

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Site Address:

Land adjacent to 289-311 Pepper Place, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0DG

Client:

National Infrastructure Consultancy (NIC) Ltd.

Assessment Date:

21st May 2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Wiltshire Council. The proposal is described as:

A new sewerage pumping station. Compound surfaced in concrete, with steel palisade boundary fence. Grading of the surrounding ground to suit the new pumping station level.

BNG assessment methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: **[BNG Methodology and Legislation – 2025.](#)**

The results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit and BNG assessment may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion.

Version Control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Kiera Horman BSc (Hons); Graduate Ecologist	25/05/2026
Reviewed	0.2	Jonathan Stuttard BSc (Hons) MSc, Technical Manager of Ecology	03/06/2026
Final	1.0	Kiera Horman BSc (Hons); Graduate Ecologist	03/06/2026
Amended	1.1	Kiera Horman BSc (Hons); Graduate Ecologist	05/06/2026

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Site Location and Context

A baseline habitat map is provided in **Appendix 1**, post-development habitat map in **Appendix 2**, a proposed development plan in **Appendix 3**, headline BNG results in **Appendix 4**, and condition assessments in **Appendix 5**.

The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference ST 88849 45639 and covers an area of approximately 0.068ha. The site comprises predominantly managed modified grassland, with one small silver birch sapling and a small section of introduced shrubs present. The surrounding landscape has a suburban character, with the site immediately bordered by residential dwellings and associated linear infrastructure such as roads, before extending into the wider rural landscape comprising agricultural fields, grassland, and small woodland copses, as shown on aerial imagery.

This report should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

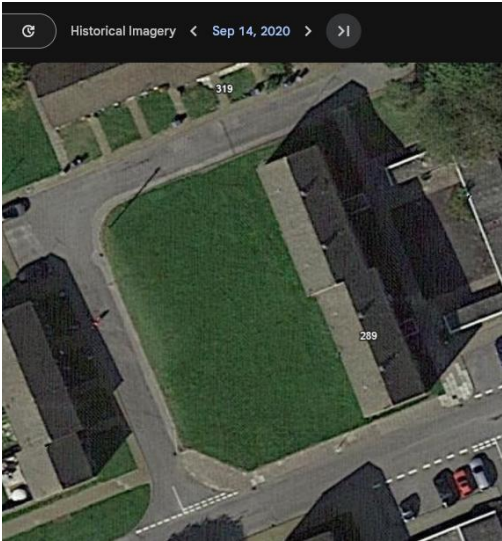
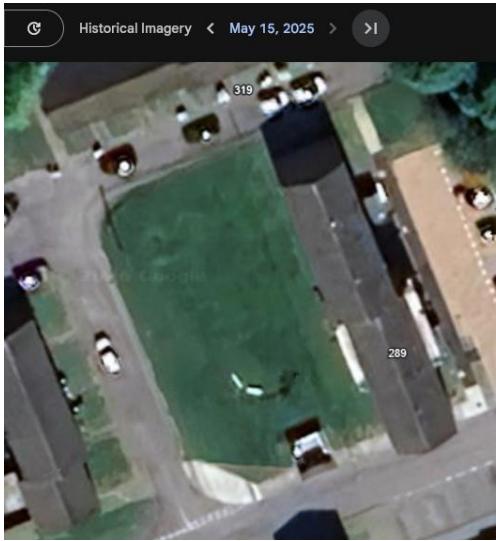
- ❖ Statutory BNG Metric – Land adjacent to 289-311 Pepper Place, BA12 0DG – v1.1 (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., 2026)
- ❖ Proposed Plan
- ❖ Baseline Habitat Condition Assessment (BHCA) - Land adjacent to 289-311 Pepper Place, BA12 0DG – v1.1 (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., 2026)

