

ECOLOGICAL MITIGATION STRATEGY

Land off Southampton Road, Alderbury

April 2026

For and on behalf of

FORMULA LAND (ALDERBURY) LIMITED



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Disclaimer

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This document does not constitute legal advice.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Ecological Mitigation Strategy (EMS) has been prepared by Beamsley Ecology Ltd on behalf of Formula Land (Alderbury) (the 'Client') in support of planning application (ref: PL/2024/09976) relating to land off Southampton Road, Alderbury, Wiltshire (the 'Site').
- 1.2 The purpose of this Strategy is to provide a clear and proportionate framework for the retention, protection, mitigation and enhancement of ecological features associated with the proposed development. It has been prepared having regard to the ecological survey work undertaken to date, together with consultation responses received from Wiltshire Council's ecology officer.
- 1.3 The Strategy demonstrates how ecological considerations have informed the iterative evolution of the scheme and how the proposals have been developed in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy, namely:
 - avoidance of ecological harm through site layout refinement and habitat retention;
 - minimisation of unavoidable effects through sensitive design and buffering;
 - mitigation through habitat strengthening and connectivity measures; and
 - compensation and enhancement through habitat creation, restoration and long-term management.
- 1.4 In response to ecological feedback received during the course of the application, the scheme has been amended to better reflect on-site ecological constraints and opportunities. This includes the retention of sensitive habitat areas, reduction in impacts to priority grassland habitats, and strengthening of existing green infrastructure features.
- 1.5 The mitigation proposals extend beyond the principal application red line boundary to include an additional area of land immediately adjoining the site to the north, identified as blue line land under the control of the applicant. This area has been incorporated into the ecological mitigation strategy in order to provide additional habitat creation, compensation and long-term enhancement opportunities. The extent of the red line ('on-site') and blue line land ('off-site') is shown on the accompanying Location Plan (drawing reference BE0117.D.02.01.1).
- 1.6 This document should be read alongside the accompanying Ecological Mitigation Strategy Plan (drawing reference BE0117.D.02.02.1), which identifies the principal ecological mitigation and enhancement areas across the site.
- 1.7 Given the outline nature of the application, this Strategy provides a strategic framework for ecological mitigation and enhancement. Detailed planting specifications, implementation methodologies, management prescriptions and monitoring arrangements can be secured through subsequent reserved matters submissions and future management plans, where appropriate.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT AND ECOLOGICAL BASELINE

Site Description

- 2.1 The Site comprises predominantly open grassland previously, together with areas of rougher grassland, scrub, hedgerows, mature trees and a watercourse. An allotment area is present toward the southern part of the site, with adjoining residential development and local roads forming part of the surrounding context.
- 2.2 A vegetated watercourse corridor traverses the site broadly east-west and forms a key ecological feature, containing mature trees. This corridor provides important habitat connectivity through the Site and links to the wider landscape.
- 2.3 Boundary vegetation, including hedgerows, scrub and trees, is present along sections of the site perimeter and contributes to the wider ecological network, providing potential shelter, foraging and commuting opportunities for a range of species.

Existing Habitats

ON SITE

- 2.4 The site supports a mosaic of grassland, boundary vegetation, trees, scrub and wetland-associated habitats, reflecting its semi-rural edge-of-settlement location. The principal ecological interest of the site relates to the diversity of grassland communities present, together with the established network of hedgerows, mature trees and the central riparian corridor.
- 2.5 Detailed botanical survey work undertaken by Leppitt Associates in May 2025 identified a more complex habitat resource than had been recorded during earlier baseline surveys, with a number of habitat parcels supporting characteristics consistent with priority habitats under the UK Habitat Classification system.

Lowland Meadow

- 2.6 Areas within the eastern and south-eastern parts of the red line site were identified as supporting habitat characteristics consistent with Lowland Meadow, a Habitat of Principal Importance.
- 2.7 These areas comprise species-rich neutral grassland with comparatively low levels of agricultural improvement and a diverse herbaceous component. Indicator species recorded include Bird's-foot Trefoil, Black Knapweed, Ragged Robin, Blue/Glaucous Sedge, Meadow Buttercup, Red Clover and locally Meadowsweet, together with a corresponding grass assemblage. The habitat includes both drier meadow communities and more seasonally damp transitional meadow areas.
- 2.8 The Beamsley Ecology review accepted that portions of the site exhibit characteristics consistent with priority lowland meadow habitat and recognised that such areas should be treated as ecologically sensitive within the mitigation strategy.

Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture

- 2.9 Areas of wetter ground associated with the western field parcel and lower-lying portions of the site were identified as supporting habitat consistent with Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture, also a Habitat of Principal Importance.

