

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

Whitley Golf Club — Planning Permission PL/2025/05424

Site name	Whitley Golf Club, Corsham Road, Whitley, Melksham SN12 8EQ
Date	March 2026
Version	2.0 — FINAL

Version Control

Version	Issue Status	Prepared by / Date	Approved by / Date
1.0	Draft for client review	Ben Mitchell MCIEEM / March 2026	Ibrahim Mnymneh, ARTEL 01.04.26
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Document Details

Authorship Details

This HMMP has been prepared by Ben Mitchell BSc (Hons) MCIEEM, Apt Ecology (ben@aptecology.co.uk, 07757 996696) on behalf of Whitley Golf Club, as required by Planning Condition 5 of permission PL/2025/05424, granted by Wiltshire Council on 3 October 2025.

Prepared in accordance with the CIEEM Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing (2017), the CIEEM Code of Professional Conduct, and the Natural England Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan Template v1.0 (2024).

1. Project Background

Site Overview — PB-B01

Project type	Mixed on-site and off-site biodiversity net gain
Development name and address	Whitley Golf Club, Corsham Road, Whitley, Melksham SN12 8EQ
BNG project name and address	As above (on-site); Area A (off-site) — golf club land immediately north of the red line boundary, same ownership
Author organisation	Apt Ecology — Ben Mitchell BSc (Hons) MCIEEM
Landowner	Whitley Golf Club
Land manager	Whitley Golf Club
Responsible body for habitat creation/enhancement	Whitley Golf Club (works undertaken by golf club staff and/or contractors)
Period covered by this management plan	30 years minimum from commencement of development (c.2026–2056), with 5-year management plan reviews
Planning authority	Wiltshire Council
Planning reference	PL/2025/05424 (granted 03 October 2025)
BNG register reference	To be assigned on registration with the DEFRA Biodiversity Gain Site Register. Registration is being progressed by Wiltshire Council in connection with the S106 agreement associated with permission PL/2025/05424. This HMMP is submitted as the management document to support that registration.
Central OS grid reference	ST 9267 6395 (site); ST 9264 6415 (Area A)
Metric revision / title	Statutory Biodiversity Metric (from January 2024); baseline and post-intervention assessments: 10 September 2025
Irreplaceable habitats present	No

Summary of Management Plan

Habitats to be Retained, Created and Enhanced PB-B02

This HMMP covers the habitats included in the approved Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation (10 September 2025). It addresses both on-site habitats within the red line boundary and the off-site enhancement area (Area A) to the north of the site, which is within the ownership and management control of Whitley Golf Club.

On-site (within red line boundary):

- 0.039 ha modified grassland (poor) enhanced to other neutral grassland (good condition)
- 48 m species-rich native hedgerow — new creation along northern site boundary (h2a — priority habitat)
- 18 small deciduous trees planted (3 designated to grow to full medium size)
- Boundary ditch (SW boundary) — retained and enhanced with marginal vegetation

Off-site — Area A (golf club land north of red line):

- 0.01 ha standing open water (pond — priority habitat) — new creation, good condition
- 0.05 ha other neutral grassland — new creation, good condition
- 0.05 ha hawthorn/hazel scrub — new creation

Metric headline results: +52.43% habitat units, +295.83% hedgerow units, +12.88% watercourse units. Trading rules satisfied.

Timescales for Actions PB-B03

Pre-construction / Year 0: Ground preparation and seeding for on-site grassland creation; installation of on-site hedgerow whips and tree planting; pond excavation and planting in Area A; grassland and scrub creation in Area A. All habitat creation works to be completed prior to or concurrent with construction where practicable.

Years 1–5: Establishment management of all created habitats; annual monitoring visits and reports to Wiltshire Council.

Years 6–30: Ongoing management to target and maintain condition; monitoring at 5-year intervals; management plan reviewed and updated at each 5-year interval.

Monitoring Requirements PB-B04

All BNG habitats will be monitored against the condition targets in Table PM-T01 at Years 1, 2, 3, 5 and every 5 years thereafter to Year 30. Monitoring will be undertaken by a competent ecologist. Monitoring reports will be submitted to Wiltshire Council. See Section 3 for full monitoring schedule.

Required Consents and Licences PB-B05

No species licences are required for the habitat creation works covered by this HMMP. All works must comply with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) — in particular, vegetation clearance and planting works must be planned to avoid disturbance to nesting birds (1 March – 31 August). Species-specific mitigation and ecological clerk of works requirements are addressed separately under Condition 6 (CEMP).

Funding PB-B06

The costs of habitat creation, establishment management, and monitoring for the 30-year period are the responsibility of Whitley Golf Club as landowner and applicant. Both the on-site and Area A off-site land are within the golf club's ownership, providing a high level of confidence in long-term delivery.

Legal Agreement PB-B07

Delivery of the biodiversity net gain measures set out in this HMMP is secured by a Section 106 planning obligation entered into in connection with planning permission PL/2025/05424 (Wiltshire Council, 03 October 2025). The S106 agreement runs with the land and binds all future owners and occupiers for the duration of the 30-year management period. This HMMP is the management document submitted to support registration of the off-site gain site (Area A) on the DEFRA Biodiversity Gain Site Register in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 and the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024. The development must be carried out in strict accordance with the submitted ecological documents and plans, including the BNG Metric (10 September 2025) and this HMMP.

