

Levetts Farm

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Prepared on behalf of Phil Redman

June 2026

**Levetts Farm
Ecology 8904
Version 03**

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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Pro Vision Ecology were commissioned in July 2025 to carry out a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment at Levetts Farm, Clench Common, Marlborough. The aim of the assessment was to establish how a 10% net gain within the development would be achieved.
- 1.2 The site comprises modified grassland in a poor condition a hedgerow, bare ground associated with a spoil heap and one building. A small section of ephemeral vegetation is also present around the existing barn in the form of common nettle.
- 1.3 The proposed development will comprise the demolition of the farm building and erection of a replacement agricultural building with associated landscaping. The hedgerow on site will be retained with access existing from clench common road. The majority of modified grassland will be retained and enhanced as part of the proposals. A new hedgerow and native trees will also be planted around the periphery of the site.
- 1.4 The proposed development will result in a net gain of 0.09 habitat units (12.83%) and a gain in 0.06 (27.57%) in hedgerow units.
- 1.5 Whilst the development does deliver the 10% net gain, the trading rules are not satisfied. To satisfy the trading rules gain, the scheme would need to include the planting of 24 individual trees. However, this is not considered to be feasible due to the size of the site. Therefore, habitat units will be purchased to meet the trading rules. A total of 0.29 individual tree units or a higher distinctiveness habitat would be required to satisfy the trading rules.

2.0 Introduction

Project Background

- 2.1 Pro Vision were commissioned in July 2025 to conduct a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of Levetts Farm, Clench Common, Marlborough. This report will contribute to a planning application for a residential development for This report will contribute to a planning application for the demolition of a farm building and erection of replacement agricultural building. Proposed plans are shown in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 This report provides the details for the BNG assessment and should be read alongside the submitted Statutory Biodiversity Metric and condition assessment sheets.

Brief

- 2.3 To carry out a BNG assessment of the site to determine the strategy for achieving a 10% net gain for habitat and hedgerow units.

Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.4 The key legislative provisions of relevance to this report with respect to the development proposals and their potential effects on ecological features are listed below:
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
 - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
 - The Protection of Badgers Act (1992)
 - The Environment Act (2021)
- 2.5 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was the Governments response to the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity (The Rio Convention), with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity in the UK. The new UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework replaced the previous BAP and is the government's response to the new strategic plan on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Although the UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework supersedes the UK BAP, the UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats still remain an important reference source for identifying habitats and species of principal importance within the UK. Within England, Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) lists species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.
- 2.6 The Government has set out its policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system in the National Planning Policy Framework Section 15 (NPPF, 2024).
- 2.9 The site at Levetts Farm is located within Local Planning Authority of Wiltshire Council. The Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan (2012-2026), adopted January 2015, includes core Policy 50 relating to Biodiversity and geodiversity which states :

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 resources 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.*
- *Any development potentially affecting a Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in paragraphs 6.75-6.77 above where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000 network. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy.*

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.*

Local sites

- *Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:*
 - i. cannot reasonably be avoided*
 - ii. are reduced as far as possible*
 - iii. are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest*
 - iv. where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements.*

Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long-term.

3.0 Methodologies

Strategic Significance

- 3.1 The Wiltshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy was consulted to establish the strategic significance of the site and to inform any potential habitat creation measures.

Baseline Assessment

- 3.2 A site visit was carried out on the 13th August 2025 by ecologist Maya Crate in clear, still and dry conditions with an ambient temperature of 15°C. The survey employed techniques based on the UK Habitat Classification System.
- 3.3 The collection of botanical information focused on the dominant and/or key indicator species for each habitat, to allow allocation of habitats to hierarchy levels 3 and/or 4 and where relevant to identify any priority habitats which are present on site.
- 3.4 The conditions of the habitats on the site were assessed in line with the condition sheets supplied alongside the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Biodiversity Net Gain Hierarchy

