



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

Standalone BNG Report



Prepared on behalf of: Jamie Hughes

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Document Control

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Site Address	Fairfields, Semington, Trowbridge BA14 6JD

Project Personnel

Role	Name	Position	Date
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Surveyor	Kola Lam	Ecologist	16/07/26

Revision History

Date	Version	Summary of Changes
24/07/26	1.0	First Draft
24/07/26	1.0	First Issue
27/07/26	1.1	Second Issue

Executive Summary

We were appointed by Jamie Hughes to undertake an appraisal of Fairfield, Semington, Trowbridge BA14 6JD to map and assess habitats on site to support a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment.

The proposed development comprises the change of use of unused grassed agricultural land at Fairfield, Semington, Trowbridge, BA14 6JD, to provide a small-scale outdoor padel sports facility. The works are anticipated to include the installation of two modular padel courts, associated circulation areas, a timber decking and seating area, a portacabin providing welfare and accessible toilet facilities, and parking for approximately six to eight vehicles. The scheme would also include the installation of 6-metre-high lighting columns, localised ground preparation using a steel ring-beam foundation system, permeable surfacing to the parking area, together with associated pedestrian routes and site infrastructure. Access would be taken from the A361 via the existing site entrance and track, with no changes proposed to the existing highway access. The padel court and cabin will be constructed above the existing grassland, with a raised and permeable design that allows light and rainfall to reach the vegetation beneath. On this basis, the proposals are not expected to result in any loss of grassland habitat.

Before visiting the site, a thorough desk study was undertaken in order to determine historical records of designated sites, habitats and protected species within a 2km search area. Data was sourced from Natural England via the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (DEFRA MAGIC).

A site survey was carried out by Kola Lam on 16/07/26 with reference to current CIEEM guidance and UKHab methodology.

The on-site baseline biodiversity value is calculated at 0.15 habitat units. Post-development, without additional BNG intervention, the scheme would deliver 0.17 habitat units, resulting in a net gain of 0.02 habitat units. **The scheme achieves the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain requirement and satisfies the relevant trading rules.**

The development assessed within this report does not include the installation of a septic tank or foul drainage pipe. Any subsequent inclusion of these features within the red line boundary may require the habitat calculations and proposed habitat plan to be reviewed.

Kola Lam

Ecological Consultant

ROAVR Group

Acknowledgements

Data referred to within this report were sourced from the Natural England Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (DEFRA MAGIC) database. No full Local Environmental Records Centre data search was commissioned.

Client Documents

This report has been completed on the assumption that the plans provided by the client at the time of issue of this report remain the same. A list of the documents provided by the client can be found in the table below.

Table: Documents provided by the client as of 10/07/26

Plans provided by client as of 10/07/26
DESIGN_statemment.pdf
RDPC-001_rev1.pdf
RDPC-008.pdf

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1 Introduction

ROAVR Group were commissioned to undertake a UKHab site walkover and mapping survey at Fairfields, Semington, Trowbridge BA14 6JD.

The survey consists of a desktop study, which was undertaken on 16/07/26 and a site survey, which was carried out by Kola Lam on 16/07/26.

The methodology and results are outlined within the report. Where applicable, recommendations for suitable mitigation and ecological enhancements are provided.

The report is to be submitted to support a planning application. Full details of the proposals can be found on the planning portal.

The information and recommendations within this report have been prepared and provided in accordance with CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct (CIEEM, 2022).

1.1 Site Description

The survey site covers an area of approximately 0.07 hectares and is centred on grid reference ST 890 599.

The site is situated within a rural area in the Wiltshire Council administrative area and comprises previously managed agricultural grassland at Fairfields, Semington, Trowbridge, BA14 6JD. The surrounding landscape is characterised by open agricultural fields, scattered rural development, existing access tracks and boundary vegetation. Habitats within the red line boundary are dominated by g4 Modified grassland, comprising a closely managed, relatively uniform and species-poor grass sward with limited botanical diversity and occasional common herbaceous and ruderal species. The habitat is generally short and regularly managed, with small areas of bare ground and no trees, hedgerows or scrub included within the site boundary. Adjacent hedgerows and mature trees occur beyond the red line boundary and form part of the wider ecological context of the site.

