



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report

Prepared for John Reid, JCB Farms Limited

JCB Wardlow Site 1, Ashbourne Road,
Rue Hill, Caudon Low, Staffordshire

November 2025

Fauna Forest Ecology Limited

Registered company number in England: 10184201

VAT Registration number: 284024905

Registered office address: South View Bungalow, Cheadle Road, Oakamoor, ST10 3AN

T: 01538 703890

M: 07917765464

E: info@faunaforest.co.uk

W: www.faunaforest.co.uk

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Methods used to prepare this report, including those carried out in the field followed The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.

Report Author:	Nathalie Cossa BSc (Hons)
Report review 1:	Tom Charlton MSc MCIEEM MRSB
Report review 2:	David Nixon MSc MCIEEM MRSB
Report review 3:	Charlie Fothergill BSc (Hons) MSc
Site Name:	JCB Wardlow Site 1, Ashbourne Road, Rue Hill, Caudon Low, Staffordshire
Document Number:	FFELTD-00908-V6
Project:	Erection of two agricultural barns
National Grid Reference:	SK 08543 47752

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fauna Forest Ecology Limited was commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment Report to determine the potential impact on biodiversity arising from the proposed development on land off Ashbourne Road, Rue Hill, Cauldon Low, Staffordshire. The proposals are to erect two agricultural buildings, enhance the remaining neutral grassland and plant trees around the perimeter to screen the buildings and provide wildlife interest.

The site supports neutral grassland and a small area of non-native shrubs. A BNG calculation, using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (version dated 23rd July 2024), was completed on 10th October 2025 to assess whether the proposed development would deliver the minimum 10% net gain required by law. The results indicate that the development would result in a 163.45% net gain of habitats within the site.

As part of the proposals, some of the other neutral grassland will be retained, while areas of other neutral grassland will be enhanced to achieve moderate condition. At least 90 small native trees will be planted around the perimeter to screen the buildings and provide wildlife interest. The area of non-native scrub will be retained.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Fauna Forest Ecology Limited on behalf of John Reid, JCB Limited in relation to land off Ashbourne Road, Rue Hill, Staffordshire. It presents the findings of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment for a proposed development comprising the erection of two agricultural barns. The total site area is approximately 0.19 hectares (ha). A map with the site boundary is shown in Figure 1.
- 1.2 The site is located approximately 9.6km west of Ashbourne and 20km east of Stoke-on-Trent and contains other neutral grassland, introduced shrub and a dry-stone wall. It is surrounded by grazed and arable habitat with a mix of tree lines, stone walls and hedgerow margins leading to a number of woodland compartments and other semi-natural habitats in the wider countryside. Close by are two large quarries: an active limestone quarry approximately 260m to the north and a disused quarry now used as an industrial test facility approximately 245m to the south of the site
- 1.3 This BNG Assessment Report largely follows the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidance¹. The BNG Assessment has been informed in part by a UKHab assessment undertaken by David Nixon MCIEEM MRSB and Frances Horsford MSc.
- 1.4 The assessment process involved calculating the baseline ecological Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) unit score by classifying habitat types according to their distinctiveness, condition, connectivity and strategic significance at both the pre-development and post-development stages, in line with the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric (hereafter referred to as 'the Metric'). Baseline habitat conditions were classified in a robust and consistent manner, using the data available at the time of assessment, and with all data collection methods and limitations clearly identified.
- 1.5 Pre-development and post-development habitat units and hedgerow units for the site were then calculated based on the current development proposals. The feasibility of the proposals to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity through the Metric was assessed. A BNG design was developed with the aim of maximising biodiversity gain through habitat creation, enhancement and natural succession, where appropriate. The approach prioritised achieving BNG on-site wherever possible, with off-site measures considered only if necessary.

