

# BERNWOOD ECOLOGY

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## Potters Farm North Marston Buckinghamshire



## Habitat Management Plan

Mr. Breakell

18<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Breakell-PF-24.001 (Issue 1.1)



Proud to be:



Hensmans Farm, Narton End, Swanbourne, Buckinghamshire, MK17 0SL

## Limitations

Ecological assessments can only assess a site at a particular time. This evidence can be used to draw conclusions as to the likely presence or absence of species (animals and plants), population size, use of the site by animals; it is neither definitive nor complete. Any survey is a snapshot in time and should not be regarded as definitive nor complete study.

The preparation of mitigation strategies, consultation exercise and submission of any licence applications cannot be relied upon until approved [licensed] in writing by the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation. Allowance must be made for both programme and financial change to projects as a result of application failure, amendment or refusal.

Every professional effort and due diligence have been applied to provide an accurate ecological assessment of the site at the time of the preparation of this report, but no liability can be assumed for omissions, or subsequent changes to design and development. Additional works should be anticipated as surveys and proposals for the site progress.

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## Quality Assurance

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## Executive Summary

Bernwood Ecology have been instructed to produce a Habitat Management Plan to discharge the Planning Condition (4) for the consented development 23/00021/APP. The development is for the construction of a new building to include four stables and ancillary rooms for storage associated with equestrian use and a manège for personal use, with a winter paddock and small area of gravel hardstanding at Potters Farm, North Marsden.

The aim of the Habitat Management Plan is to provide details and specifications for the protection, creation and management of habitats and other features of biodiversity interest for a minimum thirty-year period.

The main areas created/retained and managed include Mixed Scrub, Traditional Orchard and Modified Grassland as well as biodiversity enhancement features; two bat boxes and two bird boxes. The creation and management of these areas is to ensure they achieve the target conditions specified in the Biodiversity Net Gain calculator.

The habitats created under the Habitat Management Plan will be subject to a monitoring visit to ensure the conditions specified are being met. This will allow any remedial measures needed to be identified and subsequently take place.

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## 1. Introduction and Objectives

- 1.1 Bernwood Ecology were instructed by Mr Breakell on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to complete a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for the construction of a new building to include four stables, and ancillary rooms for storage associated with equestrian use and a manège for personal use, with a winter paddock and small area of gravel hardstanding. Appendices 1-3).
- 1.2 The purpose of an HMP is to provide details and specifications for the management of habitats and other features of biodiversity interest (CIEEM, 2017a and 2017b) in order to discharge the Planning Condition (4) for the consented development (planning reference: 23/00021/APP).

## 2. Legal Protection

- 2.1 The finding of this report represents the professional opinion of qualified ecologists and does not constitute professional legal advice. The client may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the relevant wildlife legislation cited in this report.
- 2.2 The following information is a simplified summary of the legislation and the full text of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (2017 Regulations) and other legislation together with current published guidelines should be consulted.

### European Protected Species

- 2.3 It is understood that 2017 Regulations will be further amended due to the departure of the UK from the EU on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. From that date the provisions in The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 will apply (see <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/579/contents/made>). Existing protection for habitats and species including standards and assessment procedures will remain as they have been prior to the UK leaving the EU.
- 2.4 The 2017 Regulations and The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 should be read together until further clarification or changes are made available by the UK Government or legal case law.

## 3. Purpose and objectives

- 3.1 The purpose of this document is to provide sufficient information to allow the compliance with and discharge of condition 4 in accordance with the planning consent. Planning Condition 4:

*Prior to commencement of development (including works of demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) shall be submitted to and*

*approved in writing by the local planning authority to secure the biodiversity net gains (4.23% habitat units) and biodiversity enhancement features in accordance with the details provided in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Bernwood Ecology (received by the LPA on 04/01/2023) and the revised Biodiversity Metric (received by the LPA on 20/10/2023). The content of the HMP shall include the following:*

- A) Introduction to purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed works.*
- b) Review of potential ecological constraints*
- c) Detailed design(s) and/or working method(s) to achieve stated objectives.*
- d) Extent and location/area of proposed works on appropriate scale maps and plans.*
- e) Type and source of materials to be used where appropriate, e.g. native species of local provenance.*
- f) Timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development.*
- g) Details of biodiversity enhancement features including model specifications and location (for 2 bat boxes and 2 bird boxes).*
- h) Persons responsible for implementing the works.*
- i) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.*
- j) Details for monitoring and remedial measures.*
- k) Details for disposal of any wastes arising from works.*

*The HMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall be for no less than 30 years. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the HMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.*

3.2 The consented development provides opportunities to create areas of new habitats proportional to the impacts and size of the site. The aim is to deliver an overall enhancement to biodiversity within the site which is maintained under a planning condition obligation for 30 years.