Phasing Strategy — PB-B08

Will the proposed works be delivered in phases?	Yes, works to construct the driving range will occur prior to the clubhouse works. However, the BNG habitat creation is separate from the construction phases and will be delivered in phase 1. All habitat creation and enhancement works will be delivered in a single phase concurrent with or immediately following the construction programme. This management plan covers the full 30-year period for all habitats listed above.
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Roles and Responsibilities

Ecologist Responsible for HMMP — PB-B09

Name	Ben Mitchell
Organisation	Apt Ecology
Responsibility	Production of HMMP; ecological advice on habitat creation and management; undertaking or overseeing monitoring surveys; preparation of monitoring reports; advice on adaptive management.
Start / End Date	Start: 2026 End: Reviewed at 5-year intervals; minimum 30 years
Statement of Competency	BSc (Hons) Ecology; Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) since 2013. Experienced in BNG metric assessment, habitat management planning, and ecological survey. Author of the PEA and BNG Metric for this site.

Landowner and Land Manager — PB-B10

Name / Organisation	Whitley Golf Club
Responsibility	Day-to-day implementation of management prescriptions for all on-site and Area A habitats; ensuring access for monitoring visits; maintaining habitat creation areas free from unauthorised disturbance; engaging with Apt Ecology when management issues arise.
Start / End Date	Start: 2026 End: 30-year plan period (minimum)
Statement of Competency	Day-to-day management will be undertaken by golf club groundskeeping staff. Area A and on-site habitat management does not require specialist ecological skills for routine operations (mowing, ditch clearance) but staff will be briefed on the prescriptions in this plan. Specialist management activities will be guided by Apt Ecology. A simple site management log will be maintained by the club, recording the date and nature of all management works carried out on the HMMP habitat parcels. This log will be provided to the suitably qualified ecologist (SQE) in advance of each monitoring visit to inform the monitoring assessment and will be included as an appendix to the monitoring report submitted to Wiltshire Council.

LPA — Reviewing Body — PB-B12

Organisation	Wiltshire Council (Planning Department)
Responsibility	Review and approval of monitoring reports submitted under Condition 5; review of this management plan at 5-year intervals.

Land Use Summary

Overview of Baseline Site Use PB-B13

The site is a golf club and driving range on the edge of the village of Whitley in north Wiltshire (ST 9267 6395). The application boundary covers the existing driving range, associated buildings, car park, and club house. Six UKHAB habitat types were recorded within the boundary at the time of survey (PEA, Apt Ecology, 10 September 2025): developed land (sealed surface), modified grassland (poor condition), dense scrub, native hedgerow, standard trees, and standing open water (small ornamental pond). No priority habitats are present within the red line boundary.

Area A, to the north of the red line, was poor-quality modified grassland at baseline, managed as part of the golf course, with an area of standing open water (Pond 2) at its southern edge. Area A is within the ownership of Whitley Golf Club.

BNG baseline: 1.67 on-site habitat units, 0.01 hedgerow units, 0.22 watercourse units. 0.20 off-site habitat units. (Statutory Biodiversity Metric, 10 September 2025.)

Overview of Proposed Site Use PB-B14

Following construction, the site will continue to operate as a golf club. The habitat creation and enhancement areas covered by this HMMP are:

On-site: Species-rich grassland and a new native hedgerow will be established within the site boundary. Tree planting will be distributed across the site. The boundary ditch will be retained and enhanced. These areas will be managed in accordance with this HMMP for 30 years alongside normal golf course operations.

Area A (off-site): A new pond, species-rich grassland buffer, and hawthorn/hazel scrub will be created in Area A, which will function as a dedicated nature area not used for golf. Area A is managed solely by Whitley Golf Club.

Site Baseline and Environmental Information Checklist — PB-T01

Baseline and Environmental Factor	✓	Reference or reason if not included
Statutory / Non-statutory Designated Sites	✓	No statutory designated sites within 5km. No direct or indirect effects on designated sites. PEA, Sept 2025.
Protected and Notable Species	N/A	Species-level mitigation and enhancement is addressed under Planning Condition 6 (CEMP), not this HMMP. GCN eDNA surveys negative (Ponds 3 and 4). No bat roosts confirmed.
Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)	✓	Cherry laurel present on site — not within HMMP habitat parcels. No Schedule 9 INNS recorded in BNG habitat areas. Vigilance prescriptions included for all parcels.
Biological Records — Sites and Species	✓	GCN record c.1km south informed precautionary approach in PEA. No records directly constraining HMMP habitat management.
Baseline Habitats Survey	✓	PEA (Apt Ecology, 10 September 2025); BNG Metric condition assessments (Apt Ecology, 10 September 2025).
Public Access	✓	Site is a private golf club. Area A will be managed as a nature area with no public access. No public rights of way. Not a constraint on management prescriptions.
Climate	✓	Pond design includes marginal shelves and buffer grassland to manage water level fluctuation. Grassland seed mixes selected for drought resilience. North Wiltshire climate: moderate rainfall, clay soils.
Geology and Topography	✓	Gently undulating. Clay-rich soils (Wiltshire lowlands) — suitable for pond creation and neutral grassland. Topsoil stripping required for species-rich grassland to achieve low fertility substrate.
Agricultural Land Status	N/A	Site not in agricultural use. Area A managed as golf course amenity land. Not a constraint.
Soils and Substrates	✓	Low fertility substrate required for species-rich grassland target condition. Topsoil stripping and export prescribed for grassland creation parcels. See Section 2 prescriptions.
Contaminated Land	N/A	No known contamination. Not applicable.
Hydrology and Drainage	✓	Pond creation in Area A. Surface water drainage scheme under separate Condition 4. Ditch along SW boundary retained and enhanced. No hydrological conflicts identified.
Flood Risk Zones	N/A	
Landscape Character and Designations	N/A	No landscape designations affect the HMMP parcels.
Historic Land Use	N/A	Golf course since mid-20th century. No constraints on habitat management.
Historic Environment and Earth Heritage	N/A	No scheduled monuments or listed buildings within or adjacent to HMMP parcels.

