Yellow Rattle

Hedges

- 4.2.9 The hedge can be planted and maintained so it achieves 'Good' condition. The specific criteria to achieve this (taken from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain condition assessment sheets) are shown in **Table 4-3**. The key actions to achieve this at the Southview Farm development are to:
- Ensure the species-rich grassy margin within the nursery area is maintained as described above – this is necessary to create a safe ecotone for wildlife
 - Plant ≥ 5 UK-native or archaeophyte woody species throughout the hedge
- 4.2.10 Well-managed hedgerows provide food year-round for wildlife; offer shelter and nesting sites; act as wildlife corridors across the landscape; reduce soil erosion, store carbon, and support natural pest control.
- 4.2.11 Hedges should be cut on a two- to three-year rotation rather than annually, as many species form their flower buds on second-year growth. By trimming different sections in different years, you ensure a continual supply of spring blossoms for pollinators and autumn berries for birds.

General Principles

- Avoid cutting in the bird nesting season
- Aim for an A-shaped profile: wide at the base, narrower at the top.
- Maintain buffer strips of at least 2 metres of uncut grass for nesting, feeding, and overwintering wildlife.
- Allow occasional trees to grow at 20-metre intervals for perches and habitat.
- Keep old or dying trees if safe — they are valuable for insects, bats, and hole-nesting birds.
- Add Climbers: Ivy, Honeysuckle, Clematis, and Bryony add shelter and nesting sites plus food for birds and small mammals.

Table 4-3. Condition Criteria for all Hedgerows

Criteria	Condition
A1	Height
A2	Width
B1	Gap - hedge base
B2	Gap - hedge canopy continuity
C1	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation
C2	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation
D1	Invasive and neophyte species
D2	Current damage
Additional group - applicable to hedgerows with trees only	
E1	Tree class
E2	Tree health

Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

4.2.12 The objective is for the field on the eastern edge of the Site to be managed and planted with trees to create a dark zone for bats that are known to commute and forage in this area. The area is roughly 8m wide and has a total area of 245m². While small, filling this space with trees would result in a woodland habitat. As outlined previously, achieving 'Poor' condition woodland is the most realistic in this instance. The specific criteria to achieve this condition (summarised from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain condition assessment sheets) are shown in **Table 4-4**. The key actions required to achieve this at the Southview Farm development are:

- Prepare the ground for tree planting
- Introduce shade-tolerant species to the existing grassland. This will form the woodland field layer.
- Choose a mix of tree species known to thrive in the area that mature quickly so different age classes may be achieved beyond the 30-year BNG window (if the habitat remains).
- Plant trees when they are dormant, usually from mid-November to early March.
- Ensure trees are planted at the same depth that they were growing at in the nursery.
- Protect the young trees from herbivore damage.

4.2.13 Due to the size of the proposed woodland and the duration available to secure its condition at Southview Farm, the following condition criteria are particularly relevant:

- **Age distribution (Indicator A).** If the planted tree species are not a birch *Betula* spp., cherry *Prunus* spp. or *Sorbus* spp, the age classes are young (0-20 years old), intermediate (21-150 years old), and old (>150 years old). For birch, cherry or *Sorbus* species: Young (0-20 years old), Intermediate (21-60 years old), Old (>60 years old). A recognisable age-class should be a consistent, recognisable layer across the woodland or stand being assessed. Presence of a few saplings would not indicate that the woodland has an 'age-class' of young trees.
- **Edge effects (Indicator F).** Open space of more than 10m wide is not possible in a woodland this size, meaning the wildlife populations and communities will likely be shaped by the environment at the woodland edges as much as the environment within the woodland itself. Consequently, ensuring there is minimal open space will help ensure these 'edge effects' are kept to a minimum, and diverse communities have a better chance of establishing.

Table 4-4: Woodland Condition Criteria

Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)
A	Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes present.	Two age-classes present.	One age-class present.
B	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland.	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland.	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland.
C	Invasive plant species	No invasive species present in woodland.	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, and other invasive species <10% cover.	<i>Rhododendron</i> or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ≥10% cover.
D	Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.	Three to four native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.	Two or less native tree or shrub species across woodland parcel.
E	Cover of native tree and shrub species	>80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native.	50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understory shrubs are native.	<50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native.
F	Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted.	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space.	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category.
G	Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland.	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland.

Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)
H	Tree health	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback.	11% to 25% tree mortality and or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present.	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present.
I	Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community at ground layer present.
J	Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots, or a complex woodland.	Two storeys across all survey plots.	One or less storey across all survey plots.
K	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees per hectare.	One veteran tree per hectare.	No veteran trees present in woodland.
L	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.
M	Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident.	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area, and or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground.	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground.

Individual Trees

- 4.2.14 The individual trees sited within the nursery's outdoor area should target criterion A, B, D, and F from the individual trees Biodiversity Net Gain statutory condition sheet.
- 4.2.15 Condition C is not targeted as ancient and veteran trees are cannot (or are unlikely to) be established within the 30-year window relevant to this HMMP. Similarly, criterion E is unlikely in a nursery environment where the trees will likely be maintained and deadwood safely removed, or kept out of reach of children. This is also why the fruit trees are not classified as orchard habitat in BNG terms – they won't achieve the structural conditions required.
- 4.2.16 The key actions required to manage the individual trees at the Southview Farm development are:
- Prepare the ground for tree planting
 - Stake and protect the trees
 - Water trees regularly, especially in dry periods
 - Prune and maintain the trees at suitable times

Table 4-5. Condition Criteria for Individual Trees

Criteria	Condition
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).
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).
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are 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.
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.

5. OUTLINE MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

5.1.1 The areas and hedgerows to be managed are shown in the **Management Prescriptions Plan** shown after **Table 5-1**.

Table 5-1. Outline Management Prescriptions

Year 1			Months											
Task	Habitat	Start	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Mow to a height of ~100mm, removing cuttings. Avoid cutting between April and July.	Grassland	Jan/Aug												
Soil nutrient testing and trial pits to map soil profile	Grassland	Jun												
Sowing with a suitable seed mix	Grassland	Oct												
Roll the soil after sowing seeds	Grassland	Oct												
Selection of suitable, native tree stock from a reputable supplier	Planted Trees & Hedge	Pre-planting												
Preparation of ground. E.g., preparing tree pits	Planted Trees & Hedge	Pre-planting												
Plant trees before seed is sown to avoid disturbing the ground once seeds are in	Planted Trees & Hedge	Oct												
Installation of tree guards and stakes, where required, around trees and whips	Planted Trees & Hedge	Oct												
Monitor tree guards and stakes. Replace any damaged guards or stakes, and loosen or tighten as required	Planted Trees & Hedge	Oct												
Check plant health and replace failures	Planted Trees & Hedge	Oct												

Year 2			Months											
Task	Habitat	Start	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Cut meadow twice and remove arisings, in periods of drought, reduce the frequency of mowing accordingly.	Grassland	Mar/Aug												
Cut the entire area (avoiding the trees) to around 100mm and remove the arisings. Timings depend on growth.	Grassland	Aug												
Prune in late winter or early spring while the tree is dormant														
Monitor tree guards and stakes. Replace any damaged guards or stakes, and loosen or tighten as required	Planted Trees & Hedges	All year												
Weeding during monthly maintenance visits during the growing season: weeds will either be cut back with a strimmer or hand weeded	Planted Trees & Hedges	Apr												
Water regularly (weekly) during the first 1-2 growing seasons, especially during dry periods	Planted Trees & Hedges	Apr												
Check plant health and replace failures	Planted Trees & Hedges	All year												
Prune a third or a quarter of the hedge	Hedge	Aug												

Years 3-5			Months											
Task	Habitat	Start	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Cut meadow twice and remove arisings, in periods of drought, reduce the frequency of mowing accordingly.	Grassland	Mar/Aug												
Monitor tree guards and stakes. Replace any damaged guards or stakes, and loosen or tighten as required	Planted Trees & Hedges	All year												
Weeding during monthly maintenance visits during the growing season: weeds will either be cut back with a strimmer or hand weeded	Planted Trees & Hedges	Apr												
Water during periods of prolonged drought	Planted Trees & Hedges	Oct												
Check plant health and replace failures	Planted Trees & Hedges	All year												
In year 5, cut a third or a quarter of the hedges	Hedge	Aug												
Introduce shade-tolerant plants (bulbs, ferns, grasses etc.) to woodland area once cover has started to develop	Woodland	Apr												