3.3 The objective of the HMP is to outline retained, enhanced and newly created habitats and ecological features of high importance identified within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report (issued by

Bernwood Ecology, issue number: 1.1, issued: 8th February 2022) in order to secure the biodiversity net gains and biodiversity enhancement features outlined within this report. It will also set out a methodology for habitat establishment and strategies for their management and maintenance for the next five years. The report is informed by previous ecological surveys that have identified species of interest, habitat types and measures that would benefit the overall biodiversity of the site.

#### 4. Methodology

##### Habitat Retention Enhancement

- 4.1 The creation / enhancement of all habitats must meet the habitat conditions as set out in BNG assessment and in line with Statutory biodiversity metric condition assessments (Natural England, 2024b) (Appendix 5).

##### Habitat Retention and Protection

- 4.2 In accordance with planning consent, the following condition must be adhered to. *Planning Condition 5: No works or development (including for the avoidance of doubt any works of demolition/site clearance) hereby approved shall take place until a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The TPP shall accord with current British Standard 5837 and shall include detailed plans showing the location(s) of trees, shrubs and hedgerows to be retained and the positions of protective fencing and ground protection. The protective fencing and ground protection shall be installed on site in accordance with the approved details prior to the commencement of any works or development on the site. Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and the approved fencing and ground protection measures shall be retained and maintained until all building, engineering or other operations have been completed. No work shall be carried out or materials stored within the fenced or protected areas without prior written agreement from the Local Planning Authority.*
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the TPP described as above will ensure the retained trees, hedgerows and orchard areas are sufficiently protected over the course of the works. The area of grassland along the southern boundary of the site is due to be enhanced and will be protected from damage during construction (i.e. vehicle movement, compaction) using temporary fencing and appropriate signage until the time comes for the habitat enhancement measures as stipulated in Table 1.

##### Habitat Creation and Enhancement

- 4.4 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment using the DEFRA BNG metric 3.0 was conducted by Bernwood Ecology for the proposals in February 2022 (see *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report* (issued by Bernwood Ecology, issue number: 1.1, issued: 8th February 2022)). An update Biodiversity Net Gain



Assessment using the Statutory BNG metric was conducted by Bernwood Ecology for the site on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (Appendix 4) using the plans from the consented scheme which differ slightly from those subject to the previous assessment.

- 4.5 The table below (Table 1) outlines the habitats and enhancements to be created/retained, their condition and any future management plans. These are guided by the Biodiversity Net Gain calculations and associated target conditions and criteria (Natural England 2024a, 2024b & 2024c) (Appendix 5). The baseline habitats and proposed habitats can be seen in Appendices 3 and 4.

#### Additional Enhancements

- 4.6 Four additional enhancement features (in the form of two bird boxes and two bat boxes) will be installed externally on the stable barn and nearby mature trees and secured for the lifetime of the development:
- 4.7 At least two bowl apex nest boxes (such as the Slide-Out House Martin Apex Nest or similar) are to be installed externally on the stable barn, under the eaves or canopy at the gable ends at a minimum height of two metres. Please note, due to the change in stable design and the knowledge of the presence of cats likely to be inside the barn, the original recommendations to install bird boxes inside the barn have been altered to reflect this. The artificial nest boxes will be inspected once a year between October and February and cleaned if necessary. The inspection will also check to ensure the boxes are safely attached and re-secured if necessary. The condition of the entire artificial nest will need to be checked for any damage or deterioration and replaced if necessary.
- 4.8 Two bat boxes (such as an Eco Kent Bat Box, or similar) are to be placed on suitable trees facing a southern or western aspect, at least 3m from the ground level, away from all sources of artificial light and free from obstructing branches so as to allow clear flight to and away from the box. An area where suitable trees are located is shown on the habitat plan (Appendix 3) with the exact positioning to be determined by a suitably experienced ecologist. Suspension of bat boxes should be checked yearly, and any obstructing branches will require trimming or removal. Should the boxes deteriorate to the point that they can no longer be used by roosting bats within the 30-year management period, they will be replaced like-for-like or using a similar bat box design. Please note that if the bat boxes become used, they must not be moved or interfered with as this could result in an offence under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017; a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted to provide appropriate advice if there is a requirement for the boxes to be moved.