2. Planned Management Activities

Management Plan Aims and Objectives PM-B01

The aim of this HMMP is to deliver, establish, and maintain all habitats included in the BNG Metric calculation for planning permission PL/2025/05424 to the target condition specified in that metric, and to sustain them at or above that condition for a minimum of 30 years in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 and Planning Condition 5.

The specific objectives are:

1. Create and establish 0.039 ha of species-rich neutral grassland (good condition) on-site within 5 years.
2. Create and establish 48 m of species-rich native hedgerow (h2a) along the northern site boundary, reaching good condition within 10 years.
3. Plant 18 small deciduous trees (3 to medium) on-site and ensure successful establishment.
4. Retain and enhance the SW boundary ditch to reach and maintain moderate condition.
5. Create a 0.01 ha pond (good condition) in Area A within 5 years.
6. Create and establish 0.05 ha of species-rich neutral grassland (good condition) in Area A within 5 years.
7. Create and establish 0.05 ha of hawthorn/hazel scrub in Area A.

All habitats will be managed to sustain target condition for the full 30-year period, with adaptive management applied where monitoring identifies that targets are not being achieved.

Design Principles Informed by Baseline Information PM-B02

The BNG strategy was designed in response to the ecological character of the site and the baseline metric scores. Key design decisions were:

- The largest unit gain is achieved by converting poor modified grassland to species-rich neutral grassland. The on-site grassland parcel (0.039 ha) uses land that will no longer be required for parking or driving range operations. Area A (0.6 ha of poor modified grassland) provides sufficient space to accommodate the pond, grassland, and scrub without compromising golf course operations.
- Pond creation in Area A exploits the topographic character of the ground and provides a priority habitat (standing open water) generating significant metric uplift from a baseline of low value grassland habitat. The pond is surrounded by the grassland buffer, satisfying the metric criterion for semi-natural habitat within 10 m of the pond edge.
- The new species-rich hedgerow on the northern site boundary replaces a modified grassland strip and contributes significantly to hedgerow unit gain (+295.83%).
- Both the on-site parcels and Area A are within Whitley Golf Club's ownership and under their direct management, which gives high confidence of delivery over 30 years (as noted in the PEA, September 2025).

Habitat and Condition Targets — PM-T01

Baseline Habitat	Target Habitat	Parcel / Area	Baseline Condition	Target Condition	Years to Target	Condition Assessment Notes
Modified grassland (poor)	Other neutral grassland (g3c)	On-site — 0.039 ha	Poor	Good	5	All criteria A–F to be passed. Criteria A and F are essential for good condition. Target ≥ 10 vascular plant spp./m ² . Low fertility substrate required.
Non-native hedgerow / no hedge (new creation)	Species-rich native hedgerow (h2a)	On-site — 48 m, northern boundary	N/A	Good	10	Criteria A1, A2, B3, B2, C1, C2, D1, D2 to be passed. E criteria N/A (no established trees initially).
No habitat (tree planting)	18 small deciduous trees (3 to medium)	On-site — distributed per approved landscape plan	N/A	Good	10	Trees to be native species. Survival and condition assessed at each monitoring visit.
Ditch (poor condition)	Ditch (enhanced)	On-site — SW boundary	Poor	Moderate	5	Criteria A, D, E, G, H to be passed. Criteria B and F to be improved through marginal planting and water management.
Modified grassland (poor) — Area A	Standing open water — pond (r1)	Area A — 0.01 ha	N/A (creation)	Good	5	Criteria A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I all to be passed for good condition.
Modified grassland (poor) — Area A	Other neutral grassland (g3c)	Area A — 0.05 ha	Poor	Good	5	All criteria A–F to be passed. Criteria A and F essential. ≥ 10 vascular plant spp./m ² . Low fertility substrate.
Modified grassland (poor) — Area A	Hawthorn/hazel scrub (h3)	Area A — 0.05 ha	N/A (creation)	Moderate	10	Criteria A, B, C, D to be passed for moderate condition. Criterion E (clearings/glades) is aspirational and will be managed towards but is not required for the metric target condition.

Habitat and Condition Targets — Further Comments PM-T01

All habitats are to be maintained at or above their target condition for the full 30-year period. Where monitoring identifies that a habitat is declining below its target condition, the adaptive management process in Section 3 will be triggered. The retention of boundary hedgerows and standard trees is secured under Planning Condition 5 and Condition 6 (CEMP) and is not separately scored in the metric as a gain; those features are not therefore the subject of management prescriptions in this HMMP.

Habitat Retention — PM-03 / PM-04

Measures to Protect Retained Habitats PM-03

The following habitats within the metric calculation are retained rather than created. They are shown on the approved Post Construction BNG Plan (Apt Ecology, 10 June 2025, Version 2).

Boundary ditch (SW boundary): The ditch is retained in situ. During construction it will be protected by a 5 m no-storage, no-access buffer on the development side. Post-construction, the ditch will be managed under the prescriptions in this HMMP to achieve moderate condition.

Note: Retained boundary hedgerows and standard trees are secured under Conditions 5 and 6 and are not subject to HMMP management prescriptions.

Specification of Protective Measures PM-04

Ditch buffer during construction: No materials, plant, or spoil to be stored within 5 m of the top of the ditch bank. If any temporary culverting is required it must be agreed with Apt Ecology in advance. The ECoW will inspect the ditch at the pre-commencement check and record its condition.

Habitat Retention Plan — PM-F01

The Post Construction BNG Plan (Apt Ecology, 10 June 2025, Version 2) shows the locations of all retained and created habitat parcels. This plan is submitted as part of the Condition 5 package and is referenced here.



Creation, Enhancement and Management Targets and Prescriptions

The following sections set out the creation, enhancement and management prescriptions for each BNG habitat parcel in turn. Condition assessment criteria are drawn from the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Sheets.

