



MIDDLE GREEN FARM DAUNTSEY

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. ACD Environmental Ltd were commissioned by F W Potter & Son to conduct a Biodiversity Metric Calculation of a site referred to as Middle Green Farm, Dauntsey hereafter referred to as 'the Application Site' (OS Grid Reference: SU 00021 82551).
- 1.2. The Application Site is approximately 0.0804ha of land, which is predominantly modified grassland and bramble scrub.
- 1.3. The proposed development will result in a loss of modified grassland and bramble scrub to construct a cow shed.
- 1.4. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been used to measure and account for biodiversity losses and gains as a result of the proposed development. The results of the Metric can be summarised as follows:

On-site Baseline Units	Habitat Units	0.17
On-site Post-Development Units	Habitat Units	0.21
Total net unit change	Habitat Units	0.03
Total net % change	Habitat	18.63%

- 1.5. The proposed development will result in a net gain of 18.63% (0.03 units) in habitats. To achieve a net gain of 18.63% in habitats a total of 0.03 units of wildflower/other neutral grassland and mixed scrub have assisted in achieving this result.
- 1.6. Trading rules have been met, and this will be possible if the enhancements detailed in this report are followed. Offsetting has been sought in the wider ownership to achieve this net gain.
- 1.7. Measures to achieve this net gain in biodiversity have been explored within the wider ownership boundary. This includes the enhancement of modified grassland to wildflower/other neutral grassland and the creation of mixed scrub.
- 1.8. Providing the proposed habitats are enhanced, the proposed development within the Application Site will be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework

(NPPF)¹ and Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)².

¹ HM Government. *National Planning Policy Framework December 2024*. Available at:
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf>

² Wiltshire Council (2015). *Wiltshire Core Strategy*. Adopted 20th January 2015. Available at:
<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-core-strategy>

2. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

- 2.1. ACD Environmental Ltd were commissioned by F W Potter & Son to conduct a Biodiversity Metric Calculation of a site referred to as Middle Green Farm, Dauntsey (OS Grid Reference: SU 00021 82551).
- 2.2. The Application Site is situated within Middle Green Farm in the village of Dauntsey. The Application Site comprises approximately 0.0804ha of land, which is predominantly modified grassland and bramble scrub. This area is currently used for the informal storage of farm equipment and waste materials, including tyres. Rubble piles and earth mounds are also present. The local landscape consists of agricultural fields and buildings, residential buildings, patches of woodland and waterbodies.
- 2.3. The approximate red line boundary and blue line boundary) of the Application Site are shown in **Image 1**.



Image 1: Application Site location and approximate boundary shown in red³.

³ Map data, QGIS 2025

Context

- 2.4. The development proposals are for a proposed erection of a cow shed which will form part of a planning application) with Wiltshire Council.

Purpose

- 2.5. The purpose of this assessment is to:
- Determine the impact of the development on biodiversity by:
 - Establishing the theoretical value of biodiversity within the Application Site before and after development.
 - Assessing how the value of biodiversity within the Application Site would change following development.
 - Make detailed design recommendations to maximise opportunities for biodiversity on-site and where required, establish the parameters of any biodiversity offsetting.
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3. METHODOLOGY

Names and qualifications of surveyors

- 3.1. This report has been written by Madison Sellar, Ecologist with ACD Environmental Ltd. Madison has approximately three years' experience in ecological consultancy and has undertaken various surveys, ranging from Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys to Phase 2 surveys for protected species, including bats, hazel dormice, badgers, reptiles, water voles and great crested newts. Madison has written various reports, including Ecological Impact Assessments (EclAs), Landscape and Ecological Management Plans (LEMPs), Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) reports. Madison is a Qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).
- 3.2. A Technical Review of this report has been undertaken in line with ACD Environmental Ltd's Quality Assurance procedures. The Technical Review was undertaken by Lisa Durrant. Lisa is a Senior Ecologist at ACD Environmental Ltd. She has 13 years' experience in ecological consultancy and holds Natural England Class License for bats (Level 2), great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*, dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius*, and barn owl *Tyto alba*. She is a Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM).

Habitat Survey

- 3.3. The Application Site was subject to a site walkover on 3rd December 2025, completed by ACD Environmental Ltd. This survey confirmed the baseline habitats within the Application Site consisted predominantly of modified grassland and bramble scrub.
- 3.4. The data from the site visit completed in December 2025 was classified with reference to the UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab)⁴ and input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- 3.5. Using the above method, recent photos and data already known from the desk study using DEFRA Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside application (MAGIC)⁵, to determine the priority habitats within 500m and the Application Site was assessed for the habitat types it supports and their importance in a local context.

⁴ UKHab (2023). UK Hab V2. Available at: <https://ukhab.org/>

⁵ Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside' (MAGIC) (2025), Available at: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.html>

Limitations and Precautionary Approach

- 3.6. The site visit was undertaken during December, a sub-optimal month for vegetation surveys. However, these habitats were readily apparent/easily distinguished, therefore, this is not considered to be a significant limitation.
- 3.7. Professional judgement was used by ACD Environmental Ltd and justification for the habitat's conditions will be evidenced where required.