- 2.10 These areas are characterised by damp to waterlogged conditions and support rush-dominated vegetation with associated wet grassland flora. Species recorded include Jointed Rush, Soft Rush, Hard Rush, Common Fleabane, Cuckoo Flower and other moisture-tolerant herbs. These habitats form part of the site's hydrological transition zone associated with the adjacent riparian corridor.

Other Neutral Grassland

- 2.11 Beyond the priority habitat parcels, the site supports broader areas of other neutral grassland of varying condition, ranging from more species-poor coarse grassland to moderately diverse swards. These areas contribute to the ecological function of the site by providing transitional habitat and structural diversity.

Modified Grassland

- 2.12 Limited areas of more intensively managed or agriculturally improved grassland are present, including parts of the northern blue line land. These areas are of comparatively lower ecological value and have been assessed as modified grassland in poor condition. Such land presents a suitable opportunity for habitat enhancement and restoration through the mitigation strategy.

Hedgerow Trees and Scrub

- 2.13 The site is enclosed and subdivided in part by established hedgerows containing a range of native woody species, together with areas of scrub and scattered mature trees. Of particular value are veteran trees identified to the northwest of the Site. These features are of notable ecological importance, particularly in providing habitat connectivity, nesting opportunities, shelter and foraging resources for birds, bats, dormice and other fauna.

Riparian Corridor

- 2.14 A vegetated watercourse corridor crosses the site and forms one of the principal ecological features within the wider landholding. This corridor is associated with trees, scrub, wetland margins and locally wetter ground, creating a linear habitat connection through the site. A small area of willow scrub is also associated with this feature.
- 2.15 The corridor is considered important for habitat connectivity and likely supports commuting and foraging activity by bats, movement by small mammals and reptiles, and a range of invertebrate interest.

Summary Value (on-site)

- 2.16 Overall, the site's ecological value is derived from both the presence of priority habitat parcels and the wider mosaic of supporting habitats that surround and connect them.
- 2.17 The principal ecological importance of the site relates to the areas identified as Lowland Meadow and Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture, which represent habitats of elevated significance in both policy and biodiversity terms. These habitats form the core ecological resource within the site and are a key consideration in the design and mitigation approach.
- 2.18 This value is further strengthened by the presence of associated neutral grassland, hedgerows, scrub, mature trees and the riparian corridor, which together provide structural diversity, ecological connectivity and supporting habitat functions. These surrounding habitats increase resilience and functionality by offering foraging resource, shelter, dispersal routes and transitional habitat for a range of species.
- 2.19 Accordingly, the revised mitigation proposals have sought not only to retain and compensate for priority

habitats where necessary, but also to enhance the wider habitat network that underpins their ecological function.

OFF SITE

Modified Grassland

- 2.20 The off-site area comprises species poor modified grassland in poor condition. The type and condition of the habitats was determined through habitat survey on the 8th May 2024¹.

Notable and Protected Species

- 2.21 Ecological survey work undertaken to date has identified the Site as supporting, or having suitability to support, a range of notable and protected species. The site's value for fauna is closely linked to the presence of species-rich grassland, boundary vegetation, mature trees, scrub and the central riparian corridor, which together provide opportunities for foraging, shelter, nesting and movement through the wider landscape.

Hazel Dormouse

- 2.22 Hazel Dormouse is a species of principal ecological importance at the site. Whilst initial tube surveys undertaken in 2023 did not record the species, subsequent checks confirmed the presence of dormice within habitat along the northern boundary, thereby establishing the site as supporting this species.
- 2.23 Dormice are closely associated with structurally diverse hedgerows, scrub and woodland edge habitats, particularly where strong habitat connectivity exists. Within the Site context, the boundary vegetation, riparian corridor and associated scrub habitats are considered to provide suitable commuting, foraging and shelter opportunities.

Bats

- 2.24 Bat activity surveys recorded a range of species using the site for commuting and foraging purposes, including common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, Leisler's bat, serotine, Daubenton's bat, Natterer's bat and barbastelle.
- 2.25 Survey evidence indicates that bat activity is concentrated along linear habitat features, particularly the central watercourse corridor, mature hedgerows and areas of wet woodland. These features provide sheltered flight lines, navigation routes and enhanced invertebrate prey availability.

Reptiles

- 2.26 Targeted reptile surveys confirmed the presence of slow worm and grass snake within the site. These records indicate the Site supports suitable habitat for widespread reptile species, particularly within rough grassland margins, scrub interfaces and less intensively managed areas.
- 2.27 The combination of open basking areas, structural variation and wetland habitat provides high value to this group.