GH-T01 Target habitat: Other neutral grassland (g3c) — good condition — 0.039 ha on-site			
Condition Assessment Criterion	Targeted?	Creation / Enhancement Approach	Management Approach
A: Good example of habitat type with high proportion of characteristic indicator species.(Essential for Moderate or Good condition — non-acid grassland)	Yes	Creation from poor modified grassland on low-fertility substrate using species-rich native seed mix. Yellow rattle (<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>) to be included to suppress competitive grasses.	Annual assessment against target species list. Cut and remove arisings annually (late summer). No fertiliser input. Monitor criterion A at each visit.
B: Sward height varied — $\geq 20\%$ < 7 cm, $\geq 20\%$ > 7 cm	Yes	Achieved through single annual late-summer cut regime from Year 2.	Annual cut in August–September. No early cuts that would prevent height variation from developing.
C: Bare ground 1–5%	Yes	Expose areas of bare ground during seeding preparation; some will persist naturally.	Monitor and maintain small areas of bare ground. Avoid over-management.
D: Bracken $< 20\%$, scrub (including bramble) $< 5\%$	Yes	Low risk on this parcel. Monitor from Year 1.	Remove bramble and scrub encroachment if cover approaches 5%. Annual check.
E: Species indicative of suboptimal condition / damage $< 5\%$	Yes	No fertiliser, no machinery storage on grassland parcel.	Inspect annually. No storage or parking on grassland area.
F: ≥ 10 vascular plant species per m ² including characteristic forbs.(Essential for Good condition — non-acid grassland)	Yes	Seed mix to include minimum 15 forb species appropriate to lowland neutral grassland (Wiltshire). See GH-T03 species list.	Annual botanical monitoring (quadrats). If species richness declines, over-seed with target forbs in autumn.

GH-T02 (On-site grassland) — Detailed Methods

Action	Timing	Prescriptions
Topsoil stripping	Year 0 — pre-seeding	Strip topsoil from the 0.039 ha grassland creation area and remove from site (do not stockpile on the grassland parcel). Expose low-fertility subsoil or substrate. Do not add compost, topsoil, or fertiliser.
Surface preparation	Year 0	Rake to a fine tilth. Consolidate lightly. Create a friable seedbed with some areas of exposed mineral soil.
Seeding	Year 0 — August–September preferred	Apply native species-rich neutral grassland seed mix at manufacturer's recommended rate. Mix must include yellow rattle <i>Rhinanthus minor</i> and minimum 15 forb species. See GH-T03 species list.
Year 1 establishment cuts	Year 1	Cut to 5–7 cm height 2–3 times in Year 1 (April, July, September) to prevent rank grass dominating. Remove all arisings from site within 1 week of each cut.
Annual management cut (Year 2 onwards)	Annually, August–September	Single cut to 7–10 cm in late summer after seed-set. Remove all arisings within 2 weeks. This is the primary management prescription for the 30-year period.
Weed control	As required, Years 1–5	Hand-pull or spot-treat injurious weeds (creeping thistle, docks) if cover exceeds 5%. No broad-spectrum herbicide application.
INNS vigilance	Annually	Inspect for Schedule 9 INNS. Remove any plants found immediately.

Species List — GH-T03 (On-site grassland)

The species-rich neutral grassland seed mix must include the following species as a minimum, appropriate to Wiltshire lowland neutral grassland:

Grasses (fine-leaved, non-aggressive): Common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Crested dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), Sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), Meadow fescue (*Festuca pratensis*).

Forbs (minimum 15 species): Yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor* — essential), Common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), Meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), Ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), Field scabious (*Knaulia arvensis*), Meadow cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*), Salad burnet (*Poterium sanguisorba*), Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), Cowslip (*Primula veris*), Rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*).

Species list to be confirmed with a reputable native seed supplier prior to purchase and refined if any species are unavailable.

HD-T01 Target habitat: Species-rich native hedgerow (h2a) — good condition — 48 m on-site

Condition Assessment Criterion	Targeted?	Creation / Enhancement Approach	Management Approach
A1: Height >1.5 m average	Yes	Plant double-staggered row of bare-root whips. Allow to grow without cutting for minimum 3 years.	Formative pruning from Year 4 to encourage bushy structure. Target >1.5 m by Year 5.
A2: Width >1.5 m average	Yes	Double-staggered row at 45 cm centres provides natural spread.	Allow natural spread. Do not trim width below 1.5 m.
B3: Gap at base <0.5 m for >90% of length	Yes	Dense planting at base of hedge. Establish grass buffer on both sides.	Monitor for gaps annually. Replace failed whips. Ensure mowing does not damage base.
B2: Canopy gaps <10% of length, no single gap >5 m	Yes	Continuous planting line. Replace failures promptly.	Annual gap inspection. Infill any gaps >2 m with additional whips (Nov–March).
C1: >1 m width undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length	Yes	Establish 1 m grass buffer on development side. No mowing within 1 m of hedge base.	Maintain unmown buffer strip permanently. Do not extend car park or hard surfaces to hedge base.
C2: Nutrient-enriched vegetation <20% of undisturbed ground	Yes	No fertiliser applied in buffer zone.	Monitor for nettle/dock domination annually. Hand-pull if approaching 20%.
D1: >90% free of invasive non-native species	Yes	Use only native species in planting mix. Monitor from Year 1.	Annual INNS inspection. Remove any Schedule 9 species immediately.
D2: >90% free of human-caused damage	Yes	Protect newly planted hedgerow with rabbit guards. Mark with canes.	Maintain guards Years 1–3. Protect from machinery damage. No storage adjacent to hedge.

