



ECOLOGYSOLUTIONS

Part of the ES Group

ENVISION AESC
UK BATTERY PLANT,
SUNDERLAND

Biodiversity Net Gain Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background & Proposals

- 1.1.1. Ecology Solutions was commissioned by Envision AESC to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment for the site proposed for the UK Battery Plant at the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP), Sunderland. The site forms Phase 2 of IAMP ONE, the southern section of the wider scheme.
- 1.1.2. The site was most recently surveyed in January 2020 by E3 Ecology Ltd, with check surveys undertaken by Ecology Solutions in April and May 2021. The 2020 surveys were themselves updates of earlier work, and there is a good understanding of the ecological interest of the site going back several years .
- 1.1.3. The results of this work have informed the baseline for the biodiversity metric assessment. This survey was based on extended Phase 1 survey methodology¹, as recommended by Natural England, whereby the habitat types present are identified and mapped, together with an assessment of the species composition of each habitat. This technique provides an inventory of the basic habitat types present and allows identification of areas of greater potential which require further survey. Any such areas identified can then be examined in more detail.

1.2. Site Characteristics

- 1.2.1. The site largely consists of arable and grassland fields. Improved grassland, bare ground, ruderal vegetation and standing water are also present within the site.

1.3. Biodiversity Net Gain Report

- 1.3.1. This document assesses the level of Biodiversity Net Gain within the site. This report has been prepared with due consideration to the guidance published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)^{2,3} in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain. This assessment has been primarily based around the results of the 2020 habitat surveys and 2021 check surveys.
- 1.3.2. This report determines the on-site baseline as well as biodiversity losses and gains as a result of the development.

¹ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a Technique for Environmental Audit*. England Field Unit, Nature Conservancy Council, reprinted JNCC, Peterborough.

² CIEEM (2019). *Biodiversity Net Gain. Good Practice Principles for Development, A Practical Guide*.

³ CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA (2016). *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development*.

2. BIODIVERSITY METRIC 2.0

- 2.1. The Biodiversity Metric 2.0⁴ uses habitat features as a proxy measure for capturing the value and importance of nature. It uses calculations to assess the importance of each habitat based on its size, ecological condition, location and its connectivity.
- 2.2. Measurements for habitats pre-development were calculated using QGIS software. Information regarding the habitats present as well as their condition were based on survey information obtained in 2020 and 2021. The Biodiversity Technical Supplement⁵ as well as professional judgment was used to inform the habitats' condition criteria, as well as any connectivity score.
- 2.3. The post-development habitat and landscape information has been provided by RPS.

⁴ At the time of preparing this assessment, version 3.0 of the metric has recently been published. Given the timing of the application and the work completed until this point, it is considered reasonable to continue with version 2.0 for this assessment.

⁵ Natural England (2019). *The Biodiversity Metric 2.0, Auditing and Accounting for Biodiversity, Technical Supplement, Beta Edition*, Natural England Joint Publication JP029

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF METRIC

3.1. This section should be read in conjunction with the Biodiversity Metric calculation tool included as Appendix 1 to this document.

3.2. Baseline Habitat (Pre-Development)

3.2.1. Table 3.1 below summarises the habitats present on site. The information included within this table is based on information gathered during the Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken in 2020 and check surveys in 2021.

3.2.2. Overall, the habitat baseline is valued at 76.94 units. For clarity, areas of the same habitat type have been grouped together in the table below.

Baseline habitat	Baseline Biodiversity Units	Ecological Features	Impact
Grassland – Other Neutral Grassland	52.88	A large area of the site approximately 13ha comprises neutral grassland in poor condition. These grasslands have formed as a result of lack of management / cultivation of arable fields / improved grasslands.	A small area (0.31ha) will be enhanced post-development. Other areas will be lost to facilitate the development and new landscaping of lower ecological interest.
Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral	9.24	Ruderal areas have developed as a result of lack of cultivation on previous arable fields.	These areas are to be lost to the development.
Urban - Vacant/derelict land/ bare ground	2.90	Along the southern boundary of the site and to the east of the farm buildings was an active works area which was bare ground at the time of survey with little to no vegetation.	These areas are to be lost to the development.
Grassland - Modified grassland	4.88	Grassland field dominated by Perennial Rye Grass <i>Lolium perenne</i> , and other fast growing species with grasses dominating the sward.	A small area (0.08ha) of this grassland will be enhanced post-development.
Cropland - Cereal crops	6.54	Arable field cultivated for Wheat <i>Triticum spp.</i>	Arable field will be lost and replaced by species poor grassland.
Heathland and shrub - Bramble scrub	0.32	This habitat is dominated by Bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> but includes occasional Hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> and emergent Cherry <i>Prunus avium</i> and Sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> trees.	Area lost to development.
Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	0	Existing farm buildings and associated infrastructure	Area lost to development.
Lakes - Temporary lakes, ponds and pools	0.18	An area of standing water within neutral grassland.	Area lost to development.