Breeding Birds

- 2.28 The Site supports habitat suitable for breeding birds, particularly within hedgerows, scrub, trees and grassland

¹ Survey carried out by Robyn Ablitt from the Somerset Wildlife Trust Consultancy on behalf of Cornwall Environmental Consultants (CEC).

margins. Earlier survey work recorded a range of common bird species, including species of conservation interest such as Song Thrush and Bullfinch.

- 2.29 Boundary vegetation and scrub provide nesting habitat, while grassland and meadow habitats offer foraging opportunities through seed and invertebrate resources.

Hedgehogs and Other Small Mammals

- 2.30 The site contains habitat suitable for hedgehog and other common small mammals through its combination of rough grassland, scrub, hedgerows and connected green corridors. Such habitats provide shelter, breeding opportunities and movement routes through the site.
- 2.31 The maintenance of permeable boundaries and structurally diverse green infrastructure will assist these species post-development.

Amphibians

- 2.32 The site is not considered to support significant habitat for Great Crested Newt, with no suitable breeding ponds present within the site itself. However, wetter margins associated with the watercourse and wet grassland may provide habitat of value to common amphibian species such as common frog, and common toad.

Invertebrates and Pollinators

- 2.33 The species-rich grassland habitats, scrub margins, wetland influence and flowering hedgerows indicate the site is likely to support a range of common invertebrates and pollinators. These resources are particularly associated with the priority grassland habitats and are important in supporting wider food chains, including bats and birds.

Ecological Significance in Context

- 2.34 Overall, the site supports a typical but locally valuable assemblage of fauna associated with semi-rural grassland and boundary habitats, with particular importance arising from:
- confirmed Hazel Dormouse presence;
 - diverse bat activity associated with connected corridors;
 - reptile presence; and
 - the habitat network supporting birds, invertebrates and small mammals.
- 2.35 The mitigation proposals have therefore been developed to retain and enhance those habitat features most relevant to these species, with particular emphasis on connectivity, structural diversity and long-term habitat management.

3.0 POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- 3.1 This Ecological Mitigation Strategy has been prepared with regard to the relevant national and local planning policy framework, together with applicable biodiversity and species protection legislation. Collectively, these provisions seek to ensure that development avoids significant ecological harm, protects important habitats and species, and secures measurable biodiversity enhancement.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity value and wider ecological networks.

- 3.3 In particular, planning decisions should:

- minimise impacts on, and provide net gains for, biodiversity;
- contribute to the Government's commitment to halt the decline in species abundance;
- protect and enhance sites, habitats and species of ecological importance;
- promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and wildlife corridors; and
- apply the mitigation hierarchy, seeking first to avoid impacts before considering mitigation or compensation.

- 3.4 Where significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for, planning permission should be refused.

- 3.5 The mitigation proposals set out in this Strategy have therefore been developed to ensure that ecological impacts are avoided or reduced where possible, with residual effects addressed through targeted mitigation, habitat creation and long-term management.

Environment Act 2021 / Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.6 The Environment Act 2021 introduced a mandatory requirement for qualifying developments to deliver a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), measured using the statutory biodiversity metric.

- 3.7 This requires development proposals to:

- assess baseline habitat value;
- demonstrate post-development biodiversity uplift;
- prioritise on-site habitat retention and enhancement where practicable;
- use off-site measures where necessary and appropriate; and
- secure habitat creation and management for the required monitoring period.

- 3.8 The revised proposals and associated mitigation strategy have been prepared alongside an updated BNG assessment and seek to maximise biodiversity outcomes through habitat retention, enhancement and additional habitat creation within the adjoining blue line landholding.

Wiltshire Core Strategy - Policy 50

- 3.9 Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy relates to biodiversity and geodiversity and seeks to ensure that development:
- protects designated sites and important ecological features;
 - avoids adverse impacts upon habitats and species;
 - secures no net loss of local biodiversity resources;
 - maintains and enhances ecological networks;
 - incorporates appropriate mitigation and compensation where impacts are unavoidable; and
 - delivers opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.

- 3.10 The mitigation strategy has been prepared with these objectives in mind, particularly through the retention of key habitats, strengthening of habitat connectivity and creation of additional compensatory habitat areas.

Protected Species Legislation

- 3.11 A number of species recorded at, or relevant to, the Site receive legal protection under UK legislation.

- 3.12 This includes, where relevant:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); and
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

- 3.13 Protected species identified as material considerations in relation to the site include Hazel Dormouse and bats, together with widespread reptiles protected from killing or injury.

- 3.14 The presence or likely presence of protected species does not preclude development, provided that proposals are informed by suitable survey evidence and appropriate avoidance, mitigation, compensation and licensing measures are capable of being secured where necessary.