Table 1. Habitats to be created, enhanced or retained, their condition and future management plans.

Target Habitat	Created/ Retained	Areas required	Minimum Target Condition <sup>1</sup> (see Appendix 5 for details of Condition Assessment criteria)	Creation Method	Establishment	Annual Management Over a 30-Year Period for modified grass, traditional orchard, mixed scrub and bird and bat boxes.
<b>Modified Grassland</b>	Enhanced	0.1ha	Moderate – To pass criterion A, B, C, D and G.	Enhancement of the modified grassland around periphery of menage, car parking and stables/ yard areas, to be used for light horse grazing etc. post development.	Emorsgate seed mix EM1 (or equivalent)– general purpose native species meadow mixture to be sown in Autumn or Spring over scarified existing grassland. If seeds are sown in autumn, an initial cut to be undertaken in March/April to 5cm or if seeding in spring, first cut in May).	Grassland should be lightly grazed or alternatively subject to a cut every two months or when the sward reaches ~15 cm. Reduce grazing if possible (or cease cutting) between July-August to allow wildflowers to seed. Light grazing to resume from September or if required, a final cut in September/October. Ensure all cuttings are removed.  Any failed establishment to be re-seeded in next available suitable sowing period.
<b>Modified Grassland</b>	Created	0.21	Poor	Reinstatement of the modified grassland around periphery of menage, car parking and stables/ yard areas.	General purpose lawn grass seed mix to be sown as per supplier's instructions.	To be used for light horse grazing etc. post development. Any failed establishment to be re-seeded in next available suitable sowing period.
<b>Traditional Orchard</b>	Enhanced	0.05ha	Moderate – fails on essential criterion – A, passes B, C, D, E, F and H	Extension to the Traditional Orchard proposed through addition of minimum of 6 – 8 new fruit trees into area of existing grassland (using trees of heritage value informed by PTES's Fruit Finder tool <a href="https://ptes.org/campaigns/traditional-orchard-project/fruitfinder/">https://ptes.org/campaigns/traditional-orchard-project/fruitfinder/</a> ). The grassland is specifically not being seeded to allow for continuity in vegetation cover and prevent encroachment of common nettle and other undesirable species that soil disturbance is likely to create.  The planted fruit trees will be of half-standard size to aid establishment. Trees will be planted following the natural grid spacing present in the existing orchard.	Potted trees can be planted out at any time of year except summer. Bare-rooted trees should be planted while dormant, generally between November and March. Planting during a drought, hard frost or when the soil is waterlogged will be avoided. Plastic spiral tree guards for protection against rabbit damage will be installed and the trees will be supported between two stakes. A bark mulch will be placed around the base of the tree to reduce weed growth and aid with water retention.  Young trees will be kept watered during the first year, especially during the summer if there are periods of low rainfall.	Vegetation should be kept low around the base of the new tree while it establishes to reduce the water and nutrient competition. A one metre diameter circle clearance of vegetation around the base should be maintained for at least the first 3 years, the layer of mulch should achieve this as well as helping with moisture retention.  Once the new fruit trees are established, they will be pruned as necessary over the winter months to encourage a sustainable growth form and encourage fruiting. All cut material is to be used to create habitat piles within the orchard area.  Deadwood should be left <i>in situ</i> , on the trees or on the ground where possible.  Invasive non-native plant species as listed. In Schedule 9 WCA will be removed.
<b>Mixed Scrub</b>	Enhanced	0.03ha	Moderate – passes 3 or 4 criteria*	An area of mixed planted hawthorn, blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> , hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , guelder rose <i>Viburnum opulus</i> and self-set bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> as well as black poplar <i>Populus nigra</i> trees where suppliers' stocks allow. At least 80% of species should be native with no single species comprising more than 75% of cover.  Scrub trees to be planted as 30cm minimum size whips at approximately 50cm spacing to achieve a minimum density of	Whips to be left to establish for first 10-15 years. Where/ if surrounding vegetation begins to overgrow the trees, it will be cut back to ensure sufficient light reaches the planted trees. Coppicing adjacent sections sequentially should be avoided in order not to reduce foliage for invertebrates to feed on.	Once established (~15 years), scrub should be managed by rotationally coppicing blocks (no more than one third at any one time) of scrub and allowing them to re-grow on a 10 yearly basis.  Non-native plant species (as listed in Schedule 9 WCA) should be removed.