Table 3.1. Summary of Baseline Habitats.

3.3. Post-Development

- 3.3.1. Table 3.2 below summarises the habitats that will be present post-development and the habitat units delivered by each. The remaining areas of the site will consist of the new buildings and hardstanding, and score 0 habitat units.
- 3.3.2. It has been assumed that habitats present post-development will be subject to appropriate management to ensure that the desired conditions are met.

RPS Habitat	Metric Habitat Type	Area (Ha)	Habitat Units
Tree Planting	Urban Street Trees	55 individual trees	0.35
Native buffer planting mix	Heathland and Shrub – Mixed Scrub	6.48	60.60
Proposed Wildflower Meadow EM1, Shade Tolerant EH1 mix, Flood meadow and marginal planting	Grassland – Neutral Grassland	1.66 created, 0.6 enhanced	11.67 created, 4.37 enhanced
Ornamental shrub planting	Urban – Introduced shrub	0.07	0.14
Close Mown Lawn EG21 mix	Grassland – Modified	0.07	0.14
Wet Woodland	Woodland and Forest – Wet Woodland	0.5	2.12

Table 3.2. Summary of Post-development Habitats.

- 3.3.1. Overall, the proposed scheme would result in a gain of 2.44 units resulting in a percentage increase of +3.17%.

4. EVALUATION

4.1. The Principles of Evaluation

Biodiversity Net Gain – Good Practice Principles for Development

- 4.1.1. CIRIA, CIEEM and IEMA have developed principles of good practice to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain. These principles provide a framework that helps improve the UK's biodiversity by contributing towards strategic priorities to conserve and enhance nature through sustainable development. There are ten principles in total, and all principles must be applied together as one approach. The ten principles are set out below.
- 4.1.2. **Principle 1. Apply Mitigation Hierarchy.** Do everything possible to first avoid and then minimise impacts on biodiversity. Only as a last resort, and in agreement with external decision makers where possible, compensate for losses that cannot be avoided. If compensation for losses within the development footprint is not possible or does not generate the most benefits for nature conservation, then offset biodiversity losses by gains elsewhere.
- 4.1.3. **Principle 2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere.** Avoid impacts on irreplaceable biodiversity; these impacts cannot be offset to achieve no net loss or net gain.
- 4.1.4. **Principle 3. Be inclusive and equitable.** Engage stakeholders early, and involve them in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluation the approach to net gain. Achieve Net Gain in partnership with stakeholders where possible and share the benefits fairly among stakeholders.
- 4.1.5. **Principle 4. Address risks.** Mitigate difficulty, uncertainty and other risks to achieving Net Gain. Apply well accepted ways to add contingency when calculating biodiversity losses and gains in order to account for any remaining risks, as well as to compensate for the time between the losses occurring and the gains being fully realised.
- 4.1.6. **Principle 5. Make a measurable net gain contribution.** Achieve a measurable, overall gain for biodiversity and the services ecosystems provide while directly contributing towards nature conservation priorities.
- 4.1.7. **Principle 6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity.** Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity by using robust, credible evidence and local knowledge to make clearly-justified choices when:
- Delivering compensation that is ecologically equivalent in type, amount and condition, and that accounts for the location and timing of biodiversity losses.
 - Compensating for losses of one type of biodiversity by providing a different type that delivers greater benefits for nature conservation.
 - Achieving net gain locally to the development while also contributing towards nature conservation priorities at local, regional and national levels.
 - Enhancing existing or creating new habitat.