- 3.15 The strategy has therefore been prepared to retain and enhance habitat features relevant to protected species and to provide an appropriate framework for detailed mitigation at subsequent stages.

Habitat and Priority Species Considerations

- 3.16 Certain habitats present within the Site, including Lowland Meadow and Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture, are recognised as Habitats of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as retained).

- 3.17 These habitats are material considerations in planning decisions and should be conserved, enhanced or appropriately compensated where impacts are unavoidable.
- 3.18 Similarly, species such as Hazel Dormouse are of elevated conservation significance and require careful consideration through site Design and mitigation planning.

Summary

- 3.19 The relevant policy and legislative frameworks do not prevent development at the Site. Rather, it requires development to be appropriately informed, sensitively designed and supported by robust mitigation and enhancement measures.
- 3.20 This Ecological Mitigation Strategy has therefore been prepared to demonstrate compliance with those requirements through the application of the mitigation hierarchy, retention of ecologically valuable features, creation of new habitats and the delivery of long-term biodiversity enhancement.

4.0 DESIGN EVOLUTION AND APPLICATION OF THE MITIGATION HIERARCHY

- 4.1 The proposed development has been subject to an iterative design process informed by ongoing ecological survey work, consultee feedback and review of habitat constraints and opportunities across the site. Ecological considerations have been a key component of this evolution, resulting in substantive amendments to the layout and the introduction of additional off-site land in order to secure an improved ecological outcome.
- 4.2 The revised proposals demonstrate clear application of the recognised mitigation hierarchy, whereby impacts are addressed in the following order:
- Avoid impacts wherever reasonably possible;
 - Minimise impacts that cannot be wholly avoided;
 - Mitigate residual effects through design and habitat measures; and
 - Compensate / enhance through habitat creation and long-term management where residual effects remain.

Baseline Design Constraints

- 4.3 Subsequent ecological survey work identified that parts of the site support habitats of greater ecological value than initially understood, including areas consistent with Lowland Meadow and Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture, together with habitat supporting protected and notable species including Hazel Dormouse, bats and reptiles.
- 4.4 These findings required reconsideration of earlier site assumptions and a review of how development could best be accommodated while responding appropriately to ecological sensitivities.

Avoidance Through Layout Revision

- 4.5 The primary response to these findings has been amendment of the site layout to avoid impacts to the most sensitive habitat areas where practicable.

4.6 Most notably:

- Development has been withdrawn from the more ecologically sensitive eastern section of the site;
- Areas supporting Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture have been retained in full;
- Greater separation has been achieved between built development and retained ecological features where practicable;
- Existing habitat corridors, including the riparian corridor and key boundary vegetation, have been retained as integral components of the green infrastructure framework.

4.7 These changes represent the first and most important stage of the mitigation hierarchy by reducing the extent of direct habitat loss through design-led avoidance.

Minimisation of Residual Effects

4.8 Where impacts cannot be wholly avoided, the proposals have sought to minimise residual ecological effects through sensitive site planning and strategic landscape measures.

4.9 This includes:

- reducing the extent of impact to areas of Lowland Meadow;
- retaining and buffering key boundary habitats;
- maintaining habitat continuity through the site;
- providing space for habitat enhancement within retained green corridors; and

4.10 Accordingly, the extent and severity of potential impacts have been significantly reduced compared with earlier scheme iterations.

Mitigation Through Habitat Enhancement

4.11 Given the outline nature of the application, detailed enhancement measures for retained on-site habitats will be finalised at reserved matters stage, informed by final landscape design, BNG requirements and habitat management objectives.

4.12 Where important habitat is to be retained additional measures presented at the point of a reserved matters application will include:

- enhancement of the central riparian corridor as a multifunctional ecological corridor;
- strengthening of boundary vegetation and woodland edge through native species-rich scrub and hedgerow planting;
- enhancement of non-priority neutral grassland habitats;
- reinforcement of habitat connectivity for dormice, bats and other fauna; and

- provision of additional foraging, nesting and refuge opportunities.

Compensation and Additional Enhancement

- 4.13 Notwithstanding the significant avoidance measures undertaken, some residual impacts to Lowland Meadow remain unavoidable due to the need to deliver a viable and coherent development layout.
- 4.14 In response, an additional parcel of land immediately adjoining the northern boundary of the site has been brought forward as blue line mitigation land. This land comprises modified agricultural grassland of limited ecological value and offers a suitable opportunity for compensatory habitat creation, biodiversity uplift and species specific enhancements.
- 4.15 Proposed measures include:
- Lowland Meadow translocation and / or creation;
 - Enhancement of existing modified grassland to other neutral grassland;
 - strengthening of ecological connectivity through creation of mixed scrub buffers and islands; and
 - long-term habitat management and monitoring.
- 4.16 The incorporation of the off-site area materially improves the ability of the scheme to address residual effects and deliver wider biodiversity benefits.