HD-T02 (On-site hedgerow) — Detailed Methods

Action	Timing	Prescriptions
Ground preparation	Year 0 — pre-planting	Mark out 48 m planting line along northern boundary. Remove existing non-native vegetation from 2 m wide planting strip. Do not use herbicide within 1 m of boundary.
Planting	Year 0 / Year 1 — November–March	Double-staggered row of bare-root native whips at 3 plants per metre (5 per metre of row). Species mix: hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (40%), blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> (20%), field maple <i>Acer campestre</i> (15%), hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> (15%), dog rose <i>Rosa canina</i> (5%), holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> (5%). Fit individual spiral rabbit guards to all whips.
Aftercare — Years 1–3	Years 1–3	Water in dry spells (Year 1). Mulch strip around whips to suppress grass competition. Replace failed whips if losses exceed 20%. Do not cut planted stock.
Formative pruning — Years 4–7	Years 4–7, autumn/winter	Light trimming to encourage bushy lateral growth. Do not reduce height below 1 m until target height achieved.
Ongoing management — Year 8 onwards	Every 2–3 years, September–February only	Trim on 2–3 year rotation to maintain target height and width. Allow sections to carry berries and flowers in alternating years. Never cut the same section in consecutive years.
Nesting bird protection	1 March – 31 August annually	No cutting or significant management within this period unless pre-checked by a competent ecologist and confirmed free of active nests.

Species List — HD-T03 (On-site hedgerow)

Planting species as per HD-T02 above. Target species composition for good condition includes characteristic native hedgerow species. By Year 10 the hedgerow should support hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, dog rose, and holly at minimum, with natural recruitment of elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) tolerated at low levels.

On-site: 18 Small Deciduous Trees (3 to Medium)

Trees — On-site: 18 Small Deciduous Trees (3 to Medium)			
Action	Timing	Prescriptions	
Tree planting	Year 0 / Year 1 — October–March	Plant 18 native small deciduous trees as shown on the approved landscape plan (Artel, January 2025). Species from: pedunculate oak Quercus robur, field maple Acer campestre, rowan Sorbus aucuparia, silver birch Betula pendula, wild cherry Prunus avium. Stake and tie all trees. Fit tree guards. Three trees designated on plan to grow to full medium size — label stakes.	
Establishment — Years 1–3	Years 1–3	Water in dry periods. Inspect and adjust stakes/ties annually. Replace failed trees in Year 1 like-for-like.	
Three designated medium trees	Ongoing	No crown restriction or management of the three designated trees. Record their identities and locations in monitoring reports.	
Ongoing management	Annually from Year 3	Annual inspection for health and condition. Crown lift or formative pruning of remaining 15 trees as appropriate. No works within bird nesting season without prior check.	

DI-T01 Target habitat: Ditch — moderate condition — SW boundary			
Condition Assessment Criterion	Targeted?	Creation / Enhancement Approach	Management Approach
A: Good water quality, clear water, no obvious pollution	Yes	No management change to water inflow. Protect ditch from silt runoff during construction with silt fencing.	Ensure no chemical or sediment inputs from adjacent operations. Annual visual quality check.
B: ≥10 species emergent, floating or submerged plants in 20 m length	Yes	Plant drought-tolerant marginal species: water forget-me-not <i>Myosotis scorpioides</i> , brooklime <i>Veronica beccabunga</i> , marsh marigold <i>Caltha palustris</i> , water mint <i>Mentha aquatica</i> .	Annual plant establishment check. Supplement planting if fewer than 5 species by Year 3.
C: <10% filamentous algae / duckweed	Yes	Ensure ditch is not over-shaded or enriched.	Remove excess filamentous algae annually if criterion approaches failure. No nutrient inputs.
D: Marginal vegetation fringe >75% of length	Yes	Planting of marginal species as per criterion B.	Allow marginal vegetation to establish. Do not clear more than 50% in any one year.
E: Physical damage <5% of ditch	Yes	Construction buffer maintained (5 m no-access zone).	No machinery access within 5 m of ditch edge. Clearance works by hand where possible.
F: Minimum summer water depth — 50 cm minor ditch	Yes	The ditch has been assessed as capable of achieving moderate condition as part of the consented development. Post-construction drainage improvements and marginal vegetation establishment will support improved water retention. Criterion F is targeted.	Monitor water depth annually. If water levels do not improve by Year 3, investigate drainage connections and implement additional water retention measures in liaison with Apt Ecology.
G: <10% heavily shaded	Yes	Ditch currently open. Monitor for hedge encroachment.	Maintain open aspect. Trim any overhanging vegetation if shading approaches 10%.
H: No non-native plant/animal species	Yes	Monitor from Year 1.	Remove any Schedule 9 INNS immediately if found.

DI-T02 (Ditch) — Detailed Methods			
Action	Timing	Prescriptions	
Marginal planting	Year 0 / Year 1 — March–May	Plant native marginal species at 0.5 m centres along accessible bank: water forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>), brooklime (<i>Veronica beccabunga</i>), marsh marigold (<i>Caltha palustris</i>), water mint (<i>Mentha aquatica</i>). Use plug plants. No invasive species.	
Annual rotational clearance	Annually, September–October	Clear no more than 50% of ditch length in any one year on alternating sides. Remove spoil from bank. Retain marginal vegetation on uncleared sections. Do not use mechanical equipment within the ditch channel.	
INNS vigilance	Annually	Inspect for Schedule 9 INNS. Remove immediately if found.	