- 3.5 The scheme has been designed in line with the BNG hierarchy:
- Enhance and restore biodiversity on-site (within the red line boundary of a development site).
 - If developers can only achieve part of their BNG on-site, they can deliver through a mixture of on-site and off-site. Developers can either make off-site biodiversity gains on their own land outside the development site, or buy off-site biodiversity units on the market.
 - If developers cannot achieve on-site or off-site BNG, they must buy statutory biodiversity credits from the government. This must be a last resort. The government will use the revenue to invest in habitat creation in England.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.6 On completion of the fieldwork the habitat information was mapped using Biodiversity Metric QGIS template and areas were imported into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool using the GIS Import tool. The metric calculates the baseline biodiversity units for the site based on the following factors:-
- Area
 - Habitat distinctiveness
 - Habitat condition
 - Strategic significance
- 3.7 The proposed habitat creation measures were selected in line with the site conditions and the surrounding habitats. Once inputted the metric provides biodiversity units for the proposed habitats based on the following factors:-

- Area
- Habitat distinctiveness
- Habitat condition
- Strategic significance
- Time habitat is created
- Time to target condition
- Difficulty of creation

3.8 The difference between the baseline units and proposed units is then used as a measure of change and is used to assess the number of biodiversity units achieved. Habitats, hedgerows and rivers are inputted as separate factors, with each requiring net gains, where present on a site.

4.0 Baseline Conditions

- 4.1 The results of the baseline survey are presented below. A habitat survey map is shown in **Appendix B**. The map illustrates the location and extent of the site surveyed, along with additional notable features. Full condition assessments have been provided alongside this report.
- 4.2 There is evidence of some habitat degradation works on the site since January 2020 meaning full assessments could not be completed. This comprised a small number of trees had been removed as part of the neighbouring works.

Strategic significance

- 4.3 The site is located within a Local Nature Recovery Strategy Area which has been identified as suitable to create more woodland. Proposals for the site include the creation and enhancement of modified grassland. Whilst this is not in line with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy it was considered unfeasible to create this within the development due to the current and proposed agricultural use of the site.
- 4.4 Therefore, the habitat creation proposed is considered to lie outside any formal network.

On-site Habitats

Modified grassland

- 4.5 The site comprises a large expanse of modified grassland which contained a spoil heap within the central aspect (**Figure 1**). Due to construction happening around the site boundary, the grassland had high levels of physical damage and bare earth patches present throughout. The grassland was also seen to be of a short sward nature measuring approximately 5 centimetres around the majority of the site. The sward was higher around the existing barn reaching up to 40 centimetres in some areas.
- 4.6 Species present within the grassland comprised dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), annual meadow (*Poa annua*) grass in a high abundance with occasional broadleaf dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), springy turf moss (*Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and rare ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*).
- 4.7 This grassland was assessed as being in **poor condition** due to not having 6-8 species per m², a short sward height and physical damage present.



Figure 1: Highlighting modified grassland with damage and spoil heap present

Developed land; sealed surface

- 4.8 An area of developed land sealed surface was present forming the hardstanding base of the barn and surrounding area, this had some encroachment from vegetative species. The barn was a single storey open sided barn which had an unstable internal temperature and was comprised of metal sheeting walls. The barn had metal support beams, but had high levels of light ingress due to gaps in the roof and in the metal sheeting which bordered up previous windows.

Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface

- 4.9 An area of artificial unvegetated; unsealed is present north of the barn. In the form of an access track.
- 4.10 A condition assessment is not applicable to this habitat.

Bare ground

- 4.11 A bare ground spoil heap was present on the central aspect with some vegetation encroachment from cocksfoot, hogweed, common nettle and occasional ivy. This was due to works being carried out around the site boundary (**Figure 2**).
- 4.12 The bare ground was assessed as being in **poor** condition.



Figure 2: Spoil heap present due to current works

Ephemeral vegetation

- 4.13 A small area of ephemeral vegetation was present around the barn located on site; this had a tall sward height of approximately 40 centimetres. The vegetation within this area was mostly common nettle which was interspersed with broadleaf dock and grassland species. This area had been less damaged than other areas of the site and had been left to grow without formal management (**Figure 3**).
- 4.14 This was assessed as being of **poor condition**, due to failing criteria A as the majority of the vegetation was common nettle and there was a lack of different species that are beneficial to wildlife.



Figure 3: Ephemeral vegetation around barns

Bramble scrub

- 4.15 An expanse of bramble scrub was present on the northern boundary. Species present comprised mostly bramble, interspersed with common nettle, ivy, blackthorn, hogweed, bracken and small oak saplings. This formed a border between the site and the neighbouring agricultural fields acting as an outgrown hedgerow. The bramble was identified as having gaps present throughout, but the scrub was dense in some areas (**Figure 4**).
- 4.16 A condition assessment is not applicable to this habitat.