1.2 Development Proposals

The proposed development comprises the change of use of unused grassed agricultural land at Fairfields, Semington, Trowbridge, BA14 6JD, to provide a small-scale outdoor padel sports facility. The works are anticipated to include the installation of two modular padel courts, associated circulation areas, a timber decking and seating area, a portacabin providing welfare and accessible toilet facilities, and parking for approximately six to eight vehicles. The scheme would also include the installation of 6-metre-high lighting columns, localised ground preparation using a steel ring-beam foundation system, permeable surfacing to the parking area, together with associated pedestrian routes and site infrastructure. Access would be taken from the A361 via the existing site entrance and track, with no changes proposed to the existing highway access. The development assessed does not include a septic tank or foul drainage pipe, and no habitat loss associated with either feature has been included within the metric calculation. The padel court and cabin will be constructed above the existing grassland, with a raised and

permeable design that allows light and rainfall to reach the vegetation beneath. On this basis, the proposals are not expected to result in any loss of grassland habitat.

1.3 Scope of Works

The aims of this assessment were to:

- Identify the likely ecological constraints associated with the proposed development
- Identify suitable mitigation measures (if required)
- Determine whether further surveys are necessary
- Identify opportunities for ecological enhancement
- Undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) baseline assessment in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric
- Ensure the proposed development complies with the mandatory BNG requirements of the Environment Act 2021

2 Methodology

2.1 Desktop Study

Site-specific information concerning land designations, protected species and protected habitats within a 2km search area was sourced from DEFRA MAGIC.

No full Local Environmental Records Centre data search was commissioned.

Where species records were reviewed, records older than 10 years were screened out to focus the assessment on recent and more relevant ecological data.

Results of the desktop study should be considered to be indicative only.

2.2 UK Habitat Survey Methodology

A UKHab survey, which consisted of a site walkover and mapping, was undertaken by Kola Lam on 16/07/26.

The survey was undertaken from ground level. Habitats and ecological features were mapped using a GPS-enabled handset, supported by field notes and photographs.

A Site Habitat Map was produced in accordance with the UK HAB methodology.

The BNG baseline has been calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, as required under the Environment Act 2021 and associated regulations.

Habitat condition was assessed using the relevant Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition assessment sheets.

2.3 Limitations

Only one site visit was undertaken; therefore, a full evaluation of species present throughout the year could not be made and there were seasonal constraints to species identification. However, the data collected during the site survey was sufficient to make an appropriate assessment of the site.

The site maps shown in Appendix 2 were produced from an Ordnance Survey Tile purchased from our mapping supplier.

A site walkover with a GPS-enabled handset was used to inform the location and extent of existing habitats shown on the appended mapping, and it is as accurate as possible, but some error must be allowed for without a full topographical survey.

3 Policy and Legislative Context

This section includes the legislative context of those protected species or other notable species that are recorded on-site or have the potential to be present on-site. Details on specific legislation for other protected or notable species that have not been identified as being present, or having the potential to be present, are not included below.

3.1 National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024, as amended 7 February 2025) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied in the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system, only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so and is a material consideration for local planning authorities in determining applications.

Planning Practice Guidance is relevant, covering the Natural Environment alongside the NPPF. Therefore, features of ecological value should be considered in the context of conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

The Government's objectives for planning are to promote sustainable development, to conserve, enhance and restore the diversity of England's wildlife and geology and to contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance.

3.2 Local Planning Policy

This report has been commissioned to address relevant local planning policy concerning biodiversity protection and enhancement. The site at Fairfields, Semington, Trowbridge, BA14 6JD is subject to Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 50, Biodiversity and Geodiversity, which requires ecological features to be protected, retained and enhanced, with impacts avoided, mitigated or compensated where necessary. Core Policy 52, Green Infrastructure, is also relevant and supports the protection and improvement of habitat networks and existing vegetation. These policies require the proposed padel facility to demonstrate that ecological constraints have been assessed and that appropriate biodiversity enhancement measures are incorporated into the scheme.

3.3 National and International Legislation

The following national and international legislation is relevant to this assessment:

- Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1982)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1983)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)
- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- Protection of Badgers Act (1992)
- The Hedgerows Regulations (1997)
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1994)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act (1996)
- The Environment Act 2021
- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

4 Desktop Study

4.1 Designated Sites

There were no statutorily designated sites within the 2km search area.

4.2 Local Habitat

There were 3 types of priority habitats with more than 18 parcels that were formerly mapped within the 2km search area.