5.0 ECOLOGICAL MITIGATION ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

- 5.1 The proposed ecological mitigation and enhancement measures have been developed in response to the identified habitat and species constraints of the Site, the iterative evolution of the layout, and the opportunities presented by the off-site area. Collectively, these measures are intended to retain and strengthen key ecological functions, compensate for residual habitat loss where necessary, and deliver a coherent network of habitats capable of long-term management and enhancement.
- 5.2 The principal mitigation areas are illustrated on the accompanying Ecological Mitigation Strategy Plan, drawing ref. BE0117.D.02.01.1.
- 5.3 Given the outline nature of the application, the measures described below provide a strategic framework. Detailed specifications, planting schedules, dimensions, phasing and management prescriptions can be refined through subsequent reserved matters submissions and future ecological management plans.

Area A – On-site Habitat Retention

- 5.4 The retention of significant areas of high value habitat has been prioritised, including Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture and Lowland Meadow Priority Habitats. These areas will be protected from construction and operational impacts through the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), and design of the boundary treatments to minimise pressures arising from the new residents.
- 5.5 Veteran trees and woodland at the northwest have been buffered from development, and all retained hedgerows will be protected through use of tree protection fencing informed by arboricultural impact assessment.

Area B – Strengthened Riparian Corridor

- 5.6 The existing watercourse and riparian corridor provides a valuable habitat feature for various species, and in terms of general connectivity through the local area. The corridor presently provides linked vegetation structure associated with the watercourse, mature trees, scrub and wetter habitat margins.
- 5.7 The mitigation strategy proposes the retention and enhancement of this corridor as a multifunctional ecological feature.
- 5.8 Measures include:
- retention of existing trees, hedgerows and scrub where practicable;
 - supplementary planting with native species-rich scrub and understorey vegetation;
 - creation of species-rich grassland glades and edge habitat through proposed mixed scrub;
 - strengthening of habitat structure to the north of the feature along section proposed to be abutted by development to the south;
 - deadwood and log pile habitat in adjacent habitats;
 - buffering from built development and garden encroachment; and
 - sensitive lighting design to maintain a dark corridor.
- 5.9 This area is expected to provide substantial benefits for commuting and foraging bats, Hazel Dormouse movement, reptiles, breeding birds, invertebrates and wider ecological connectivity.

Area C – Strengthened Boundary Features

- 5.10 Existing site boundaries provide important ecological structure and movement corridors. The mitigation strategy proposes the retention and strengthening of these features to improve connectivity both within the site and to the surrounding landscape.
- 5.11 Measures will include:
- gapping up of existing hedgerows;
 - native species-rich mixed scrub planting;
 - reinforcement of woody corridors for dormice and birds;
 - encouragement of peripheral bramble scrub interface to mitigate potential on-site losses;
 - management of hedgerows on rotational cutting cycles; and
 - retention of unmanaged margins adjacent to boundary vegetation.
- 5.12 These measures will be particularly beneficial for Hazel Dormouse, nesting birds, bats, hedgehog and general

habitat connectivity.

Area D – Lowland Meadow Translocation / Creation Area

- 5.13 An area of adjoining blue line land to the north has been identified as suitable for compensatory habitat creation associated with the revised proposals.
- 5.14 This land currently comprises modified agricultural grassland of comparatively limited ecological value and presents an opportunity for habitat enhancement.
- 5.15 Indicative measures will include:
- translocation of suitable lowland meadow turves and / or soils from affected donor areas on-site
 - receptor area preparation through nutrient reduction and sward removal where required;
 - green hay strewing or brush harvested seed application;
 - plug planting of appropriate meadow species;
 - supplementary seeding of species-rich neutral grassland communities;
 - establishment of appropriate cutting and collection regimes;
 - low intensity aftermath grazing where feasible; and
 - long-term monitoring and adaptive management.
- 5.16 The objective of this area is to provide compensatory grassland habitat of increasing botanical interest over time, while also delivering benefits for pollinators, birds, bats and wider biodiversity net gain outcomes.