Figure 4: Bramble scrub on the northern boundary

Hedgerow

- 4.17 A beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) hedgerow was present on the southern boundary of the site. This comprised solely of beech creating a monocultural native hedgerow. The hedgerow was approximately 2.5 metres high and 1 metre wide (**Figure 5**).
- 4.18 The hedgerow was assessed as being in a **moderate condition** due to the activities being undertaken less than 1 metre from the hedgerow and as it is less than 1.5 metres wide.



Figure 5: Beech hedgerow on the southern boundary

Individual trees

- 4.19 There were three felled trees (**Figure 6**) within the site boundary. The felled trees were located in close proximity to the existing agricultural building to the west of the spoil heap. One of these trees was a medium tree and the other two were small. For the purpose of the metric it has been assumed that these have been in **good condition**



Figures 6: Felled trees within the site boundary

Baseline summary

- 4.20 The current BNG baseline is provided below in **Table 1**. The site has a baseline of 0.70 habitat units and 0.21 hedgerow units.

Table 1: Statutory Biodiversity Metric Baseline.

Habitat baseline					
Habitat	Biodiversity Units	Area (ha)	Condition	Distinctiveness	Suggested action
Modified Grassland	0.31	0.1562	Poor	Low	Same distinctness or better habitat required
Bramble Scrub	0.05	0.0113	N/A - Other	Medium	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctives habitat required
Ephemeral Vegetation	0.01	0.0044	Poor	Low	Same distinctness or better habitat required
Bare ground	0.04	0.0199	Poor	Low	Same distinctness or better habitat required
Artificial Unvegetated unsealed surface	0	0.0157	N/A - Other	V.Low	Compensation not required
Developed land; sealed surface	0	0.0219	N/A - Other	V. Low	Compensation not required
Individual tree	0.29	0.0244	Good	Medium	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctives habitat required
Hedgerow Baseline					
Hedgerow	Biodiversity Units	Length (km)	Condition	Distinctiveness	Suggested Action
Native hedgerow	0.21	0.035	Good	Low	Same distinctiveness band or better

5.0 Proposed Habitats

- 5.1 The proposed plans have been designed to retain as much of the existing habitats as possible. The development comprises the erection of a replacement agricultural building with associated landscaping. An expanse of modified grassland will be retained in the east of the site and enhanced to good condition.
- 5.2 The development will include planting individual trees and a native hedgerow delineating the boundary of the site. Proposed habitats are shown in **Appendix C**.

Enhancement of existing habitats

Modified grassland

- 5.3 The areas of modified grassland in the east of the site will be enhanced to a good condition. **Table 2** below highlights the conditions required for the grassland. An area to the north of the proposed barn will also be enhanced to a good condition.

Table 2: Condition assessment criteria to be met for good condition modified grassland

	Criteria	How it will be achieved
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs	Any created areas will be sown with a wildflower mix while existing areas already meet this criteria.
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 centimetres and at least 20% is more than 7 centimetres) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed	Management will ensure there is a varied sward height across the grassland through sectional cutting.
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Areas will be mown to ensure scrub encroachment does not occur
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)	Any areas of bare ground will be re-seeded where required to ensure less than 10% of the grassland comprises bare ground.
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Management will prevent the colonisation by bracken.
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	Management will prevent the colonisation by invasive species

Creation of new habitats

Modified grassland

- 5.4 New areas of modified grassland will be created on the northeastern aspect, replacing some of the building footprint that was present. This will be planted to a good condition which can be achieved by meeting the criteria outlined above in **Table 2**.

Hedgerows

- 5.5 A native hedgerow will be planted separating the site from the adjacent development. For the purpose of the metric it has been assumed that this will reach poor condition, however it is anticipated that a higher condition could be achieved following successful establishment.

6.0 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

- 6.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric was run based on the measures outlined in **Section 5.0** and is shown in **Table 3**. The assessment results in a net gain of 0.09 habitat units (12.86%) and a net gain of 0.06 (27.57%) hedgerow units.