Calculator Tool

Assessment Framework

- 3.8. For the purposes of this assessment, the Statutory Sites Biodiversity Metric has been utilised. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric is accompanied by a 'Calculation Tool'. This was used to calculate the biodiversity units for the Application Site before and after development. The assessment was conducted using the criteria set out within the Natural England guidance document⁶.

Habitat Measurements

- 3.9. Baseline habitat measurements were carried out in line with the survey results from the site walkover survey. Measurements were calculated using QGIS.
- 3.10. Measurements were entered to the nearest 0.001 ha.

Distinction Assessments

- 3.11. Habitats are assigned to distinctiveness bands automatically within the Metric. These are based on an assessment of the distinguishing features of a habitat or linear feature, including the consideration of species richness, rarity (at local, regional, national and international scales), and the degree to which a habitat supports species rarely found in other habitats.
- 3.12. The distinctiveness band of each habitat is preassigned in the Biodiversity Metric. The bands are based upon the UK Habitat Classification system. A combination of simple rules and professional judgement have been used to assign each habitat type to the appropriate distinctiveness band. The distinctiveness categories used are tailored to habitat type.

⁶ Biodiversity Statutory Metric: *Small Statutory Biodiversity Metric - User Guide*. Natural England. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

3.13. Distinctiveness Assessments are assigned according to **Table 1**.

Table 1: Distinctiveness Assessment.

Category	Scores	Multiplier
Very High	8	Priority habitats as defined in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act that are highly threatened, internationally scarce and require conservation action e.g. blanket bog
High	6	Priority habitats as defined in Section 41 of the NERC Act requiring conservation action e.g. lowland fens
Medium	4	Semi-natural habitats not classed as a Priority Habitat but with significant wildlife benefit e.g. mixed scrub
Low	2	Habitat of low biodiversity value e.g. temporary grass and clover ley
Very Low	0	Little or no biodiversity value e.g. hardstanding or sealed surface

Proposed Target Condition Assessments

- 3.14. Proposed habitats will have a different ecological target condition. The Metric therefore takes account of variation in habitat target conditions.
- 3.15. Condition Assessments are assigned according to **Table 2**. Habitat Condition was assessed using the criteria set out within the Natural England guidance document.

Table 2: Condition Assessment.

Category	Score
Good	3
Fairly Good	2.5
Moderate	2
Fairly Poor	1.5
Poor	1

Strategic significance

- 3.16. The spatial location of a habitat is treated as a component of the quality of a habitat parcel in the same way as distinctiveness or condition. Strategic significance is used to determine whether the habitat is of increased importance due to its location.

4. ASSESSMENT

Context

- 4.1. The Application Site is situated within Middle Green Farm in the village of Dauntsey. The Application Site comprises approximately 0.0804ha of land, which is predominantly modified grassland and bramble scrub. This area is currently used for the informal storage of farm equipment and waste materials, including tyres. Rubble piles and earth mounds are also present. According to DEFRA MAGIC website there are no priority habitats within 500m of the Application Site. The local landscape consists of agricultural fields and buildings, residential buildings, patches of woodland and waterbodies.

Baseline Habitats

- 4.2. Locations of habitats can be found in the Baseline Habitat plan in **Appendix 1**. Site photographs can be found in **Appendix 3** of this report.
- 4.3. The Application Site predominantly consists of modified grassland and bramble scrub.

Unmanaged modified grassland dominated by tall forb (g4 521 16)

- 4.4. The majority of the Application Site (approximately 0.0734ha) consists of modified grassland. The grassland is dominated by hairy willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*. Other species include common nettle *Urtica dioica*, cleavers *Galium aparine*, perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, bitter dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, dove's-foot crane's-bill *Geranium molle*, bristly oxtongue *Helminthotheca echinoides*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, a blackthorn sapling *Prunus spinos* and creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*.
- 4.5. This habitat is of '**poor**' condition according to UK Habitat condition assessment criteria.
- 4.6. This area will be lost to facilitate the new development.

Bramble scrub h3d

- 4.7. The rest of the Application Site (approximately 0.007ha) consists of bramble *Rubus fruticosus* scrub.
- 4.8. Bramble scrub is allocated a pre-determined fixed condition score within the Metric. It is assessed as **Condition Assessment 'N/A'**.
- 4.9. This area will be lost to facilitate the new development.

Proposed Habitats On-site

4.10. The following habitats are proposed as part of the redevelopment of the Application Site:

- Buildings.
- Wildflower grassland/other neutral.
- Mixed scrub.

4.11. Locations of proposed habitats can be found in the Habitat Creation Plan in **Appendix 2**.

On-site – Buildings u1b5

4.12. The development will result in the construction of a cow shed (approximately 0.0504ha).

4.13. Buildings are allocated a pre-determined, fixed condition score within the Metric. Therefore, due to the lack of biodiversity value, buildings are assessed as '**N/A - Other**'.