Area E – Other Neutral Tussocky Grassland Creation

- 5.17 Boundary areas and margins offer opportunity for the creation of structurally diverse grassland habitats complementary to the more species-rich meadow areas.
- 5.18 Indicative measures will include:
- sowing of tussock-forming and native neutral grassland mixes;
 - rotational cutting regimes to maintain varied sward heights;
 - retention of uncut refuge strips;
 - incorporation of herb-rich margins appropriate to the light conditions; and
 - integration with scrub edges and open habitat mosaics.
- 5.19 These habitats can provide important refuge, basking and foraging opportunities for reptiles, and habitat structure for invertebrates, small mammals and birds, while contributing positively to the overall habitat

mosaic.

Additional Species Enhancement Measures

- 5.20 In addition to habitat-based mitigation, the detailed design stage will incorporate a range of species enhancement measures where appropriate.
- 5.21 These will include:
- integrated bat roost features within new dwellings;
 - bird nesting boxes or integrated bird bricks;
 - hedgehog permeability gaps within any proposed fencing;
 - reptile refugia and hibernacula;
 - log piles and deadwood habitat; and
 - pollinator-friendly planting within public open space.
- 5.22 The final specification of such measures can be confirmed through reserved matters and subsequent management plans.

Lighting and Sensitive Design Measures

- 5.23 Artificial lighting has the potential to affect bats, dormice and wider nocturnal ecology. A sensitive lighting approach should therefore be embedded within the detailed design of the development.
- 5.24 Indicative principles include:
- avoidance of illumination to retained corridors and habitat edges;
 - directional, baffled and low-spill luminaires;
 - warm spectrum lighting where appropriate;
 - use of timers, sensors or curfews where feasible; and
 - retention of dark corridors along the riparian route and key boundaries.
- 5.25 A detailed lighting strategy will be designed with reference to the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) guidance², and can be produced as part of the reserved matters application.

Delivery and Long-Term Management

- 5.26 The ecological value of mitigation measures is dependent upon successful establishment and ongoing management. Accordingly, the habitats described above will be subject to appropriate long-term management

² Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Note GN08, Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night

and monitoring through a future Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan or equivalent document.

5.27 This will include:

- Periodic establishment checks;
- Appropriate meadow cutting regimes;
- scrub and hedgerow management;
- replacement planting where necessary;
- monitoring of habitat condition;
- adaptive management responses; and
- periodic reporting where required.

Summary

5.28 The mitigation and enhancement measures proposed combine habitat retention, strategic restoration and long-term management to create an integrated ecological network across the red line and blue line landholdings.

5.29 Rather than isolated features, the measures are intended to function collectively by:

- retaining priority habitat where practicable;
- compensating for residual habitat effects;
- strengthening species movement corridors;
- increasing structural and botanical diversity; and
- contributing positively to biodiversity net gain and long-term ecological resilience.

6.0 SPECIES-SPECIFIC MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENT

6.1 The ecological mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 5** have been developed to deliver targeted benefits for species known or considered likely to utilise the site, whilst also strengthening the wider ecological network. The proposals are therefore intended not only to offset potential impacts, but to provide a positive and functional biodiversity outcome over the long term.

Hazel Dormouse

6.2 Hazel Dormouse is a key ecological consideration for the site, with confirmed presence associated with boundary habitats.

6.3 The proposed mitigation measures are expected to provide significant benefits through the retention and strengthening of connected woody habitat corridors, particularly along the riparian route and perimeter boundaries.

6.4 Indicative benefits include:

- enhanced connectivity across the Site
- increased availability of structurally diverse scrub and hedgerow habitat;
- improved seasonal food resource through flowering, fruiting and nut-bearing species;
- greater shelter and nesting opportunities;
- reduced fragmentation through continuous green infrastructure; and
- long-term management of boundary habitats in favourable condition.

6.5 The strengthening of habitat corridors is expected to materially improve functional habitat availability for dormice within and off-site areas.

Bats

6.6 Survey work has confirmed that the Site supports a diverse assemblage of commuting and foraging bats. The principal benefit to bats will arise through retention and enhancement of linear habitat features and improved prey availability.

6.7 Indicative benefits include:

- maintenance and enhancement of dark commuting corridors;
- strengthened tree line and hedgerow flight routes;
- increased invertebrate abundance associated with retained and created meadow and wetland habitats;
- Increased foraging opportunities along the riparian corridor; and
- potential provision of roosting opportunities through integrated roost features.

6.8 These measures are expected to be particularly beneficial for pipistrelle species, noctule, Leisler's bat, serotine and other species recorded locally.

Reptiles

6.9 The confirmed presence of slow worm and grass snake indicates the importance of rough grassland and transitional ecotones across the site.