Planning policy and legislation

- 1.6 BNG has been defined as 'development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, and an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation' (*BNG: Good Practice Principles*)

¹ CIEEM (2021). Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Audit Templates Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. Winchester, UK.

for Development).²

- 1.7 BNG became mandatory in England under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) from February 2024 for large sites and April 2024 for small sites. All sites must achieve a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity.
- 1.8 Using a biodiversity metric means that a developer applies a standardised formula to calculate the value of the site both before and after the development in the form of biodiversity units. These vary dependent upon the habitats affected, their condition and their extent. Where necessary, the developer will then provide an offset to deliver an equivalent number of biodiversity units. Offsetting is only used to compensate for adverse impacts on the biodiversity present on the site that will be impacted once appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures have been completed. This ensures that the mitigation hierarchy as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023³) is followed.
- 1.9 The NPPF (2024) seeks to ensure that the planning system contributes to and enhances the natural and local environment, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity by:
*“187. d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
192. b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”*
- 1.10 Public authorities have a specific duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act) to consider biodiversity and are required by central government to deliver no net loss.
- 1.11 A BNG Assessment must be completed prior to works commencing to allow any planning officers the opportunity to consider the likely impacts the proposed development will have on the local biodiversity.

² CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA (2016). *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice principles for development*. London: CIRIA/CIEEM/IEMA.

³ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. Available at: [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Accessed: November 2025).



Base map: © Google, Imagery © Google / Maxar Technologies
Map created with QGIS Geographic Information System version 3.44.3 (2025). Open Source Geospatial Foundation Project. <http://qgis.org>.

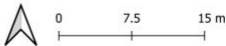
FAUNA FOREST
ECOLOGY

Site Location Map

JCB Wardlow: Site 1
Ashbourne Road, Rue Hill,
Cauldon Low, Staffordshire

LEGEND

Red Line Boundary



Map completed by: N. Cossa BSc (Hons)

Map completed on: 09/10/2025

Figure 1: Site Location Map

2 METHODOLOGY

Desk study

- 2.1 To assess the potential ecological impacts of the scheme, a desk-based study was undertaken using online resources, including the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC). This was used to identify records of designated sites and ecologically important habitats within a 1 km radius of the site. Google Earth was also consulted to review the surrounding landscape context (see limitations).
- 2.2 Staffordshire Ecological Record (SER) were commissioned to provide ecological and site records within a 1 km radius of the site.

Baseline habitat assessment

- 2.3 A UK Habitat Survey (UKHab) was carried out on 1st May 2024 by David Nixon MSc MCIEEM MRSB and Frances Horsford MSc. The habitats recorded have been mapped and are referenced within the Ecological Appraisal Report (May 2025).
- 2.4 During the UKHab survey, broad habitat types were identified across the site.⁴ These were subsequently converted into habitat classifications compatible with the Metric.

Statutory Biodiversity Metric

- 2.5 The Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Defra Metric was used to calculate biodiversity units. This spreadsheet-based tool requires input of both pre-development and post-development habitat types, their associated condition, and the measured extent of each habitat.
- 2.6 Habitat areas (measured in hectares) were derived from development plans prepared by JCB Farms Limited, for Wardlow Quarry, Caudon Low, dated 18/03/2022 and verified using QGIS.
- 2.7 Habitat condition was assessed in accordance with guidance set out the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide.⁵ Each broad habitat type was assessed against the published criteria to determine condition.

⁴ UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0*. Available at: <https://www.ukhab.org>. (Accessed: November 2025).

⁵ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2025). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/689c5ee17b2e384441636196/The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_User_Guide_-_July_2025.pdf (Accessed: November 2025).

- 2.8 Once all habitat types, conditions and areas were entered for both pre-development and post-development stages, the Metric calculated the changes in biodiversity units (including habitat units, hedgerow units and river units if applicable), as well as the overall percentage gain or loss arising from the proposals. The Metric calculations were completed by Nathalie Cossa BSc (Hons).