Table 4.2.1: Priority habitats formerly mapped within a 2km radius of the survey site.

Habitat	Approx. Closest Distance from Site (km)
Traditional Orchards	0.38 km E
Traditional Orchards	0.58km NE
Deciduous woodland	0.94km E
Deciduous woodland	0.96km E
Deciduous woodland	1.00km E
Traditional Orchards	1.15km NE
Ponds and Lakes	1.84km SE

*Data from DEFRA MAGIC

There were 3 standing water bodies situated within a 500m radius of the survey site, P1 situated within 250m radius from the site.

4.3 Historical Species Records

Protected species records relating to the site and surrounding area were obtained from publicly available sources as part of the desk study. Due to the small scale of the proposed development, a full Local Environmental Records Centre (LERC) data search was not commissioned for this report.

The absence of identified records does not discount the presence of a species. An absence of identified records is primarily a result of a lack of survey or the non-submission of records. Furthermore, historical records of species do not confirm their current presence within an area.

4.3.1 Bats

There were 78 records of bats within 2 km of the site, comprising Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*) and unidentified bat records (*Chiroptera*).

4.3.2 Mammals

There were 135 records of other mammals within 2 km of the site, comprising Roe Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*), Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), American Mink (*Neovison vison*), Muntjac (*Muntiacus reevesi*), Weasel (*Mustela nivalis*), Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), Common Shrew (*Sorex araneus*), Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Badger (*Meles meles*), Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Beaver (*Castor fiber*), Mole (*Talpa europaea*), Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), Feral Cat (*Felis catus*) and Field Vole (*Microtus agrestis*).

4.3.3 Amphibians

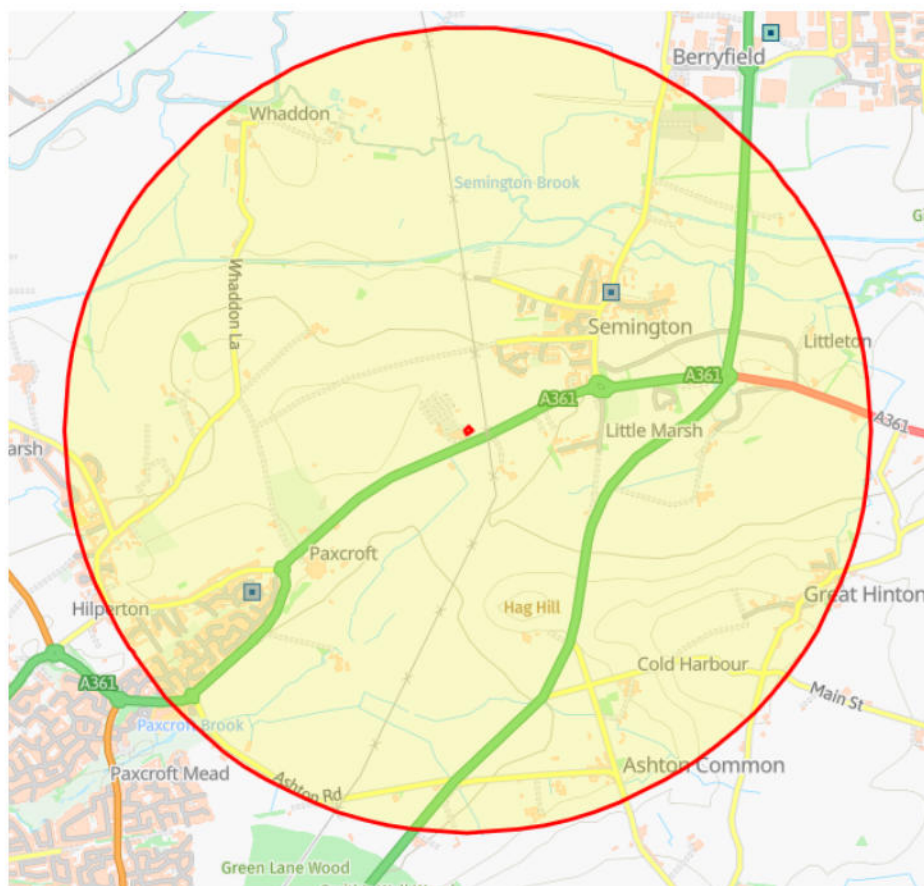
There were 11 records of amphibians within 2 km of the site, comprising Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*), Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) and Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*).