				4/m <sup>2</sup> on average across the planting block. Planting to be naturalised, in order to create areas of dense planting alongside natural openings and glades. Whips to be protected with appropriate tree guard- if non-biodegradable tree guards used, guards are to be removed and disposed of after trees become established (predicted to be ~10-15 years).		Rough grassland fringes benefit from a cut and rake rotation cycle of two to three years where half is cut in late summer or autumn.
<b>Bird and bat boxes</b>	Created	N/A	N/A	Two bat boxes (such as an Eco Kent Bat Box, or similar) and at least two bowl apex nest boxes (such as the Slide-Out House Martin Apex Nest or similar) are to be installed.	The bat boxes are to be positioned at a minimum of 3m above the ground, secured to suitable trees facing a southern or western aspect, away from all artificial light and free from obstructing branches. Bird boxes are to be installed externally on the stables under the eaves at a minimum height of two metres. The boxes are to be maintained for the 30-year period.	Any vegetation growth obscuring the boxes must be trimmed to allow free access into the boxes. If the boxes become damaged or ineffective due to deterioration they must be replaced with the same or similar product.

<sup>1</sup>Based on the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (see Bernwood Ecology's *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report* issue number: 1.1, issued: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022)

\*Based on condition criterion outlined in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments (Natural England, 2024b) (Appendix 5).

5. Works schedule

	INITIAL CREATION/ENHANCEMENT MATRIX											
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Mixed Scrub												
Scrub planting.												
Modified Grassland (Good Condition)												
Sowing should be undertaken in suitable weather conditions in autumn or spring. Where existing grassland is to be enhanced, the grassland will be scarified to open up the sward and provide areas of bare soil in which seeds can establish and germinate. After sowing the area will be lightly rolled, to bring the seed into good contact with the soil.												
Vegetation can be cut to a short sward height (~50mm).			(if sown in autumn)	(if sown in autumn)	(if sown in spring)							
Modified Grassland (Poor Condition)												
Sowing should be undertaken in suitable weather conditions in autumn or spring. A fine, firm seed bed is to be created by machine or by hand, sowing in overlapping sections. After sowing the area will be lightly rolled, to bring the seed into good contact with the soil.												
Traditional Orchard												
Trees are to be planted, avoiding very cold or windy weather, during frost free period whilst ground is not waterlogged.												
Tree guard and stakes. Mulch around 1m diameter of trees to protect from weeds.												
Weeding of one-metre diameter around young trees.												
Trees watered throughout the year, especially during summer months / dry periods.												

	ONGOING MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS MATRIX											
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Mixed Scrub												
Once established (~15 years), coppicing of up to 1/3 of the scrub on 10-year rotation.												
Cut and rake rough grassland fringes in a rotation cycle of two to three years where half is cut in late summer or autumn.												
Modified Grassland (Good condition)												
Lightly grazed or alternatively subject to a cut every 2 months or when the sward reaches 15cm. Grazing / cutting should be avoided during summer months to allow wildflowers to establish. All cuttings removed.												
Removal of invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 WCA.												
Modified Grassland (Poor condition)												
Grazed or cut throughout the year												
Traditional Orchard												
Weeding of one-metre diameter around young trees, replacing mulch of required.												
Replacement planting of any failed trees (for first 5 years).												
Prune as necessary – deadwood to be left in place where possible / cuttings used to create habitat piles in orchard. Adjust ties where necessary.												
Remove invasive plant species, as listed in Schedule 9 WCA.												
Monitoring and review												
Monitoring of habitat creation (~12months from creation)												

## 6. Responsibilities for Implementation

- 6.1 A copy of this HMP is to be retained on site at all times. It must be followed by any parties (including contractors) working to create or manage the habitats.
- 6.2 The ultimate responsibility for the works to comply with the HMP and environmental legislation remains with the client; Mr. D. Breakell. The client can appoint a contractor to undertake the management works if they wish to do so. The clients and/or any contractors working to deliver the project must uphold the recommendations within the HMP and environmental legislation.
- 6.3 Should the ownership of the site be transferred within the lifetime of the HMP (30 years), all responsibilities for the planning condition implementation for the HMP must be transferred to the new owner through an appropriate covenant.