- Enhancing ecological connectivity by creating more, bigger, better and joined areas for biodiversity.

4.1.8. **Principle 7. Be additional.** Achieve nature conservation outcomes that demonstrably exceed existing obligations (i.e. do not deliver something that would occur anyway).

4.1.9. **Principle 8. Create a net gain legacy.** Ensure net gain generates long-term benefits by:

- Engaging stakeholders and jointly agreeing practical solutions that secure net gain in perpetuity.
- Planning for adaptive management and securing dedicated funding for long-term management.
- Designing net gain for biodiversity to be resilient to external factors, especially climate change.
- Mitigating risks from other land uses.
- Avoiding displacing harmful activities from one location to another.
- Supporting local-level management of net gain activities.

4.1.10. **Principle 9. Optimise sustainability.** Prioritise Biodiversity Net Gain and, where possible, optimise the wider environmental benefits for a sustainable society and economy.

4.1.11. **Principle 10. Be transparent.** Communicate all net gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders.

Lawton's Principle

4.1.12. Principles for enhancing England's wildlife sites were developed as part of the Lawton Review⁶. Across the UK, these principles can be used to design Biodiversity Net Gain activities to boost wildlife sites. They are:

- Improving the quality of wildlife sites;
- Increasing the size of the wildlife sites;
- Enhancing connections between, or joining up wildlife sites;
- Creating new wildlife sites; and
- Reducing pressure on wildlife sites.

4.2. Post-Development Evaluation

4.2.1. The site's contribution to Biodiversity Net Gain has been assessed with due regard to the principles outlined and discussed above. The on-site proposals are set to deliver a net gain, as summarised in Table 4.1 below.

On-site habitat units pre-development	76.94
On-site habitat units post-development	79.28
Total net unit change	2.44
Total net % change	3.17

Table 4.1 Summary of Biodiversity Net Gain.

⁶ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2010). *Making Space for Nature: A Review of England's Wildlife Sites*, DEFRA

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. Ecology Solutions was commissioned by Envision AESC to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment for the site proposed for the UK Battery Plant at the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP), Sunderland. The site forms Phase 2 of IAMP ONE, the southern section of the wider scheme.
- 5.2. The site consists mainly of grassland which has developed on arable fields owing to lack of management / cultivation.
- 5.3. Overall, when assessed under the Biodiversity Metric version 2.0, the site will deliver a net gain of 3.17% without the need for any off-site areas to offset any losses.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Excerpts from Biodiversity Net Gain Tool

Headline Results

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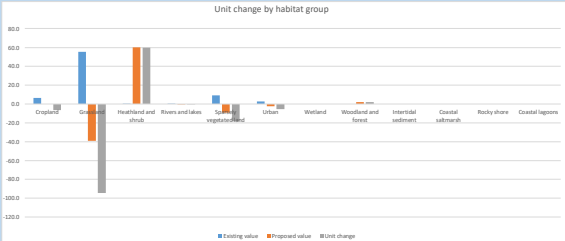
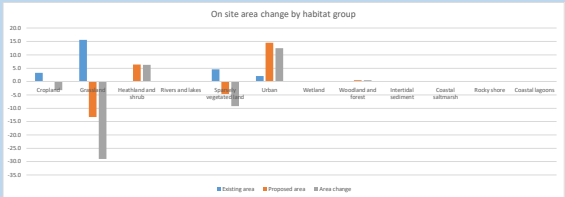
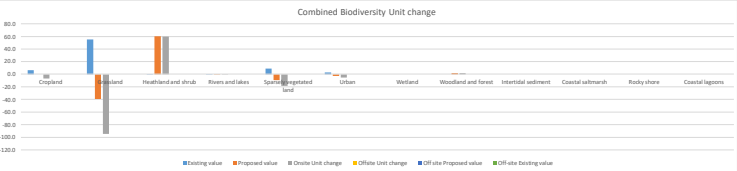
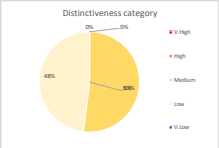
On-site baseline	Habitat units	76.94
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation, enhancement & succession)	Habitat units	79.38
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation, enhancement & succession)	Habitat units	0.00
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Total net unit change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention/creation)	Habitat units	2.44
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Total net % change (including all on-site & off-site habitat creation + retained habitats)	Habitat units	3.17%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	River units	0.00%