PO-T01 Target habitat: Standing open water — Offsite - pond (r1) — good condition — 0.01 ha (Area A)			
Condition Assessment Criterion	Targeted?	Creation / Enhancement Approach	Management Approach
A: Good water quality, clear water, no obvious pollution	Yes	Excavate pond in area with no surface water inflow from fertilised or cultivated land. Surround with grassland buffer (>10 m all sides).	Annual visual water quality check. Prevent any nutrient input. No livestock access.
B: Semi-natural habitat (moderate+ distinctiveness) surrounding pond for ≥10 m from edge	Yes	Species-rich grassland buffer of 0.05 ha surrounds the pond — this parcel directly satisfies criterion B.	Maintain grassland buffer to good condition (see GH-T01 Area A). Must remain semi-natural for full 30 years.
C: <10% duckweed / filamentous algae cover	Yes	Marginal vegetation planting to balance pond ecology.	Remove excess duckweed/algae manually if criterion approaches failure. No herbicides in or adjacent to pond.
D: Pond not artificially connected to other waterbodies	Yes	Design pond as self-contained feature without piped inflow/outflow.	Maintain as standalone feature. No drainage connections to be made without Apt Ecology agreement.
E: Water levels fluctuate naturally — no artificial dams, pumps, pipework	Yes	Create pond at natural ground level. Rely on rainfall and groundwater.	No artificial water level management. Monitor annually.
F: No Schedule 9 non-native plant or animal species	Yes	Use only UK-native plants. Do not introduce fish or non-native species.	Annual INNS inspection. Remove any Schedule 9 plants or animals immediately.
G: Pond not artificially stocked with fish	Yes	No fish introduction.	Maintain no-fish policy for the 30-year period.
H: Emergent/submerged/floating plants cover ≥50% of area <3 m deep (non-woodland pond)	Yes	Plant native aquatic and marginal species at establishment. See PO-T03 species list.	Monitor plant cover annually. Supplement planting if cover falls below 50% by Year 3.
I: Pond surface ≤50% shaded by adjacent trees/scrub (non-woodland pond)	Yes	Pond located in open grassland. Scrub parcel is set back from pond edge.	Annual shading assessment. Manage scrub/grassland interface to prevent over-shading.

PO-T02 (Area A pond) — Detailed Methods

Action	Timing	Prescriptions
Pond excavation	Year 0 — September–February preferred	Excavate pond to design profile: maximum depth 1.5 m at centre, shallow marginal shelves (0–0.5 m) around at least 60% of perimeter. Minimum surface area 100 m ² (0.01 ha). Line if ground conditions require. Remove all spoil from site.
Aquatic and marginal planting	Year 0 / Year 1 — April–June	Plant native species: yellow flag iris (<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>), marsh marigold (<i>Caltha palustris</i>), water forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>), brooklime (<i>Veronica beccabunga</i>), water mint (<i>Mentha aquatica</i>), common reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i> — max 20% cover). Plant at marginal shelves. Use aquatic baskets or bare-root plants. No non-native species.
Establishment management — Years 1–3	Years 1–3	Monitor for invasive species. Thin common reed if cover exceeds 30% by Year 3. Remove arisings. Do not introduce fish or waterfowl that would destabilise early plant establishment.
Ongoing management	Every 2–3 years	Thin emergent vegetation (reed, iris) on rotational basis if total emergent + floating cover exceeds 80% of pond surface. Retain diverse mix of open water, emergent, and submerged zones.
INNS vigilance	Annually	Inspect for Schedule 9 INNS (particularly New Zealand pigmyweed <i>Crassula helmsii</i> , floating pennywort <i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i>). Remove immediately if found.

Species List — PO-T03 (Area A pond)

Marginal and aquatic planting — target species list:

Marginals (shallow margins 0–20 cm): Marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*), water forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*), water mint (*Mentha aquatica*), yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus* — limit to 20% cover).

Emergents (20–50 cm): Common reed (*Phragmites australis* — limit to 20% total cover), lesser reedmace (*Typha angustifolia*).

Submerged/floating: Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), spiked water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), broad-leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*).

All plants must be sourced from UK-native stock. No non-native aquatic plants to be introduced.

GH-T01 (Area A grassland) Target habitat: Other neutral grassland (g3c) — good condition — 0.05 ha (Area A)			
Condition Assessment Criterion	Targeted?	Creation / Enhancement Approach	Management Approach
A: Good example of habitat type with characteristic indicator species. (Essential for Good condition)	Yes	Creation from poor modified grassland. Low-fertility substrate preparation. Species-rich seed mix with yellow rattle.	Annual botanical assessment. Cut and remove arisings. No fertiliser. Monitor criterion A at each visit.
B: Sward height varied	Yes	Annual late-summer cut from Year 2 maintains varied sward structure.	Single annual cut, late summer. No cutting before August.
C: Bare ground 1–5%	Yes	Exposed during ground preparation.	Maintain through careful management. Avoid over-cutting.
D: Bracken <20%, scrub <5%	Yes	Low risk. Adjacent scrub parcel managed separately.	Annual check. Remove bramble/scrub encroachment at boundary of grassland parcel if >5%.
E: Suboptimal indicator species <5%	Yes	No enrichment. No livestock access.	Annual inspection. No fertiliser, manure, or cultivation.
F: ≥10 vascular plant species per m ² (essential for Good condition)	Yes	High-diversity seed mix. Same species list as on-site grassland.	Annual quadrat monitoring. Overseed with target forbs in autumn if species richness declines.

GH-T02 (Area A grassland) — Detailed Methods		
Action	Timing	Prescriptions
Topsoil stripping	Year 0	Strip and export topsoil from 0.05 ha grassland creation area in Area A. Expose low-fertility substrate.
Surface preparation and seeding	Year 0 — August–September	Prepare seedbed as per on-site grassland prescription (GH-T02). Apply same species-rich neutral grassland seed mix including yellow rattle.
Year 1 establishment cuts	Year 1	As per on-site grassland — cut 2–3 times, remove arisings.
Annual management (Year 2+)	Annually, August–September	Single late-summer cut. Remove all arisings within 2 weeks.
Weed control	Years 1–5 as required	Hand-pull injurious weeds if >5% cover. No herbicides.