## 7. Monitoring and Remedial Measures

- 7.1 To ensure the aims and objectives of the HMP are being met, monitoring of the created and retained habitats and a review of the HP will be implemented as detailed below.
- 7.2 The created and retained habitats will be subject to a monitoring visit 12 months following completion of the works, by an appropriately experienced ecologist. Any necessary remedial measures will be identified to the client, (Mr. D. Breakell) and they will need to be addressed and implemented to ensure establishment of the created habitats within the 30-year period of the HMP.
- 7.3 Any failed planting within the first 5 years from establishment will be replaced within the next suitable planting/ sowing season.

## 8. Funding Resources and Mechanisms

- 8.1 The creation and management of the habitats, including monitoring and remedial actions is to be privately funded by the client (Mr. D. Breakell).

## 9. Conclusions

- 9.1 This report sets out the ecological elements of a Habitat Management Plan.
- 9.2 All the habitats created/retained are outlined in this report and their thirty-year management is also outlined. All measures mentioned in this report in addition to the measures detailed in the '*Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report*' (Bernwood Ecology, issue: 1.1, issued 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022) are to be followed.

- 9.3 Development of the site presents an opportunity to enhance its ecological value, whilst safeguarding any existing ecological interest where possible, and providing landscape benefits.
- 9.4 The implementation of the measures set out within this report will enhance biodiversity within the site for the next 30 years.

## 10. References and Further Reading

BSI (2012). Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction—Recommendations (BS 5837:2012). British Standards Institution.

BSI (2013). Biodiversity—Code of practice for planning and development (BS 42020:2013). British Standards Institution.

CIEEM (2017a). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2017b). Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2021). Good Practice Guidance for Habitats and Species. [online] <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Good-Practice-Guide-July-2021-Update.pdf>

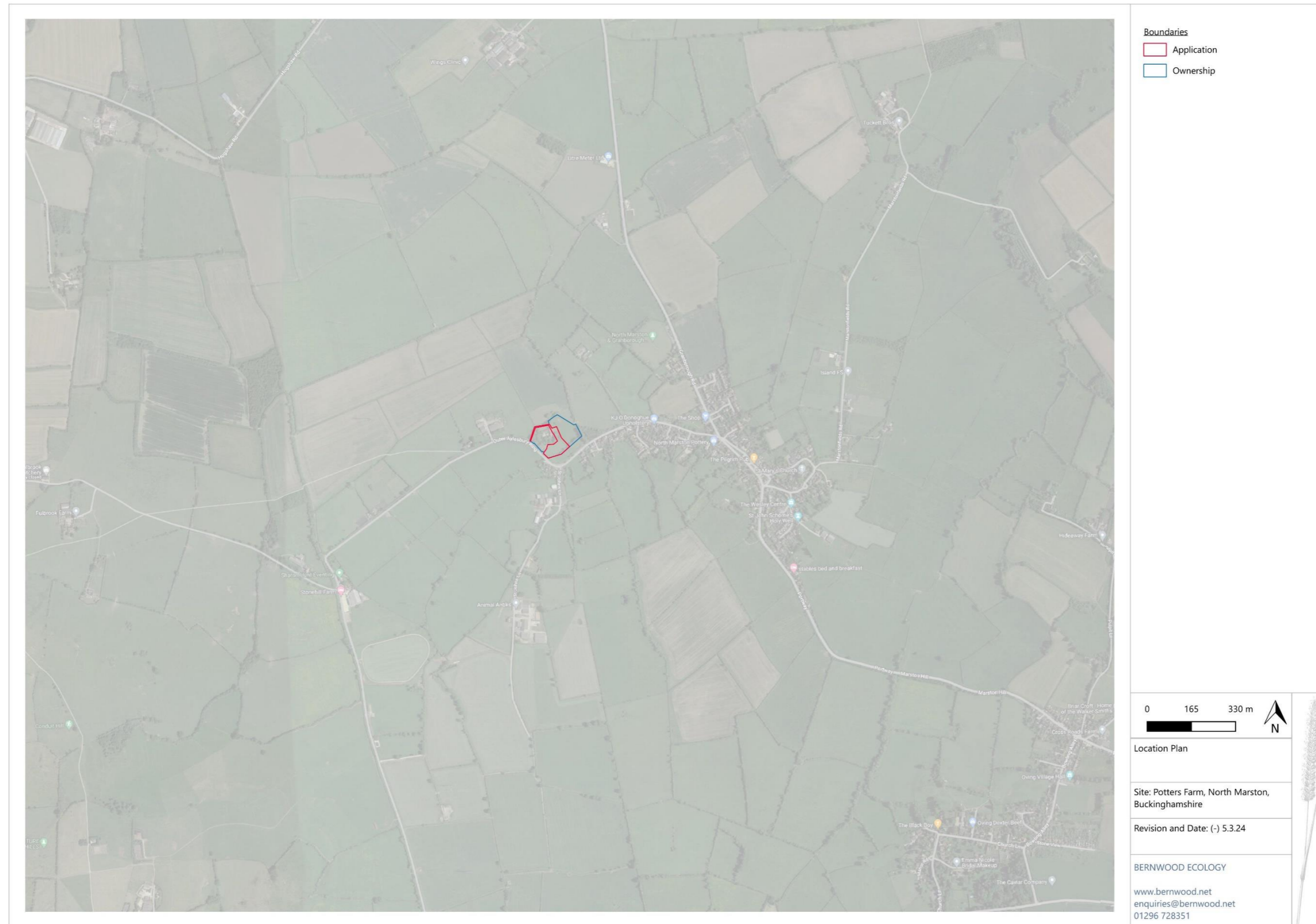
Natural England (2024a). Statutory Biodiversity Metric tool User Guide. [online] [The\\_Statutory\\_Biodiversity\\_Metric\\_-\\_User\\_Guide\\_.pdf](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Natural England (2024b). The Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments. [online] [Statutory\\_Biodiversity\\_Metric\\_Condition\\_Assessments\\_-\\_Feb24.xlsx](#) (live.com)