Summary Figures

Net project biodiversity units (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention/creation)	Habitat units	2.44
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Total project biodiversity % change (including all On-site & Off-site Habitat Creation + Retained Habitats)	Habitat units	3.17%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	River units	0.00%

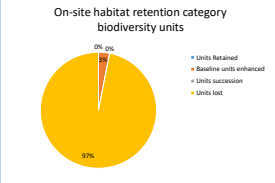
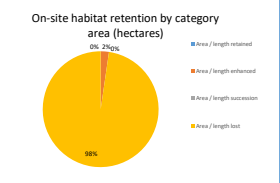
On-site habitat retention and enhancement			
	Habitats	Hedgerows	Rivers
Total site area / length	25.75	0.00	0.00
Total site units	76.34	0.00	0.00
Area / length retained	0.00	0.00	0.00
Units Retained	0.00	0.00	0.00
Area / length enhanced	0.60	0.00	0.00
Baseline units enhanced	2.40	0.00	0.00
Area / length succession	0.00		
Units succession	0.00		
Area / length lost	25.15	0.00	0.00
Units lost	74.54	0.00	0.00

lost by distinctiveness		
Category	Area lost (hectares)	Area lost (%)
V high	0	
High	0.03	0
Medium	12.7	52
Low	11.78	48
V low	0	



On-site	Baseline		Post development on site		Onsite Change	
	Habitat group	Existing area	Existing value	Proposed area	Proposed value	Onsite Unit change
On-site	Cropland	3.3	6.5	0.0	0.0	-3.3
	Grassland	15.7	55.4	-13.3	-39.2	-94.5
	Heathland and shrub	0.1	0.3	6.4	60.3	60.0
	Rivers and lakes	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.3	-0.4
	Sparingly vegetated land	4.6	9.2	-4.6	-9.2	-18.5
	Urban	2.1	2.9	14.6	-2.4	-5.3
	Wetland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Woodland and forest	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.1	2.1
	Intertidal sediment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Coastal saltmarsh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Rocky shore	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Coastal lagoons	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Overall Change	
Area change	Unit change
-3.3	-6.5
-29.0	-94.5
6.3	60.0
-0.1	-0.4
-9.2	-18.5
12.5	-5.3
0.0	0.0
0.5	2.1
0.0	0.0
0.0	0.0
0.0	0.0



Off-site	Baseline		Post development Off-site		Off-site Change	
	Habitat group	Existing area	Off-site Existing value	Proposed area	Off-site Proposed value	Offsite Unit change
Off-site	Cropland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Grassland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Heathland and shrub	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Rivers and lakes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Sparingly vegetated land	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Urban	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Wetland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Woodland and forest	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Intertidal sediment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Coastal saltmarsh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Rocky shore	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Coastal lagoons	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Combined	Baseline		Combined Post development		Combined change	
	Habitat group	Existing area	Existing value	Proposed area	Proposed value	Proposed value
Combined	Cropland	3.3	6.5	0.0	0.0	-3.3
	Grassland	15.7	55.4	-13.3	-39.2	-94.5
	Heathland and shrub	0.1	0.3	6.4	60.3	60.0
	Rivers and lakes	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.3	-0.4
	Sparingly vegetated land	4.6	9.2	-4.6	-9.2	-18.5
	Urban	2.1	2.9	14.6	-2.4	-5.3
	Wetland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Woodland and forest	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.1	2.1
	Intertidal sediment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Coastal saltmarsh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Rocky shore	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Coastal lagoons	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