Strategic Significance

- 2.9 The strategic significance of habitats was assessed for both pre-development and post-development scenarios, taking into account the site's location, proximity to existing areas of biodiversity interest, inclusion within local ecological networks, and its position within wider habitat corridors.
- 2.10 The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is at the final draft stage and is due to be published by early 2026.⁶ The following documents were used to inform the decision to apply the strategic significance multiplier to habitats within the site:
- 2.10.1 Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).⁷
 - 2.10.2 Staffordshire County Council's Natural Environment Strategy 2024-26.⁸

Limitations

- 2.11 The accuracy of habitat area measurement is limited by the form of baseline data collection and can only be relied upon to a certain degree of resolution.
- 2.12 The biodiversity calculations are based upon ecological assessment of habitat carried out during October 2025; and as such, should a prolonged period of time pass prior to the commencement of the project, changes which may affect the conclusions of this report may occur.
- 2.13 This report is not intended to address impacts to protected species even though a records search has been commissioned.
- 2.14 No other limitations specific to this report influenced the assessment.

⁶ Staffordshire County Council, (2025). *Notice of Key Decisions*. Available at: <https://staffordshire.moderngov.co.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=367> (Accessed: November 2025).

⁷ Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, (2001). *Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan*. Available at: <https://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Staffordshire%20Biodiversity%20Action%20Plan%202nd%20Edition%202001.pdf> (Accessed: November 2025).

⁸ Staffordshire County Council, (2025). *Enhancing Nature: Staffordshire County Council's Natural Environment Strategy 2024-26*. Available at: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Environment/Documents/Staffordshire-County-Council-Natural-Environment-Strategy.pdf> (Accessed: November 2025).

3 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Desk study

- 3.1 Two statutory designated sites within 1km of the application site were identified, both of which were Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Rue Hill SSSI, approximately 45m north of the site, and Caldon Dales SSSI, approximately 760m northeast of the site. There were 10 non-statutory designated sites within 1km of the application site was returned by SER.
- 3.2 Two priority habitat types were identified within 1km of the application site, including seven parcels of lowland deciduous woodland and 25 parcels of lowland calcareous grassland. No priority habitats were found within the site boundary.
- 3.3 Notable fauna records returned by SER included four records of common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, nine records of brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, and two records of noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. 72 records of badger *Meles meles*, four records of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, a variety of bird records and 18 records of great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*.
- 3.4 More details can be found in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report prepared by Fauna Forest Ecology Limited, October 2025.

Strategic significance

- 3.5 The Staffordshire County Council's Natural Environment Strategy focuses on hedgerow creation, woodland expansion and strategic tree planting where it improves habitat connectivity, the enhancement of road verges and improvements to heathland biodiversity as priority areas for nature recovery. The Staffordshire BAP underlines the importance of priority habitats, emphasising the reinstatement of river valley meadows and an increase in heathland coverage and connectivity as of particular regional importance. None of these habitat types were identified within the site, which only featured poor quality neutral grassland and non-native introduced shrub. Therefore, all habitats present on site are considered to be of low strategic significance.