Natural England (2024c). Statutory Biodiversity Metric tool calculation tool. [online] [The\\_Statutory\\_Biodiversity\\_Metric\\_Calculation\\_Tool\\_-\\_Macro\\_enabled\\_02.24.xlsm](#) (live.com)



Appendix 1. Site location plan.





Appendix 2. Existing baseline habitat plan.



Appendix 3. Proposed habitat plan.





Appendix 4. BNG Statutory Metric Calculation.

Potters Farm		Return to results menu			
<b>Headline Results</b>					
Scroll down for final results ▲					
On-site baseline	Habitat units	1.66			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation &amp; enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	1.76			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site net change <small>(units &amp; percentage)</small>	Habitat units	0.10	5.87%		
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%		
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Off-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation &amp; enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Off-site net change <small>(units &amp; percentage)</small>	Habitat units	0.00	0.00%		
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%		
Combined net unit change <small>(Including all on-site &amp; off-site habitat retention, creation &amp; enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	0.10			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
<b>FINAL RESULTS</b>					
Total net unit change <small>(Including all on-site &amp; off-site habitat retention, creation &amp; enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	0.10			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Total net % change <small>(Including all on-site &amp; off-site habitat retention, creation &amp; enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	5.87%			
	Hedgerow units	0.00%			
	Watercourse units	0.00%			
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓				
<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Baseline Units</b>	<b>Units Required</b>	<b>Unit Deficit</b>	
Habitat units	1.00%	1.66	1.68	0.00	No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓
Hedgerow units	1.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
Watercourse units	1.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

Appendix 5. BNG Statutory Metric Condition Criteria.

**Condition Sheet: SCRUB Habitat Type**

For Dunes with sea buckthorn see:	<a href="#">Dunes with sea-buckthorn (Dunes with Hippophae rhamnoides) - Special Areas of Conservation (jncc.gov.uk)</a>
For other scrub types see:	<a href="#">ukhab – UK Habitat Classification</a>

<b>On-site or off-site, site name and location</b>		<b>Survey date and Surveyor name</b>	
<b>Limitations (if applicable)</b>		<b>Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)</b>	
<b>Grid reference</b>		<b>Habitat parcel reference</b>	

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range). <sup>1</sup> - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species <sup>2</sup> , - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> , sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> (only in its restricted native range), or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , which can be up to 100% cover).		
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran <sup>3</sup> ) shrubs are all present.		
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species <sup>4</sup> (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA <sup>5</sup> ) and species indicative of suboptimal condition <sup>6</sup> make up less than 5% of ground cover.		
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.		
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.		