6.10 The mitigation proposals provide benefits through the creation of a more diverse structural habitat mosaic.

6.11 Indicative benefits include:

- warm south-facing habitat edges suitable for basking;

- enhanced connectivity across the Site;
- increased prey availability associated with invertebrate-rich grassland;
- created hibernacula or refuge features; and
- long-term management preventing habitat succession to unsuitable condition.

6.12 Collectively, these measures are expected to improve habitat quality for common reptile species.

Breeding Birds

6.13 The site currently supports suitable nesting and foraging habitat for a range of common farmland, scrub and garden bird species.

6.14 The proposals will provide benefits through habitat retention and new native planting.

6.15 Indicative benefits include:

- strengthened scrub and hedgerow nesting habitat;
- increased berry, seed and invertebrate food resources;
- structurally varied edge habitat for territory establishment;
- retained tree and shrub cover; and
- increase in nesting opportunities through installation of bird boxes, integrated nesting features and new scrub planting.

Invertebrates and Pollinators

6.16 The proposed habitat creation measures offer substantial opportunities for invertebrates and pollinating species, particularly through expansion of species-rich grassland and flowering scrub.

6.17 Indicative benefits include:

- increased nectar and pollen resource through meadow creation;
- larval foodplants associated with native grassland communities;
- warm grassland margins and bare ground opportunities where appropriate;
- deadwood and decaying vegetation niches;
- damp habitat niches associated with the riparian corridor and retained grassland; and
- reduced management intensity.

Hedgehog and Small Mammals

- 6.18 The combined habitat network of grassland, scrub, boundaries and open space provides opportunities for hedgehog and other small mammals.
- 6.19 Indicative benefits include:
- improved shelter and nesting opportunities;
 - retained and enhanced movement routes through connected green corridors;
 - enhanced foraging habitat; and
 - permeability through boundary design, where appropriate.

Amphibians and General Fauna

- 6.20 Although the site is not considered of importance for great crested newt or other notable amphibians, the strengthening of damp habitat edges, rough grassland and vegetated corridors will provide incidental benefits for common amphibians and wider fauna.

7.0 MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND FUTURE DELIVERY

- 7.1 The long-term success of the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures described within this Strategy will depend not only on their initial implementation, but on appropriate establishment management, ongoing maintenance and periodic ecological review.
- 7.2 Given the outline nature of the application, this document provides a strategic framework for delivery. Detailed habitat management prescriptions, responsibilities, monitoring triggers and implementation programmes are more appropriately developed once the final layout, landscape design, drainage strategy and phasing are confirmed through subsequent reserved matters submissions.
- 7.3 Accordingly, it is considered that a detailed Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) will be secured at the reserved matters stage and secured through planning condition.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

- 7.4 The mitigation and enhancement measures set out within this Strategy have been developed to align with the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) objectives of the proposed development.
- 7.5 While this document does not replace the formal BNG Assessment or future Biodiversity Gain Plan, it provides the habitat delivery framework through which biodiversity gains can be achieved.
- 7.6 The updated information provided following consultation includes an updated BNG assessment. This will require updating at reserved matters stage once landscaping details and HMMPs are confirmed.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This Ecological Mitigation Strategy has been prepared to support the revised proposals for land off Southampton Road, Alderbury, and demonstrates how ecological considerations have informed the evolution of the scheme.
- 8.2 Through the iterative design process, the proposals have been amended to better respond to identified habitat and species constraints. In particular, development has been reconfigured to retain sensitive habitat areas, fully retain Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture, reduce impacts to Lowland Meadow, and strengthen the role of retained green infrastructure features within the site layout.
- 8.3 In addition, the inclusion of adjoining blue line land to the north, under the control of the applicant, provides a significant and deliverable opportunity for compensatory habitat creation, species-specific mitigation, ecological enhancement and biodiversity uplift on land currently of limited ecological value.
- 8.4 The mitigation measures identified within this Strategy, including enhancement of the riparian corridor, species-rich habitat creation, strengthened boundary planting and long-term management principles, provide a robust framework through which ecological impacts can be appropriately addressed.
- 8.5 It is acknowledged that some loss of Lowland Meadow habitat will arise. However, impacts have first been avoided and reduced through iterative layout amendment, with Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture retained in full. Residual effects are addressed through compensatory habitat creation and long-term management on adjoining land under the applicant's control. The accompanying BNG assessment demonstrates that the statutory trading rules are satisfied and that the scheme secures substantial net gains in habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units over a minimum 30-year period.
- 8.6 Given the outline nature of the application, detailed specifications and management prescriptions can be secured through subsequent reserved matters submissions, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), and updated Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) documentation.
- 8.7 Overall, the proposals demonstrate a clear application of the mitigation hierarchy and provide a credible and deliverable basis for protecting, enhancing and managing biodiversity interests alongside the proposed development.