Executive Summary

- ❖ The current landscaping proposal generates a net loss of area-based habitat units (-32.73%) with unmet trading rules and a net gain of linear-based habitat units (0.07 units - % cannot be calculated due to 0 baseline units). At present, trading conditions are not satisfied for the loss of modified grassland (low distinctiveness). With unmet trading conditions and a net loss in area-based habitat, the proposal fails principal Rules 1 and 2 of BNG and is not compliant with current legislation (Environment Act 2021) and planning policies (National Planning Policy Framework, 2025).
- ❖ In order to achieve a +10% biodiversity net gain for area-based habitats, a minimum area-based unit score of 0.13 units will need to be achieved. At present, there is a unit deficit of 0.05 units. These units can be of any habitat type to satisfy trading rules.
- ❖ In order to achieve the required net gain in biodiversity as a result of the proposed development, the provision of additional or alternative landscaping should be explored and the proposed plans amended accordingly to achieve a net gain on site. Suitable habitat creation or enhancement examples could involve the enhancing the remaining 0.04032ha of retained modified grassland to achieve a condition score of “moderate” to achieve a net gain of +13.33% and satisfying trading rules, or planting 5no. native trees within the site to achieve a net gain of +18.14%.
- ❖ If these enhancements are deemed to be unachievable/ unfeasible within the current site boundary, a financial contribution to off-site ecological enhancements (i.e. purchasing biodiversity units) within an approved scheme is required to make up the +10% net gain for area-based habitat units.
- ❖ A summary as to what off-site units will be required is detailed in the table below.

	Area-Based	Distinctiveness	Broad Habitat Group	Habitat	Units Required
		Low	Grassland	Modified Grassland	0.05
		Total			0.05

Introduction

BNG Informative		
Habitat Degradation Statement	Date reflected by BNG calculations	21 st May 2026
	The baseline biodiversity value of the site is derived from the habitats present at the time of the BHCA field survey (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., 2026). As shown in the satellite imagery obtained from Google Earth dated 14th September 2020 and 15th May 2025, the site does not appear to have undergone any degradation during this period. The Google Earth imagery does show the installation of a refuse store to the south of the site; however, this was associated with a previously approved planning application (Ref: 21/00457/FUL) and is therefore not considered to represent habitat degradation.	
		
		
Irreplaceable Habitat Statement	No irreplaceable habitats as listed under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024) are currently present nor were present before 30 th January 2020.	
Metric Version & Publication Date	Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool first published 29 th November 2023 with last updates to metric tools and user guides on 3 rd July 2025.	
BNG Target Uplift	+10%	

National Character Area (NCA)	132 – Salisbury Plain and West Wiltshire Downs		
Strategic Significance	Wiltshire Council, the responsible authority for drafting the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Swindon Borough Council, has adopted a comprehensive LNRS in November 2025 (Wiltshire and Swindon Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Wiltshire Council).		
	Habitat	Baseline / Post-Development	Justification
	Modified grassland	Both	Low Strategic Significance Not mentioned within the LNRS.
	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	Post-development	
Limitations			
There were no specific limitations to the assessment.			

Baseline

Baseline Biodiversity Value: On-Site**Area-Based Habitats (A-1)**

Habitat	Area (ha)	Description	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance
Other developed land	0.00658	A small section of developed land is present along the southern site boundary in the form of the pavement and a bin store.	Habitat condition pre-determined as ' N/A ' as detailed within the Statutory Biodiversity Condition Assessment Supplement.	Low Strategic Significance
Modified Grassland	0.06129	The majority of the site consists of frequently managed modified grassland with the occasional scattered shrub. The parcel has a relatively short and homogenous sward, with fewer than six vascular plant species per m ² . A single silver birch sapling is present within the grassland; however, it has a diameter at breast height of less than 7 cm and is therefore not included within the BNG calculation.	Poor: passes 5 of 7 criteria excluding essential criterion A. Assessed using the 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet.	Low Strategic Significance