4.3.4 Reptiles

There were 3 records of reptiles within 2 km of the site comprising Grass Snake (*Natrix helvetica*).

4.3.5 European Protected Species Licences (EPSL)

There was one EPSL related to bats within the 2km search area as shown in table



*Data from DEFRA MAGIC

Table 4.3.5: Previous protected species licences for bats mapped within a 2km radius of the survey site.

Reference, Date and Species	Approx. Distance from Site (km)
2018-37916-EPS-MIT- 28/11/2018 - SER	0.96km NE

*Data from DEFRA MAGIC; SER - serotine bat (*Eptesicus serotinus*)

5 Site Survey

The site survey was undertaken on 16/07/26. The weather conditions were considered to be appropriate for the survey (Table 5.0.1).

Table 5.0.1: Weather conditions at the time of survey.

Condition	Detail
Temperature	23°C
Wind	5 mph
Precipitation	No rain during the survey.

* Weather data were recorded on site and/or checked against BBC Weather.

5.1 UK Habitat Survey Results

The habitats presented consist of the following UKHab categories:

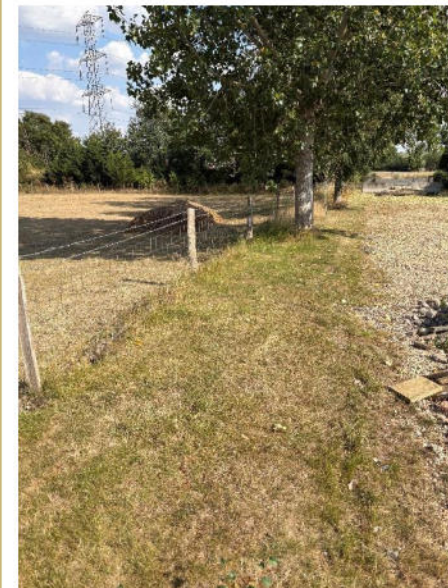
- g4 - Modified Grassland

A description of habitats present, along with target notes, is shown in Table 5.1.1. The location of habitats is shown in the Site Habitat Map, Appendix 2.

Table 5.1.1: Description of habitats present on-site (please also see the Site Habitat Map, Appendix 2).

Habitats and Target Notes	Description	Supporting Photo
Habitat 1: g4 - Modified Grassland	Habitat 1 comprises g4 Modified grassland, forming the principal habitat within the red line boundary. It is characterised by a closely mown, relatively uniform and species-poor grass sward with limited botanical diversity and only occasional common herbaceous and ruderal species. Vegetation is generally short and managed, with no trees, hedgerows or scrub included within the habitat parcel. Passed criteria C, D, E, F, G Failed criteria A, which is essential for achieving moderate or good condition Also failed criteria B Condition Poor	 

		
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6 Biodiversity Net Gain

6.1 BNG Assessment Overview

The development is subject to the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by the Environment Act 2021). The BNG assessment has been undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The biodiversity value of the site has been calculated in habitat units, hedgerow units, and watercourse units as applicable. The assessment separates area habitat units, hedgerow units and watercourse units, as these modules are not interchangeable within the metric.

6.2 Site Baseline

The on-site baseline biodiversity is calculated at **0.15 habitat units**. The baseline habitats comprise modified grassland only. No on-site hedgerow and watercourse units present within the red line boundary.

6.3 Site As Proposed

Post-development, without intervention, the proposed plans will result in **0.17 habitat units** or a net gain of **0.02 habitat units** (a net change of **+13%**). **Both the mandatory 10 percent BNG requirement and habitat trading rules are satisfied.**

The calculation excludes any septic tank or foul drainage pipe because these features do not form part of the assessed development.

6.4 Recommended Actions

On-site delivery of the full 10 percent net gain is constrained by the proposed development footprint within the red line boundary. Any proposed on-site habitat creation or enhancement would need to be realistic, secured for at least 30 years, and entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric using an appropriate habitat type.

The current proposed development is able to achieve the mandatory 10 percent BNG requirement and satisfy the relevant trading rules.

Any habitat creation or enhancement secured to deliver BNG, whether on-site or off-site, must be maintained and monitored for a minimum period of 30 years in accordance with a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan or equivalent management and monitoring document, secured by planning condition, planning obligation or conservation covenant as appropriate. Where off-site units are secured from a registered habitat bank, the long-term management, monitoring and legal securing mechanism would ordinarily be dealt with by the habitat bank provider, subject to provision of suitable evidence for the Biodiversity Gain Plan.