Important ecological features

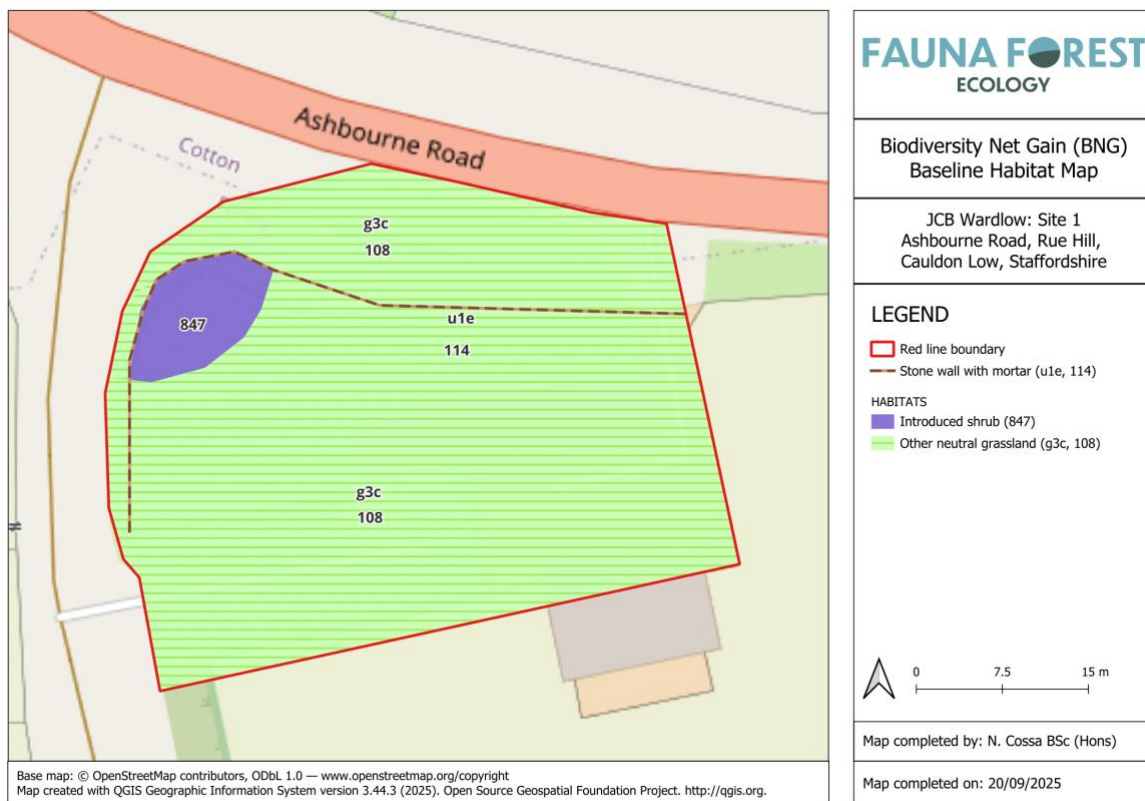
- 3.6 There was little present on site which provided any important ecological features.

Biodiversity units

- 3.7 The baseline habitats recorded during the survey comprised two different habitats. A summary of the baseline habitats and their associated condition assessments is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of baseline habitats

Baseline Habitat (including UKHab code if applicable)	Area (ha)	Condition	Description	Baseline Units
Other neutral grassland (g3c)	0.1782	Poor	The sward varies in length with areas mown short and others left to grow long around the drystone wall and remains of a previous building. Species diversity is low containing plants associated with nutrient enrichment.	0.71
Introduced shrub (847)	0.0102	Condition Assessment N/A	Non-native introduced shrubs have been planted in the western corner of the site.	0.02

**Figure 2: BNG Baseline Habitat Map**

4 BNG GOOD PRACTICE PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The good practice principles for biodiversity net gain are set out within Table 1.1 of Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development 9. The principles include:

- Apply the mitigation hierarchy (avoiding, then minimising and finally compensating for any impacts and losses).
- Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere (e.g. irreplaceable habitats).
- Be inclusive and equitable (engaging stakeholders early is key).
- Address risk (mitigating for difficult and uncertain risks to achieve net gain).
- Make a measurable net gain contribution (making sure that the calculation uses an appropriate metric) and be consistent and transparent with calculations.
- Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity (use robust credible evidence and local knowledge to inform decisions).
- Be additional (exceed existing obligations).
- Create a net gain legacy (involving stakeholders, securing funding for long-term management, allowing resilience in the net gain design, mitigating risks from other land users and supporting local-level management of net gain activities).
- Optimise sustainability (prioritising BNG and optimising the wider environmental benefits) .
- Be transparent (communicate clearly and timely and share the learning with all stakeholders).

4.2 All of the above principles have been considered. No irreplaceable habitats are being lost. Biodiversity loss is being mitigated on site with half the retained grassland being enhanced and planted trees providing greater biodiversity interest.