Table 3: Statutory Biodiversity Metric results

On-site baseline	Habitat units	0.70
	Hedgerow units	0.21
On-site post intervention	Habitat units	0.79
	Hedgerow units	0.27
Total net unit change	Habitat units	0.09 (12.83%)
	Hedgerow units	0.06 (27.57%)
Trading Rules Satisfied	No	

- 6.2 The scheme provides 12.83% net gain in habitat units and 25.57% net gain in hedgerow units. However, the trading rules have not been satisfied due to the loss of medium distinctiveness habitat.
- 6.3 To satisfy the trading rules gain, the scheme would need to include the planting of 24 individual trees. However, this is not considered to be feasible due to the size of the site. Therefore, habitat units will be purchased to meet the trading rules. A total of 0.29 individual tree units or a higher distinctiveness habitat would be required to satisfy the trading rules.
- 6.4 The development will need to look at off-site solutions and will either need an alternative off-site location to secure the additional habitat units or units will need to be purchased from a habitat bank. These units should be purchased from a habitat bank within the same LPA (Wiltshire) or the same National Character Area (Berkshire and Marlborough Downs). Habitat units purchased from outside the Local Planning Authority or National Character Area would also be acceptable, however the units required will differ from those outlined above.
- 6.5 The development will be subject to the Biodiversity Gain condition under paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The condition is deemed to apply to every planning permission granted for the development of land in England (unless exemptions or transitional provisions apply). Once planning is approved the final details for the discharge of this condition will be required within a Biodiversity Gain Plan which will be submitted to the LPA, it is considered this condition can be discharged based on an off-site solution.

7.0 References and Bibliography

CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA (2019) Biodiversity Net Gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide. CIRIA C776a. London, 2019.

Defra (2025) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric– Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets with Instructions

Defra (2025) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - auditing and accounting for biodiversity calculation tool

Defra (2025) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - GIS Import Tool

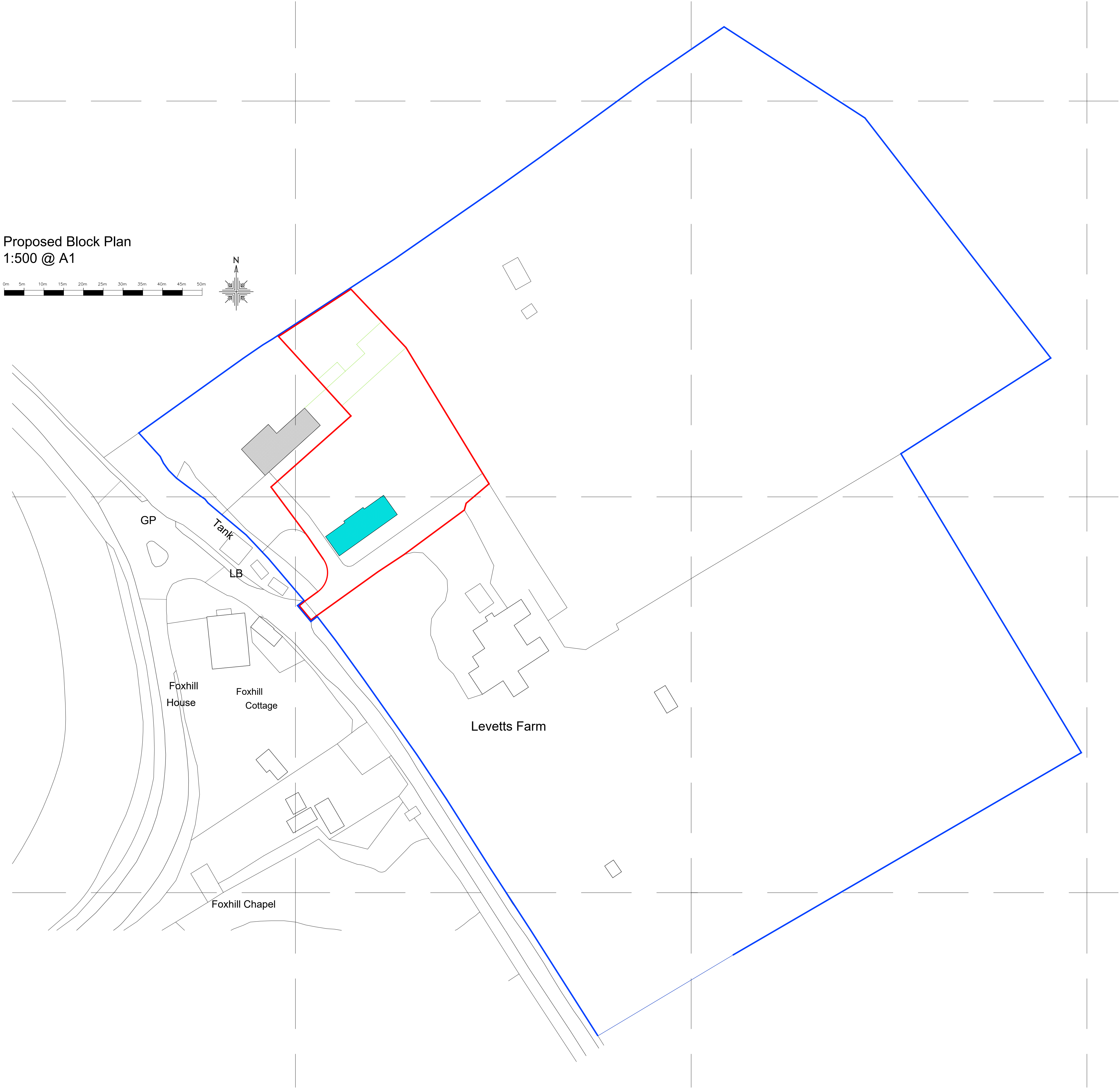
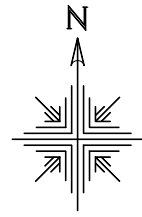
National Planning Policy Framework (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, London.