Post-Development

Post-Development Biodiversity Value: On-Site

Area-Based Habitats

	Habitat	Area (ha)	Description	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance
Retained (A-1)	Other developed land	0.00564	The pavement and part of the pre-existing bin store footprint will be retained along the southern boundary of the site.	Habitat condition pre-determined as ' N/A ' as detailed within the Statutory Biodiversity Condition Assessment Supplement.	Low Strategic Significance
	Modified grassland	0.04032	The majority of the grassland parcel on site will be retained; however, a small section will be lost to the development, along with the silver birch sapling and some scattered shrubs.	Poor: passes 5 of 7 criteria excluding essential criterion A. Assessed using the 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet.	Low Strategic Significance
Created (A-2)	Other developed land	0.02097	A new sewerage pumping station, along with its associated concrete platform, will be installed within the western half of the development site. In addition, the existing refuse store will be relocated further to the east.	Habitat condition pre-determined as ' N/A ' as detailed within the Statutory Biodiversity Condition Assessment Supplement.	Low Strategic Significance
	Modified grassland	0.00094	A small section of modified grassland will be created in the footprint of the pre-existing bin store.	Poor: passes 4 of 7 criteria excluding essential criterion A. Assessed using the 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet.	Low Strategic Significance

Post-Development Biodiversity Value: On-Site					
Linear-Based Habitats					
	Habitat	Length (km)	Description	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance
Created (B-2)	Non-native & ornamental hedgerow	0.07394	Laurel hedgerows will be planted around the sewerage pumping station for visual screening.	Habitat condition pre-determined as ' <i>poor</i> ' as detailed within the Statutory Biodiversity Condition Assessment Supplement.	Low Strategic Significance.

Change of Biodiversity Value

		Biodiversity Units	
		Area-Based	Linear-Based
On-Site	Baseline	0.12 units ❖ 0.00 units of other developed land ❖ 0.12 units of modified grassland	None ❖ N/A
	Post-Development	0.08 units ❖ 0.00 units of retained other developed land ❖ 0.00 units of proposed other developed land ❖ 0.08 units of retained modified grassland ❖ 0.00 units of proposed modified grassland	0.07 units ❖ 0.07 units of retained modified grassland
	Net Change	-32.73%	N/A – 0 baseline units
Off-Site	Baseline	❖ N/A	none ❖ N/A
	Post-Development	❖ N/A	none ❖ N/A
	Net Change	N/A	0%
Overall Net Change		-32.73%	N/A – 0 baseline units

Results, Discussion, and Next Steps

BNG Informative	
Results	The current landscaping proposal generates a net loss of area-based habitat units (-32.73%) with unmet trading rules and a net gain of linear-based habitat units (0.07 units - % cannot be calculated due to 0 baseline units). In line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (2024), any loss of a habitat must be replaced on a like-for-like or like-for-better principle. At present, trading conditions are not satisfied for the loss of modified grassland (low distinctiveness). With unmet trading conditions and a net loss in area-based habitat, the proposal fails principal Rules 1 and 2 of BNG and is not compliant with current legislation (Environment Act 2021) and planning policies (National Planning Policy Framework, 2025). In order to achieve a +10% biodiversity net gain for area-based habitats, a minimum area-based unit score of 0.13 will need to be achieved. At present, there is a unit deficit of 0.05 units. These units must be of a low distinctiveness habitat (further modified grassland) or higher in order to satisfy trading rules.
Recommendations and Next Steps	In order to achieve the required net gain in biodiversity as a result of the proposed development, the provision of additional or alternative landscaping should be explored and the proposed plans amended accordingly to achieve a net gain on site. The provisioning of additional landscaping should first be considered within the site boundary. However, if this is deemed not feasible due to the small scale of the development or the highly managed nature of the grassland and levels of footfall, a financial contribution towards off-site ecological enhancements (e.g. the purchase of biodiversity units within an approved scheme) may be required. The exploration of suitable habitat creation or enhancements should be initially explored. Potential enhancements are detailed below: - Enhancing the remaining 0.04032ha of the retained modified grassland to achieve a condition score of “moderate” will result in a net gain of +13.33% and satisfied trading rules. The below recommendations will achieve a condition score of “moderate”. - There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m², including at least 2 forbs.