7 Limitations and Liability

This report has been prepared by ROAVR Group for the sole use of the Client named within this document in accordance with the agreed scope of works and our terms of business. No responsibility is accepted by any third party unless prior written consent has been obtained from ROAVR Group.

The findings and recommendations are based on conditions recorded at the time of the survey and cannot guarantee the complete absence of protected or notable species. Should proposals change materially, or more than two years elapse between survey and commencement of works, updated surveys and/or further advice may be required.

Third-party data sourced from DEFRA MAGIC and the LERC has been used in good faith, but should be considered indicative only. The BNG assessment has been undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and reflects site conditions at the time of survey. Unit values may be subject to review by the Local Planning Authority.

The responsibility for complying with wildlife legislation and implementing recommended mitigation measures rests with the Client and appointed contractors. ROAVR Group recommends that a suitably qualified ecologist supervises any works with the potential to affect protected species.

This report has been prepared in accordance with CIEEM Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing (2017), CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017). All content remains the copyright of ROAVR Group and may not be reproduced without prior written permission.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kola Lam

Ecologist

ROAVR Group



Prepared by: Kola Lam, MSc

Checked by: Jacob Cupit, BSc, Lead ecologist



8 References

CIEEM (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Second Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2022). Code of Professional Conduct. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2024). National Planning Policy Framework. HMSO, London.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey. JNCC, Peterborough.

Natural England (2024). Statutory Biodiversity Metric 4.0. Natural England, York.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021), Schedule 7A. HMSO, London.

British Standards Institution (2013). BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity — Code of Practice for Planning and Development. BSI, London.

Appendix 1: Site Location and Assessment Boundary



Figure A1.1: Extract from Google Maps showing the site location



Figure A1.2: Extract from DEFRA MAGIC showing the site area

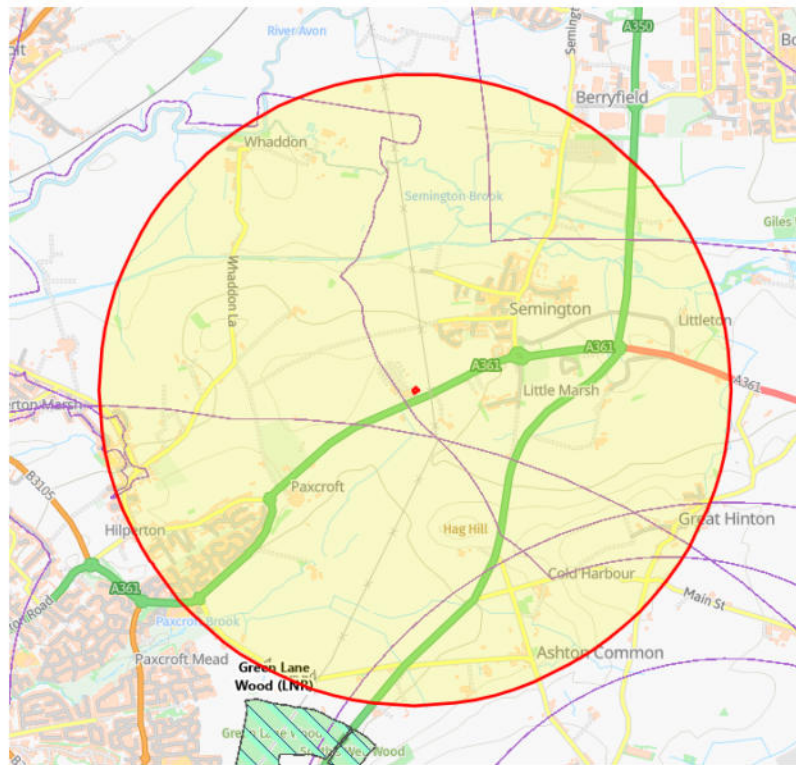


Figure A1.3: Extract from DEFRA MAGIC showing the designated sites within a 2km radius