UKHab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0

Appendices

Appendix A: Proposed Plans

Proposed Block Plan
1:500 @ A1



GENERAL NOTES

All measurements are to be taken from site prior to the commencement of works.
All structural elements to be designed and specified by the structural engineer.
All drainage to be thoroughly investigated on site and contractor to confirm final design.
Final kitchen, bathroom & utility layouts/fittings/fixtures tbc by client & supplier/installer.
Position & number of electrical sockets and lighting points tbc by client and installed by a fully qualified electrician.
All gas works to be carried out by a fully qualified gas contractor.
All work is to be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations as a minimum requirement.

LEGEND

	Electrical distribution board
	External gas meter
	External electrical meter
	Boiler
	Boiler flue
	Mains operated heat detector
	Mains operated smoke detector
	Battery operated carbon-monoxide detector
	Mechanical extract fan 60l/s (kitchens/utility)
	Mechanical extract fan 30l/s (bathrooms)
	Roof/wall vent
	Wet under-floor heating manifold
	Radiator with thermostatic radiator valves
	Drainage gully
	Rain water pipe
	Soil vent pipe
	Inspection chamber
	Electrical vehicle charging point
	Toughened glass
	Obscured glass
	Door self-closer
	Fire door (30 mins)
	Emergency egress
	Cavity closer
	Air brick with telescopic vent
	Joist/rafter span
	Direction of fall
	Structural beams or lintels
	Foundations
	Demolish
	Drainage runs

DATE	REVISION	DESCRIPTION
04.11.2025	V1	Revised design
19.01.2026	V2	Red & blue lines amended
16.02.2026	V3	Access track added

PROJECT:
Levetts Farm

CLIENT:
Phil Redman



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M: 07747 144707
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claire.townsend@live.co.uk

TITLE:
Proposed Block Plan
BARN

PROJECT No:	DRAWING No:	REVISION:
2025/163	11	V3
DATE:	SCALE:	DRAWN:
07.07.2025	1:500 @ A1	CT

DRAWING STATUS:

PLANNING

Appendix B: Baseline Habitats

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

The proposal presented here is subject to review by specialist consultants, and is to be read in conjunction with all relevant specialist's drawings and information where available. Any discrepancies between this and any other consultant's drawings and information should be reported to Pro Vision immediately.

Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Felled Tree
- Native Hedgerow
- Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface
- Bramble Scrub
- Developed Land; Sealed Surface
- Modified Grassland
- Ruderal/Ephemeral
- Bare Ground



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	15.05.26	Map Created	MC	AH
v2	18.06.26	Map Created	MC	AH

CLIENT:	Phil Redman	
PROJECT:	Levetts Farm	
DRAWING:	Baseline Map	1:500
NUMBER:	8904-XX-E0-01	A4
ISSUE:	v2	18.06.26

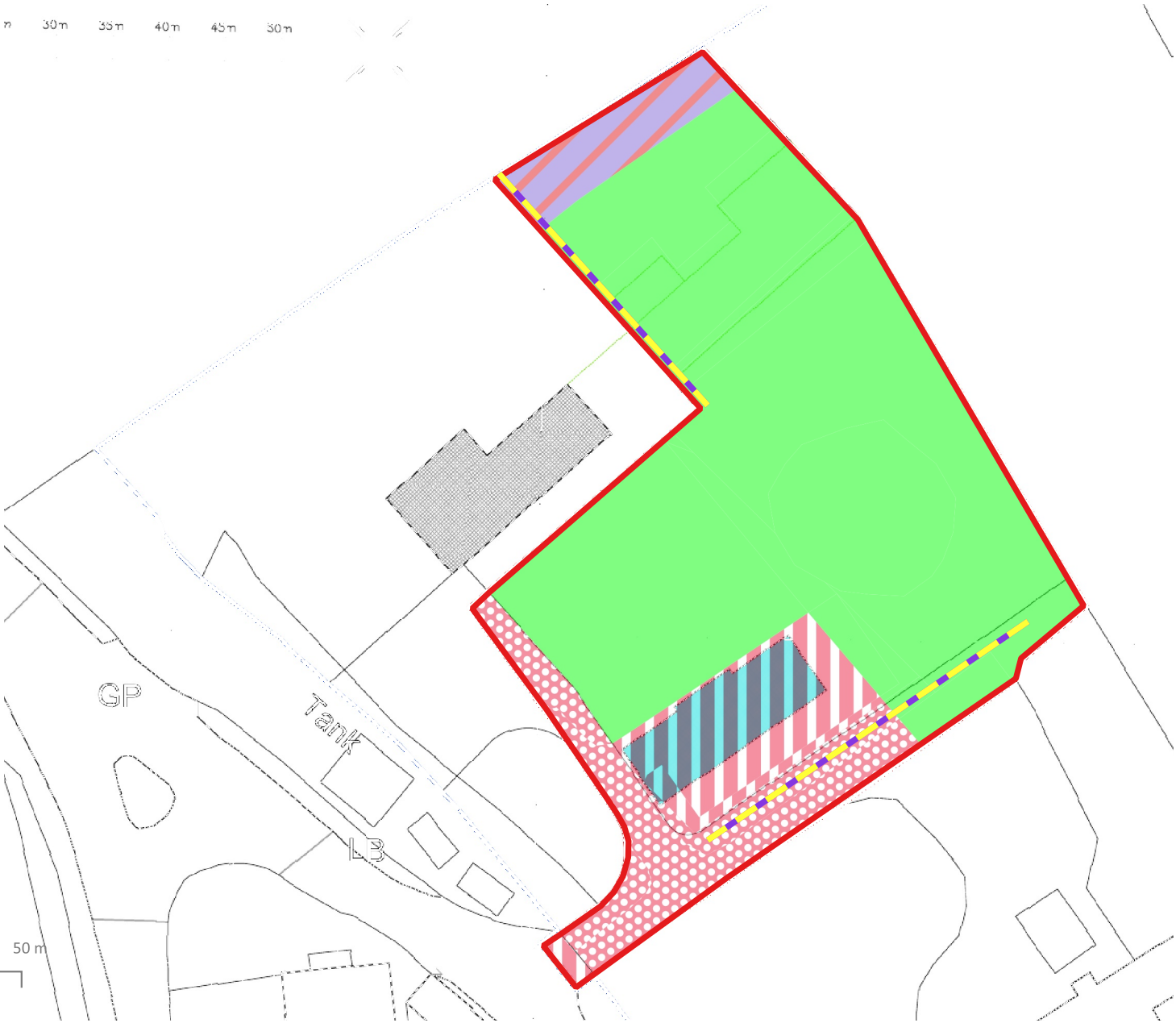
Appendix C: Proposed Habitats

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Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Bramble scrub
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Modified grassland



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	16.01.26	Map Created	MC	AH
v2	18.06.26	Map updated	MC	AH

CLIENT:	Phil Redman		
PROJECT:	Levetts Farm		
DRAWING:	Proposed Map		1:550
NUMBER:	8904-XX-E0-02		A4
ISSUE:	v2		18.06.26