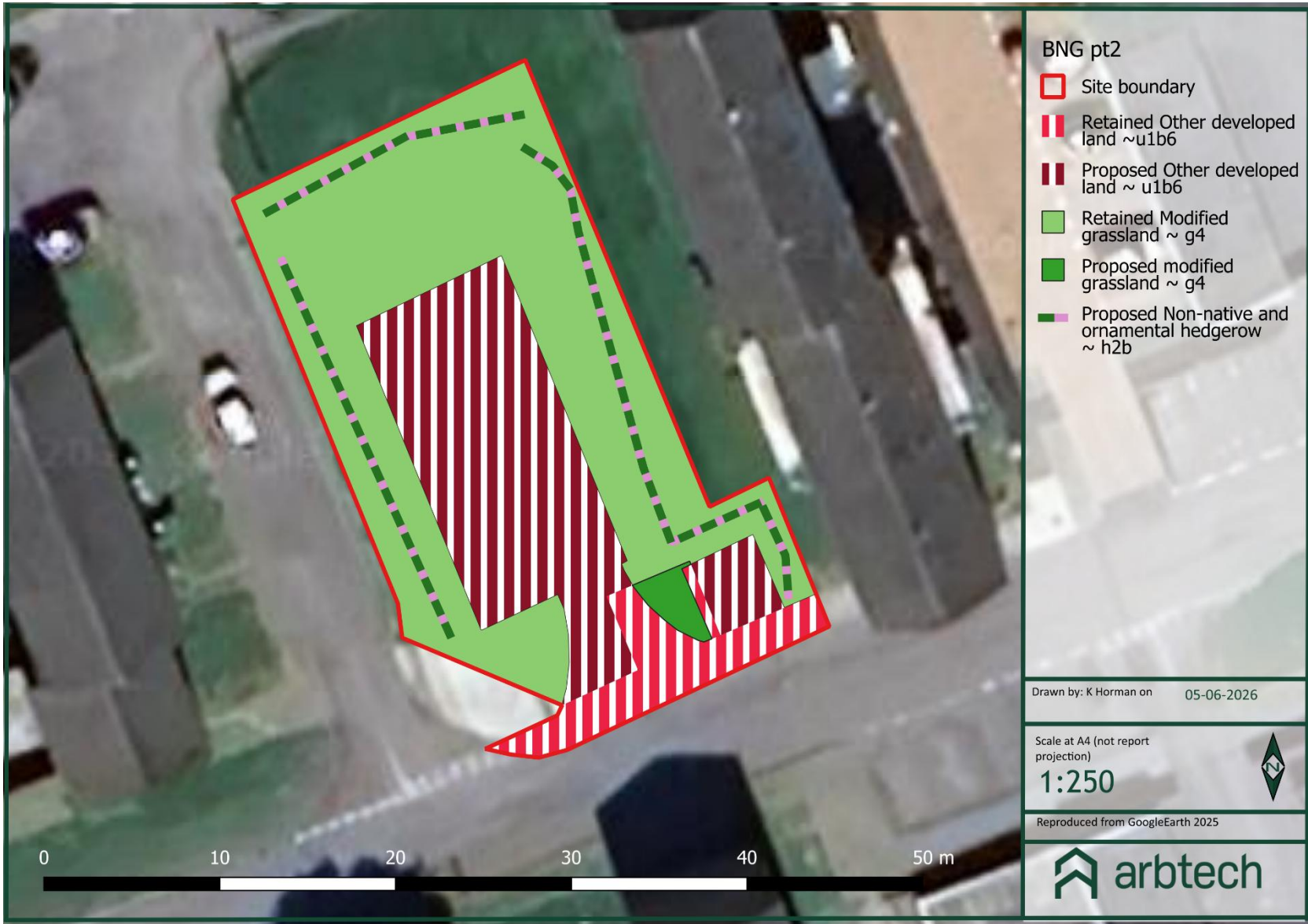
	○ Bare ground must comprise between 1-10% of the total area of grassland, including localised areas such as tyre tracks, areas which exceed this will be reseeded. Cover of bracken must comprise <20%, and cover of scrub <5% of the total area of grassland. ○ There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981). ● Planting 5no. native trees within the site will result in a net gain of +18.14% and satisfied trading rules. The below recommendations will achieve a condition score of “Moderate”. ○ The tree is a native species (or more than 70% within the block are native species). Examples include silver birch, pedunculate oak, beech and wild cherry. ○ The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion). ○ The tree is mature or more than 50% within the block are mature. This criterion will be failed due to the young age at which the trees will be planted. ○ There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by anthropogenic activities such as vandalism or herbicide use. There is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height. ○ Natural Ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark. This criterion is likely to be failed due to the young age of the trees. ○ More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath. Should these alterations be incorporated this BNG Assessment will need to be updated to accurately reflect the change in biodiversity value of the site pre- and post-development.
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	If these enhancements are deemed to be unachievable/ unfeasible within the current site boundary, a financial contribution to off-site ecological enhancements (i.e. purchasing biodiversity units) within an approved scheme is required to make up the +10% net gain for area-based habitat units. The mechanism for securing this off-setting will need to be proposed to and confirmed by the LPA and would be linked to the application through a planning obligation Section 106 (s106) agreement. The proposed habitat compensation must be of an appropriate distinctiveness to meet the trading rules of BNG. A summary as to what off-site units will be required is detailed in the table below. <table><tr><td></td><th>Distinctiveness</th><th>Broad Habitat Group</th><th>Habitat</th><th>Units Required</th></tr><tr><th rowspan="2">Area-Based</th><td>Low</td><td>Grassland</td><td>Modified Grassland</td><td>0.05</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Total</td><td>0.05</td></tr></table>		Distinctiveness	Broad Habitat Group	Habitat	Units Required	Area-Based	Low	Grassland	Modified Grassland	0.05	Total			0.05
	Distinctiveness	Broad Habitat Group	Habitat	Units Required											
Area-Based	Low	Grassland	Modified Grassland	0.05											
	Total			0.05											
Pre-Commencement	A Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) must be produced for the site. This should include recommendations for the implementation, management and monitoring of the site for at least 30 years to ensure that biodiversity net gain is delivered. These additional requirements can only be actioned following the finalisation of the BNG assessment – be it on-site or off-site net gains sought.														
BNG Mitigation Hierarchy															
Avoidance	Retention of the majority of the modified grassland on site.														
Minimisation															
Mitigation	If suggested enhancements are deemed to not be feasible then offsite units will need to be purchased in order to achieve the required 10% net gain.														
Offset															