SC-T01 (Area A scrub) Target habitat: Hawthorn/hazel scrub (h3) — moderate condition — 0.05 ha (Area A)			
Condition Assessment Criterion	Targeted?	Creation / Enhancement Approach	Management Approach
A: Good example of habitat type — ≥80% native scrub, ≥3 native woody species, no single species >75% cover	Yes	Plant multi-species native mix: hawthorn (40%), hazel (30%), blackthorn (15%), dog rose (10%), elder (5%). No single species exceeds 40%.	Monitor species composition and canopy cover at each visit. Maintain multi-species structure.
B: Seedlings, saplings, young and mature shrubs all present	Yes	Bare-root whips will provide young stock. Establish from Year 0; mature structure to develop over 10+ years.	Rotational coppicing from Year 10 will maintain age-class diversity.
C: No Schedule 9 INNS; suboptimal species <5% ground cover	Yes	Native species only. Monitor from Year 1.	Remove any INNS immediately. Remove cherry laurel if it colonises from adjacent areas.
D: Well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland/forbs between scrub and adjacent habitat	Yes	Scrub parcel borders grassland buffer — interface will develop naturally.	Maintain transitional zone at scrub/grassland boundary. Do not cut up to scrub edge.
E: Clearings, glades or rides present	Aspirational	Not required for metric target condition (moderate). Rotational management from Year 5 will progressively create internal variation as an enhancement measure beyond the metric requirement.	Manage rotational coppice regime to introduce glades and edge habitat as an aspirational enhancement. Not required for moderate condition under the metric.

SC-T02 (Area A scrub) — Detailed Methods		
Action	Timing	Prescriptions
Ground preparation	Year 0	Mark out 0.05 ha parcel in Area A. No topsoil stripping required. Ensure grass is cut short prior to planting.
Planting	Year 0 / Year 1 — November–March	Plant bare-root native whips at 1 m centres: hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (40%), hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> (30%), blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> (15%), dog rose <i>Rosa canina</i> (10%), elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i> (5%). Fit spiral rabbit guards to all whips.
Establishment — Years 1–3	Years 1–3	Replace failed whips if losses exceed 20%. Spot-treat competitive grass in immediate vicinity of whips by hand. Do not cut planted stock.

Nesting season protection	1 March – 31 August annually	No management works during nesting season unless pre-checked by competent ecologist.
Rotational management — Year 5+	Every 5 years from Year 5	Coppice up to one-third of scrub in any one year on a rotational basis. Create 1–2 small glades (2–5 m diameter) within the parcel to achieve criterion E. Maintain transitional scrub-grassland edge.

Habitat Creation and Management — Risk Register — PM-T02

PM-T02 — Habitat Creation and Management Risk Register and Remedial Measures				
Date	Habitat	Risk Factor	Trigger for Action	Remedial Measure
2027/28	Neutral grassland (on-site + Area A)	Failure to achieve adequate species richness (criterion F) due to competitive grass dominance	<8 plant species per m ² at Year 2 survey	Overseed target forbs in autumn (Year 2). Increase cut frequency. Introduce yellow rattle if not already establishing.
2027/28	Neutral grassland (on-site + Area A)	High topsoil fertility preventing forb establishment	Species richness fails to improve after Year 3	Investigate soil pH and fertility. Consider additional topsoil removal or scarification.
2027/28	Species-rich hedgerow (on-site)	High whip failure rate in Year 1	Mortality >20% by first winter	Replace failed whips like-for-like in November. Review rabbit guard condition. Consider additional protection.
2027/28	Species-rich hedgerow (on-site)	Slow establishment — height <0.5 m by Year 5	<0.5 m average height at Year 5 monitoring	Review management; ensure no cutting has occurred. Additional whip planting if gaps present.
2027/28	Pond (Area A)	Pond fails to hold water / water level critically low in summer	Dry centre (< 10 cm depth) in July of Year 1 or 2	Investigate hydrology. Clay-line or install flexible pond liner. Consult Apt Ecology.
2027/28	Pond (Area A)	INNS colonisation (e.g. Crassula helmsii, Hydrocotyle ranunculoides)	Any Schedule 9 aquatic INNS identified	Immediate manual removal. Notify Apt Ecology. Monitor every 3 months until clear.
2027/28	Hawthorn/hazel scrub (Area A)	Whip failure in Year 1 (>20% mortality)	Survival count <80% at Year 1 visit	Replace failed whips. Review rabbit pressure. Additional guards if required.
2027/28	Pond (Area A) and neutral grassland (Area A)	Grassland buffer (criterion B for pond) fails to establish to semi-natural standard — pond condition target becomes unachievable	Grassland fails to achieve moderate or better condition by Year 3, OR grassland parcel is encroached upon or damaged	Treat grassland failure as highest priority remedial action. Pond condition cannot be met without the grassland buffer. Notify Apt Ecology immediately. Implement remedial grassland measures (see grassland risk rows). Notify Wiltshire Council if grassland parcel is threatened by encroachment or change of use.
2027/28	All habitats	Change of land manager / ownership leading to HMMP obligations not being met	Evidence of management not being implemented at Year 1 or subsequent monitoring	Notify Wiltshire Council. Reinstate management agreement. Review legal mechanism securing HMMP delivery under Condition 5.

3. Monitoring Schedule

Monitoring Strategy MS-B01	
Monitoring is designed to track progress against the habitat condition targets in Table PM-T01 using the same condition criteria from the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. This allows direct comparison between baseline, intermediate, and target condition across the 30-year period. Methods used will include fixed-point photography at each monitoring visit (from the same positions, documented at Year 1), botanical quadrat sampling for grassland parcels, walk-over condition assessments for hedgerow, ditch, scrub, and pond parcels, and plant survival counts for hedgerow and scrub whips and trees during the establishment phase. All monitoring will be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist (minimum MCIEEM or equivalent) in accordance with the HMMP Monitoring Report Template (Natural England, 2024) and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment criteria. Results at each visit will be compared against baseline.	