⁹ Baker, J., Hoskin, R. and Butterworth, T. (2019) *Biodiversity Net Gain. Good Practice Principles for Development – A Practical Guide*. Available at: [Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide](#). (Accessed: November 2025).

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

- 5.1 The development will involve construction of two agricultural barns as part of the existing agricultural units already present on site.
- 5.2 The impact on the surrounding landscape will be mitigated by retaining and enhancing the grasslands where possible, and planting trees around the periphery of the site shielding the barns from the nearby SSSI.
- 5.3 The other neutral grassland, including trees, will be maintained for a minimum of 30 years after the target condition has been achieved.
- 5.4 The proposed habitats are illustrated in Figure 3 below, with details of those to be retained, enhanced, and created set out in Table 2, along with the associated habitat management proposals

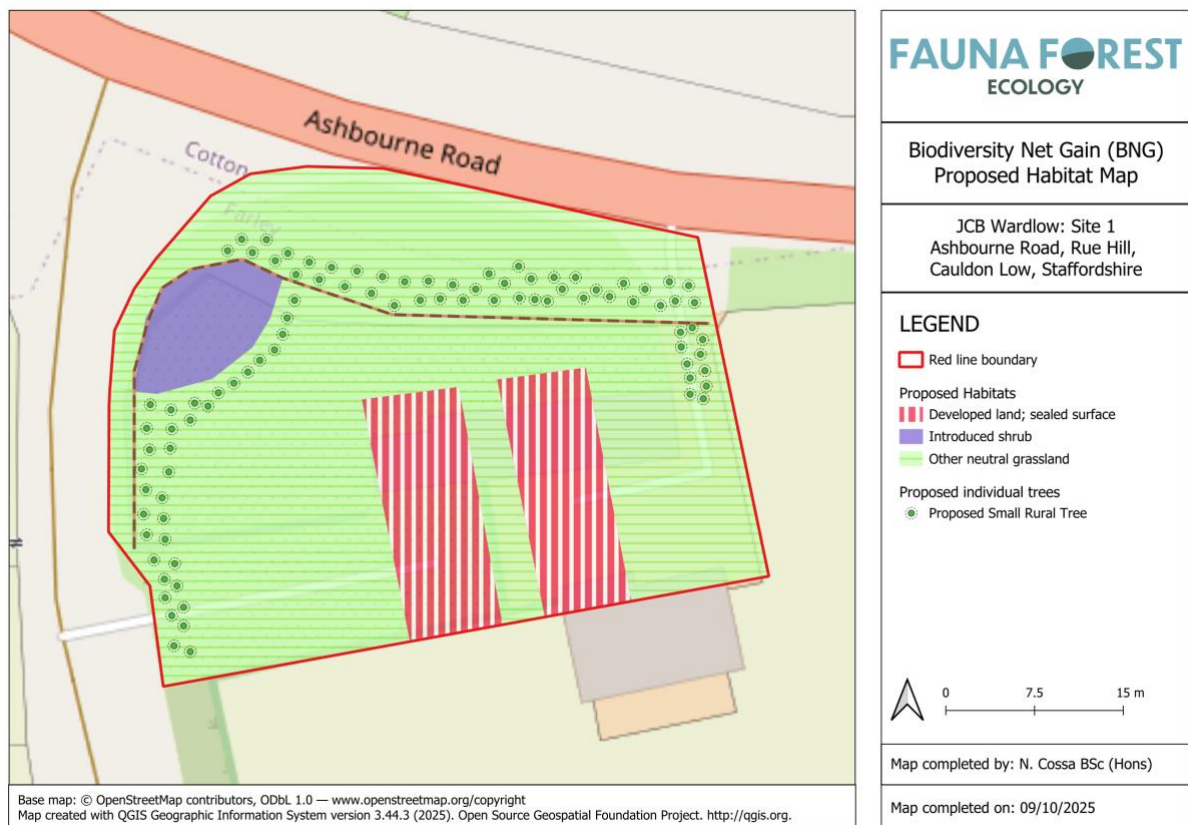


Figure 3: BNG Proposed Habitat Map

Habitat retained

- 5.5 Habitats to be retained are detailed in Table 2.