Appendix 1: Baseline Habitat Plan



Appendix 2: Post-Development Habitat Plan



Appendix 3: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 4: Headline BNG Results

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	-0.04
	Hedgerow units	0.07
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	-32.73%
	Hedgerow units	N/A
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲	

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.12	0.13	0.05
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

Input errors/rule breaks present in metric ▲

Appendix 5a: Baseline Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets

Modified Grassland; assessed using 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet:

Condition Assessment Criteria:		Condition passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² , including at least 2 forbs. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	N	Fewer than 6 vascular plant species per m ² .
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	N	Regularly mown, uniform short sward height present.
C	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	No scattered scrub present (less than 20% coverage).
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Y	No physical damage present.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y	No bare ground present.
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	No bracken observed (less than 20% coverage).
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Y	Absence of invasive species.
Essential criterion achieved (Y/N)			N
Number of criteria passed			5
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓	
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)		
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion A	Poor (1)	✓	

Appendix 5b: Post-Development Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets

Retained modified Grassland; assessed using 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet:

Condition Assessment Criteria:		Condition passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² , including at least 2 forbs. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	N	Fewer than 6 vascular plant species per m ² .
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	N	Regularly mown, uniform short sward height present.
C	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	No scattered scrub present (less than 20% coverage).
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Y	No physical damage present.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y	No bare ground present.
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	No bracken observed (less than 20% coverage).
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Y	Absence of invasive species.
Essential criterion achieved (Y/N)			N
Number of criteria passed			5
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓	
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)		
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion A	Poor (1)	✓	

Proposed modified Grassland; assessed using 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet:

Condition Assessment Criteria:		Condition passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² , including at least 2 forbs. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	N	Fewer than 6 vascular plant species per m ² .
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	N	Regularly mown, uniform short sward height present.
C	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	No scattered scrub present (less than 20% coverage).
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	N	No physical damage present.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y	No bare ground present.
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	No bracken observed (less than 20% coverage).
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Y	Absence of invasive species.
Essential criterion achieved (Y/N)			N
Number of criteria passed			4
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate (2)	
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion A		Poor (1)	✓