Years 6-30			Months											
Task	Habitat	Start	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Annual mowing, leaving some areas long to create desired sward heights	Grassland	Apr-Sep												
May also comprise the control of scrub and undesirable species such as docks and thistle through hand cutting/digging	Grassland	Apr-Sep												
Formative pruning, if required	Planted Trees	Aug												
Cut a third or a quarter of the hedges on a 2-3 year rotational cycle (8, 10, 13, 15, 18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 30)	Hedge	Aug												
Maintain a rough grass margin of at least one metre at the base of the hedge and cut back every other year	Hedge	Aug												
Monitor shade-tolerant plants as part of standard woodland condition assessment (years, 1, 2, 5 etc). If undesirable species competing, remove by hand and re-establish (if necessary) desirable species	Woodland	Apr												

5.2. Prohibited Activities

5.2.1 Except where specified in this plan, or where justified as part of an adaptive management technique agreed with the project ecologist, the following activities and actions will not be carried out:

- Herbicides and pesticides will not be used
- Ivy, brambles or other climbers and scramblers will not be cut back from trees unless justified for arboriculture or safety reasons
- Grass cuttings, brash or other materials generated during management of the site will be disposed of responsibly off-site
- Machinery and vehicles will adhere to suitable routes and avoid the root protection areas of hedgerow trees
- Standing and fallen dead wood will not be removed from the site unless there is a justifiable safety risk, especially within the orchard area
- Vegetation suitable for nesting birds will not be removed during the nesting season unless it has first been checked for nests
- Grassland will not be cut to a height below 100mm (except where specified) to avoid harm to reptiles and amphibians

6. MONITORING AND REPORTING

- 6.1.1 The site would be monitored in years 1, 2, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30. Compliance with each aspect of the condition criteria would be assessed during each visit.
- 6.1.2 The monitoring would comprise a UK Habitat Classification Survey and Condition Assessment, to be completed by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) competent in such methodology. The survey will be undertaken between April – June. After each monitoring survey the following outputs will be provided to the Council:
- Management Actions Log
 - Habitat Condition Assessment Report
 - Statutory BNG Metric
 - Post-interventions Habitat and Condition Map
 - Remedial Measures, if required
- 6.1.3 Where there are any variations from the target criteria, the biodiversity metric may need to be re-calculated to assess the extent of any potential shortfall. However, this should not be necessary where the monitoring shows that the compartments are on track to achieve their target condition within the specified timeframes.

Table 6-1: Monitoring and Reporting Schedule

Year	Methodology and Timing	Deliverable	Remedial Action
1	UK Habitat Classification Survey and Condition Assessment, to be completed by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) competent in such methodology. Undertaken after sowing and planting has taken place.	Monitoring report to LPA to confirm the outcome of the survey. In Year 1 this will comprise confirmation that the correct grass mix and trees and shrubs are planted to the correct methodology over the correct area. It is not expected that the habitats will have achieved their target condition at this point.	Should the survey identify that habitats have been installed to the wrong specification or in the incorrect area, the SQE will relay this to the landowner and their appointed contractor to rectify immediately and within the same planting season.
2	UK Habitat Classification Survey and Condition Assessment, to be completed by a SQE competent in such methodology. Undertaken between April – September prior to cutting.	Monitoring report to LPA to confirm the outcome of the survey. In Year 2 this will comprise confirmation that the grassland, trees and shrubs are developing accordingly.	In Year 2, it should be evident if the sown grassland mix is taking and developing appropriately. If it is apparent that weed species are dominant, remedial measures will comprise more intensive management to combat weed species, coupled with targeted spot-treatment where necessary.
5	UK Habitat Classification Survey and Condition Assessment, to be completed by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist SQE competent in such methodology. Undertaken between April – September prior to cutting.	Monitoring report to LPA to confirm the outcome of the survey. In Year 5 this will comprise confirmation that the grassland trees and shrubs are developing accordingly.	In Year 5, it should be evident if the sown grassland mix is taking seed and developing appropriately. If it is apparent that weed species are dominant, remedial measures will comprise more intensive management to combat weed species, coupled with targeted spot-treatment where necessary, over-seeding or plug-planting. The enhanced hedges should have achieved their target condition.
10	UK Habitat Classification Survey and Condition Assessment, to be completed by a SQE competent in such methodology. Undertaken between April – September prior to cutting.	Monitoring report to LPA to confirm the outcome of the survey. At Year 10, the grassland should have achieved its target condition, and the monitoring report will confirm this, or the remedial measures which are being actioned to rectify.	The grassland should be on course to achieve its target condition by Year 10. If this is not the case, and the over-seeding/more intensive management considered in Year 5 has not worked, more intrusive ground investigations/topsoil stripping would need to be considered.