FIGURES

Figure 1: *Site Location*

Figure 2: *Mitigation Plan*



Red line ('on-site')

Blue Line ('off-site')

BASE MAPS

Aerials

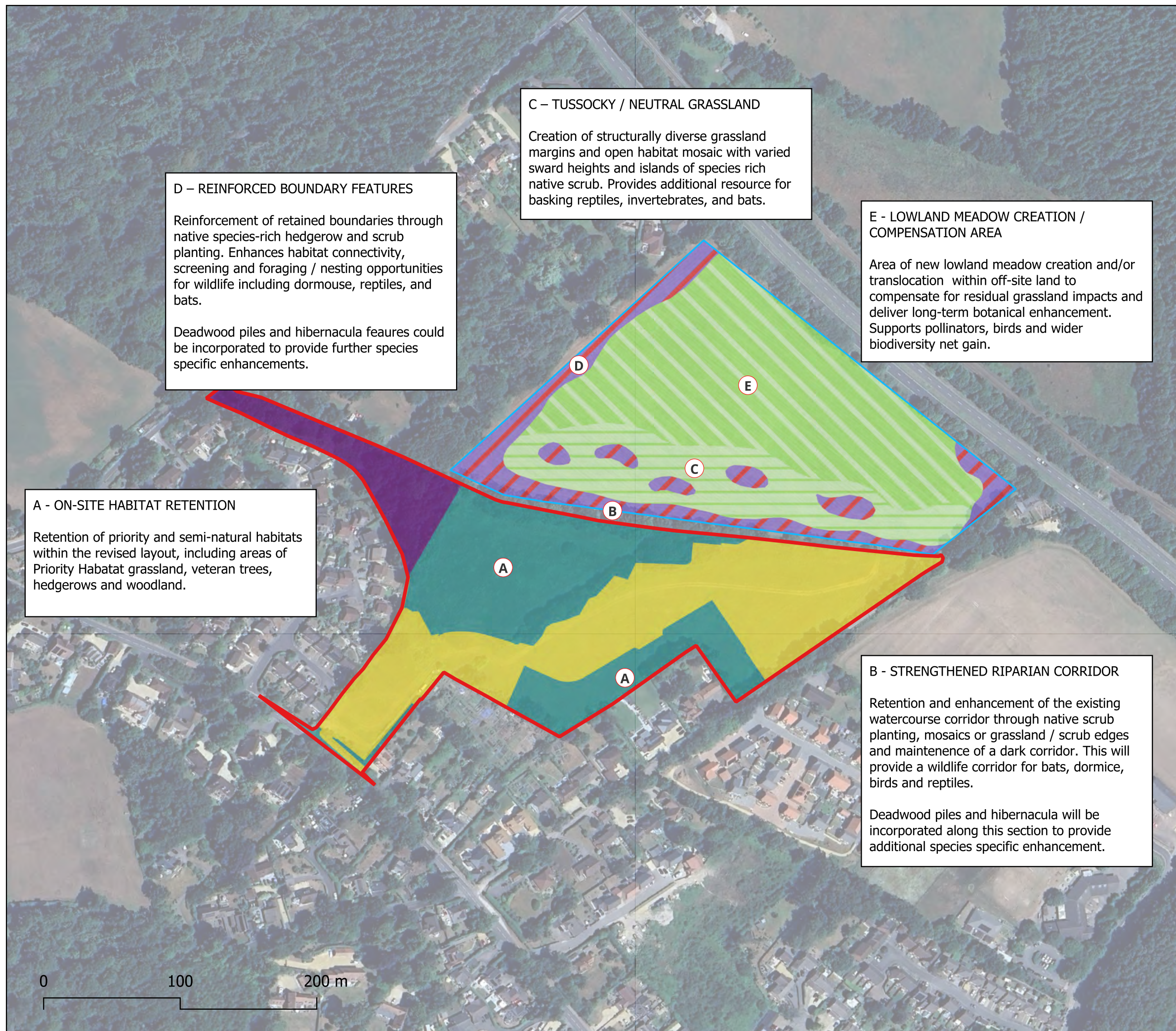


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Land off Southampton Road, Alderbury

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Figure 1: Site Location

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- Red line Boundary
- Blue Line Mitigation Area
- PROPOSED OFF-SITE HABITATS
 - Lowland meadows
 - Mixed scrub
 - Other neutral grassland
- ON-SITE HABITAT RETENTION
 - Enhanced
 - Retained
 - Lost
- BASE MAPS
 - Aerials
- Mitigation Areas



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DRAWING TITLE
Figure 2: Mitigation Strategy

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