On-site - Wildflower grassland/other neutral g3c

4.14. An area of modified grassland the size of approximately 0.02ha within the wider ownership boundary will be sown and enhanced with EL1 flowering lawn mixture and EM1 basic general purpose meadow mixture by Emorsgate.

4.15. EL1 species are as follows (20% wild flowers and 80% grasses):

4.16. 1.00% kidney vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria*, 1.00% betony *Betonica officinalis*, 1.60% common knapweed *Centurea nigra*, 1.00% hedge bedstraw *Galium album*, 1.60% lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, 1.40% oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, 0.20% birds'-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, 0.60% black medick *Medicago lupulina*, 2.40% ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, 1.00% cowslip *primula veris*, 1.20% selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, 1.60% meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, 1.00% bladder campion *Silene vulgaris*, 0.40% dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, 4.00% white clover (ag) *Trifolium repens*, Grasses; 8.00% common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, 28.00% crested dogstail *Cynosurus cristatus*, 24.00% red fescue *Festuca rubra*, 4.00% smaller cat's-tail *Phleum bertolonii*, 16.00% smooth-stalked meadow-grass *Poa pratensis*.

4.17. EM1 species are as follows (10% wild flowers and 90% grasses):

4.18. 1.50% common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, 1.00% wild carrot *Daucus carota*, 0.30% lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, 1.00% oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, 0.60% musk mallow *Malva moschata*, 1.60% ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, 1.50% salad burnet *Poterium sanguisorba ssp sanguisorba*, 1.00% selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, 1.00% meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, 0.20% yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, 0.50% red campion *Silene dioica*, 9.00% common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, 31.50% crested dogstail *Cynosurus cristatus*, 27.00% red fescue *Festuca rubra*, 4.50% smaller cat's-tail *Phleum bertolonii* and 18.00% smooth-stalked meadow-grass *Poa pratensis*.

4.19. This grassland is expected to reach a **Moderate Condition**.

On-site - Mixed scrub h3h

4.20. An area of modified grassland the size of approximately 0.01ha within the wider ownership boundary will be utilised for mixed scrub creation to compensate for the loss of bramble scrub within the Application Site. The composition of the mixed scrub will comprise of 5-7 or more native species such as hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, field rose *Rosa arvensis*, dog rose *Rosa canina*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus* and dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*.

4.21. The mixed scrub is expected to reach a **Moderate Condition**.

5. RESULTS AND EVALUATION

- 5.1. The full results of the Metric have been provided separately as an Excel document. Assessor comments have been added where they are deemed necessary to provide reasoning or justification for certain aspects of the calculation. A summary of results can be found in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Summary of Results.

On-site Baseline Units	Habitat Units	0.17
On-site Post-Development Units	Habitat Units	0.21
Total net unit change	Habitat Units	0.03
Total net % change	Habitat	18.63%

- 5.2. The Statutory Metric Biodiversity Metric calculations has demonstrated that the proposed development will result in a net gain of 18.63% (0.03 units) in habitats. To achieve a net gain of 18.63% in habitats a total of 0.03 units of wildflower/other neutral grassland and mixed scrub have assisted in achieving this result. Trading rules have been met, and offsetting has been sought in the wider ownership boundary. This net gain will be possible if the enhancements detailed in this report are followed.
- 5.3. It is important to note that the Metric does not explicitly deal with fauna. Instead, it uses habitat types as a proxy for the biodiversity 'value' of the species communities that make up those different habitats and its results must be considered in conjunction with other measures. To this end, a suite of artificial enhancements, which provide opportunities for fauna, should be incorporated into the scheme.
- 5.4. One policy from the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) is appropriate to this development and is listed below.
- 5.5. Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity:

“Protection

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it

has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource, and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.

All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

Biodiversity enhancement

All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/ Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character.”

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. The proposed development will result in a net gain of 18.63% (0.03 units) in habitats.
- 6.2. Measures to achieve this net gain include the proposed enhancement of 0.02ha of modified grassland to wildflower/other neutral grassland and the proposed creation of 0.01ha of mixed scrub within the wider ownership boundary.
- 6.3. Trading rules have been met, and offsetting has been sought in the wider ownership boundary.
- 6.4. This net gain will be possible if enhancements detailed in this report are followed.
- 6.5. Provided the proposed post-development habitats are created, the proposed development will be in accordance with the Wiltshire Core Plan (2015) and will be in accordance with the NPPF.

APPENDIX 1: BASELINE HABITAT PLAN



APPENDIX 2: HABITAT CREATION PLAN



APPENDIX 3: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph 1: Looking northwest at the Application Site and modified grassland with tall forbs.



Photograph 2: Looking southwest at the Application and line of trees (outside of red line boundary).



Photograph 3: Looking south-west at the bramble scrub within the Application Site.



Photograph 4: Looking at the miscellaneous farm equipment within the Application Site.