**Footnotes**

**Footnote 1** – Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.

**Footnote 2** – Native woody species as defined and listed in the Hedgerow Survey Handbook: DEFRA (2007) *Hedgerow Survey Handbook: A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK*. 2nd ed. [online]. Defra, London. PB1195. Available from: Hedgerow Survey Handbook (publishing.service.gov.uk).

**Footnote 3** – See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran species. Available from: [Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) and [Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**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, using professional judgement.

**Footnote 5** – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

**Footnote 6** – Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type may include: non-native conifers, tree-of-heaven *Alianthus altissima*, holm oak *Quercus ilex*, European turkey oak *Quercus cerris*, cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, snowberry *Symphoricarpos* spp., shallon *Gaultheria shallon*, American skunk cabbage *Lysichiton americanus*, buddleia *Buddleja* spp., cotoneaster *Cotoneaster* spp., Spanish bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica* and hybrid bluebells *Hyacinthoides x massartiana*. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.

<b>Number of criteria passed</b>		
<b>Condition Assessment Result (out of 5 criteria)</b>	<b>Condition Assessment Score</b>	<b>Score Achieved x/√</b>
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	
<b>Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score</b>		

BNG Statutory Metric Condition Criteria for Traditional orchards.

Condition Sheet: ORCHARD Habitat Type			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Traditional orchard			
Habitat Description			
<a href="#">ukhab - UK Habitat Classification</a>			
On-site or off-site, site name and location		Survey date and Surveyor name	
Limitations (if applicable)		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference	
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	Presence of ancient <sup>1</sup> and or veteran <sup>1</sup> trees. <b>Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition.</b>		
B	Presence of deadwood in or on trees, or on the ground: at least 20% of mature trees have deadwood associated with them.  Some examples of deadwood are: standing, attached and fallen trees or limbs; dead stems; branches and branch stubs greater than 10 cm diameter; and internal cavities. The types and distribution of deadwood provide a range of habitats suitable to support a wide assemblage of saproxylic invertebrates. <b>Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition.</b>		
C	Less than 5% of fruit trees are smothered by scrub. Small patches of dense scrub and or scattered scrub growing between trees can be beneficial to biodiversity, however these occupy less than 10% of ground cover.		
D	There is evidence of formative and or restorative pruning to maintain longevity of trees.		
E	At least 95% of the trees are free from damage caused by humans or animals, for example browsing, bark stripping or rubbing on non-adjusted ties.		
F	Grassland is not overgrazed, poaching is not evident around the trees, with no more than 10% of trees poached under the canopy.		
G	Species richness of the grassland is equivalent to a medium, high, or very high distinctiveness grassland.		
H	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species <sup>2</sup> (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA <sup>3</sup> ) and species indicative of suboptimal condition <sup>4</sup> make up less than 10% of ground cover.		
All criteria achieved (required for good condition - Yes or No)			
Number of criteria passed			
Condition Assessment Result (out of 8 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved xIV	<b>Footnotes</b> <b>Footnote 1</b> - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: <a href="#">Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a> and: <a href="#">Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> <b>Footnote 2</b> – 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. <b>Footnote 3</b> – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). <b>Footnote 4</b> - 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> and common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> . There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.
Passes 6- 8 criteria, including essential criteria A and B.	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 criteria; OR Passes 6 or 7 criteria but fails an essential criterion.	Moderate (2)		
Passes 3 or fewer criteria.	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			

BNG Statutory Metric Condition Criteria for Modified grassland.

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)		
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type		
Grassland - Modified grassland		
On-site or off-site, site name and location		Survey date and Surveyor name
Limitations (if applicable)		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference
Habitat Description		

[ukhab - UK Habitat Classification](#)

Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
<p>A There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m<sup>2</sup> present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). <b>Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.</b></p> <p>Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m<sup>2</sup> (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.</p>		
<p>B Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.</p>		
<p>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).</p> <p>Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.</p>		
<p>D Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.</p>		
<p>E Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)<sup>2</sup>.</p>		
<p>F Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.</p>		
<p>G There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species<sup>4</sup> (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA<sup>4</sup>).</p>		

Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)

Number of criteria passed

Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/7
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score		

Footnotes

**Footnote 1** – Creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, greater plantain *Plantago major*, white clover *Trifolium repens* and cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*.

**Footnote 2** – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.

**Footnote 3** – 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, using professional judgement.

**Footnote 4** – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).