Monitoring Methods and Intervals — MS-T01

MS-T01 — Monitoring Methods and Intervals		
Habitat	Monitoring Methods	Interval and Timing
Other neutral grassland — on-site (0.039 ha) and Area A (0.05 ha)	5 x 1 m ² quadrats per parcel (stratified random placement, fixed positions from Year 1). Record all vascular plant species and estimate % cover. Assess against criteria A–F. Full species list across parcel. Estimate % bare ground, % bracken/scrub. Fixed-point photographs (minimum 4 per parcel).	Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30. Surveys June–August.
Species-rich native hedgerow — on-site (48 m)	Whip survival count and condition (Years 1–3). From Year 5: walk-over condition assessment against HD criteria A1, A2, B2, B3, C1, C2, D1, D2. Measure height and width at 3 fixed points. Record species composition. Note gaps. Fixed-point photographs.	Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30. Surveys October–November (Year 1–3 any month).
Trees — on-site (18 planted)	Survival count and health condition for all 18 trees. Record height and condition of 3 designated medium trees. Note guard condition Years 1–3.	Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30.
Ditch — on-site (SW boundary)	Walk-over assessment against criteria A–H. Estimate % cover of marginal vegetation. Count plant species in 20 m section. Visual water quality check. Note % shading. Fixed-point photographs.	Years 1, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30. Surveys May–July.
Pond — Area A (0.01 ha)	Visual water quality and level assessment. Estimate % cover of aquatic/emergent/floating vegetation. Count plant species. Assess against criteria A–I. Note % shading by adjacent scrub/trees. INNS check. Fixed-point photographs (minimum 3 positions).	Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30. Surveys May–July.
Hawthorn/hazel scrub — Area A (0.05 ha)	Whip survival count and condition (Years 1–3). From Year 5: walk-over structural assessment (% cover estimates: open ground, scattered scrub, dense scrub). Species composition check. Assess against criteria A–E. Note glades/clearings. Fixed-point photographs.	Years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30. Surveys April–June or September–November.

Monitoring Reports — MS-T02

Monitoring reports will be prepared by Apt Ecology using the HMMP Monitoring Report Template (Natural England Appendix 1a, v1.1) and submitted to Wiltshire Council following each monitoring visit. Reports will include: condition assessment results against Table PM-T01 targets; fixed-point photographs; comparison against baseline and previous monitoring; assessment of management implementation; and any recommendations for adaptive management.

MS-T02 — Monitoring Report Schedule		
Responsible for submitting monitoring reports		Responsible for receiving and reviewing reports
Apt Ecology (Ben Mitchell MCIEEM) on behalf of Whitley Golf Club		Wiltshire Council, Planning Department

Monitoring Report and Plan Review Schedule				
Project Year	Month — Report Submitted	Month — Plan Reviewed	Comments	
Y1	October	—	First-season establishment report. All habitat creation works confirmed. Whip survival counts. Grassland emergence recorded.	
Y2	October	—	Grassland development check. Hedgerow and scrub survival Year 2. Pond condition Year 2.	
Y3	October	—	3-year establishment assessment. All habitats assessed against target trajectory. Flag any early adaptive management needs.	
Y5	October	November	First 5-year management plan review. Full condition assessment of all habitats against metric targets. Report submitted to LPA for approval of updated HMMP.	
Y10	October	November	10-year review. Full condition reassessment.	
Y15	October	November	15-year review.	
Y20	October	November	20-year review.	
Y25	October	November	25-year review.	
Y30	October	November	Final 30-year close-out report and condition assessment.	

Adaptive Management — MS-B02

Summary of Adaptive Management Approaches MS-B02

Monitoring results will be evaluated against the condition targets in Table PM-T01 after each monitoring visit. If a habitat is assessed as failing one or more condition criteria, or as not being on a positive trajectory towards its target condition, the risk register (PM-T02) will be consulted to identify the appropriate remedial measure. Where a risk trigger has been reached, Apt Ecology will advise Whitley Golf Club on the remedial action required and confirm implementation in writing.

Minor adjustments to management timing or method that do not materially affect the habitat condition targets can be agreed directly between Apt Ecology and Whitley Golf Club and will be recorded in the subsequent monitoring report. Any proposed changes to target habitat types, parcel boundaries, or condition targets must be agreed in writing with Wiltshire Council prior to implementation.

The management plan will be formally revised at each 5-year monitoring interval. Revised versions will be submitted to Wiltshire Council for approval. Day-to-day observations by golf club staff that suggest a habitat is not performing as expected should be reported to Apt Ecology promptly so that remedial advice can be given before the next formal monitoring visit.

References

- Planning Permission PL/2025/05424, Wiltshire Council, 03 October 2025
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (amended v5), Apt Ecology (Ben Mitchell BSc (Hons) MCIEEM), 10 September 2025
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments, Apt Ecology, 5 September 2025
- BNG Metric, Apt Ecology, 10 September 2025
- Post Construction BNG Plan (Site and Offsite), Apt Ecology, 10 June 2025, Version 2
- Proposed landscape and ecological plan, Artel, January 2025
- Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan Template (HMMP) v1.0, Natural England, 2024
- HMMP Companion Document v1.0_v2, Natural England, June 2025
- HMMP Checklist v2.0, Natural England
- HMMP Monitoring Report Template (Appendix 1a) v1.1, Natural England
- Environment Act 2021
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition, 2017
- CIEEM Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing, December 2017