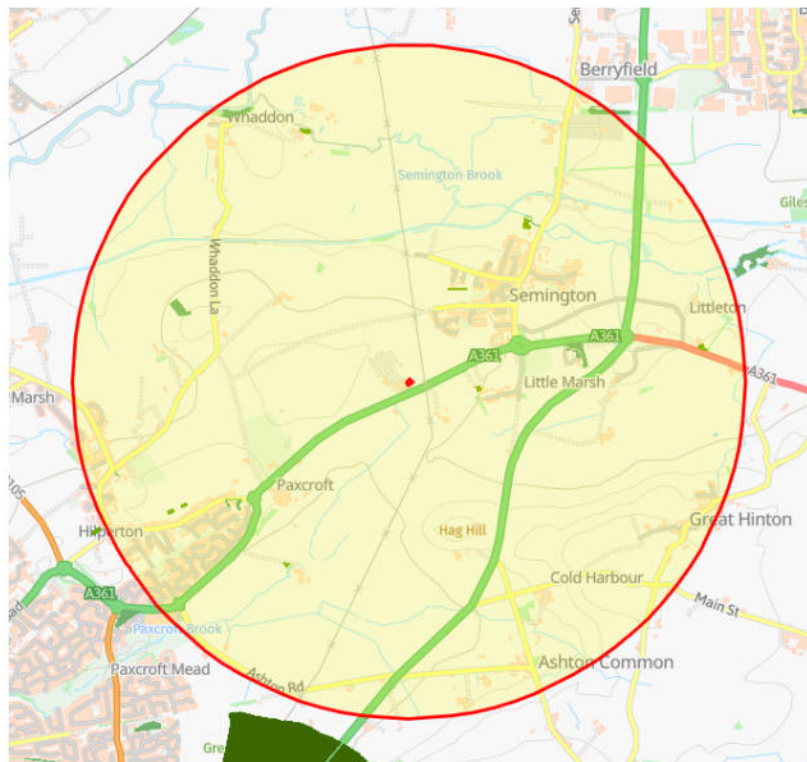


Figure A1.4: Extract from DEFRA MAGIC showing the priority habitats in a 2km radius

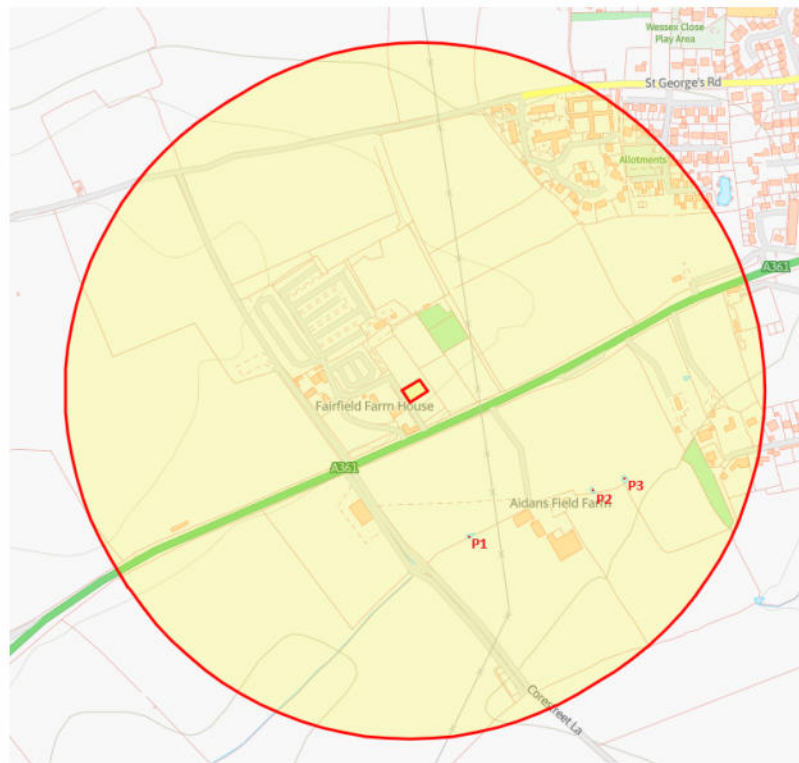


Figure A1.5: Standing water bodies mapped within a 500m radius

Appendix 2: Baseline and Proposed BNG Plans



Figure A2.1: Baseline Habitat Map, produced per the UK Habitat Classification Manual (Butcher et al., 2020)



Figure A2.2: Proposed Habitat Map, produced per the UK Habitat Classification Manual (Butcher et al., 2020)