Habitat enhanced

5.6 Habitats to be enhanced are detailed in Table 2.

Habitat created

5.7 Habitats to be created are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of habitat management for proposed and post-development habitats

Habitat	Retained/ Enhanced/ Created	Area (ha)	Target Condition	Units	Proposed Habitat Management
Other neutral grassland	Retained	0.0733	Poor	0.29	At least 90 small trees are to be planted within this parcel. Although the grassland could be managed in a more sensitive manner than the current management regime, future shading and leaf litter from the proposed trees will make it difficult to improve the grassland to moderate condition. Therefore, this grassland will be retained as poor.
Introduced shrub	Retained	0.0102	N/A - Other	0.02	The shrubs are to be retained, replacing any diseased or dead shrubs with native species in the future.
Other neutral grassland	Enhanced	0.0732	Moderate	0.50	A sensitive mowing regime should be used. The remaining grassland is to be enhanced by allowing the grass to grow longer for much of the year, then cutting it once during spring, then allow to grow during summer with opportunity for plants to flower and seed, followed by a late August/early September cut. In

					both cases, arisings must be removed to reduce a build-up of nutrients. The spring cut would also help prevent establishment of rank grasses. If it was not possible to achieve the number of species required to achieve a moderate condition, a native locally sourced grass and wildflower seed mix should be used.
Developed land; sealed surface	Created	0.0375	N/A - Other	0.00	Not applicable.
Rural tree	Created	0.3664	Moderate	1.12	At least 90 small trees of native species, locally sourced will be planted within the grassland areas around the periphery of the site.

6 BNG METRIC

- 6.1 The habitats proposed for retention, enhancement, and creation, as detailed in this report, have been entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (July 2025). Table 3 provides a summary of the headline results, with full metric details included in Appendix A.

Table 3. Biodiversity metric headline results

Baseline Habitat Units	0.73
Post Development Habitat Units	1.93
Total Net Unit Habitat Change	1.20 (positive)
Total Net Percentage Habitat Changes	163.45% (positive)

- 6.2 The assessment has demonstrated that the proposals will lead to a net gain of 1.20 habitat units, resulting in an overall gain of 163.45%.

Habitat trading

- 6.3 The enhancement of some of the retained neutral grassland and the planting of 90 trees will generate enough medium distinctiveness units to compensate for the loss of some of the neutral grassland, which is also classed as medium distinctiveness.
- 6.4 The enhancement of the neutral grassland, retention of introduced shrubs and the planting of trees will comply with the trading rules for medium distinctiveness.

Assumptions and justifications

- 6.5 It is assumed that half of the remaining neutral grassland will be enhanced to moderate condition with the remaining half retaining its poor condition as a minimum. This will involve a more sensitive approach, allowing the grass to grow longer for much of the year, cutting it once in spring, then allowing it to grow through summer so plants can flower and set seed, followed by a late August or early September cut. In both cases, all arisings should be removed to prevent a build-up of nutrients. The spring cut will also help to limit the spread of rank grasses
- 6.6 It is assumed that a minimum of 90 native, locally sourced small trees will be planted across the site and maintained over the long term. These trees should be carefully selected to suit the local soil type and conditions, with native species such as oak, field maple, silver birch and rowan recommended to

provide ecological value. Each tree will be inspected annually to monitor health and growth, and any that show signs of disease, stress, or dieback will be replaced in the next planting season with a tree of the same species and comparable size. Trees will be managed in accordance with best practice to ensure they reach and maintain a moderate condition for a minimum of 30 years, contributing to long-term habitat structure and biodiversity enhancement.