Year	Methodology and Timing	Deliverable	Remedial Action
15	UK Habitat Classification Survey and Condition Assessment, to be completed by a SQE competent in such methodology. Undertaken between April – September prior to cutting.	Monitoring report to LPA to confirm the outcome of the survey.	The grassland should have achieved target condition. If the over-seeding/more intensive management considered in Year 5/10 has not worked, more intrusive ground investigations/topsoil stripping would need to be considered.
20	UK Habitat Classification Survey and Condition Assessment, to be completed by a SQE competent in such methodology. Undertaken between April – September prior to cutting.	Monitoring report to LPA to confirm the outcome of the survey. In Year 20 this will comprise confirmation that the grassland, hedgerows and scrub have achieved their target conditions, otherwise remedial measures actioned to rectify this.	More intrusive ground investigations/topsoil stripping would need to be considered. Consultation with the LPA if alternative planting is required due to soil, climatic or other factors maybe required.
30	UK Habitat Classification Survey and Condition Assessment, to be completed by a SQE competent in such methodology. Undertaken between April – September prior to cutting.	Monitoring report to LPA to confirm the outcome of the survey. In Year 30 this will comprise confirmation that all habitats have reached their target condition, or the remedial measures which are being actioned to rectify.	The Remedial measures will be specific to the habitats in question and may comprise: • Altered/alternative management; • Suitable irrigation; • Scrub management; • Re-planting of habitats; • Consultation with the LPA if alternative planting is required due to soil, climatic or other factors; and • Discuss future management and monitoring of the habitats

7. COSTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND LEGAL

- 7.1.1 The developer will ensure that the appropriate resources are in place for the implementation of this management plan. As this is an Outline planning application, the precise entities and roles are yet to be determined.
- 7.1.2 During the construction period, the main contractor will be responsible for ensuring that capital works are delivered, and that any maintenance is provided until such time as areas of the site are completed. They will appoint such organisations as are required to assist.
- 7.1.3 Once completed, the land will likely be managed by a Residents Management Company.
- 7.1.4 The Suitably Qualified Ecologist will document all records of monitoring. The records will be stored securely and made available for review as necessary. These will be maintained to provide a resource for the client and if necessary, to regulatory and statutory authorities to inspect conformity and compliance.
- 7.1.5 The delivery of this plan will be legally secured by the planning conditions attached to the planning permission.

8. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN OUTCOME

8.1. Strategic Significance

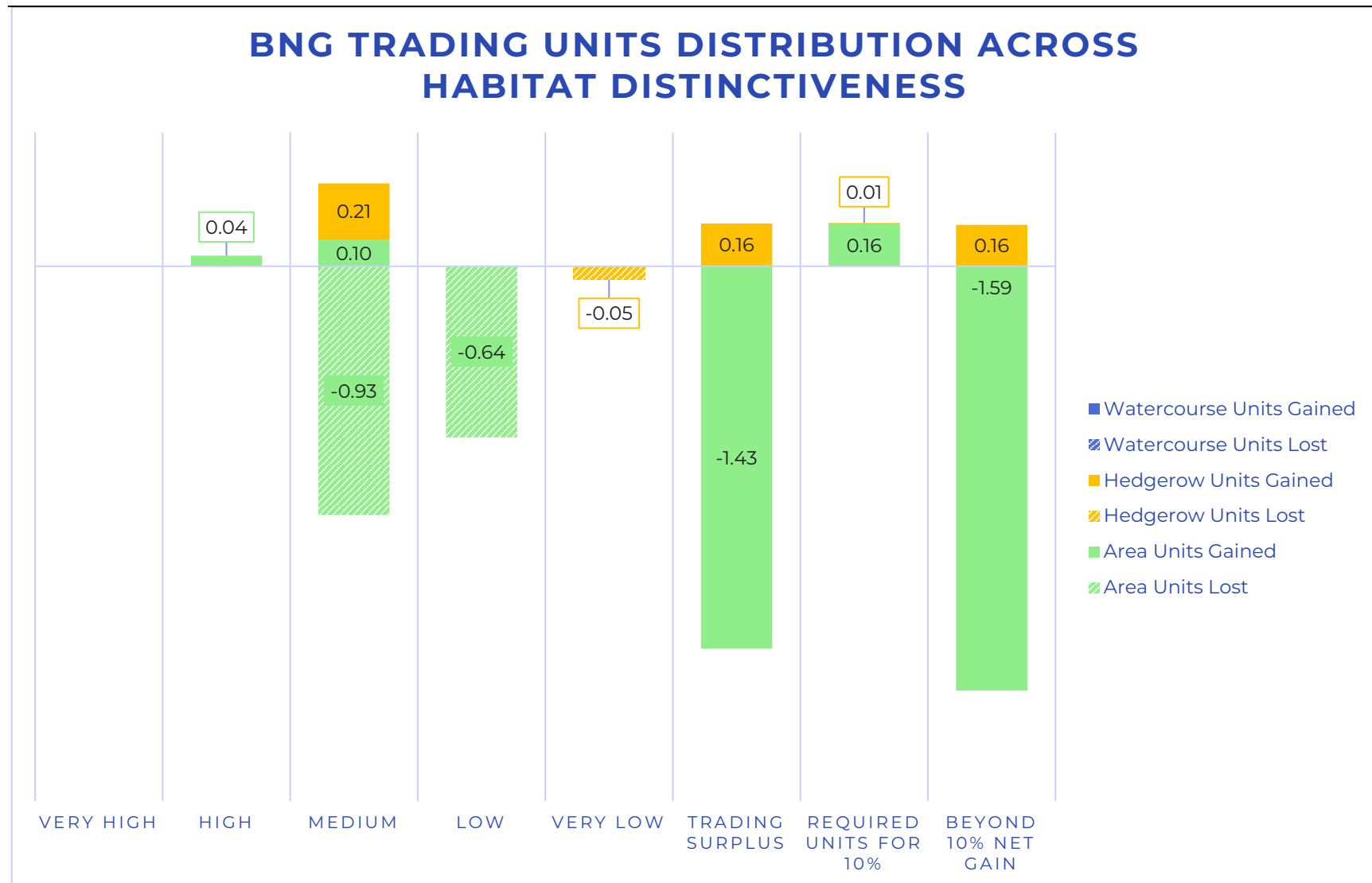
- 8.1.1 The Wiltshire & Swindon Local Nature Recovery Strategy is available on their LNRS Viewer³, and has therefore been used to determine habitat strategic significance for this proposal.
- 8.1.2 Creating new woodland is an identified measure within the LNRS strategy (W2), so has been assigned high strategic significance within the metric. While creating new Other Neutral Grassland is also an identified measure within the LNRS (NG2), the habitat must be in 'Good' condition (page 52 of LNRS). As this cannot be achieved within the proposed scheme, this has been assigned low strategic significance within the metric. Lastly, the Site is within important areas for notable bat species, and the proposed woodland contributes at least in part towards these species.

8.2. On-site Net Change

- 8.2.1 Subject to the details set out above, the on-site net change would be:

BNG Module	Net Change in Units	Percentage Gain
Areas	-1.42	-68.47%
Hedgerows	+0.16	+306.32%
Watercourses	n/a	n/a

³ Wiltshire & Swindon LNRS Experience [Internet]. Arcgis.com. 2026 [cited 2026 Feb 26]. Available from: https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/2b3a19902e3e4b81bac90326a2a2dec5/page/Interactive-map?draft=true&views=View-4#data_s=id%3AdataSource_12-19209d14036-layer-6-0%3A2864801%2Cid%3AdataSource_12-1983c8d7fdc-layer-31-19841238feb-layer-31-0-1%3A1%2Cid%3AdataSource_18-1997bece863-layer-41-0%3A3572827%2Cid%3AdataSource_18-1997105fe34-layer-101-19865de85c6-layer-29-19865ddcd42-layer-28%3A876%2Cid%3Awidget_250_output_config_1~widget_32_output_config_1%3A0



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