A-1 Site Habitat Baseline

Condense / Show Columns

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Habitats and areas				Habitat distinctiveness	Habitat condition	Ecological connectivity	Strategic significance	Suggested action to address habitat losses	Ecological baseline
Ref	Broad Habitat	Habitat type	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Ecological connectivity	Strategic significance		Total habitat units
1	Grass land	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	6.72	Medium	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or higher distinctiveness s habitat required	22.88
2	Grass land	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	0.32	Medium	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or higher distinctiveness s habitat required	1.28
3	Sparsely vegetated land	Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral	1.3	Low	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	2.60
4	Sparsely vegetated land	Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral	3.32	Low	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	6.64
5	Grass land	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	3.98	Medium	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or higher distinctiveness s habitat required	14.32
6	Urban	Urban - Vacant/derelict land/ bareground	1.38	Low	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	2.32
7	Grass land	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	3.44	Medium	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or higher distinctiveness s habitat required	13.76
8	Grass land	Grassland - Modified grassland	0.98	Low	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	1.16
9	Grass land	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	0.16	Medium	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or higher distinctiveness s habitat required	0.64
10	Grass land	Grassland - Modified grassland	1.86	Low	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	3.72
11	Cropland	Cropland - Cereal crops	3.27	Low	N/A - Agricultural	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	6.54
12	Urban	Urban - Vacant/derelict land/ bareground	0.39	Low	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	0.58
13	Heathland and shrub	Heathland and shrub - Bumble scrub	0.08	Medium	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same broad habitat or higher distinctiveness s habitat required	0.32
14	Urban	Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	0.04	V.Low	N/A - Other	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Compensation Not Required	0.00
15	Lakes	Lakes - Temporary lakes, ponds and pools	0.03	High	Poor	Low	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Same habitat required	0.18
16									
17									
18									
19									
20									
Total site area ha			25.75					Total Site baseline	76.99

Retention category biodiversity value								Respoke compensation agreed for unacceptable losses	Comments	
Aea retained	Aea enhanced	Aea succession	Baseline units retained	Baseline units enhanced	Baseline units succession	Aea lost	Units lost		Asses sor comments	Reviewer comments
	0.6		0.00	2.40	0.00	5.12	20.48		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 1	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.32	1.28		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 2	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	2.60		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 3	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	3.32	6.64		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 4	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	3.58	14.32		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 5	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	1.16	2.32		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 6	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	3.44	13.76		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 7	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.58	1.16		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 8	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.16	0.64		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 9	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	1.86	3.72		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 10	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	3.27	6.54		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 11	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.29	0.58		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 12	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.32		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 13	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.64	0.00		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 14	
			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.18		Figure 12.2 - Parcel 15	
0.00	0.60	0.00	0.00	2.40	0.00	25.15	74.54			

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Forest with high biodiversity - 2009 Intentional habitats										
Proposed habitat	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Ecological connectivity	Strategic significance	Temporal multiple Time to target condition/years	Difficulty of creation category	Habitat units delivered	Comments	
					Strategic significance				Assessor comments	Reviewer comments
Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	16.37	V.Low	N/A - Other	Low	Area/ compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	0	Low	0.00		
Urban - Street Tree	0.23	Low	Moderate	Low	Area/ compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	27	Low	0.35		
Heathland and shrub- Mixed scrub	6.48	Medium	Good	Low	Area/ compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	7	Low	60.60	Reactive buffer planting	
Urban - Introduced shrub	0.07	Low	Poor	Low	Area/ compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	1	Low	0.14	Commercial	
Grassland - Modified grassland	0.07	Low	Poor	Low	Area/ compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	1	Low	0.14	Grass sward from HCS1	
Grassland - Other neutral grassland	1.66	Medium	Good	Low	Area/ compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	15	Low	116.67	HSA 1201, Marginal wet flood-meadow Planting native or near-native species	
Woodland and forest - Wet woodland	0.5	High	Good	Medium	Area/ compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	32+	Medium	2.12	Wet woodland	
Totals	25.15							75.61		

A-3 Site Habitat Enhancement

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		Post development/ post intervention habitats																	
		Baseline habitats			Change in distinctiveness and condition													Comments	
Baseline ref	Baseline habitat	Proposed habitat (Pre-populated but can be overridden)	Distinctiveness change	Condition change	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Ecological connectivity score	Strategic significance	Time to target condition/years	Difficulty of enhancement category	Habitat units delivered	Assessor comments	Reviewer comments					
1	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	Medium - Medium	Poor - Good	0.6	Medium	Good	Low	Area/ compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	25	Low	4.37							



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