- 6.7 It is assumed that the neutral grassland will grow up to the edge of the barns with no paths or access roads created.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Project implementation and construction plan

- 7.1 An implementation plan will be prepared to include detailed drawings, such as landscape planting schedules, as well as management proposals, a construction handover checklist, and a clear timetable for implementation. The plan will also identify those responsible for each activity. This document should be closely aligned with the Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan (BNG MMP) outlined below.

Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan

- 7.2 The BNG MMP is a document that sets out the long-term management and monitoring of all created and enhanced habitats. It should include detailed management and maintenance prescriptions for each habitat during years 1–5, along with broader management objectives for the full duration of the BNG commitment, typically a minimum of 30 years.

APPENDIX A: COMPLETED BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN METRIC SPREADSHEET

Erection of two pullet sheds

Headline Results

Scroll down for final results ▲

Return to results menu

On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.73	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	1.93	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	1.20	163.45%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	1.20	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
FINAL RESULTS			
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	1.20	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	163.45%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓		

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.73	0.81	0.00	No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

APPENDIX B: SITE PHOTOS



Photo 1 (above): g3c short-mown other neutral grassland south of stone wall, and existing neighbouring agricultural buildings.



Photo 2 (above): Dry-stone wall and introduced non-native shrub.



Photo 3 (above): Short-mown other neutral grassland north of stone wall, adjacent to road.

APPENDIX C: SPECIES LIST

Other Neutral Grassland

Common name	Scientific name	DAFOR
Bent grass	<i>Agrostis</i> sp.	A
Bittercress	<i>Cardamine</i> sp.	R
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	R
Cock's foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	R
Common mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	O
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	O
Crested dog's tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	R
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	R
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	R
Perennial rye grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	D
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i> agg.	A
Scented mayweed	<i>Matricaria chamomilla</i>	R
Smooth sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	R
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	R
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	A
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	O

APPENDIX D: CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS

Grassland Condition Sheet

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high and very high distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types			
Grassland - Other neutral grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site	Survey date and Surveyor name	1st May 2022, David Nixon MSc MCIEEM MRSB & Frances Horsford MSc
Limitations (if applicable)	N/A	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	JCB Wardlow
Grid reference	SK 08542 47753	Habitat parcel reference	g3c
Habitat Description			
Habitat meets UKHab criteria for Other neutral grassland due to not meeting the definition for g3a or g3b AND meeting all three of the following four criteria: >20% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges: <i>Yes - at least 20% herbs</i> >8 species per m2 (incl. forbs, grasses, sedges & rushes, excl. bryophytes): <i>Yes - over 8 species per quadrat</i> >=1 grass species that is not generally sown for intensive agricultural production is at least abundant: <i>Yes – Red fescue and bent grass abundant</i> - Cover of rye-grasses <i>Lolium</i> spp. and White clover <i>Trifolium repens</i>, where present, is <30%: <i>No – perennial rye-grass abundant (>75% cover) and white clover abundant (50-75% cover)</i>			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	No	Grassland dominated by perennial rye grass, with a variety of forbs present including scented mayweed, white clover and meadow buttercup.

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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	No	Grassland is mown short, all grass under 7cm.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ² .	Yes	No large patches of bare ground.
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Yes	No bracken recorded on site.
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition ³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Yes	Some species indicating nutrient enrichment such as creeping buttercup and spear thistle, however <5% cover of the total area.
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	No	Less than 10 plant species per m ² present.
Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		No	
Number of criteria passed		3	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/√	
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)			
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)	N/A	

Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	N/A	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	N/A	
Non-acid grassland types (Result out of 6 criteria)			
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	Good (3)		
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F.	Poor (1)	✓	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
N/A			
Notes			
Footnote 1 - Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description. Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover. Footnote 3 - Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i>, spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>, curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i>, broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>, common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>, creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i>, greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i>, white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site. Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement. Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).			